

Toyota Campaign Is Most Effective Ad Of Super Bowl LV

February 9, 2021

"Upstream" finishes ahead of Jeep, Bass Pro Shops and M&Ms in video ad tech company Unruly's ranking of the best ads from Super Bowl 2021



NEW YORK – Tuesday, February 9, 2021 – Toyota's "Upstream" is the most effective ad of Super Bowl LV, according to new research from [Unruly](#).

A [study by the advertising platform](#) found the [ad from the autos brand](#), which features 13-time Paralympic gold medalist Jessica Long, was the campaign most likely to have the biggest impact on brand and business metrics.

Tremor International company Unruly used its content testing tool [UnrulyEQ](#) to measure consumers' responses to all the big ads from Super Bowl LV. Ads were ranked using EQ Score — a composite score based on a campaign's ability to not only engage consumers, but also drive brand metrics such as brand favorability and purchase intent.

Four ads finished with a score of 8.1 out of 10, but Toyota's minute-long commercial took the Super Bowl ad crown after generating more emotional engagement than any other Super Bowl LV ad.

Jeep's call for national unity, ["The Middle"](#), starring Bruce Springsteen, and Bass Pro Shops' tribute to The Great Outdoors, ["Get Back To Nature"](#), were joint second, with both attracting intense emotions from 60% of viewers. M&Ms' ad ["Come Together"](#), and NFL's ["As One"](#), were fourth and fifth respectively.

Other brands to make it into the top 10 include Doritos, DoorDash, Anheuser-Busch and Cadillac. Ads from Amazon, Bud Light and Tide did not make the top 10.

It was a particularly high-scoring year, with ads attracting an average EQ score of 7.4 — almost three points higher than Super Bowl 2020's average. Ads on average also generated 53% more emotional engagement than the previous Super Bowl.

Most Effective Ads Of Super Bowl LV – Compiled by Unruly

Rank	Brand	Campaign	EQ score (out of 10)	% of people who were intensely emotional engaged
1.	Toyota	"Upstream"	8.1	63%
=2.	Jeep	"The Middle"	8.1	60%
=2.	Bass Pro Shops	"Get Back To Nature"	8.1	60%
4.	M&Ms	"Come Together"	8.1	55%
5.	NFL	"As One"	8.0	60%
6.	Doritos	"#FlatMatthew"	8.0	54%
7.	DoorDash	"The Neighborhood"	7.9	56%
=8.	Anheuser-Busch	"Let's Grab A Beer"	7.8	51%
=8.	Remy Cointreau	"Love Letter"	7.8	51%
=10.	Fiverr	"Opportunity Knocks"	7.8	50%
=10.	Cadillac	"ScissorHandsFree"	7.8	50%
	US Norm		5	32%

Toyota's campaign, which tells the heart warming story of Team Toyota athlete Long's incredible journey, which began when she was adopted by an American couple from a Russian orphanage, finished top after 63% of viewers had an intense emotional response to the content — almost twice the average US ad.

"Upstream" was the most inspiring of all the Super Bowl ads tested, 163% more than the average US ad. The ad also generated intense feelings of warmth, happiness and amazement, but also had viewers reaching for the tissues, with the ad 164% sadder than the US norm.

Such an intense emotional response also had a significant impact on its brand metrics. Along with Doritos, Toyota managed to drive the highest level of desire to find out more among consumers (70%), while brand favorability (66%) and purchase intent (66%) were also well above the US norm.

Terence Scroope, VP, Insight & Solutions for Unruly and Tremor Video, said: "Emotions were certainly a lot more heightened this year, with viewers' emotional responses on average a lot more intense than any of the five previous Super Bowls we've

tested. With performance and brand metrics also a lot higher, it meant this year's crop of ads attracted the highest EQ Scores we have ever seen at the Super Bowl.

"What's also interesting is the ads that finished near the top. While many ads feature celebrities trying to make us laugh, some of the top performers noticeably deviated from this tried-and-trusted formula. Toyota, for example, borrowed a page from its own successful 2018 ad, focusing on the bond between mother and child, overlaid on the backdrop of a striving athlete's journey to success. Similarly, Bass Pro Shops leaves the celebrities out of the mix and focuses on a narrative around enjoying nature and the outdoors in a year when we face great challenges and interruptions to our lifestyles."

Bud Light's "Legends" and Cheetos' "It Wasn't Me" were the ads most likely to make people laugh, with 17% of viewers finding the content funny — more than 4 times the US average.

Read Unruly's complete summary of Super Bowl LV data [here](#).



Methodology

Unruly analyzed the emotional responses of 3,657 US consumers to 43 ads aired during Super Bowl LV using its content measurement tool, [UnrulyEQ](#). The results were then compared to Unruly's database of thousands of ads. Ads with the same EQ scores are ranked by how much intense emotional engagement they generated. The average UnrulyEQ ranking for US ads is 5.0. *Remy Cointreau's ad was included in Unruly's Super Bowl ranking after airing in 15 local markets.

UnrulyEQ helps advertisers maximize the performance of their CTV, video and display ad campaigns through creative testing, data activation and campaign measurement.