

Super Bowl Sunday!

-by Bob Salvas, Success Mail

Now that the New Years' party hats are put away, a good number of people will start to focus on the next celebration: Super Bowl Sunday! Last year about 130 million people tuned in to the game and similar numbers are expected this year. The large number of viewers has always made the game an important event for marketing and advertising people. This is why a 30-second commercial during the Super Bowl costs about 3 million dollars!

As a football fan, I personally love the Super Bowl. My favorite team is the New England Patriots and of course I am disappointed they will not be playing in this year's big game (who the heck am I going to root for?). But I take solace in the fact that the Pats have had great success in the past having appeared in 5 Super Bowls in the last 20 years (and winning 3 of them).



So the New England Patriots will not be in the Super Bowl this year. But they are not the only ones with a Super Bowl history that will not be there this year. Word is that **Pepsi** will not have a commercial in this year's Super Bowl. Pepsi has had commercials in **every** Super Bowl for the last 20 years and this year they are pulling out. Some are speculating that it is due to a slow economy, but I think there is more to it.



About three years ago I read a report indicating that, for the first time ever, more marketing money was being spent on direct marketing than mass marketing/advertising. And the numbers have gone up each year so that 2009 will show that direct marketing accounted for 54.3% of advertising/marketing spending. I am not surprised. As consumers we often try to block out mass marketing- either by paying no attention to it or through the use of technology (using DVR or TIVO for television watching; paying subscriber fees like renting DVDs, pay stations on television, XM radio, etc).

The other part of that is that consumers are fed up with what marketing author Seth Godin calls 'interruption marketing'. If you think about it, interruption marketing has been **the** advertising model probably since the invention of the printing press. The advertiser's job is to find something you like or have to do and then interrupt it, trying to sell you something. Drive your car- interrupted by a billboard. Watch TV- interrupted by a commercial. Read the newspaper- interrupted by a print ad. Have dinner with your family- interrupted by a telemarketer. Even the early days of the internet- interrupted by a pop-up ad!

Interruption marketing was probably fine in the days where we had a smaller number of media vehicles to handle. Three television stations to pick from, a local movie theatre or two, a local newspaper, a local library or book store, AM and FM radio stations, LIFE, TIME and SPORTS ILLUSTRATED magazine- this was the world I grew up in. Technology, of course has changed all of that. Today there are more products than ever being touted on more media channels than ever resulting in a public that has reached **INTERRUPTION OVERLOAD**.

So, it is my understanding is that Pepsi will take a portion of the money they will save by not having a Super Bowl commercial and invest it into some direct marketing- great idea. But there are many avenues they can go within direct marketing. If I were them, I would take a close look at what another corporate giant is doing this year- GOOGLE.



You see, recently, GOOGLE sent me a letter. Yes, a **real** letter on paper with **real** postage. As a small business person they wanted to entice me to consider using GOOGLE ADWORDS. Imagine the king of the internet using direct mail?

Let me tell you- GOOGLE did not get to be GOOGLE by not being smart. They understand that change is not always about changes in technology but also about changes in human behavior. Various studies have indicated that 98% of consumers bring their mail into the home on the same day it is delivered. Over 80% of that mail is scanned and/or read by the consumer. Compare that to the 20% (if you are lucky) of the people you know who might open/read your email blast. In general, people LIKE getting hard-copy mail and actually read it. I have to believe that one of the main reasons for this is that direct mail is non-intrusive. It does not INTERRUPT us. We retrieve it from the mailbox and it sits on the counter until WE are ready to open it. Our state of mind is naturally better because of this and on average, we spend about 30 minutes scanning and reading our mail.

The good news is that while you might have to be Google or Pepsi to afford a Super Bowl commercial, you do NOT have to be Google or Pepsi to afford to do some direct mail. Technology has made it more affordable than ever- even for the smallest business person.

A lot of business people look at what their competitors are doing for marketing and do the same thing. I say look at what the big companies like Google and Pepsi are doing and do that. They probably spent millions just figuring out **what** to do and that information was just given to you for free! Use it!

I know that I will personally be doing more direct mail for my marketing in 2010. Now I just have to figure out who to root for in this year's Super Bowl!

*Bob Salvas is a direct marketing consultant and owner of Success Mail.
bob@successmail.net 401-359-1602*