

SPORTS SCORES

■ James Brown moves from Fox to CBS, 3C



In Pittsburgh: Fans greet Steelers at airport.

Teams plotting for XLI

■ Steelers and Seahawks look ahead to next season, 1, 8C

By David DeNoma, Reuters

USA TODAY

NO. 1 IN THE USA

Boos in the night

■ Recap of, um, highlights from *American Idol*'s popular auditions, 1, 8D



Donny Meacham: "Murdered" classic tune.

Tuesday, February 7, 2006

USA TODAY

Super Bowl ad watchers make a run for Web

Some business sites see a massive increase in visits

By Bruce Horowitz
USA TODAY

Super Bowl XL is history, but the ad game is in overtime with the battle for attention online.

Just five years ago, the great hope of most Super Bowl advertisers was to have their brand names remembered a day after the game.

Now, a growing number are measuring Super Bowl ad success by the number of day-after hits on their websites — and the number of times their commercials are watched or downloaded via computers, iPods or cellphones.

For Super Bowl advertisers, driving Web hits is like driving traffic to an auto dealer, says Stephen Greysier, marketing professor at Harvard Business School. "It leads to the test drive — or even the sale."

At a minimum, when a consumer goes to a company's site, "It greatly improves the odds of remembering the brand," says Daniel Howard, chairman of the marketing department at Southern Methodist University's Cox School of Business.

By any measure, Web response following the big game was huge. Few saw more bounce than FedEx, whose ad featured a caveman trying to send a prehistoric package. Traffic to the area of fedex.com where the company offers its ads was up 13,000% for the period from the game's end to 2 p.m. Monday, vs. the period last week, says Carla Boyd, a spokeswoman.

Akamai, which provides services for major websites that include 23 of the 32 Super Bowl advertisers, says traffic to the 23 peaked at a combined 782,679 hits per minute immediately after the game, compared with 50,000 hits per minute on a typical Sunday.

Even then, only a few sites fully exploited their online potential, says Kieran Taylor, director of product marketing for Akamai. Just a few of the 23 got most of the increase, he says, but he declined to name the leaders.

But one Super Bowl advertiser, Sharpie, frankly says it didn't do a good job directing viewers to its

site. At the end of Sharpie's Super Bowl spot, the reference to the website was just a small, visual image. "It was something we didn't think much about," President Rory Leyden says.

However, its traffic was up 400% on Sunday vs. last Sunday. "We underestimated the number of people who would visit the website," says Leyden, whose company is introducing Sharpie pens in new colors and will offer 39 by year's end.

In contrast, Super Bowl ad leader Anheuser-Busch took its Internet strategy to "a new level" this year, says Marlene Coulis, vice president of brand management.

This was the first year the beer giant made its Super Bowl spots readily available for downloading. As a result, traffic on the already busy site spiked 400% between midnight and noon on Monday, compared with the same period on an average day, Coulis says.

It's critical for A-B to drive Web traffic, she says, because its target consumers — 21-to-27-year-old beer drinkers — are so hard to reach elsewhere.

A-B also made its Super Bowl spots available to other major sites — from Google to AOL — resulting in millions of additional people viewing the commercials, she says.

Yahoo searches for Super Bowl commercials jumped roughly 800% since the ads aired on Sunday, spokeswoman Gaude Paez says.

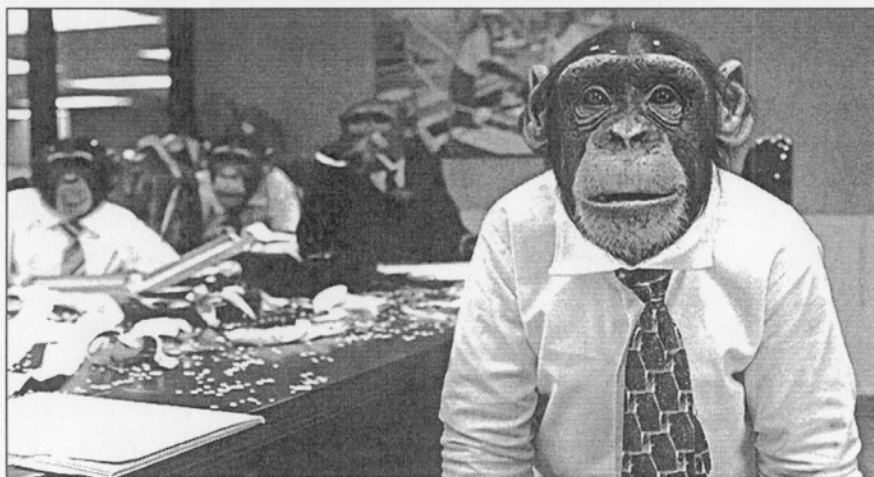
Meanwhile, AOL.com saw a 30% jump in visitors to its site, where the ads were available to view after the game. It had 13.5 million "streams" or viewings of Super Bowl commercials between the end of the game and noon on Monday, says Carlos Silva, senior vice president at AOL.

A Super Bowl with no real stand-out ads led to more views of many ads instead of lots of viewings of one, he says.

Other Internet response:

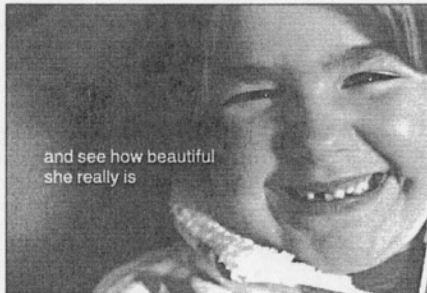
► **Dove.** The soapmaker aired one ad featuring girls, which directed viewers to its campaignforrealbeauty.com website that promotes self-esteem. The site saw a 1,600% increase in traffic between 7 p.m. Sunday and 2 p.m. on Monday, vs. an average 24-hour period, says Dove marketing director Philippe Harousseau.

► **Burger King.** The chain, which aired one spot featuring the



Traffic up by 800,000 unique visitors

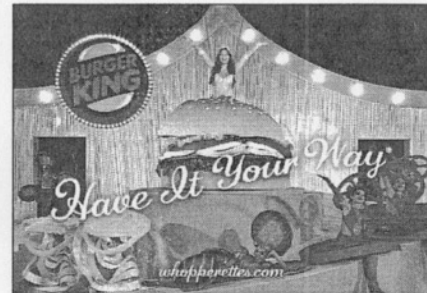
CareerBuilder: The job site ran two Super Bowl spots featuring the antics of an office full of white-collar chimps and their hapless human co-worker.



and see how beautiful she really is

1,600% increase

Dove: The commercial promoted its campaignforrealbeauty.com website, which promotes self-esteem.

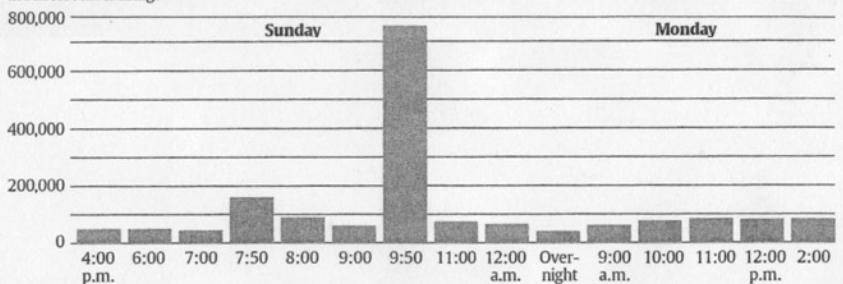


50,000 visitors and 3,000 downloads

Burger King: The company says its Whopperettes.com site is the most popular ad it's ever launched.

Tracking Super Bowl advertisers' website traffic

The number of visitors per minute to websites of 23 of 32 Super Bowl advertisers as tracked by Akamai's Net Usage Index for Advertising:



Source: Akamai

By Marcy E. Mullins, USA TODAY

dancing Whopperettes, says its Whopperettes.com site is the most popular ad site the chain ever launched. It had 50,000 visitors in about 12 hours and provided 3,000 downloads of its Super Bowl spot, says Russ Klein, chief global marketing officer.

► **CareerBuilder.com.** The job site, which ran two Super Bowl spots featuring white-collar chimps, drew 800,000 unique visitors more than average between game's end and midday on Mon-

day, says Richard Castellini, vice president of consumer marketing.

► **Nationwide.** The ad starring Fabio resulted in a 162% site surge on Monday, compared with a typical Monday, and 17,500 downloads of the ad, says Steven Schreiber, vice president of advertising. He says 90% of visitors since Sunday were new to the site.

► **ESPN.** The sports network, which ran two ads, had more than a million additional viewers at its website in the 15 hours following

the game, vs. the same period on a normal Sunday to Monday, says John Kosner, senior vice president for new media.

► **Aleve.** The pain reliever, which aired one ad starring Leonard Nimoy (*Star Trek*'s Mr. Spock), had a 101% increase in Web traffic between 7 a.m. and 2 p.m., vs. the same day a year ago, says Irish McKernan, spokeswoman at Bayer Health Care.

Contributing: Theresa Howard.