Who Won The #BrandBowl?

Jaclyn Gardner

Super Bowl ads. Overall I don't think they compared to the splendor of Apple's "Think Different" ad or last year's VW "Darth Vader" spoof. Those were classics that define generations. But there were some gems especially as *Made in the USA* and *manufacturing* topics are clearly hot in both politics and advertising.

From my count there were 22 auto commercials in Super Bowl 2012 versus the 18 car commercials from last year [1]. This year advertisers brought out Rocky themed music, Jerry Seinfeld, Jay Leno and Matthew Broderick (what… was Ben Stein busy?!?!) to get to you buy their new car. Only one commercial referenced U.S.-made: the Hyundai Gensysis RSpec (mentioned 45,000 U.S. employees). If one of these commercials inspired you to buy a new vehicle, may I suggest you check out Mark Schmit's recent blog post [2] to see where these advertised cars and trucks line up as "American made".

Now to the good stuff… The top 3 Super Bowl XLVI commercials, IMHO:

First Place – #BrandBowl Champs!
"We Make the Power that Makes the Beer – GE Works" – General Electric

GE did something all fans of manufacturing can appreciate… they made manufacturing essential to everyone. Through three commercials, GE painted beautiful pictures of how the manufacturing floor impacts American life.

Healthcare: In this commercial we see cancer patients meet the men and women that make the machines that find tumors and keep doctors informed of progress towards a cure. Powerful piece.

Louisville Plant: Here we're told GE is "Building Something Big in Louisville", which turns out to be a community of happy employees that found jobs after they were laid off.

And my favorite of the night… no matter how involved in manufacturing you are you MUST appreciate this…

Turbines & Beer: Who knew that GE made the turbines that make our beer cold! What a brilliant ad, partnering with Budweiser, to take the brewery supply chain even further. The commercial educated viewers on how a supply chain works. Brewmasters need more than hops & bottles & beer delivery guys… they need energy! And they need a machine to capture that energy. Thank you, GE, for

making me appreciate my cold brew a bit more this Super Bowl. Cheers to you!

Second Place – Outstanding Showing!
"Imported From Detroit – Second Half is About to Begin" – Chrysler

It won my heart with Clint Eastwood. Then it challenged us to show up for the "second half" in the game of life and economic recovery. I've always been a fan of the "Imported From Detroit" campaign as it, in my point of view, shifted the perception of "imported cars" and was a crafty way to tell us "look at me in Detroit". I dug it, many others didn't. I appreciate the advertisers following up last year's Eminem commercial with an Eastwood "keep moving ahead" public service announcement for America. Great timing. Great message. Let's keep moving forward America.

Third Place – Great Effort!
"Matthew's Day Off" – Honda

Extended Commercial [3]

(If they played this full commercial, this could have jumped up higher on the list – check it out!). This commercial has nothing to do with manufacturing, or "Make it in America", or my overall job in any way… bummer. But it does bring back an American classic (I'm allowed one stretch for a killer commercial, right?) Ferris reminds us that life moves pretty fast, and that you need to stop a take a look around once in awhile. Point taken, my friend. Thanks for playing along for your fans… America salutes you.

Educating folks on the value of U.S. manufacturing is essential. It needs to happen daily, through many avenues and different messages. The kids in school need to realize that "making something" is cool, it is one way we connect. And, it all needs to work together for this country to continue in the "second half".

At least that's my take on the #BrandBowl. What were your favorite commercials?

See the original post at the Manufacturing Innovation Blog *[4].*

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[1] http://www.bmwblog.com/2011/02/07/super-bowl-best-car-commercials/
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