

From Screens to Snacks: How Cheetos Turned Ads into Action

With its groundbreaking Snap-to-Steal campaign on Super Bowl Sunday in 2021, Cheetos introduced a new product. Cheetos supported its launch with a comprehensive 360-degree strategy, effectively harnessing the brand's power. The brand innovatively utilized social media channels and connected our messaging to influencers and celebrities featured in the advertisement. Goodby Silverstein & Partners enabled customers to take Cheetos directly off the TV screen while encouraging others to grab items from the shelf. In an industry first, the firm partnered with Snapchat to upload each advertisement frame to its image recognition program. The camera could recognize the app and unlock free Cheetos when a user pointed it at the advertisement and tapped it on their device. When the advertisement is scanned, Snapchat offers customers a digital bag of the new Crunch Pop Mix from Cheetos, which can be redeemed for the actual product.

Social media activity tends to spike around big games. However, the pandemic has increased the use of apps like Snapchat, as people seek to stay connected and share their thoughts during live events. According to internal Snap statistics, 61% of surveyed Snapchat users expressed interest in watching the Tampa Bay Buccaneers vs. Kansas City Chiefs game on Sunday, with nearly two-thirds planning to use the app. “In the United States, the most active age group on Snapchat consists of those aged 15-25, who make up 48% of users.” While more housebound individuals are expected to engage with social media during the big game due to the pandemic, Cheetos recognized an opportunity to incorporate product sampling into the marketing campaign for Crunch Pop Mix, reaching a larger audience.

Cheetos' “Snap-to-Steal” campaign was used to persuade the Gen-Z demographic that

this campaign tactic would drive game-day engagement because the followers never grow old, are carefree, and don't take themselves too seriously. They amplify their cultural insights by directing, entertaining, and creating relevant material, and connecting to them through what they already use with our Cheetos lovers.

This campaign utilized a creative fusion of "new" and "old" media and offered Snapchat users two ways to participate. First off, because the advertisement ran for a brief period, utilizing the AR filter was a special experience. There were concealed markers in each of the 1,440 frames of the advertisement, saving viewers from having to pause it or position their smartphone cameras in a specific direction. Who wouldn't want to feel unique? Second, there was a genuine reason for taking part: complimentary refreshments! As a result of this campaign, 9,500 available bags were redeemed in two weeks. Cheetos also launched a homepage takeover on Spotify, reaching 1.7 million unique users. The night of this campaign, during the Super Bowl, this campaign interacted with their audience on Twitter and told them to be ready to "steal" a bag of Cheetos. 50 thousand+ bags were redeemed.

Post-Super Bowl, Cheetos launched a TikTok challenge with influencers; users were encouraged to show how they "steal" Cheetos, driving 3.7 billion views. This question is presented to Mila Kunis in the 2021 Cheetos Super Bowl commercial. But due to the wise counsel of rapper Shaggy, Mila always had the right response when her husband Ashton Kutcher discovered her gorging on his priceless Cheetos: "It Wasn't Me." The remixed version of this timeless song serves as the best advertising medium for the delicious new Cheetos Crunch Pop Mix and the subsequent "It's a Cheetos Thing" campaign.

Overall, this campaign did a nice job. It was memorable seeing that almost two years later, I specifically remembered this Super Bowl Ad. Before digging deeper into this campaign, I

had no idea there was even a campaign with this ad. To continue the discourse around "stealing Cheetos" beyond the game, they implemented a TikTok hashtag challenge. Looking back at all of the videos I found on the internet and TikTok, most were replays of the commercial and less of the actual campaign. The primary purpose of advertising isn't just entertaining you; it's to change your mind and behavior to drive sales. I think Cheetos' "Snap-to-steal" campaign made the right choices there, and that you don't think they could have done anything better, as evidenced by the success of this campaign.