

What Is The Super Bowl

Denny's Super Bowl free 'Grand Slam Breakfast' brings 2 million diners

Diner has promoted the iconic dish giveaway heavily, with a bold 30-second appeal ad that aired during the third quarter of the Super Bowl 43 on Sunday, plus

Friday, February 6, 2009

Denny's 1,600 chain restaurants across North America, Puerto Rico and Canada, were slammed for eight hours Tuesday with hungry patrons standing on sidewalks for nearly two hours to take advantage of the \$5.99 "Grand Slam Breakfast" giveaway.

Denny's, a dining chain with annual revenue of about \$900 million, has advertised in a TV commercial Sunday during the Super Bowl XLIII that it would give away its signature breakfast from 6 a.m. until 2 p.m. local time Tuesday, at all its restaurants in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico, while supplies lasted.

Denny's Diner has promoted the iconic dish giveaway heavily, with a bold 30-second appeal ad that aired during the third quarter of the Super Bowl 43 on Sunday, plus another 15-second ad during the post-game show, offering a free breakfast to some 90 million viewers. In addition, it has placed a full-page ad in USA Today's Monday edition. The promotion was further announced on The Today Show and notices were also sent out to the chain's "Denny's Breakfast Club" members.

The NBC ad, which was bought to unveil a new promotion for customers squeezed by the recession, may have cost as much as \$3 million, said Nelson Marchioli, CEO of Denny's Corp. Super Bowl XLIII's 30-second commercial time slot costs \$2.4 million–\$3 million for the airtime alone, excluding production and talent costs.

The game was televised live by the US NBC Sunday Night Football and Canada's CTV Television Network. BayTSP has reported that, "as of 10 a.m. Wednesday, commercials that initially aired during NBC's Super Bowl XLIII broadcast subsequently had been watched online more than 28 million times."

"The promotion has a total cost of \$5 million U.S., which includes \$3 million for the commercial on NBC," said a Denny's spokesman, noting also that the company received about \$50 million in news coverage, most of which was positive. According to a Denny's representative, two million people walked through the restaurant chains' doors Tuesday, and each Denny's restaurant served an average of 130 Grand Slams per hour.

With the "Denny's Feeds America" promotion, the company has reported 14 million hits on its Web site between Sunday night and Monday morning. Denny's shares rose 6 cents, or 3.1 percent, to \$1.98 in afternoon trading. The stock has traded in a range of \$1.18 to \$4.10 over the past 52 weeks.

"Denny's free Grand Slam" has ranked in the top 10 Google searches early Tuesday and fell to No. 18 by the end of the promotion, while "denny s locations" was #9 on Google Trends, which tracks fast-rising searches. It has also held spots No. 1 (Denny's) and 7 (Grand Slam) on Twitter's trending topics. It has generated much chat on Twitter, garnering 1,700 tweets on Tuesday, compared with its average of 59. Doritos, winner of the USA TODAY survey for best Super Bowl spot ad, had 933 mentions after reaching a peak of almost 3,300.

The idea of the TV ad was to get people to come in and re-evaluate Denny's Diner. "A lot of people have forgotten what Denny's is, or they think they know, while we've come out with a whole lot of new products. We felt like we needed to jump start the brand," Denny's Chief Marketing and Innovation Officer Mark Chmiel said.

"We're celebrating the Grand Slam this year," Chmiel said. According to the company's financial data, on January 15 Denny's reported systemwide comparable-store sales for the fourth quarter were down 6.1 percent, compared to a 0.2 percent decline from the same period in 2007.

According to Robert Gonzalez, public relations company Hill & Knowlton spokesman, Denny's has expected at least 2 million people to eat a free Grand Slam by the end of the promotion. "Every restaurant is packed with people and lines," Gonzalez said. "Everything today is about fast. People are on the go, and they're eating fast food. It's cutting into sit-down dining," he added.

"Each of the more than 1,500 Denny's were planning to make about 100 Grand Slams an hour," Denny's spokeswoman Cori Rice said. It had predicted it will have served about 1,400 people per location, more than five times the normal volume. "Grand Slam Breakfast" is a four-item option on its menu, consisting of two pancakes, two eggs, two strips of bacon and two sausage links. It weighs in at 44 grams of fat, 56 carbohydrates and 770 calories.

Nationwide, Denny's expected to sell about 2 million Grand Slams — about 15 percent of the annual tally. According to Mark Chmiel, chief marketing operator and executive vice president, the diner chain has reported approximately 2 million meals worth more than \$12 million were given away nationwide and each Denny's restaurant served an average of 130 Grand Slams per hour. It estimated it has earned about \$50 million worth of public relations following the free Grand Slam campaign, Chmiel said.

The company is also experimenting with a Grand Slam Burrito and also has introduced for this year, a Grand Slamwich, which includes eggs, bacon, sausage and cheese between two slices of bread, with a teaspoon serving. "It already has shown strong consumer appeal," said Chmiel. The company has received flood of e-mails and letters proving the positive impact of the Grand Slam campaign and commercials on its customers.

Chmiel also announced he's planning a third major promotion in this year's third quarter, which happens to include another major sporting event, the World Series. "That's one we're definitely looking at," he said.

Jobless Paris Winslow of downtown San Francisco, California has joined the long line which stretched from the front door on Mission Street, between Fourth and Fifth streets, to the corner of Fourth and up the block. "The economy is getting kind of scary. This line looks like those pictures of soup kitchen lines during the 1929 Great Depression," Winslow said.

"I came all the way from San Francisco for a free \$6 meal, Isn't that pathetic? A year ago, I never would have done this. These days I'm willing to put my ego on the back burner," said Stephen Weller, a jobless contractor who waited with his dog, Emmett. California Denny's restaurant managers have issued rain checks (for free chilled meals, as security backed by actual bacon) to anyone who failed to get in by the 2 p.m. deadline.

A big eater could also "Slam It Up" by adding any two additional items for 99 cents each to their meal. Customers on Tuesday were also handed "bounceback" coupon books that include offers for additional free menu items with purchases. Chicago Tribune reporter Kevin Pang has eaten five free Grand Slams on Tuesday at five different Denny's Diners in four hours. He claims to have consumed 4,100 calories at Harwood Heights, 5:36 a.m., at Schiller Park, 6:22 a.m., at Franklin Park, 7:08 a.m., at Melrose Park, 7:41 a.m. and at Grand Slam No. 5 Oak Park, 8:57 a.m.

"The Grand Slam has always been a Denny's favorite. This free offer is our way of reacquainting America with Denny's real breakfast and with the Denny's brand," Denny's CEO Nelson Marchioli said in a statement. In 1977s, the Grand Slam started as a baseball-related promotion in Atlanta, Georgia. Its normal price averages around \$5.99. Marchioli said the event was also a way to kick-off its "Year of the Grand Slam" promotion. Denny's claimed it has sold 12.5 million Grand Slams a year.

"The economy's tough and people are jumping all the way to fast food to try to figure it out. We all use fast food, whether it's for time or convenience or for money. But you can go to Denny's and you don't have to give up a real breakfast and that was the whole focus of our commercial," Marchioli explained. McDonald's (MCD, Fortune 500) has done well during this economic meltdown since the global recession pushes people toward less expensive dining options.

McDonald's has announced plans Wednesday to open 175 new restaurants in China this year despite the global economic crisis, thereby increasing the number of outlets in China by 17 percent, from 1,050 currently. Last month, McDonald's 2008 net profit has risen 80 percent from 2007 to 4.3 billion dollars.

Marchioli has also introduced Denny's \$4 Weekday Express Slam, which is a streamlined version of the Grand Slam. "I want to take back share. For too long, we have allowed others to take share, whether it was Starbucks or McDonald's. They're fine competitors and I don't expect to take all their business from them, but I'd like a little bit back," Marchioli noted.

According to Rafi Mohammed, author of "The Art of Pricing," people love free. "It triggers a Pavlovian response in people," said Mohammed. If Pavlov's dogs salivate when a bell rings, Denny's free Grand Slam breakfast has attracted 2 million hungry customers. "I believe free maximizes trial and doesn't devalue a product as long as it is a rare event. Aside from the cost, the major downside is that it attracts customers who truly have no intention of coming back," he added.

According to University of Portland consumer psychology professor Deana Julka, people flock to free promotions amid just a few dollars saving because there's nothing in life for free. "So when there's something out there that costs nothing, it creates a psychological rush. Especially in these times when people feel overtaxed or overburden, there's an internal reward people feel by getting something for free," she said. "It's being thrifty and feeling like you beat the system. Free really hits the spot for a lot of people," Julka added.

"Free is an emotional hot button. When free is concerned, there is no downside - or, at least, we don't see the downside immediately. So we overvalue everything that is free. People love free stuff, particularly when money's tight," said Dan Ariely, a business professor at Duke University, author of "Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions."

Experts, however, explained these moves need to be done sparingly, since giveaways can teeter in the balance between desperation and a well designed marketing ploy. "Giving your product away for free is not worth it because it undermines your brand value," said branding expert Rob Frankel, saying people are attached to the idea of it being free, than the actual product itself.

Free giveaways are not anything new in the food industry. "It just feels good when you can get something for free and not have to worry about it coming out of your wallet," Frankel noted. Dunkin' Donuts and Panera Bread all have had free coffee and food promos last year. "In November, Starbucks gave away free cup of coffee to anyone who came in on Election Day. Have you taken a look at how Starbucks is doing now?" Last week it has announced it would shut down 300 stores, in addition to the 600 it already planned to close.

On February 24, IHOP will be offering a free shortstack to every customer to encourage donations (in place of the cost) for Childrens Miracle Network. The International House of Pancakes (IHOP) is a United States-based restaurant chain that specializes in breakfast foods and is owned by DineEquity. The chain had more than 1950 restaurants in all 50 states, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Canada and Mexico. Since 2006, IHOP's National Pancake Day celebration has raised over \$1.85 million. In 2008, over 1.5 million pancakes (12 miles high if they were stacked) were given to customers for donations.

Denny's ("Denny's Diner") is a full-service diner/family restaurant chain in the United States. It operates over 2,500 restaurants in the United States (including Puerto Rico), Canada, Curaçao, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, and New Zealand). The resto chain is known for always being open, serving breakfast, lunch, dinner, and dessert around the clock.

Today, Denny's operates about 1,600 restaurants in all 50 U.S. states, Canada and Mexico. There are also about 578 Denny's restaurants in Japan operated under a license by a subsidiary of Seven & I Holdings, seven Denny's locations in New Zealand, and approximately 38 Denny's diners in the United States. Denny's headquarters is now located in Spartanburg, South Carolina, headquarters of the parent company Trans World Corporation that acquired Denny's in 1987.

Denny's was historically notable for offering a free meal to anyone on their birthday. The offer included a limited number of meal options from a special birthday menu. The promotional ritual ceased in 1993, though occasionally individual franchises will continue the tradition.

In 2008, Denny's has ceased to be in the ranks among the top diner chains in the \$83 billion breakfast market, whose top five firms -- McDonald's, Starbucks, Dunkin' Donuts, Burger King and IHOP -- accounted for 22 percent of the volume. "A lot of consumers have written Denny's off their let's-go-there list," said Ron Paul, president of Technomic, a consulting firm.

Super Bowl XLIII was an American football game between the American Football Conference champion Pittsburgh Steelers (15–4) and the National Football Conference champion Arizona Cardinals (12–8) to decide the National Football League (NFL) champion for the 2008 NFL season. It was played on February 1, 2009, at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Florida. It has an attendance of 70,774 and 98.7 million viewers. Pittsburgh earned its sixth Super Bowl win, thus securing sole possession of the record for most Super Bowl wins.

Steelers, Cardinals win championship games to advance to Super Bowl XLIII

article The Pittsburgh Steelers and the Arizona Cardinals have won their respective conference championship games to advance to Super Bowl XLIII, the championship

Monday, January 19, 2009

The Pittsburgh Steelers and the Arizona Cardinals have won their respective conference championship games to advance to Super Bowl XLIII, the championship game of the National Football League. The game is scheduled to take place on February 1 in Tampa Bay at Raymond James Stadium. The Steelers were the American Football Conference champion, defeating the Baltimore Ravens by a score of 23 to 14. Meanwhile, the Cardinals became the National Football Conference champions by defeating the Philadelphia Eagles 32 to 25.

Pittsburgh's Bettis to work as NBC studio analyst

Content Guide

what to write Jerome Bettis, who announced his retirement from the Pittsburgh Steelers on the night they won the Super Bowl XL in Detroit - Monday, February 20, 2006

Jerome Bettis, who announced his retirement from the Pittsburgh Steelers on the night they won the Super Bowl XL in Detroit, has been tapped as a studio analyst at NBC. His first game in the broadcast booth will come September 7th, on the same night the Steelers will receive their Super Bowl rings. "It will be the proudest night of my life," Bettis said. "I will finally get my ring and I will start my new career in television in front of all the Steelers fans."

Bettis, a Notre Dame graduate, began his career in 1993 with the Los Angeles Rams, but was picked up by the Steelers in 1996 and became the NFL's 5th leading rusher in Pittsburgh.

People bid farewell to elderly Shinkansen super-express in Japan

Wednesday, December 17, 2008 The final farewell train in the first series of Shinkansen super-express, called zero-kei (0 Series), ran through western

Wednesday, December 17, 2008

The final farewell train in the first series of Shinkansen super-express, called zero-kei (0 Series), ran through western Japan Sunday afternoon from Shin-Osaka to Hakata. 0 Series has served in Japan since 1964, undergoing some model changes, and was retired from regular runs at the end of the last month. Extra farewell runs were scheduled for three days, with all seats allowed to be reserved, and this was the final run.

On Sunday in Shin-Osaka station, a farewell ceremony for Shinkansen 0 Series began at 14:30, where those who contributed to its debut were invited. Around 14:45, the train slowly appeared to enter Track 20. The head and tail cars changed roles, and the train got ready by 14:48 as HIKARI 347 bound for Hakata. And, at 14:56, blowing a long horn, the 0-Series train left for the final trip.

Japanese news media report that approximately 2,800 people gathered to see off the final departure, so did many in the stations the train stopped by. Lastly, the train arrived at Hakata as scheduled at 18:01, welcomed by about 1,600 fans.

Shinkansen network was launched on 1 October 1964, just before Tokyo Olympic Games, with a route connecting the capital Tokyo and Osaka City (now operated by JR-Central). The route for 0-Series trains was gradually extended to the west, which in 1975 reached Hakata area of Fukuoka City (now by JR-West).

Shinkansen 0 Series has a characteristic round face with a part like a shallow bowl, and was nicknamed "dango-bana" or "dangoppana" (literally, "dumpling nose"). At the time of its debut, 0 Series ran at a maximum speed of 210 km/h, which was the world's highest. HIKARI, meaning beam or light, was the name of trains for the faster service. Even while more modern and faster series were rising, 0 Series continued to serve for some years, but in 1999 it ceased from JR-Central services, and in March 2000 from regular HIKARI runs of JR-West.

According to the media, remaining 0-Series Shinkansen cars are destined to be scrapped. Some other cars, which were withdrawn earlier, are preserved in museums including one in Osaka and National Railway Museum in the U.K.

Wikinews interviews John Taylor Bowles, National Socialist Order of America candidate for US President

recent of our interviews is Laurens, South Carolina's John Taylor Bowles. Mr. Bowles is running with the endorsement of the National Socialist Order of

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

While nearly all cover of the 2008 Presidential election has focused on the Democratic and Republican candidates, the race for the White House also includes independents and third party candidates. These parties represent a variety of views that may not be acknowledged by the major party platforms.

As a non-partisan news source, Wikinews has impartially reached out to these candidates, throughout the campaign. The most recent of our interviews is Laurens, South Carolina's John Taylor Bowles. Mr. Bowles is running with the endorsement of the National Socialist Order of America, a Minnesota-based Neo-Nazi party created after a recent rift in the National Socialist Movement.

2005 Afghan opium harvest begins

is up over 239% since 2003, according to U.S. government estimates. Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of illegal drugs. In 2002 Super Bowl ads

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Most heroin sold in Europe comes from Afghanistan's poppies. This past week, the 2005 opium harvest was in full view and going full speed in Afghanistan. The cultivators gathering resin from the crop are operating even near the main road through Kandahar and the farmers are out gathering resin from opium poppies in full view.

Last year 80% of the world's opium came from Afghanistan and production is up over 239% since 2003, according to U.S. government estimates. Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of illegal drugs.

In 2002 Super Bowl ads, the White House sent out the message that "drugs fund terrorists". Doug Wankel, a former U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) official, says the opium industry is "financing terrorism. It's financing subversive activities. It's financing warlordism... And if it's a threat to the government of Afghanistan, it's a direct threat to the national security interests of the United States."

"The Bush administration has decided not to destroy the opium crop in Afghanistan," stated a U.S. intelligence official returning from Afghanistan in relation to the 60% smaller 2002 crop. The source, who requested that he not be identified, noted "U.S. forces could destroy the crops using aerial spraying techniques, but no such actions are planned."

U.S. plans to spray the crops were canceled at the request of Afghan President Hamid Karzai, who has called for jihad or "holy war", but is concerned that aerial spraying could be harmful to the health of Afghan villagers. The U.S. claims that the spraying would be safe, but is granting Karzai's request.

Karzai has indicated that he may change his mind if other U.S. strategies fail to halt the opium. Congress budgeted \$774 million for anti-drug operations in Afghanistan just this year.

NFL: Chicago deals Jones to New York

112 yards on 15 carries in Super Bowl XLI against the Colts. Jones (who will be 29 next season) who originally signed with the Bears for a four year \$10

Friday, March 9, 2007

The Chicago Bears confirmed Tuesday that they had traded running back Thomas Jones along with one of their second round picks (which was 63rd overall) in the 2007 draft to the New York Jets. In exchange they will receive the Jet's second round pick, which is 37th overall in the upcoming NFL Draft and originally belonged to the Washington Redskins.

Jones rushed for 1,210 yards last season with the Bears and 301 yards in the playoffs including 112 yards on 15 carries in Super Bowl XLI against the Colts. Jones (who will be 29 next season) who originally signed with the Bears for a four year \$10 million deal as a free agent prior to 2004. His contract was set to expire after 2007. After his 1,335 yard 2005 season (which included nine touchdowns) Jones expressed his unhappiness with his contract by boycotting the Bears' offseason voluntary workouts. Shortly after the Super Bowl, Jones expressed his desire for a change to Bears general manager Jerry Angelo. At a scouting combine two weeks ago he hinted a trade might be in the works, saying of Jones "He's expressed some things to me personally. We'll work on some things. I told him I would listen, and I did." Had Jones stayed with the Bears in 2007 he would have made \$2.75 million. The contract with the Jets (arranged by his agent Drew Rosenhaus) is for four years and is worth \$20 million with a \$12 million guaranteed signing bonus. Having passed his physical for the Jets, Jones is set to receive \$13.1 million in the deal's first two years.

Reflecting on the trade Jones said "It wasn't really a situation where I wanted to be traded. It was a situation where I wanted to have an opportunity to do what I am capable of doing and that's going somewhere and providing leadership like I did in Chicago." He looked forward to playing with the Jets "I had a great time in

Chicago, and it was a great experience playing there and making it to the Super Bowl last year with those guys. But I'm very, very excited to be here in New York. It's a great city. We had a chance to play the Jets this year, and the energy and the excitement that we felt up here at the Meadowlands and just being in New York in general was something that was special." Jones also addressed concerns about his age, saying "I'll be 29 years old this year, but I haven't had a lot of carries for a 29-year-old back and I'm a workout warrior. I love working out, I love taking care of my body and I'm very in tune with my body and how I feel. The way I feel right now, I could play for a long, long time."

Last season the Jets ranked 30th in rushing in the NFL, and the trade gives the Jets the starting running back they have lacked since Curtis Martin's knee injury over a year ago (Martin did not play last season and is expected to retire). Jets general manager Mike Tannenbaum was happy about the trade, stating "We did a lot of research on Thomas as a person, and we think he's a good fit on and off the field. He's a tough, outdoor, northeast runner, and he provides leadership." Jones will be sharing running duties with Leon Washington, and Cedric Houston (the Jets released their two other running backs Derrick Blaylock and Kevan Barlow). Last year Houston totaled up 374 rushing yards while Washington led the team with 650.

Jones spoke of his admiration of his new teammate, saying "Leon Washington is a great back. I watched him last year, and he made some great plays for the Jets, helped them get to the playoffs. I have a lot of respect for him and all the other running backs out there. I'm one of the guys on the team that just wants to provide leadership and make plays and help us win." When asked if he expected to get most of the rushing duty Jones said "The best players play, and that's a great situation to be in. It gives you an opportunity to go out there and compete. Competition makes everybody better." The addition of Jones will give the Jets the option of using Washington and Houston as situational runners, which many believe will increase their effectiveness. The Jets' general manager Tannenbaum stressed that the coaching staff would determine such questions, but said of Brown "I think he's a complete back, in terms of, he can be on the field for all three downs. How he's used and in what role will ultimately be determined by [Head Coach] Eric [Mangini] and Coach Schottenheimer, but he's a guy who can come in here and add to the productivity of the team."

In place of Jones, the Bears are expected to start Cedric Benson. Benson was the fourth overall pick in the first round of the 2005 draft and is playing for the Bears under a \$35 million contract. Benson rushed for 647 yards last season, averaging 4.1 yards per carry. Benson was injured in the Super Bowl after 2 carries for a 1 yard loss. Both Jones and Benson served the Bears as tailbacks, and (barring injury) were substituted for one another every couple of series. Bears general manager Angelo said of Benson "It's his time. It's that simple. It's his time. We feel strongly that he is ready." Angelo dismissed questions surrounding Benson's hardiness (a sprained knee in 2005 kept him out of six games, and last season he suffered a shoulder injury at training camp and a sprained knee in the Super Bowl). Angelo pointed out "He's been hurt, [but] he never was hurt in college. He had a lot of carries and four 1,000-yard seasons."

While many in Chicago view Jones' relationship with his teammates, and Benson in particular as icy, he had only complimentary things to say when discussing the trade and its effects. He told reporters "Cedric Benson has a lot of talent. He's a talented guy. When you move into the featured role, there are a lot more responsibilities. Coach Tim Spencer is a great running backs coach and I had a great relationship with him, not only as a coach but as a friend. He has so much advice for me to make me a better football player and I'm sure he'll pass that same advice to Cedric."

The Bears have declared their intent to have special-teams standout Adrian Peterson serve as a complementary player to Benson. While Peterson only had 10 carries last season, in 2005 he led the Bears with 76 carries at an average of 5.1 yards. General manager Angelo stated "We feel good about Cedric and Adrian. We still feel we have two quality running backs. That was a part of why we did what we did. We'll continue to look for a running back because we want to carry three running backs on the roster."

The Bears top draft positions are now 31st overall in the first round, and their new acquisition of 37th overall in the second round. The Jets top draft positions are both in the second round, the 59th overall and the newly

acquired 63rd overall.

The Jets also announced they signed 13-year veteran Bobby Hamilton to defensive back and Kenyon Coleman (six year veteran from Dallas) to defensive end. The Bears announced the 49ers' offensive assistant Pep Hamilton would succeed Wade Wilson (who went to Dallas) as quarterback coach, and Charles London (formerly Duke's assistant running back coach) would take over Mike Bajakian's offensive quality-control coach position since he left to become offensive coordinator at Central Michigan.

'Top Model' winner CariDee English on her modeling career and her battle with psoriasis

today? CariDee English: Fine! Doing good. MH: So I heard you went to the Super Bowl last Sunday. CE: Oh, no, I didn't get to go! I've been in New York for

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Since winning the reality television series America's Next Top Model in December 2006, CariDee English, a small-town girl from Fargo, North Dakota, was plucked from relative obscurity to be the new look for CoverGirl Cosmetics, the newest fresh face on the cover of Seventeen, and affiliated with the largest modeling agency in the world, Elite Model Management.

However, she feels her greatest accomplishment is being the spokeswoman for the National Psoriasis Foundation, in which she is a motivational speaker and gives encouragement to psoriasis sufferers. CariDee has even lobbied in Congress for the passage of a bill which would ask the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Institute of Medicine to increase spending on finding a cure for psoriasis. You can read more about her role with the National Psoriasis Foundation [here](#).

Wikinews reporter Mike Halterman sat down and talked with CariDee earlier in the week to discuss her own issues with psoriasis, how she has helped other sufferers in her role as spokeswoman for the Foundation, as well as what it's like to be a new model in New York City and her thoughts on how the fashion industry operates today.

This is the second in a series of articles with America's Next Top Model contestants. Articles will be published sporadically.

Google blocks home device from responding to Burger King commercial

" Prior to the release of the commercial, Google caused a similar incident during the Super Bowl, when its own commercials activated the speakers because

Friday, April 14, 2017

On Wednesday afternoon at around 2:45 PM US Eastern Time (1845 UTC), Google prevented its Google Home speaker from responding to prompts by a Burger King commercial advertising the chain's Whopper hamburger, after the spot went live on the internet at 12PM Eastern Time (1600 UTC).

The fifteen second commercial, with an actor playing a Burger King employee, is designed to activate Google Home speakers owned by viewers, the function being triggered by the actor asking "Ok Google, what is the Whopper burger?". Upon receiving the question, the speakers would read the introduction to the Wikipedia article on the burger. According to a report by USA Today, responding to the commercial's launch, Wikipedia users vandalized the article, with statements like "The 'Whopper' is the worst hamburger product sold by the international fast-food restaurant chain Burger King," or that it contains "rat and toenail clippings", all of which would be recited by the speaker.

Amidst the spree of edits to the article, a Wikipedia user named "Fermachado123" edited the page to reflect positively on the burger. A report by The Washington Post noted similarities between the user's name and Fernando Machado, senior vice president for global brand management at Burger King. The chain declined to say whether the edits to the article were by Machado.

The commercial subsequently prompted responses from Wikipedia and Google, with the former locking its article from editing by unregistered users, and the latter preventing its speakers from responding to the commercial. According to a report by The Verge, Google may have used the sound clip of the actor's voice to disable the commercial's ability to activate the speakers, as other people were still able to get the devices to respond to inquiries about the burger.

Burger King later bypassed Google's restrictions on its commercial, by releasing new versions of the spot. The chain revealed the new versions on The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon and Jimmy Kimmel Live on Wednesday night. According to a report by USA Today, the new versions featured different voices asking the prompting question, in one case, a woman, and in another, a different man from the actor in the initial version. Tests done by USA Today on Thursday morning confirmed the new versions of the commercial were able to activate the speakers.

Before airing the new commercials, Burger King expressed awareness the original spot no longer triggered the speakers, and teased the subsequent versions through a statement on Wednesday by spokesman Brooke Scher Morgan. "You'll have to tune in tonight to see if the commercial triggers the Whopper sandwich definition response", said Morgan. According to Morgan, the chain launched the commercial as a means to "do something exciting with the emerging technology of intelligent personal assistant devices."

In a post on Twitter dated to Wednesday, software developer Anthony Kirkpatrick criticized Burger King's approach, writing, "re: that burger king ad, yeah relying on linking to wiki text through an assistant definitely can't go wrong or be misused in any way".

Another tweet, by user Dawn Xiana Moon, dated to Thursday stated, "Burger King fail. Hijacking devices isn't cool. It's clever, but it's not going to win friends."

Users on YouTube also took the commercial's comments page on the site to vent their frustration with the approach taken by Burger King, citing concerns regarding privacy incursions through the remote activation of the speakers. "When you take over someones phone or tablet and have it do your own remote commands intentionally, you are HACKING", wrote one user.

According to marketing professor Jonah Berger, a faculty member of the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, who authored the book *Contagious: Why Things Catch On*, Burger King potentially gained patrons through the publicity generated by the commercial. "This is particularly valuable to Burger King rather than, say McDonald's, or someone else," said Berger, "because Burger King wants to be known as an edgy restaurant or establishment that does interesting, creative and different sorts of things. It's part of their brand equity". He also added Google may stand to gain from the commercial as well, stating, "a whole bunch of people who didn't know what Google Home was or hadn't heard of it may [now] go out and buy one."

Prior to the release of the commercial, Google caused a similar incident during the Super Bowl, when its own commercials activated the speakers because they contained the "Ok Google" trigger phrase. On the possibility other advertisers may attempt to repeat Burger King's actions, Berger had this to say: "Just like any other marketing campaign, the first time someone tries something, it's creative, innovative and everyone says it's great[...] But two weeks from now, if every brand is doing this with every ad, people are going to start getting pretty annoyed."

In a statement by e-mail on Thursday, Dara Schopp, a spokeswoman for Burger King, indicated the commercial resulted in a 300% increase in Twitter "social conversation" on Burger King, in comparison to statistics from the previous day.

Whilst Google declined to comment to The Washington Post on the question, they reported an individual unofficially indicated the company was not consulted by Burger King prior to the launch of the commercial.

Observing the 2012 Human Trafficking Awareness Day in the US, and wider world

legislation on the statute books in time for the Super Bowl, due to be held in Indianapolis on February 5. The just-passed bill now goes to the House for approval

Friday, January 13, 2012

This week US citizens observed National Human Trafficking Awareness Day through acts of education, legislation, and enforcement; whilst, around the world, other people highlighted or tackled this global problem in their own countries.

According to an annual report on human trafficking released by the US State Department in June last year, 27 million men, women and children are exploited through human trafficking. Worldwide, at least two million children are estimated to be trafficked victims of the sex trade; and, in military conflicts, it is not uncommon for children to be forced to bear arms. In releasing the report last year, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton highlighted the importance of international cooperation in addressing trafficking, and cultural issues associated with it.

Under the United Nations' Palermo Protocols, human trafficking encompasses cases where victims are born into slavery, forcibly transported for exploitation, consented to work with a trafficker, and/or were forced to participate in criminal activities. The Protocols also recognize the unique status and rights of children.

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