

Verizon Punts Super Bowl Spot in Favor of Grammys Ad to Create Buzz

The stage is set! Advertisers, don't miss this cultural moment. [ADWEEK House The Big Game](#) is headed to New Orleans on February 7. [RSVP](#).

Verizon and Beyoncé essentially won the Super Bowl in 2024 with an ad that included a mysterious teaser campaign and an album announcement. This year, however, the company opted out of the game because it was crazy in love with a different idea.

Rather than compete against the noise of Super Bowl 59 ads, Verizon is debuting its new campaign, which stars Buzz Aldrin alongside the return of its original "Test Man," Paul Marcarelli, during the 67th Grammys on Sunday.

Of course, the company isn't abandoning the Big Game entirely.

In addition to trying to create buzz with Buzz Aldrin, Verizon is marking Super Bowl 59 with a FanFest in all 30 NFL markets on Feb. 9. The company also recently unveiled its House of Verizon activation in New Orleans, running from Feb. 6 through 9, which will have a soundtrack by DJ Angie Vee and DJ Fannie Mae and appearances from NFL athletes, entertainers, and fashion industry luminaries, according to ADWEEK's Jason Notte.

"Advertising in the Super Bowl is an incredible opportunity to reach large-scale audiences nationally. Verizon has done it in the past with great success, and we will continue to do so in the future," a Verizon spokesperson said in a statement to

ADWEEK. “Our goal this year, however, is to create something truly ambitious—national in scope yet deeply rooted in local communities.”



Can you hear Verizon now?

Verizon's new Grammys ad is a homecoming of sorts for the Test Man.

Marcarelli's Test Man started appearing on Verizon campaigns more than two decades ago, briefly defecting to Sprint in 2016 after the company went in a different direction with its ads. Now, he's back to do a new twist on his classic catchphrase, "Can you hear me now?" In the spot, Marcarelli and Aldrin tackle the problem of cellphone "dead zones," with Verizon helping to conquer the issue.

"It's been 10 years since I last asked America, 'Can you hear me now,'" Marcarelli said in a statement. "Back then, dead zones were everywhere, and it's safe to say today they are only in the most remote places like the dark side of the moon."

See the linear debut of Verizon's Grammys ad on Sunday, Feb. 2, at 8 p.m. on CBS and Paramount+.

As for the Super Bowl, Beyoncé was great. But this year's Big Game spots aren't Verizon's destiny, child.

AGENCY CREDITS:

Creative Agency: Gut

Director: Calmatic

Production Company: Pretty Bird

Music: Music & Strategy

Sound: Human Worldwide

Post/VFX: JAMM

Photographer: Daniel Dorsa

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