

# Liquid Death Crashes the Super Bowl With a \$50,000 Bet and a Witch in the Stands

The brand will wager on the underdog and hex the game with 'harmless spells'

Watch the spot here: [Liquid Death](#). Then, read the article below.



Liquid Death is bringing the dark arts to the big game.

By T.L. Stanley

Liquid Death, which recently drew blood from Tony Hawk—literally—for a product stunt, is crashing the Super Bowl by betting \$50,000 on the game and sending what the brand is calling a practicing witch to throw hexes from the stands.

The startup, continuing to wear its outrageousness on its sleeve, will join the legions of Americans who are placing sports bets, though its executives believe it's the first brand to do so.

The renegade company will be putting its money behind whichever team is deemed the underdog per Caesars Sportsbook. Liquid Death's senior leaders identify with a "David versus Goliath" battle, since the brand's canned water competes against legacy players like Monster, Red Bull and Mountain Dew for the coveted young skateboard, metalhead and gamer crowd.

At the same time, the leaders are willing to cheat: they've bought a ticket to the Feb. 13 game at SoFi Stadium in Los Angeles and are saying that they will send a witch,

whose identity is being kept secret, on their behalf. The “black magic” practitioner, with 42 years of experience, will use “the sun, Jupiter and Mercury” to direct the outcome. Think “harmless spells” for fumbles and missed field goals, not bodily injuries.

“Sports fans are probably the most superstitious people in the entire world—you have to wear the right hat, the right jersey and sit on the right spot on the couch for your team to win,” Andy Pearson, Liquid Death’s vp of creative, told Adweek. “And we’ve done campaigns before where we’ve tapped into people’s superstitions around witchcraft. Some people believe in it, some think it’s fake, but either way, a lot of people don’t seem too keen to mess with it. So it seemed perfect to meld the two superstitions together and see what happens.”

The move is in line with Liquid Death’s strategy of “creating entertainment over marketing,” Pearson said.

### **Toil and trouble**

To announce the “Death Bet” stunt—its first creative campaign tied to the Super Bowl—the brand dropped a video today starring the purported witch explaining his upcoming plans. He appears, with face obscured and voice distorted, in a candle-lit room surrounded by skulls and potions, including a jar labeled “dragon’s blood chunks.”

Pearson thinks the activation may color the way some people watch the game.

“Was that interception or fumble or Hail Mary real, or did Liquid Death and their witch have something to do with it?” he said. “Even if you don’t believe in the power of witchcraft, it does make you wonder.”

Liquid Death previously hexed its own water for a sinister-sounding prank on Halloween (consumers could undo the curse for 99 cents). And the brand is known for attention-grabbing, boundary-pushing stunts like its comically violent “Murder Your Thirst” animated video and a full-length horror flick. Along with tapping into the sports betting trend—Americans wagered \$52.7 billion last year—Liquid Death joins a long list of brands that have gone guerrilla in years past for the Big Game. Like other sneaky marketers who have

come before it, it will be capitalizing on the media frenzy around the event without spending big bucks to sponsor the NFL or advertise in the game. Pearson was cagey about any TV plans for Liquid Death, known mostly for its digital and social campaigns, but wouldn't rule out a regional commercial or other Super Bowl-adjacent media buy.

If the brand wins its bet, 50% of the money will go to its ongoing #DeathToPlastic initiative, a sustainability effort to fight plastic waste.

**Critical Thinking Questions - Please put your answers in a separate document.**

1. Research - provide a brief history of the brand (who, what, when, where, and its USP).
2. What is the annual revenue of Liquid Death?
3. Describe the 4 P's of this product. (You may need to do some research).
4. In your opinion, which is more effective, creating a Super Bowl commercial, or creating an ambush marketing stunt such as this? Why? (
5. Create a table which shows the pros and cons of both ambush marketing and the creation of a traditional TV commercial. Make it look good! Check spelling.
6. Research at least one other example of ambush marketing at the Super Bowl from the past. Describe the details here, then copy and paste the answer and put it in the Class Comments on Google Classroom so everyone can see your example. **No one can repeat what is already listed on Classroom! Unique examples only.**