

## **Client Background**

Popeyes is a fast food chain that was [founded in 1972](#) and currently has over [2,700 restaurants](#) in North America. The first restaurant was [opened in](#) New Orleans, Louisiana by a local entrepreneur. Like many fast food restaurants, Popeyes franchises have an indoor dining area and a drive-through lane. The menu consists of [Louisiana classics](#) such as spicy chicken, chicken tenders, and fried shrimp. [Popeyes added five flavors](#) of chicken wings to its menu on November 22, 2023. This menu addition was the focus of Popeyes' Super Bowl commercial with the tagline "Popeyes finally has wings."

## **MD-12**

[Demographic 1 - 39-64 years old](#)

[Demographic 2 - Makes more than \\$80k a year](#)

[Demographic 3 - Lives in a household of two](#)

[Psychographic 1 - Is frequently busy](#)

[Psychographic 2 - Doesn't eat fast food for the low price](#)

[Psychographic 3 - Hesitant to try new foods](#)

[Behavioral 1 - Likes to take advantage of food deals](#)

[Behavioral 2 - Fairly loyal to food brands](#)

[Behavioral 3 - Buys food for the taste](#)

[Geographic 1 - Lives in a city](#)

[Geographic 2 - Lives in a medium to high income area](#)

[Geographic 3 - Lives within a 15 minute driving radius of a Popeyes restaurant](#)

## **Audience Persona**

Jim is a 58 year old man who is married with no children. Jim works as a health inspector in Houston, Texas. His job frequently makes him drive from restaurant to restaurant throughout his day. His daily schedule is packed because restaurants often request inspections months ahead of their scheduled visit because they currently hold low scores. Jim loves picking up fast food because it is convenient as he travels throughout the day. A drive-through line also provides him anonymity and saves him from running into disgruntled restaurant managers. Unfortunately for Jim, his job has made him hesitant to try new restaurants. He prefers to stick to the places and brands he is familiar with. The places he does choose to eat usually have good deals and tasty food options. He frequently drives by a Popeyes during his daily routine, but he is not familiar with the Louisiana cuisine. He has eaten there before, but only the basic chicken tenders. His favorite restaurant is currently Buffalo Wild Wings, but he sometimes goes weeks without eating there because it is located far away.

## **The 5 Rights**

## Target Audience

My research suggests that current Popeyes customers are predominantly aged [39-64 years](#) old with a [relatively high income](#). The creative choices of the commercial should resonate with these demographics. The actor used in the commercial, Ken Jeong, is 54 years old and fits right into the target age range. His persona and comedic efforts should entertain this group because they are likely to be familiar with his work. The activities shown in the commercial also seem to be geared towards people with a high income. A self-driving car, automatic vacuum cleaner, specially-bred dog, and a drone are all things that a financially well-off person would be more familiar with than someone with a lower income. My research also suggests that many fast food eaters of that age range are fairly busy and they don't eat fast food for the low price. I think this commercial targets these psychographics well because Jeong is always eating on the move and the commercial never mentions prices. Overall, I think the creative choices in the commercial should resonate with the target audience.

## Media Mix

The Popeyes commercial was aired once during the super bowl in a 30 second spot, and a 60 second version is available on YouTube. [My research](#) indicates that TV viewership starts relatively low for Americans at 39, but it increases significantly as that number increases to 64. This suggests that a commercial on television would be most likely to reach the upper quadrant of the target age range. Looking more specifically at likely Super Bowl viewers, [my research](#) on American football fans suggests that 76% of them are middle-to-high class. It also indicates that the majority of American football fans live in a medium-sized town or a large city. These findings are encouraging for Popeyes as it implies that this particular portion of the target audience likely saw the commercial. The one part of the target audience profile that does not line up with the chosen media mix is the one-to-two person household. [My research](#) suggests that the majority of football fans live in a nuclear family. Overall, I would say that the TV commercial during the Super Bowl was effective because it likely reached several key components of the target audience profile. However, [my research](#) also suggests that people in the 39-64 age range are not as likely to use YouTube. This means that they likely would not have seen this commercial online unless they specifically searched for it. It is unlikely that the target audience was organically reached on the second platform chosen for this commercial's media mix.

## Exposure Level

My research on the right media mix suggests that most of the target audience likely saw the commercial once during the Super Bowl. Like many Super Bowl advertisements, the Popeyes commercial had a much higher reach than frequency. Millions of viewers saw the commercial, and it is likely that a large portion of the target audience saw it as well. However, it is also likely that many of them will only see it once. It has not continued to be aired on TV and

the [YouTube video](#) has a fraction of the Super Bowl views. It is hard to say whether this massive reach is worth the low frequency. The sales of the wings going forward may give a better indication of whether or not the ad was impactful enough to change buyer behavior after only one viewing. It is possible that the message was lost amidst all of the other advertisements and Super Bowl hype because of the low frequency. However, the huge reach also makes it probable that at least some portion of the target audience will remember that Popeyes now has wings.

### Timing

The Popeyes commercial ran once during the Super Bowl and it was available to watch ahead of time on YouTube. The choice to run the ad before the Super Bowl was a smart timing decision as wings are an extremely popular food to eat while watching the game. It is possible that members of the target audience saw the ad before the Super Bowl and decided to choose Popeyes as their game day snack. It is also possible that viewers who saw the commercial during the Super Bowl also decided to try the new menu item during the game. Running the ad in the first quarter gave viewers plenty of time to order before their local Popeyes closed for the night. Overall, the timing of the release of the commercial online and when it ran during the game itself was optimal for encouraging sales during a popular time to eat chicken wings.

### Cost

[It is estimated](#) that a 30 second ad during the Super Bowl this year cost \$7 million. Popeyes also uploaded and promoted the video on their own social media pages for free. The ad spot and production likely took up the vast majority of their budget, and the return on investment is dependent on their wing sales. Social media advertising was a smart financial decision because of its cost effectiveness. However, it is also likely that the high cost of the television ad did not leave Popeyes any other options. If the target audience was moved by the commercial and wing sales reflect a bump in awareness, the return on investment may be worth the high cost.

I think the goals of the ad were to raise awareness of the new menu item and ultimately convert awareness to wing sales. The wings were permanently added to the menu in November of 2023, and this seemed like Popeyes' way of announcing this addition to the masses. I think it was a hit because now millions of people have been exposed to the fact that Popeyes now has wings. The creative choices of the commercial also catered to the right audience to effectively deliver the message.

### **Industry-Focused Review**

Popeyes launched their [first Super Bowl commercial](#) to advertise the addition of wings to their menu. The advertisement included a subtle nod to the year they were founded, 1972, and their jingle "love that chicken from Popeyes." Most of their commercials in the past included the

same narrator singing this jingle in the same classic voice. This time, Ken Jeong himself was given the honor of singing the tune while sitting in a vibrating chair as a comedic reference to the popular tagline. Jeong was one of the many celebrities to appear in a Super Bowl commercial, [but one of only two](#) Asian-American celebrities.

While it was Popeyes' first Super Bowl commercial, director Charles "Calmatic" Kidd II [has directed ads during the big game before](#). Popeyes also [hired creative agency McKinney](#) to develop the commercial. They chose to stay away from the classic old Louisianan themes common in Popeyes advertisements. Instead, they chose a popular pop background song and showed modern technology such as drones and self-driving cars. The commercial also has [themes that suggest inspiration](#) from movies such as *Demolition Man* and *Austin Powers*. These new themes coincide with the intended message of new menu items coming to Popeyes' menu.

## Overall Campaign

The overall campaign besides the television commercial was fairly limited. A longer version of the ad was uploaded by Popeyes to YouTube, and Popeyes promoted it on X. However, the promotion of the video online by Popeyes was limited outside of X. The commercial did generate some buzz after it premiered with [one survey](#) finding that 47% of Gen X thought the commercial was "one of the best". This percentage was even higher for millennials and Gen Z but significantly lower for Baby Boomers. This suggests that the commercial was very popular for young and middle aged viewers.

Popeyes also announced a ["Wings for Wings" promotion](#) that announced a free 6 piece order of the new wings if either the Eagles, Ravens, or Bills won the Super Bowl. Unfortunately for Popeyes, the buzz around this promotion never took off as all of these teams lost before the big game.

## Agency Information

[Popeyes hired McKinney](#) as their creative agency last year because of McKinney's experience in the franchise food industry. Since then, McKinney has handled all of Popeyes' brand strategy, creative development, and creative production. The account is run out of McKinney's headquarters in Durham, North Carolina. McKinney also has locations in Dallas, Los Angeles, Phoenix, and New York. It is a fast growing agency with recent acquisitions of smaller agencies such as August United.

McKinney is most known for their ability to connect cultures with a brand's identity to drive business goals. Some of their most notable clients include ESPN, Samsung, Little Caesars, and Pampers. [They offer full marketing and advertising services](#) from strategy, creative development, production, and measurement.

I would be very interested in working at McKinney because of its energetic culture and collaborative work environment. It seems like an organization where I would be able to work

closely with talented strategists and creatives to ask thoughtful questions and create captivating work for major brands. I would love the opportunity to work with brands such as ESPN and Little Caesars. [It was also voted](#) into “Ad Age Best Places to Work: 2024”. I aim on pursuing roles within this agency based on my research and understanding of its professional values.

### **Nickelodeon & Paramount +**

The Popeyes commercial [was also aired](#) on Nickelodeon and Paramount + alongside the CBS broadcast.