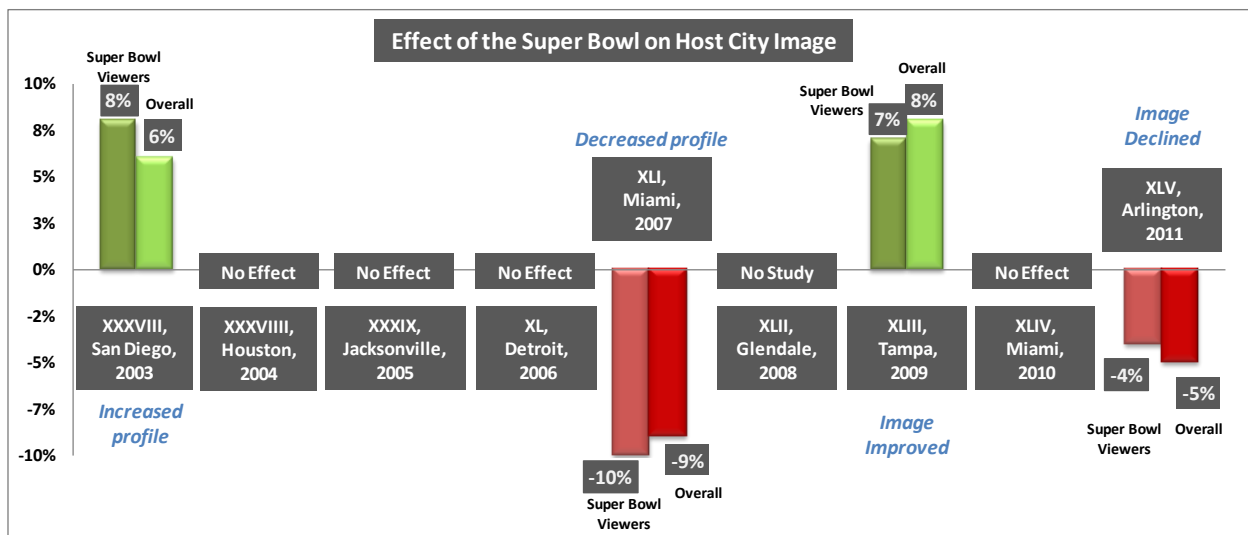


# CERC Super Bowl 45 Study

Arlington's Image Takes a Hit  
 Dallas Largely Dodges the Bullet  
 Mixed Results for North Texas

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Beginning in 2003, Competitive Edge's Super Bowl Studies have twice demonstrated that Super Bowls can deliver an image boost to the cities that host them. In theory, cities can parlay that improvement into more tourism and economic development. The studies have also shown that, despite more than 150 million viewers, the Super Bowl can have no effect. And now for the second time the study shows that the Super Bowl can be a double-edged sword, with the weather and other problems driving the host city's image in the wrong direction.



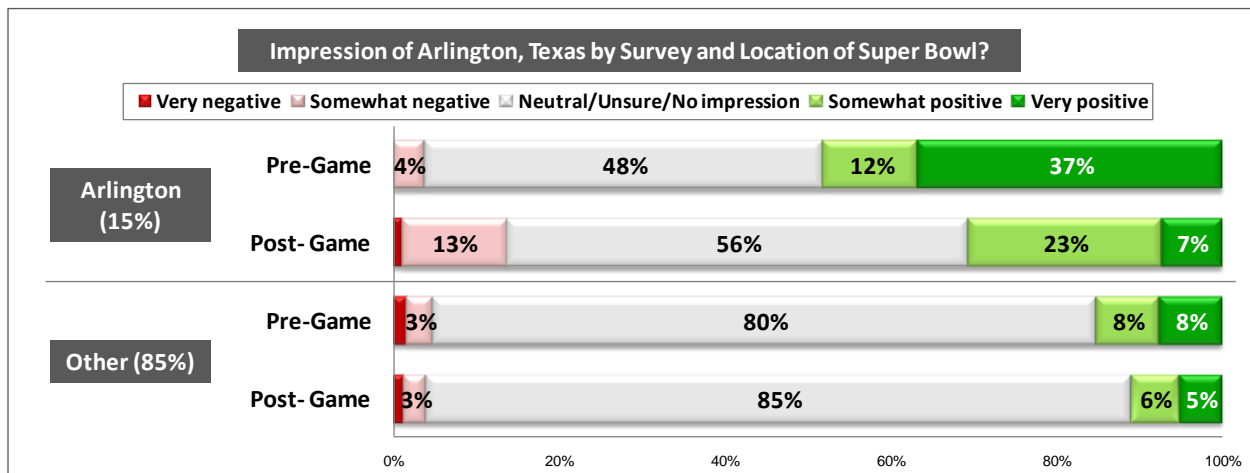
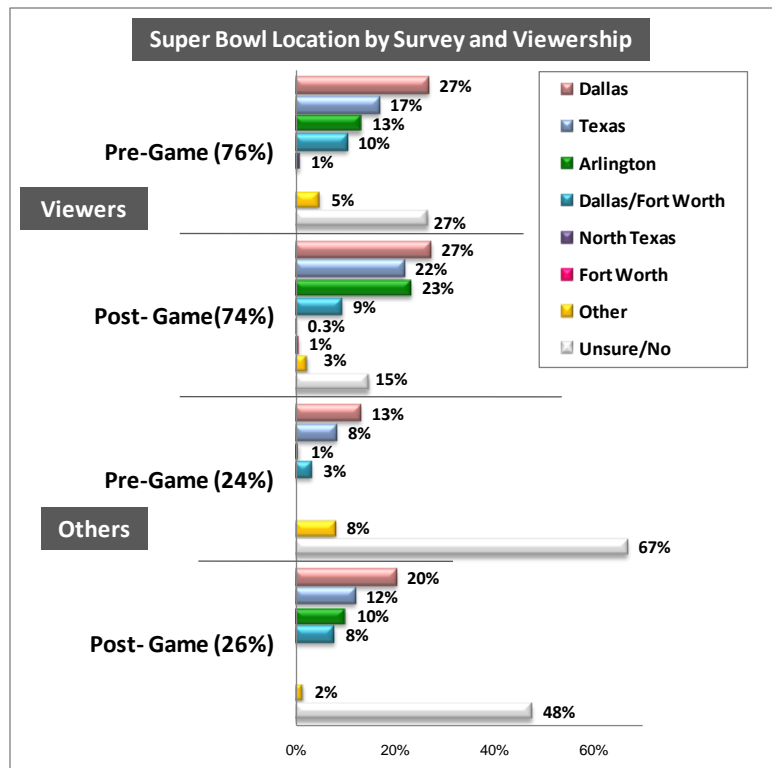
## Arlington's Image Takes a Hit

According to viewers, the game was fine, but that did not keep the image of Arlington, Texas, from taking a tumble after hosting the Super Bowl. More than 10% of Americans had held very positive impressions of the

Impression of Arlington, Texas	All Americans		Super Bowl Viewers	
	Pre-Game	Post-Game	Pre-Game	Post-Game
Very Positive	10.2	5.6	10.7	6.7
Somewhat Positive	7.3	9.3	9.1	10.1
Neutral/Unsure	4.3	4.7	3.9	4.0
Somewhat Negative	3.0	4.7	3.1	5.1
Very Negative	1.6	1.4	1.0	0.8
No Impression	73.7	74.4	72.1	73.3

city, but now only 5.6% hold very positive impressions. Extrapolating this deterioration to the entire US population, we estimate that about 10 million Americans now think less highly of Arlington. The drop in image was not limited to game viewers. Although the game telecast itself did not help, it appears that issues unrelated to the game were highlighted by the broader media to drive Arlington's image downward.

Super Bowl announcer Joe Buck mentioned Arlington nine times during the game, and the percentage of viewers who were able to identify Arlington as the host increased significantly. However, Buck's mentions were neutral, not positive, and "bumper shots" (those periods before and after commercial breaks) were usually of crowds huddled around leafless trees outside Cowboys Stadium on what looked like a chilly evening. Further, those who did not watch the game became more aware that Super Bowl 45 was played in Arlington, indicating it was not only the telecast that influenced Americans.



This attention turned out to be a bad thing for Arlington. The real significant damage came from people who knew that Arlington (rather than Dallas or another area) was the host city. The city's image was terrific before the Super Bowl among Americans who knew the game was going to be played there. However, as more people became aware that Arlington was hosting, there was a huge drop in favorability. But Arlington also took an image hit from those who were previously aware that it was the site of Super Bowl 45. The upshot is that image swings are most likely to occur among those who are paying close attention. And, when the situation is deteriorating, being mentioned nine times on national TV becomes a curse rather than a blessing.

Consequently, Arlington suffered on a number of fronts:

*Younger adults were not impressed* -- Positive ratings of Arlington fell dramatically from 23% before the game to single digits afterwards within the 18 to 34 year-old segment. Pre- and post-game differences for middle-aged and senior Americans were insignificant.

*Low income Americans became less enchanted* -- Perhaps the lavishness of the Super Bowl or the ticket fiasco rubbed those making less than \$40,000 annually the wrong way. The study shows no similar problems for Arlington among Americans in middle and upper income households.

*Arlington took a major hit from residents in the South* -- Perhaps indicating that Arlington's weather was a major problem, very positive ratings from Southerners went from 15% to 8%. On the other side of the ledger, the survey picked up significant negativity among those in the South, as their unfavorable opinions of Arlington doubled to 10%.

*Don't mess with Texas* -- Texans were much more likely to know about Arlington before the game and they generally had positive -- even *strongly* positive -- impressions of the city, but those really sank afterwards. This suggests that those with more access to in-depth media reports became more critical of the city's preparation for the game and its response once things went awry. Again, more knowledge about the situation in Arlington appears to have produced more negativity.

### Dallas Dodges the Bullet

Considering that more Americans thought the Super Bowl was being played in Dallas than in Arlington, it is fascinating to find that Dallas's image generally did not suffer. Any movement in impressions was statistically insignificant and possibly due to chance. Another startling point: most Americans do not have an impression of Dallas, the ninth largest city in the US.

Impression of Dallas, Texas	All Americans		Super Bowl Viewers	
	Pre-Game	Post-Game	Pre-Game	Post-Game
Very Positive	14.3	10.0	14.8	10.7
Somewhat Positive	19.0	19.5	21.6	20.3
Neutral/Unsure	3.2	2.9	3.3	2.8
Somewhat Negative	7.2	7.3	6.3	7.9
Very Negative	3.2	1.8	2.3	1.7
No Impression	52.9	58.5	51.6	56.6

When we isolate the folks who thought Dallas hosted the game, we find that even they did not downgrade that city at all! Therefore, the image downgrade for Arlington was a function of paying close attention to the Super Bowl and the situation surrounding it.

Despite Dallas avoiding Arlington's problems in general, the city's image did suffer among some population segments. As with Arlington, the Super Bowl influenced 18 to 34 year-olds in a negative way. Positive feelings about Dallas within that age group went from 35% to 20% and very positive impressions were cut in half. And, though Southerners did not think less of Dallas, it was residents in the northeast who significantly lowered their ratings of the city. Perhaps those northeasterners became incredulous about a major US city's inability to clear snow; something they may take for granted.

Dallas did not experience a drop among lower income Americans, and it also apparently avoided the wrath of Texans.

### "North Texas" did not Resonate with Americans

There was also no overall drop in impressions of North Texas. Not many Americans knew about the region before the Super Bowl and that did not change after the game. Marketers had been positioning this year's game as a "North Texas" Super Bowl and the American public did not take to that. A trivial number thought of North Texas as the host of Super Bowl 45.

Digging below the surface, we find drops in North Texas' image among younger adults, residents of the South and among Texans. This means that, in terms of how Americans perceive the three locations we asked about, Arlington has more in common with North Texas than it does with Dallas.

The surveys also show a downward shift in impressions of North Texas among those who did not watch the Super Bowl. This suggests that the media reports about the weather and events surrounding the game, rather than the game itself, affected North Texas. Announcer Buck never mentioned North Texas (or Dallas) as the site of the game.

Founded in 1987, Competitive Edge Research & Communication (CERC) is a national public opinion research firm specializing in civic, political and public affairs polling. It's annual Super Bowl study is conducted as part of CERC's on-going civic research. Competitive Edge conducts pre-game and post-game surveys using random digit dial sampling with a total sample size of approximately 1,000 English-speaking US adults. Survey results following the Super Bowl are compared to those from prior to the game in order to measure how the game influences the nation's impression of the host city or region.