

## ["Super Bowl" is a Registered Mark--Don't Use in Commercials or Promotions Without Permission](#)

Posted on January 10, 2011 by [David Silverman](#)

As we have advised before in both [2009](#) and [2010](#), "**Super Bowl**" is a **registered trademark** belonging to the NFL, and they will aggressively enforce their trademark rights against any station that attempts to use this term in connection with advertising or promotional matter of any kind, including ticket giveaways, if not specifically authorized by the NFL. You are free to use trademark protected terms like "Super Bowl" in news stories or noncommercial discussions about the event under a concept known as "nominative fair use," but use of trademarked terms in a commercial context crosses the line from acceptable to unacceptable use.

Although the NFL is more aggressive than many other trademark owners in enforcing its rights, these same principles apply to other registered trademarks, including "**March Madness**," "**NASCAR**" and even TV shows such as "**American Idol**." Discussions among DJs or with listeners and viewers are fine, but you cannot use these terms to sell products or do station promotions without authorization from the trademark owners.

Refer to our previous posts linked to above for more guidelines on what stations can and cannot do with regard to the Super Bowl and other registered marks.

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