

Penn State Football's Super Bowl Claims Flagged on Social Media

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In the days leading up to the Super Bowl, Penn State Football tweeted a graphic claiming that “a Penn Stater has appeared in every Super Bowl.” Below that bold claim, in much smaller letters, appeared an important qualifier: “Except for five since 1967.”



Competitors were quick to flag the claim, and many touted their own successes in a similar manner. For example, Ole Miss Football tweeted that “an Ole Miss Rebel has won every Super Bowl,” but added its own fine-print qualifier: “Except for the ones they didn’t.”

The Nittany Lions took the jokes in stride, and later tweeted an updated graphic with a clearer disclosure, noting that “no magnifying glass [was] needed for this one.” No harm, no foul.

Had Penn State’s tweet been an advertisement, this case could have turned out differently. Companies can face legal consequences for making exaggerated claims in ads, and fine print disclosures are unlikely to save them.

Laugh now, and feel free to create your own memes. But when you go back to drafting ad copy, remember the [wise words](#) of Lesley Fair: “What the headline giveth, the footnote cannot taketh away.”