

Guerrilla Marketing: A Theoretical Review



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ABSTRACT

Guerrilla Marketing is an advertising strategy that focuses on low-cost unconventional marketing tactics that yield maximum results. The original term was coined by Jay Conrad Levinson in his 1984 book 'Guerrilla Advertising'. The term *guerrilla marketing* was inspired by guerrilla warfare which is a form of irregular warfare and relates to the small tactic strategies used by armed civilians. Many of these tactics includes ambushes, sabotage, raids and elements of surprise. Much like guerrilla warfare, *guerrillamarketing* uses the same sort of tactics in the marketing industry.

This alternative advertising style relies heavily on unconventional marketing strategy, high energy and imagination. *Guerrilla Marketing* is about taking the consumer by surprise, make an indelible impression and create copious amounts of social buzz.

Keywords: *Guerrilla Marketing, Surprise Effect, Low Cost Effect, Completely Unexpected*

Introduction

Definition:

An unconventional way of performing marketing activities on a very low budget

Guerrilla marketing is quite different from traditional marketing efforts. Guerrilla marketing means going after the conventional goals of profits, sales and growth but doing it by using unconventional means, such as expanding offerings during gloomy economic days to inspire customers to increase the size of each purchase.

Instead of asking that you invest money, guerrilla marketing suggests you invest time, energy, imagination and knowledge instead. It puts profits, not sales, as the main yardstick. It urges that you grow geometrically by enlarging the size of each transaction, having more transactions per year with each customer, and tapping the enormous referral power of current customers. And, it does it through one of the most powerful marketing weapons around—the telephone.

The telephone is a remarkably effective follow-up weapon. Don't use the phone to follow up all your mailings to customers, but research has proved that it will always boost your sales and profits. Sure, telephone follow-up is a tough task. But it works. Anyhow, no one ever said that guerrilla marketing is a piece of cake.

E-mail ranks up there with the telephone, possibly even outranking it. It's inexpensive. It's fast. It lets you prove that you really care. It helps strengthen your relationship.

Lean upon your website as well. Instead of telling your whole story with other marketing, use that other marketing to direct people to your site. Then, use the site to give a lot of information and advance the sale to consummation. A key to online success is creating a brief and enticing e-mail that directs readers to a website that give enough information for a person to make an intelligent purchase decision.

Guerrilla marketing preaches fervent follow-up, cooperation instead of competition, "you" marketing rather than "me" marketing, dialogues

instead of monologues, counting relationships instead of counting sales, and aiming at individuals instead of groups.

The History of Guerrilla Marketing

Advertising can be dated back to 4000 BC where the early Egyptians used papyrus to make sales messages and wall posters. What we consider traditional advertising and marketing slowly developed over the centuries but never really boomed until the early 1900s. It was at this time that the main goal of advertisements were to educate the consumer on the product or service rather than to entertain and engage them.

In 1960, campaigns focus on heavy advertising spending in different mass media channels such as radio and print. It wasn't till the late 1980s and early 1990s that cable television started seeing advertising messages. The most memorable pioneer during this time was MTV where they focused on getting the consumer to tune in for the advertising message rather than it being the by-product of a featured show. Agencies struggled to make an impression on consumers and consumers were tired of being marketed to. It was time for a change.

In 1984, marketer Jay Conrad Levinson introduced the formal term in his book called, "*Guerrilla Marketing*."

Levinson comes from a background as the Senior Vice-President at J. Walter Thompson and Creative Director and Board Member at Leo Burnett Advertising. In Levinson's book, he proposes unique ways of approaching and combating traditional forms of advertising. The goal of *guerrilla marketing* was to use unconventional tactics to advertise on a small budget. During this time, radio, television and print were on the rise, but consumers were growing tired. Levinson suggests that campaigns need to be shocking, unique, outrageous and clever. It needs to create buzz. Small businesses

started changing their ways of thinking and approached marketing in a brand new way. The concept of *guerrilla marketing* continues to develop and grow organically.

Guerrilla Marketing Principles

By contrasting from the various definitions of guerrilla marketing which only identifies the main elements of guerrilla communications like unexpected, drastic or cheap, the author of this research adopts definition of Guerrilla Marketing of Alexander Reidl, former marketing director of Volvo Cars Middle East. According to his thoughts there is a set of six characteristics that every guerrilla campaign has to fulfil. Not every innovate or shocking campaign means that it is guerrilla marketing campaign.

1. Completely unexpected

The result of completely unexpected situation is a surprise- a moment when the situation that arises was not expected and the participant of the event was not prepared to witness or be part of such situation. There are many ways how to catch interest of people by putting usual objects to unusual places or using usual objects in unusual time. Unexpectedness may be used as an advantage. By witnessing a surprising situation people tend to raise their attention. Therefore, the marketers may use such situation to attract the visitor, on Internet in particular, to receive a message which contains the marketing message.

2. Drastic

Any guerrilla marketing campaign should work with a form of drasticity in order to reach maximum relevant target audience. The element drasticity enables the marketer to reach large number of message receivers without necessarily large marketing budget. It is the element that may significantly help the campaign to be cost-effective with high degree of Attention and Interest element. The negative aspect of any form of drastic behaviour is that the marketing message

can be automatically rejected of the target audience, or its part, because it can assess the campaign as impolite or strongly negatively affecting their individual values.

3. Humorous

Humorous effect in the marketing communication helps to diminish the barriers between the sender and receiver, the business organisation and the customer respectively. Moreover, entertainment in the marketing communication can significantly increase the efficiency of the campaign by reaching larger number of receivers. Humorous effect is in promotion and marketing communication difficult to create however by looking at the video coverage of chosen guerrilla campaigns in the end of this section as a part of this work shows that the effect is in guerrilla campaigns is commonly used. The humorous aspect is also one of those that differentiate the campaign from most of others.

4. One shot game

One shot game, methat the guerrilla marketing campaign is performed only in strictly limited period of time, indicates that the receivers of the guerrilla messages understand that the campaign is only temporary the concept should not be used again on the same market. This aspect has in Internet marketing great importance because variety of interactive tools and techniques can make long-term guerrilla campaign for users that will be allowed to see the campaign only temporarily. The campaign can last several months but once the visitors watch it, it never appears on his/her screen again.

5. Cheap

The cost of guerrilla campaign can be often the purpose of attractiveness for the businesses. The objective is to create rumour, buzz effect and immediate impact on target group but still keeping the budget tight. This means: creativity, innovation and saving processes come

necessarily to place in the marketing planning.

The principles of innovation and creativity in marketing explained already in the literature review reveals its importance .

6. Goodwill and customer benefit

Customer benefit can be the most difficult aspect to reach in applying to the marketing activity. When a customer buys a laptop in a store, he pays for his own benefit to work and communicate anywhere. He gets benefit immediately because he purchased the laptop and opened it up in his car and started immediately to use it. However, the customer benefit may be less visible when another customer is travelling to her office by tram and she is exposed to several numbers of billboards, big boards, light boards or flyers during the way. Benefits of Using Guerrilla Marketing for Small Businesses

1. Increase Brand Awareness and Consumer Recall

The reason that guerrilla marketing is so effective is that it bombards consumers with the company's message while they are vulnerable and least expect it. The goal is to be super creative and create an interaction that the customer will not forget. For example, a hair salon might hire college students to dye their hair bright colors and hand out flyers at a local shopping mall. Think about it. Would you forget the name of a hair salon after being handed a flyer by a guy with a purple mohaw.

2. Interaction with Consumers

Guerrilla marketing tactics primarily focus on "hitting the streets" to bring the brand and product to the customer. This approach allows companies to work directly with consumers without hiding behind a television screen or other medium. This interaction makes the company seem more personal and allows company

representative the opportunity to get direct feedback on how customers feel about the products and services being offered.

3.Low Cost

Traditional marketing approaches can be very costly. Each year, companies spend billions of dollars on commercials, print ads, internet campaigns, billboards, and radio broadcasts. For small businesses, money is a precious resource. A huge benefit to guerrilla marketing is that it has a low cost. Typically, you will only need to pay for the workers who run the campaign and basic marketing materials such as flyers. This gives small businesses to opportunity to easily reach thousands of customers for a few hundred dollars.

GUERRILLA MARKETING: THE DISADVANTAGES

. One of the primary disadvantages is that guerilla marketing may often work slowly. Although it is inherently such a large, in-your-face project, the benefits will not be seen over night. Although this is typical with all marketing initiatives, the tactics behind guerrilla marketing may imply differently to some. It is important to realize, that although its execution is unconventional, consumer response is not necessarily as unconventional in terms of rapidity of response. Another key disadvantage surrounds the variables present in a guerrilla advertisement. guerrilla initiatives operate in a world with 1002 s more variables than traditional ads—at least in the sense that traditional ads' variables are familiar to consumers, so they do not as readily and unpredictably detract from the rhetoric. Finally, one other disadvantage refers to controversy—not everyone is going to like the initiative. Some may even seek to take action against it. The key is to ensure that those who don't like it don't hold too much power and standing, and that those who do like it are those who you are targeting.

Conclusion

Guerrilla marketing has come a long way since its humble bigginning in the early 1960s. Initially, guerrilla marketing techniques were used only by small businesses who were short of funds to run a full-fledged marketing campaign. However today guerrilla marketing is used not just by small business , but is also used by large corporations because of its advantages. Whoever may be the user of guerrilla marketing , its ultimate aim is to achieve consumer interest in the product through the various unconventional methods employed

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