

INSIGHTS OF GUERRILLA MARKETING IN BUSINESS SCENARIO

B. UJWALA*

*Assistant Professor,
SITAMS College,
Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh.

ABSTRACT

Thousands of entrepreneurs and small businesses suffer from not understanding their customers. They don't what they are doing right that causes customers to come to them. And, importantly, they don't know why customers choose to shop a competitor instead. Essentially, they lack a clear understanding of the needs of their customers and prospects which, if exploited, would assuredly grow their business. Often ego or downright stubbornness prevents entrepreneurs or small-business executives from using market research. They think they know the needs of their customers better than the customers themselves. It illustrates how big companies use market research to make money and how small companies can do the same at a fraction of the cost. It destroys the myth that only big companies can afford marketing research and makes clear to small and mid-size companies and entrepreneurs, and even larger businesses without an in-house research function, how marketing research can add to their bottom line. It explains about the guerilla marketing weapons and technology used in the growth of the small business. It also suggests various marketing techniques for the expansion of small business.

KEYWORDS: Customers, Entrepreneurs, Small Business, Research, Technology, Weapons.

INTRODUCTION

Guerilla Marketers can get you anywhere – on your way home from work, in the car, bus and train, on the streets, strolling or relaxing at a café terrace, in front of your house, or at major events. It is like love: You will find it at the moment you do not expect it at all! And at the moment you notice the advertisement and start thinking about its message they have what they want – your attention and interest. Guerilla Marketing distinguishes itself from other promotion tools by its surprise effect and it has become a very popular marketing strategy in current times.

Guerrilla marketing is a term reputedly coined by Jay Conrad Levinson in his book, "Guerrilla Marketing," first published in 1983. Guerrilla marketing employs unconventional and inventive strategies and tactics to promote and market products and services for minimal cost and maximum return. For small businesses struggling to survive in these difficult economic times, and with the added burden of tight marketing budgets, guerrilla marketing can be an inexpensive way to get people talking about your company, attracting people to your store, or at least writing down your phone number and website address in case they ever need your goods or services.

The name "Guerilla" originally describes a group that uses a violent approach to achieve the implementation of their beliefs and ideology. Their opponents are often a tremendous force

consisting of more people and even of more resources such as weapons or money. The Guerilla fighter's only advantage is the fact that only they know where and when they will strike.

Guerilla Marketing campaigns helped smaller companies to successfully reach their target group, even though their bigger market competitors had a larger marketing budget, more experience, and a better spread to advance the market by using traditional marketing strategies.

Many small and medium-sized companies started with Guerilla Marketing and established their business lucratively. Through constant growth rates they have the means to also afford traditional marketing tools to gain more and more market share, continuing to attack the market leaders.

NEED OF GUERRILLA MARKETING

1. Because of big business downsizing, decentralization, relaxation of government regulations, affordable technology, and a revolution in consciousness, people around the world are gravitating to small business in record numbers.
2. Small business failures are also establishing record numbers and one of the main reasons for the failures is a failure to understand marketing.
3. Guerrilla marketing has been proven in action to work for small businesses around the world. It works because it's simple to understand, easy to implement and outrageously inexpensive.

Guerrilla marketing is needed because it gives small businesses a delightfully unfair advantage: certainty in an uncertain world, economy in a high-priced world, simplicity in a complicated world, marketing awareness in a clueless world.

LEVINSON'S PRINIPLES

Levinson identifies the following principles as the foundation of guerrilla marketing:

- Guerrilla Marketing is specifically geared for the small business and entrepreneur.
- It should be based on human psychology rather than experience, judgement, and guesswork.
- Instead of money, the primary investments of marketing should be time, energy, and imagination.
- The primary statistic to measure your business is the amount of profits, not sales.
- The marketer should also concentrate on how many new relationships are made each month.
- Create a standard of excellence with an acute focus instead of trying to diversify by offering too many diverse products and services.

- Instead of concentrating on getting new customers, aim for more referrals, more transactions with existing customers, and larger transactions.
- Forget about the competition and concentrate more on cooperating with other businesses.
- Guerrilla marketers should use a combination of marketing methods for a campaign.
- Use current technology as a tool to build your business.
- Messages are aimed at individuals or small groups, the smaller the better.
- Focuses on gaining the consent of the individual to send them more information rather than trying to make the sale.
- Commit to your campaign. Use Effective frequency instead of creating a new message theme for each campaign.

PRINCIPLES OF GUERRILLA MARKETING

1. FINDA SEGMENT SMALL ENOUGH TO DEFEND

Try to pick a segment small enough so that you can become the leader. Rolls Royce is the true guerrilla. They concentrate on a small market segment and are its leader.

2. GUERRILLAS SHOULD BE ALL LINE AND NO STAFF

A guerrilla can take advantage of its small size to make quick decisions. This can be a precious asset when competing with the big national companies.

3. BE PREPARED TO BUG OUT AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE

Don't hesitate to abandon a position or a product if the battle turns against you. A guerrilla doesn't have the resources to waste on a lost cause. He should be quick to give up and move on. in a small company, one person's hunch can be enough to launch a new product. e.g.. Robert Gamm a footwear importer introduced 'KangaRoos' -zippered pocket on side of shoes.

STRATEGIES OF GUERRILLA MARKETING

1. PRICE DISCOUNT STRATEGY

The challenger can sell a comparable product at lower price. it is apparent in price wars in airlines, tariff wars in telecom industry.

2. CHEAPER GOODS STRATEGY

The idea is to offer an average or low quality product at much lower price. This works when the buyer is interested only in price.

3. PRESTIGE GOODS STRATEGY

The challenger can launch a higher quality product and charge a higher price than the leader.

4. PRODUCT PROLIFERATION STRATEGY

Challenger can attack the leader by launching a larger product variety, thus offering more choice to the buyer.

5. PRODUCT INNOVATION

6. IMPROVED SERVICE STRATEGY

7. DISTRIBUTION INNOVATION STRATEGY

Developing new channels of distribution. Like direct selling to customers.

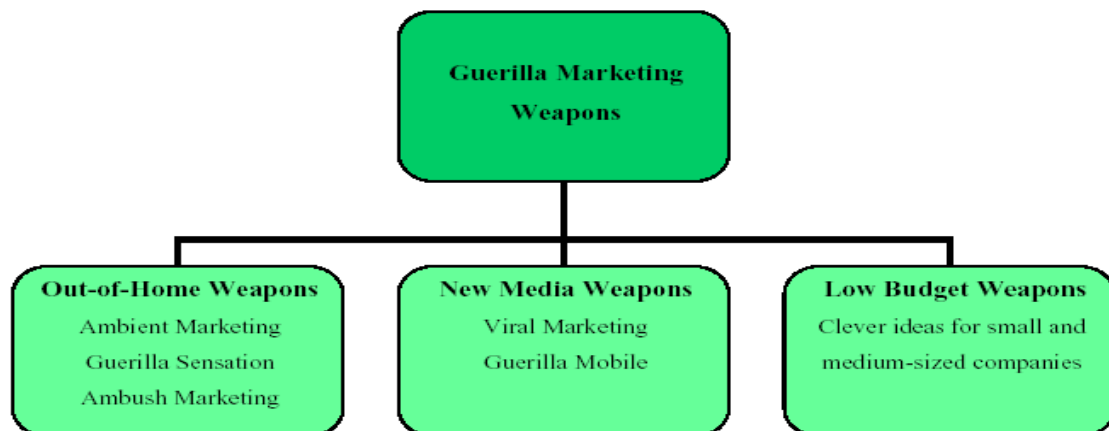
8. MANUFACTURING COST REDUCTION STRATEGY

Employing lower manufacturing cost through more efficient purchasing.

9. INTENSIVE ADVERTISING PROMOTION

The challenger engages in a rigorous advising program.

GUERRILLA MARKETING WEAPONS



OUT-OF-HOME WEAPONS

As the name “out-of-home” suggests, these weapons refer to marketing activities that are actually realised at public locations. At best it does not only catch the interest of people who pass by, but media interest as well. Newspaper reports about the action can create extra publicity for the advertised company and stimulates that people talk about the product. The most successful weapons in the category out-of-home are Guerilla Sensation, Ambient Media, and Ambush Marketing.

1. AMBIENT MARKETING

The term became well-known in the 1990s. Ambient Media refers to non-traditional out-of home advertising. While other out-of-home Marketers advertise on large-scale billboards, ambient advertisements are posted on manhole covers, cranes, pizza cartons, free postcards in bars and so on. They are all a little more unusual displays.

2. GUERILLA SENSATION

Guerilla Sensation is very similar to Ambient Marketing. Therefore it is easier to show the difference. Ambient Marketing positions advertising at unusual places. Hereby the main focus is not necessarily on the idea, but on the advertising space itself. People are confronted with advertisements where and when they do not expect it. In general Guerilla Sensation works with the same principle, but it is only used on a very limited number of events and activities.

3. AMBUSH MARKETING

It stands for a sneaky out-of-home marketing method, which promotes a brand at huge events without paying a sponsorship fee. At many major events one brand of a particular category pays a high price to be the exclusive sponsor, which leaves their competitors be left in the dark. Ambush Marketers then still find a way to make notice of their brand in connection with the event, since it attracts the attention of thousands of visitors and even viewers on TV.

NEW MEDIA WEAPONS

New technologies change our lives and they often make it easier due to mobile phones, internet, unlimited information, and shopping possibilities that enable customers to access the resources of the world with a click on the computer mouse. Of course this also gives businesses the possibility to use the advantages that technology provides. Two very strong instruments that use the modern possibilities are described below: Viral Marketing and Guerilla Mobile.

1. VIRAL MARKETING

On the Internet, viral marketing is any marketing technique that induces Web sites or users to pass on a marketing message to other sites or users, creating a potentially exponential growth in the message's visibility and effect. One example of successful viral marketing is Hotmail, a company, now owned by Microsoft, that promotes its service and its own advertisers' messages in every user's e-mail notes.

2. GUERRILLA MOBILE

Not only the PC offers unlimited possibilities to marketers. Since the number of mobile phones exceeds the number of inhabitants in many countries, the cell phone is a permanent companion of prospects. Therefore it was only a matter of time until marketers took the opportunity to reach customers and prospects at any place at any time. The wireless connection provides the possibility to present marketing messages in different ways via SMS, MMS, Bluetooth, or Infrared.

LOW BUDGET WEAPONS

This Weapon refers to Guerilla Marketing for new, small, and medium-sized companies, who only possess a small marketing budget. Like Levinson already pointed out in the 1980's that does not necessarily mean that those companies have a disadvantage compared to financially strong competitors. But since their capital is low, the top priority is to use it as efficiently as possible.

Guerilla Marketing should put this into practice by focusing on the local culture with its geographical, sportive, social network, its rituals, needs, habits, norms, traditions, and values. Clever ideas appear through unconventional methods which are supposed to catch the attention of the target group.

GUERRILLA MARKETING WITH TECHNOLOGY

Technology is currently in the process of revolutionizing small business, enabling many small business owners to dream new dreams, then attain them in surprisingly brief time spans. Sure, technology helps all businesses in many ways. But it helps small businesses in the biggest ways. Today, guerrilla business owners--that is, those who want conventional goals using unconventional means-- have a secret weapon. That weapon blasts open the doors to increased profits.

The secret weapon is technology -- though the secret is getting out as those who know it are unable to hide the grins on their faces.

To many guerrilla marketers, technology is to be lauded because it has put them online -- giving them access to the speed of email, the power of fresh information, the warmth of closely connected people, and the marketing muscle of the World Wide Web. To others, technology is the hero because it allows them to flourish in a home-based business. Technology have been divided into two types like online and offline technologies.

1. Online technology means emailing, posting notices at forums, engaging in chats, accomplishing research, gathering market data and having a website.
2. Off line technologies in guerrilla marketing includes newsletters, flyers , direct mail letters, post cards, brochures, catalogs, coupons, club Id cards etc.

POPULAR GUERRILLA MARKETING TECHNIQUES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

1. TRIED AND TRADITIONAL T - SHIRT

This is one of the oldest and most successful guerrilla marketing tools. If you buy a half dozen T-shirts, or more if you can afford them, and have them imprinted with your company name you have a good chance of bringing in more business. In smaller, but visible lettering, you can include a phone number, street address and website address. Wear one shirt yourself and pass out the others to people who move about your neighborhood as a way of creating a walking ad for your company.

2. TAG YOUR CAR OR TRUCK

What you did for your T-shirt, you can do for your car, truck, van, SUV or even your bike. Paint or stencil your company logo and other information on your vehicle and you'll have a traveling billboard.

3. FLYERS IN STRATEGIC PLACES

Find an inexpensive printer, run off an affordable number of single-sheet flyers and deposit them in strategic locales. If you own a book store, you can leave flyers there. You can also leave flyers at your local library or a college or university library. For auto repair shops, leave flyers at a towing company. For restaurants, commuter train stations might be a productive site. Be sure to get permission before leaving flyers.

4. FLYER SWAPS

Make a deal with other merchants in your neighborhood or city to provide a spot for their flyers if they do the same for you. You may be able to get exposure for your business in another business location. A dry cleaner might have flyers for a restaurant and vice versa. A clothing store might be a good place for a travel agencies flyer's and vice-versa.

5. PROJECT YOUR IMAGE

Have a slide made that includes your logo, company name, phone number and address. Add brief copy about what products or services you offer. After dark, project the slide on the side of a building. Change locations frequently, but look for sites where the most people can see it.

6. JOIN THE RIGHT GROUPS

Join your local Chamber of Commerce, and other appropriate groups to start a productive network of potential customers, vendors and consultants. You'll find a

diverse pool of people and you'll be able to help each other, not only as mutual customers, but as advisors as well.

7. PUT STICKY NOTES EVERYWHERE

Write out your sales message on Post-It notes and paste them everywhere people will see them. Bathrooms are not off limits - remember, this is guerrilla marketing. Ask a member of the opposite sex to post the notes in targeted bathrooms at movie theaters and restaurants. You can also put Post-It notes in fitting rooms at clothing stores.

ADVANTAGES OF GUERRILLA MARKETING

- **FLEXIBLE** – because of small scale nature can be adapted quickly, relatively easy to respond to change.
- **LOW COST** – one of the founding principles – ideal for firms who do not have massive marketing budgets.
- **TARGETED** – designed to reach the target market – reduces waste and ineffectiveness
- **SIMPLE** – many of the methods simple and easy to use and implement and it is ideal for the small business.

DISADVANTAGES OF GUERRILLA MARKETING

- Not completely failsafe
- Not be able to pinpoint exactly what works and what doesn't
- Requires a greater level of dedication and energy
- Investment of time is required

CONCLUSION

Guerilla Marketing is much more than just a trend today. It is rather an instrument that is utilized by companies of all sizes. Today's Guerilla Marketing, though, differs from the Guerilla Marketing philosophy that Levinson developed in the 1980s. Neither the majority of small nor the majority of large companies take over the original Levinson idea. But still many companies partly use the aspects of the root philosophy. Basic ideas such as the setup of a corporate identity were taken over by almost every company. Many others use new forms of Guerilla Marketing such as Viral Marketing or Guerilla Sensation.

It is very effective, but it requires right research, preparations and find the right information. Guerrilla marketing is not working if you do not focus on the right target and send out a relevant message using the right vehicle on the right frequency. The aspect of Guerrilla marketing is

focusing on uniqueness to the target, which in several cases leads to publicity, which could result in attention in the media, an economical way of getting the message to the target market.

REFERENCES

- Guerilla Marketing International, <http://www.gmarketing.com/>
- Kotler, P., Wong, V., Saunders, J., Armstrong, G., “Principles of Marketing”, Pearson Education Prentice Hall, 4th European Edition; 2005.
- Kotler, P., Jain, D., Maesincee, S., “Marketing Moves: A New Approach to Profits, Growth, and Renewal”, Harvard Business School Press; 1st edition, 2002
- Levinson, J. C., “Guerrilla Marketing: Easy and Inexpensive Strategies for Making Big Profits from Your Small Business”, Houghton Mifflin Company; 4th edition, 2007

WEBSITES

- www.guerrillamarketing101.net
- www.slideshare.net
- www.studygalaxy.com
- www.scribd.com
- www.ehow.com