

# Periodic Research

## Guerilla Marketing: An Unconventional Way

### Abstract

In today's scenario when there is stiff competition the companies are having cut throat competition with domestic players along with international players the ultimate method that helps the companies to achieve their desired objectives with minimum expenditure. So the only solution is guerilla marketing. The whole concept behind guerilla marketing is using time, efforts and imagination rather than money to promote tangible and intangible products.

The term guerilla first appeared during the war of independence in Spain and Portugal at the early of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Guerilla stood attack strategy based on surprise effect by a small group of people that stood against massive military force. According to Jay Conrad Lavinson (1984) Guerilla marketing is a method of unconventional means of pursuing conventional goals. It is a proven method of achieving profits with minimum money. Since guerilla marketers are not having the enough funds so they need to use their limited resources in smarter way. Even financially strong companies can also use these tactics as complimentary tools to present the brand in a multimodal way. The term guerilla marketing, unconventional marketing, extreme marketing and stealth marketing are used interchangeably by the marketers.

**Keyword:** Guerilla marketing, Unconventional marketing, marketing communication

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### Introduction

*"In a crowded marketplace, fitting in is failing. In a busy marketplace, not standing out is the same as being invisible."*

Seth Godin "Purple Cow"

Uncertainty and different changes brought by globalization forces the marketers to react quickly by certain innovative strategies. Marketers take these decisions on the basis of the data. Guerilla marketing involves unusual approaches such as intercept encounters with public to make them stop and think about your products to get maximum results from minimum resources.

The guerilla marketing may be defined more specifically as an aggressive, highly targeted and subversive, street level campaigns intended to cover unexpected and memorable encounters between product and its target customers. (Mohawak Paper Mills, Inc., 2006)

The purpose of guerilla marketing is to create a unique, engaging and thought provoking concept that can be catch the public in the car, or bus or the road streets, near to your favorite coffee shop or at major events through pr stunts, street give away of products or public intercept encounters. Guerilla marketing helps to develop a unique marketing management that is dynamic, sensitive to customers' needs and able to change according to that rapidly. Basically guerilla marketers use these strategies to customers of their competitors directly for more impact.

### Review of Literature

The term "guerrilla marketing" was first used by Jay Conrad Levinson who is known as father of guerilla marketing mentioned in his popular 1984 book, *Guerrilla Marketing* that he implies guerilla marketing is an unconventional way of performing promotional activities with small amount. While designing guerilla campaign the message and the theme should take social and individual values in the account. When the message and theme are chosen correctly it provides positive reactions, but several times when the message is coded in improper manner, the communication will be resulted in negative reactions. (Rossiter and Percy, 1987; Firlar 2005)

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Guerilla marketing is a technique that helps SMEs (small and medium enterprises) to demoralizing their rivals with small and surprising attacks by utilizing creativity and innovation (Tek, 1999).

As per survey conducted by Media Smart UK (2008) guerilla marketing helps the marketers to raise maximum attraction.

**Objectives of the Study**

Identifying and better understanding of the guerilla marketing, various tools and its benefits for small and new coming organization to encash the markets.

**Methodology** The study is based on the previous literature and the study of the practices of the industry.

**Type of Paper** The paper is based on descriptive research.

Guerilla marketing is an alternate tool that are used by marketers in the advertising landscape with the help of traditional marketing communication channels i.e. radio, television, magazine, direct mail and even other more electronic devices. In the year of 1960s US firms brought guerilla concepts in marketing when they require new approaches to beat their competitors. Good relations with public relations department are also able to bring more success in campaign. The advantage of this tactics is that only the players know where and when they will take action.

Importance of guerilla marketing is to reach maximum customer market with minimum costs which further helps to give emphasis to strengths (uniqueness) of the products and its weakness to beat the competitors' products. Guerilla marketing gets a person mind to get attention as they see the advertisement and therefore used not only by business organizations but even charitable organizations who are working on social campaign all over the world using this concept they are hoping to get more donations and making their voice more loudly.

Guerilla Marketing gives consumers something tangible, meaningful and experiential as compare to another advertisement. To make guerilla marketing more understandable we need to understand the differences between traditional marketing and guerilla marketing:

Traditional Marketing	Guerilla Marketing
Use guess work to take decisions to compete with competitors	Use science of psychology and actual laws of human behavior to cooperate with other business to grab benefits
Concentrates gross profit, traffic and responses of customers	Profits are the yardstick to measure the performance
Only suitable for big organizations with limitless amount	A kind of blessings of marketers for small and medium enterprises by using proper time, energy and imagination.

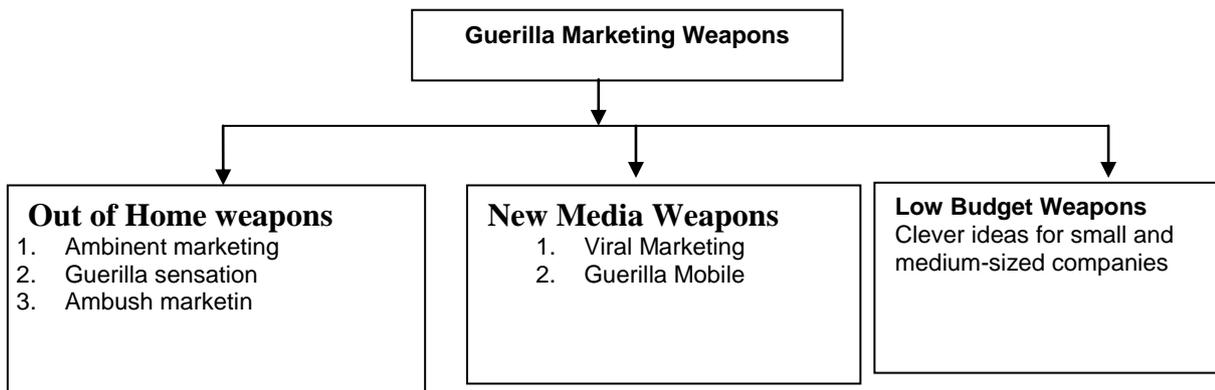
Target to a large group of customers	Focus is only individual or small group of people
Here the decision is regarding what the business can take.	The marketers think about what the business can give in the form of free information regarding the products.

As such guerilla marketing concept is also used combination of marketing mix but they give 70% importance to promotion mix and 30% to remaining three p's. Same as marketers tries to allocate its budget in three categories to target various clients using 60/30/10 rule.

- Current Customers** includes smallest group of people who contribute a large amount of profit to gross profits of the company so the company need to put 60% efforts and promotional budget on segment
- Prospective Markets** are people matches with the company's current customers' profile therefore they may be converted into customers. The marketers need to plan invest 30% marketing efforts on this profile.
- Broader market** refers to that part of population those can't be covered under first and second category of customers. So the marketing company needs to invest 10% marketing efforts to generate important customer's contacts through their personal and professional contacts. Guerilla marketers always tries to develop new customers and maintain relations with existing customers because they know more than 68% customers switch towards the competitors due to ineffective service of their employees. Small and medium enterprises can use the following tools to get the attention of their customers:

- Trade shows
- Sponsorship programs
- Thank you card
- Sponsorship memorable programs
- Public relation programs
- Publish a newsletter
- Speak at conferences
- Fusion marketing
- Website and online presence
- Electronic newsletters
- Business partnerships
- T shirt walks
- Conduct an contest
- Community involvement
- Testimonials
- Offer gift certificates
- Get a journalist to write about you
- Offer 100% money back guarantee

Guerilla marketing is a dynamic way to create brand awareness by using a combination of various tools i.e. known as weapons of guerilla marketing



**Out of Home Weapons:** As the name indicates these weapons are used at public locations not only to catch the public interest that passes by but even tries to grab the interest of media also. Newspaper and other broadcasting tools report also helps to create extra publicity that stimulate people to think and talk about the product. The most successful weapons under this category are ambient marketing, guerilla weapons and ambush marketing.

**Ambient Marketing** refers to certain kind of non traditional advertising such as billboards, manhole covers, pizza cartons, car park receipts, and cranes and so on. Sometime they display their message on large format screen of subways or handles of supermarket trolleys. It also includes such techniques as projecting huge images on the sides of buildings, or slogans on the gas bags of hot air balloons. Ambient media in the field of advertising are often mixed with ambient media developed based on ambient intelligent technology. Ambient Marketing tries to approach the customer individually through the place of contact. The emphasis is to search out the potential customers in entertaining way at their preferred location. The key of successful ambient campaign is to use best media channel available and the appropriate message format.

**Guerilla sensation** is similar to ambient marketing. In generally guerilla sensation works on the same principle but this is used at much selected events and activities. Therefore the numbers of people those are exposed to the ads are relatively small as compared to ambient marketing. But these actions can get further more attention from media side because media is always concerned about some unusual pictures.

**Ambush** means attack out of the blue, it is derived from the old French verb **embuscher**, having the meaning "to place in a wood." so ambush marketing includes certain secret out of home promotional tools that promotes the brand at huge events without paying sponsorship fees. At the big event a particular company pays large amount to become the main sponsor of the event and leaves the competitors in the dark; Ambush marketers' tries to find out ultimate way to get noticed by the target customers in relation to the event since it attracts the large no's of audiences at that time even the viewers of TV also.

In 1996 Cricket world cup, Pepsi ran a series of advertisements titled "nothing official about it" targeting the official sponsor Coca Cola. Nike sponsored a number of teams competing in the Cup despite Adidas being the official sponsor in FIFA world cup 1998.

### New Media Weapons

Rapidly changes in technologies brought mobile phones, palm top, internet, 3G technology and many more make possible to search out shopping information regarding the products all over the world on a just one click of the mouse. No doubt this also gives opportunity to the business to use the advantages of technology. Two tools those are based on modern technology are viral marketing and guerilla mobile.

### Viral Marketing

first became prominent when used to describe a marketing campaign for the e-mail service Hotmail.com. When the company launched, every outgoing message contained an advertisement for Hotmail and a link to its website at the bottom of the e-mail. As people e-mailed their friends and colleagues, they were also advertising the service. Recipients could simply click on the link and sign themselves up, and as they e-mailed friends from their new account, the message spread within existing social networks and was passed along with little effort from the company (6).

Viral marketing refers to those techniques based on social network to produce brand awareness or achieve other marketing objectives. It can be enhanced by network effects of internet. Viral marketing has come under criticism from consumers and market pundits because of concerned over unsolicited emails. The challenge for a Viral Marketer is to build a motivation in a message for people to spread it. If that is successful, the snowball effect starts and the potential for the viral message's exposure and influence is produced. The message rapidly spreads, similar to the way email jokes and software viruses are sent around to the online community. But that time it should be considered that viral marketing is a method to convey the message not virus. Encouraging people to pass the message along to others for free is an art. A personalized message or a motivational prize is often successful tools.

## Guerilla Mobile

Now days marketers are not only restricted to market place or computers but increasing the popularity of mobile phones also open a new way to convey the message to your target customers through SMS, MMS, Bluetooth or Infrared. Therefore it was only a matter of time until marketers took the opportunity to reach customers and prospects at any place at any time.

## Low Budget Weapons

Those weapons which are used by basically small and medium enterprises because of small budget are come under this category. Guerilla marketers use these weapons by considering local culture, with its geographical and social network, its needs, habits, rituals and norms and values.

## Conclusion

The term guerilla marketing has gained popularity in last few years. It has been successful in the years of 50s and 60s. In a simple way guerilla marketing is not considered as trend but it is like an instrument. The goal of guerilla marketing is to create customer interest and awareness about the product and associated organization especially in B2B market it is used more and more.

Acceptability of a guerilla marketing campaign is related to its ends rather than its beginning. Guerilla marketing is not a guarantor of success but an additional instrument that helps to make more attention from public. Guerilla marketing is a cost effective alternate tool of marketing that does not focus on the low price and high qualities features but provide emphasis on the brand specially. The best recipe for successful guerilla marketing is use of traditional marketing strategies combined with unconventional instruments.

There are very few researchers who worked on this topic therefore this paper is only for enriching the knowledge of people. There is a scope for further work on this topic in relation with various sectors.

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