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VOL. 126 | NO. 83 | Thursday, April 28, 2011

Guerrilla Sales & Marketing Guerrilla Sales a Viable Tactic

Lori Turner-Wilson Updated 3:28PM

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Lori Turner-Wilson

Guerrilla warfare is by definition unconventional. It's where a small group of combatants use less-structured, mobile tactics, such as ambushes and raids, to combat a larger, formal and less mobile army.

Similarly, in the marketing world, guerrilla marketing applies unconventional marketing techniques to generate significant results with limited expense. Guerrilla marketing can be a good fit for smaller companies that are agile and flexible. Plus, guerrilla tactics often rely more on sweat equity than financial investment.

One of the most common forms of guerrilla marketing is the street team. These are groups of people, volunteer or paid, working together to promote a product, brand or event via face-to-face interaction with consumers in a public place.

To win at street team marketing, you have to first grab the attention of your consumer, likely at an event or location where there is significant "noise" competing for the consumer's focus. Then, you have to get something into their hands that they won't immediately discard. And, finally, you want to leave a lasting, favorable impression. That's a lot to ask of a quick on-the-street consumer interaction. That's why the better street teams utilize innovative strategies for engaging the public, versus simply handing out samples and fliers.

To promote its new show "The Event," NBC hired five guys to dress like Secret Service agents and stand outside of Comic-con, the annual comic fan convention. In a sea of over-the-top costumes, five guys dressed in black suits with dark shades standing side-by-side and motionless attracted attention. The "agents" held folders clearly marked "Confidential Information." Instead of approaching consumers, they waited for consumers to come to them.

When people inquired about the folders' contents agents responded that it was "highly sensitive" and "dangerous." Some received an official-looking document detailing the escape of a high-profile inmate. Some of the document's words were blacked out. When the remaining keywords were entered into Google, it took consumers to a website. The campaign grabbed consumers' attention, put something in their hands and left a favorable impression.

Beyond the creative way you engage consumers, the keys to making street teams work are: recruitment, training, organization, goal setting, measurement and compensation.

Recruit the right members of your team – energetic, extroverted brand loyalists.

Train them to successfully execute your street team campaign by

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RECORD TOTALS	DAY	WEEK	YEAR
PROPERTY SALES	83	199	4,428
MORTGAGES	91	262	7,145
FORECLOSURE NOTICES	0	127	3,984
BUILDING PERMITS	0	595	11,784
BANKRUPTCIES	52	302	5,762
BUSINESS LICENSES	15	87	2,075
UTILITY CONNECTIONS	67	222	7,721
MARRIAGE LICENSES	0	85	1,632

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THROUGH THE LENS





showing them how first-hand. Assign new members to shadow veteran members until it's time to remove the training wheels.

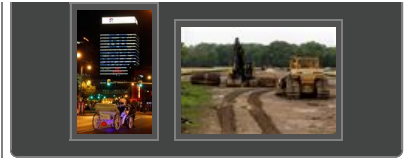
Organize your teams with team captains who are responsible for coaching in the field and monitoring performance.

Set goals for each team and track their performance. This could be as simple as coding coupons so you know which members of your street team are driving the most traffic.

Compensate team members based on performance – either with a financial payout or something less traditional such as merchandise, free product, discounts or VIP status at your store.

If you're looking for an inexpensive way to create buzz about your brand and generate traffic, consider taking your message to the streets.

Lori Turner-Wilson is managing partner of RedRover Sales & Marketing, www.redrovercompany.com. You can follow RedRover on Facebook and Twitter.



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