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DIGITAL GUERRILLA MARKETING: AN INNOVATIVE METHOD OF UTILIZING ONLINE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS TO CONNECT WITH THE TARGET AUDIENCE***

Summary: *Guerrilla marketing provides a novel and economical approach to audience engagement through surprise and inventiveness.* This marketing strategy *uses cognitive and emotional cues to provide unforgettable experiences that appeal to customers. In order to turn audiences from passive recipients of a brand's message into active participants in its story, guerrilla marketing uses the power of surprise, delight, and intrigue. Both online and offline, guerrilla marketing is distinguished by its creative and captivating strategies, which are modelled after the effective and resourceful methods of traditional guerrilla marketing. With the rise of social media and the internet, guerrilla marketing has evolved. To reach a larger audience, it now employs a range of digital tactics, but the core principles remain the same: creativity, resourcefulness, and a limited budget.* Nevertheless, the arsenal of tools has expanded. *Companies can leverage data, content, real-time engagement, social media analytics, agility, and user-generated material to create innovative and successful guerrilla marketing strategies that engage their target audience in the always-evolving digital landscape. Digital guerrilla marketing is not the same as regular online platform usage. Rather than the physical, frequently public pranks of classic guerrilla marketing, it emphasizes viral content, social media interaction, and digital campaigns. Guerrilla campaigns aim to be creative in order to stand out in the crowded digital space by drawing in viewers with original and inventive content.*

Keywords: *digital guerrilla marketing*, marketing strategy, *digital landscape, social media*

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1. INTRODUCTION

One sort of communication that tries to educate prospective customers about certain goods or services is known as advertising. Advertisers want their message to be clearly seen, believable, and eventually embraced. However, this is more difficult to achieve with traditional advertising methods these days, so marketers are using new forms of communication.[1] Guerrilla marketing is a strategy that maximizes exposure at the lowest possible expense to the business.[2] The military coined the term "guerrilla." Guerrilla is a diminutive of the Spanish word "guerra," which means war. Guerrilla warfare is thus comparable to partisan warfare or small war, both of which aim to undermine the adversary in certain areas.[3]

Guerrilla marketing is unexpected, ideally stunning, rebellious, and infectious.[4] Whether at athletic events, concerts, public parks, festivals, beaches, or shopping malls, guerrilla marketing seeks to reach as many people as possible.[5] Social media and the internet increase the visibility of guerrilla marketing campaigns. Even though effective advertisements can go viral and reach hundreds of millions of viewers through these new mediums, companies still face the risk that their message will be misinterpreted by consumers. A poorly planned campaign or one that targets the incorrect audience might harm a brand's reputation.[6] Word of mouth (WOM) has a significant influence on customer behaviour; hence it is especially important to extend it to the digital sphere (eWOM).[7] Word-of-mouth advertising is more effective than any clever algorithm or celebrity endorsement. By igniting natural dialogues, guerrilla marketing transforms consumers into brand advocates. Businesses may leverage social proof and greatly increase the reach of their message by developing experiences that people want to share. According to Nielsen research, more than 90% of customers place greater trust in word-of-mouth

[1]   Baltezarević, I. & Baltezarević, R. (2019): Prikriveno oglašavanje u novim medijima, *Baština,* sv. 48, pp. 171-179. UDK 659.1 doi: 10.5937/bastina1948171B

[2]   Prévot, A. (2007): The Effects Of Guerrilla Marketing On Brand Equity, *The Consortium Journal*, 13(2), 33- 40.

[3]   Schulte, T. (2007): Guerilla Marketing für Unternehmertypen, 3rd Edition, Verlag Wissenschaft & Praxis, Sternenfels.

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[5]   Davis, S. & Davis, F. (2021): The Effect of Guerrilla Marketing On Company Share Prices: An Event Study Analysis. *Journal of Advertising Research,* 61(3), 346-361.

[6]   Shang, R. A., Chen, Y. C. & Liao, H. J. (2006): The value of participation in virtual consumer communities on brand loyalty. *Internet research,* Vol. 16 No. 4, pp. 398-418. https://doi.org/10.1108/10662240610690025

[7]   Baltezarević, R. & Baltezarević, V. (2022): The influence of digital political communication supported by neuromarketing methods on consumer perception towards a tourist destination. *Megatrend revija,* Vol. 19, No 2, 2022: 13-34 DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2202013B

recommendations than in any other type of promotion. A company's key to gaining access to this priceless source of credibility and trust is guerrilla marketing.[8]

The average return on investment (ROI) for guerrilla marketing efforts is nearly 5 times their initial investment. Among consumers who have encountered guerrilla marketing strategies, more than 60% said they will spread the word. By 2030, 90% of all campaigns will be data-driven guerrilla marketing.[9] Although guerrilla marketing frequently takes place offline, its effects can be amplified and quantified online. Tracking the online buzz created by offline efforts is made easier with tools like Google Analytics 4. To measure the effectiveness of their guerrilla tactics, businesses could track increases in website traffic, social media mentions, and hashtag usage.[10] Digital guerrilla marketing uses a variety of tactics in both the digital and physical worlds to produce one-of-a-kind and unforgettable experiences. By making the most of modern resources, it gives traditional guerrilla marketing a new, digital twist. By combining innovative strategies with digital marketing initiatives, social media campaigns, and online presence, this method improves overall marketing efforts and produces a coherent and powerful plan. Digital guerrilla marketing uses screens, online influencers, and interactive digital displays to get attention rather than flash mobs and outdoor set pieces. With the spillover of guerrilla marketing into the digital environment, consumers can expect campaigns to appear in unexpected places, such as social media feeds, online videos, online games, and even real-world situations.[11]

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A collection of non-traditional approaches to achieving traditional objectives is known as guerrilla marketing. Different perceptions and viewpoints regarding the application and purposes of guerrilla marketing arise from the transfer of the guerrilla concept to marketing terminology. It has been shown to be an effective way to make money with little investment.[12] At first, guerrilla marketing was mostly used by small enterprises to compete with bigger, more financially supported corporations. Guerrilla campaigns have also been a good way for non-profits to devote their time,

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[8]   Taylor, A. (2024): Digital Guerrilla Marketing: Unconventional Tactics for Maximum Impact. Retrieved from: https://www.crowntv-us.com/blog/digital-guerrilla-marketing/

[9]   Steven, K. (2024): 29 Guerrilla Marketing Statistics Every Marketer Should Know. Retrieved from: https://persuasion-nation.com/guerrilla-marketing-statistics/

[10] Milla, K. (2024): Guerrilla Marketing Tactics to Boost Your Small Business. Retrieved from: https://emplibot.com/guerrilla-marketing-tactics-to-boost-your-small-business/

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[12] Levinson, J.C., Levinson, J. & Levinson, A. (2007): Guerrilla Marketing: Easy and Inexpensive Strategies for Making Big Profits from Your Small Business. Houghton Mifflin.

effort, and inventiveness.[13] The research indicates that it can be utilized to distinguish between three primary strategies. It can be used as a small- and mid-sized business strategy, as well as niche marketing and an attack strategy.[14]

The focus of small and mid-sized businesses' communications policies is on addressing the target audience directly with innovative, out-of-the-ordinary, and eccentric ideas. By emphasizing unique qualities and uniqueness, they hope to give the business a unique meaning in the eyes of customers. Long-term, steady dedication is the main requirement for this strategy to succeed.[15] It can be said that guerrilla marketing is the use of unconventional and non-traditional marketing strategies to maximize impact while utilizing minimal resources. Guerrilla marketing has grown into an important strategy that goes beyond the marketing mix and is a fundamental marketing policy approach to market development that consciously searches beyond the beaten paths for novel, unusual, previously overlooked, and possibly even frowned-upon opportunities for instrumental use.[16] The primary goal of this strategy is to improve communication through popular, empirical, acrobatic, drawing, and ambient marketing. This will create favourable consumer sentiments that will influence sales.[17] Guerrilla marketing initiatives are more remembered than regular advertising, according to 86% of customers. Furthermore, 95% of consumers concur that guerrilla marketing campaigns are more visually appealing than traditional advertising. These strategies can result in a 30% boost in sales and a 1000% rise in social media engagement. Compared to traditional advertising, guerrilla marketing generates five times as much word-of-mouth marketing and has nearly a 90% success rate in starting conversations. By 2029, augmented reality (AR) in guerrilla marketing is predicted to grow by 250%.[18]

While the Nespresso advertisement at a bus stop uses guerrilla marketing communication, an ad on billboards is an example of traditional marketing. The Nespresso advertisements were utilized concurrently as an A/B test to assess the effects of each strategy. As a result, the impact of the guerrilla advertisement was

[13]   Sasanka, M., Madhulatha, D. & Rani, L. (2016): Guerilla Marketing – A Marketing Tactic with a Limited Budget, but Exponential Creativity. IRACST – International Journal of Commerce, Business and Management (IJCBM), Vol. 5, No.1, 19 – 24.

[14]   Schulte, T. (2007): Guerilla Marketing für Unternehmertypen, 3rd ed., Sternenfels: Verlag Wissenschaft & Praxis, Sternenfels.

[15]   Jäckel, M. (2007): Guerilla-Marketing – Grundlagen, Instrumente und Beispiele, Erfurter Hefte zum angewandten Marketing, No. 15, pp. 3-12.

[16]   Zerr, K. (2005): Guerilla-Marketing in der Kommunikation: Kennzeichen, Mechanismen und Gefahren. Praxisorientierte Markenführung: neue Strategien, innovative Instrumente und aktuelle Fallstudien. 463-472. Wiesbaden: Gabler, ISBN 978-3-409-12516-1.

[17]   Ay, C. & Unal, A. (2002): New marketing approach for SMEs: Guerilla marketing. Journal of Management and Economics, 9, 75-85.

[18]   Steven, K. (2024): 29 Guerrilla Marketing Statistics Every Marketer Should Know. Retrieved from: https://persuasion-nation.com/guerrilla-marketing-statistics/

greater than that of the billboard advertisement.[19] Marketing for horror movies has always been essential to getting them seen by those other than the average horror moviegoer. "Hereditary" was one of the biggest horror movies of the last few years. An ingenious and eerie trick performed on moviegoers at a midnight screening created online attention for the movie. Fans discovered eerie dolls outside their hotel doors the day after the movie. This clever guerrilla marketing strategy helped the film earn $13 million on its debut weekend at the box office.[20] Dunkin' Donuts used an airborne banner as part of a daring guerrilla marketing campaign that ascended to the skies. The brand deliberately dispersed this eye-catching message throughout crowded cities and occasions. The message's great visibility and humorous tone were warmly received by the audience. Using the heat as a light-hearted allusion to Dunkin Donuts' iced coffee and doughnuts, the advertisement deftly took use of its summertime scheduling. The striking effect of the banner against the sky produced an unforgettable and viral moment. This significantly increased word-of-mouth and social media exposure.[21]

With their rapid growth, social networks and the Internet in general are turning into a vital marketing tool that will soon play a significant role in a company's operations. The manner in which marketing communication interacts with customers is evolving daily. Market demands can be more accurately met, and consumers' hidden needs and aspirations can be better understood and addressed, by keeping an eye on trends and creating more creative marketing communication strategies on social networks.[22] Guerrilla marketing's reach has expanded along with the digital landscape. The most effective advertisements nowadays combine the real and the virtual, using digital channels to increase the impact and reach of these imaginative initiatives. This strategy in the digital age is all about establishing a smooth transition between the real and the virtual, whether that is done through interactive online experiences, viral videos, or social media amplification.[23] On the internet, it involves using social networking sites and, occasionally, Google.[24]

[19] Spahic, D. & Parilti, N. (2019): The impact of guerilla marketing practices on consumer attitudes and comparison with traditional marketing communication: a practice. Journal of Banking and Financial Research, 6(1), 1-24.

[20] Bizzabo (2021): 35 Bold Examples of Guerrilla Marketing. Retrieved from: https://www.bizzabo.com/blog/guerrilla-marketing-examples

[21] Petraškienė, K. (2024): Guerilla marketing: tactics, types & 10 examples. Retrieved from: https://www.omnisend.com/blog/guerilla-marketing/

[22] Baltezarevic, I. & Baltezarević, R. (2020): Uticaj komunikacije u virtuelnom okruženju na pravnu informatiku, *Megatrend Revija*. *Vol. 17, № 4,* 2020: 27-40. DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2004027B

[23] Bridgewater, E. (2024): The Role of Guerilla Marketing in the Digital Age. Retrieved from: https://bluetext.com/blog/the-role-of-guerilla-marketing-in-the-digital-age/

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Digital guerrilla marketing strategies that have been successful include the following examples: In a hilarious, low-budget film produced in 2012, Dollar Shave Club CEO Michael Dubin explained the company's business plan informally. Brand recognition was greatly increased by the film, which struck a chord with a wide audience by using humor and a straightforward approach to break through the clutter in a crowded market. Millions of people saw the video once it became viral. It successfully conveyed the personality and value proposition of the brand, which resulted in a sharp rise in subscribers. Another example has to do with the advertising that Spotify ran. From 2016 onwards, Spotify used information about its customers' listening preferences and playlists to produce humorous, regional billboard advertisements. Using user data to produce relatable and personalized content, Spotify's campaign was notable for its astute use of insights and humour, which helped to humanize a digital service and establish a stronger connection with its consumers. Images of the billboards were shared on social media, and the campaign attracted a lot of attention both offline and online.[25] Furthermore, brands may produce brief, captivating videos on TokTok that have the potential to go viral very quickly. It is the perfect platform for guerrilla marketing strategies because its algorithm rewards content that gets immediate interaction. Participating in hot challenges, leveraging trending hashtags, and producing shareable content can all greatly increase the reach of the company. TokTok was used by Brooklinen to present their products in an entertaining and approachable way. Influencers in their "Made for More" campaign showed off how to use their bedding for purposes other than sleeping. This strategy engaged viewers with relatable information and demonstrated the product's adaptability.[26]

Brands may easily reach wider audiences by amplifying their guerrilla marketing initiatives through social media channels. Including interactive content, competitions, and user-generated content increases audience participation and encourages community involvement. Maintaining momentum and keeping the brand at the forefront of consumers' minds may be achieved by sharing behind-the-scenes content, encouraging audience interaction, and providing regular updates on ongoing campaigns. Working together with influencers can greatly increase the legitimacy and scope of the guerrilla marketing campaigns. A company can generate genuine recommendations that increase engagement by identifying the ideal influencer who connects with the right target market.[27] For guerrilla marketers

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[25]   Bretzfield, M. (2024): Digital Guerrilla Marketing Strategies: Harnessing Creative Tactics for Impactful Online Campaigns. Retrieved from: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/digital-guerrilla-marketing-strategies-harnessing-maurice-bretzfield-ifsgf/

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[27]   Hoang, N. (2024): Effective Guerrilla Marketing Tactics for 2025: Boost Your Brand Affordably. Retrieved from: https://www.asknam.com/effective-guerrilla-marketing-tactics-for-2025/

seeking to produce engaging and interactive experiences that make an impression on their audience, augmented reality (AR) has developed into a potent weapon. By superimposing virtual components on top of real-world surroundings, AR closes the gap between the digital and physical worlds. Consider it like a real-life video game in which the players are the customers. They can play interactive games, access secret content, and even virtually try on various items by scanning a QR code or aiming their smartphone's camera at a particular spot. It's a method of interacting with consumers more deeply, generating interest and enthusiasm that conventional marketing just cannot equal.[28]

Still, the boundaries between inventiveness and legality can occasionally be blurred by guerrilla marketing, particularly when it comes to non-traditional strategies. To prevent possible reaction, it is crucial to make sure campaigns adhere to ethical and legal guidelines.[29] Furthermore, guerrilla marketing can be problematic since the target demographic may not always respond well to unusual strategies. Being innovative and offending potential clients are two very different things.[30]

3. CONCLUSION

In a competitive market, guerrilla marketing strategies are a potent method for small companies to stand out. Through ingenuity, regional collaborations, and unorthodox methods, small enterprises may make a big difference without expensive overhead. This field has changed dramatically in the digital age, emerging as a dynamic and lively force that may assist companies in making their mark in the congested internet market. Effective guerrilla campaigns are made to produce a lot of word-of-mouth (WOM) and social media sharing. By using unconventional strategies like social media stunts, interactive websites, online challenges, and videos, guerrilla digital marketing deviates from the usual strategies.

Benefits include improved customer involvement, heightened brand awareness, and possible viral reach for a fraction of the price of conventional marketing. The core of digital guerrilla marketing is sharing, and content creation promotes user connection. This could be accomplished through interactive online events, captivating movies, or the deft use of memes. On social media, in just a few hours, a campaign can go viral and reach a worldwide audience. Influencers have

[28] Taylor, A. (2024): Digital Guerrilla Marketing: Unconventional Tactics for Maximum Impact. Retrieved from: https://www.crowntv-us.com/blog/digital-guerrilla-marketing/
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[30] Anh Vu, V. (2023): The Art of Guerrilla Marketing in the Digital Age. Retrieved from: https://blog.applabx.com/the-art-of-guerrilla-marketing-in-the-digital-age/

the power to function as catalysts, bringing attention to a company. Influencer partnerships that are carefully thought out can produce genuine and effective marketing moments.

Guerrilla digital marketing demonstrates that thinking creatively can produce amazing outcomes, making companies stand out and making a lasting impression on the digital world in a time when consumers value attention. Guerrilla marketing has dangers and challenges, despite the fact that it fosters infinite creativity. Misunderstandings, legal problems, or insensitivity are examples of pitfalls that can seriously harm a brand's reputation. Therefore, it's critical to work inside a well-defined ethical framework, making sure that advertisements respect social conventions and reflect customer values.

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DIGITALNI GERILSKI MARKETING: INOVATIVNA METODA KORIŠĆENJA ONLINE KOMUNIKACIJSKIH KANALA ZA POVEZIVANJE SA CILJNOM PUBLIKOM

Sažetak: *Gerilski marketing pruža nov i ekonomičan pristup angažovanju publike kroz iznenađenje i inventivnost. Ova marketinška strategija koristi kognitivne i emocionalne naznake da pruži nezaboravna iskustva koja se dopadaju kupcima. Da bi publiku od pasivnog primaoca poruke brenda pretvorio u aktivne učesnike u njegovoj priči, gerilski marketing koristi moć iznenađenja, oduševljenja i intrige. I onlajn i oflajn, gerilski marketing se odlikuje svojim kreativnim i zadivljujućim strategijama, koje su napravljene po uzoru na efektivne i snalažljive metode tradicionalnog gerilskog marketinga. Sa razvojem društvenih medija i interneta, gerilski marketing je evoluirao. Da bi dosegao širu publiku, sada koristi niz digitalnih taktika, ali osnovni principi ostaju isti: kreativnost, snalažljivost i ograničen budžet. Ipak, arsenal alata se proširio. Kompanije mogu da iskoriste podatke, sadržaj, angažovanje u realnom vremenu, analitiku društvenih medija, agilnost i materijal koji generišu korisnici kako bi kreirali inovativne i uspešne gerilske marketinške strategije koje angažuju njihovu ciljnu publiku u digitalnom okruženju koje se stalno razvija. Digitalni gerilski marketing nije isto što i redovno korišćenje onlajn platforme. Umesto fizičkih, često javnih šala klasičnog gerilskog marketinga, on naglašava viralni sadržaj, interakciju sa društvenim medijima i digitalne kampanje. Gerilske kampanje imaju za cilj da budu kreativne kako bi se istakle u prepunom digitalnom prostoru privlačeći gledaoce originalnim i inventivnim sadržajem.*

Ključne reči: *digitalni gerilski marketing, marketinška strategija, digitalni pejzaž, društveni mediji*