



## **BETTER business**

### **Start some guerrilla marketing**

Struggling to market your business? Tried lots of different approaches but don't seem to be getting anywhere? Then it's time for some guerrilla marketing! --- Colin Campbell shows you how!

#### **Guerrilla Marketing – Making Big Advances by Taking Smaller Steps**

When you run a small business finding an effective sales and marketing strategy can be a daunting prospect.

Most small businesses don't have large marketing budgets or the teams of marketers that are available to corporate companies. Every penny a small business spends on marketing has to count. With a limited budget you don't have the luxury of trying out a variety of different promotional activities just to see what might work.

I launched my business at the end of 2005 and six months later I found myself in a position of too many marketing activities to carry out and too little business coming in.

I was going from developing my websites to writing marketing collateral to developing newsletters to making contacts and attending networking meetings. All this was taking time and money, although all offered opportunity, there appeared to be an ever increasing amount of marketing activity to undertake.

## **Step Back!**

Having previously successfully built business in a corporate environment I began to recognise that although my marketing activities were proven to work for large companies here something was wrong.

Taking time out to think about what I was doing and how I was trying to develop my business proved to be the best thing I did.

I immediately discovered some problems;

My marketing consisted of a series of activities. They were not linked up I was meeting people, picking up business cards and not following up sufficiently quickly.

When I met people I didn't have a clear enough perspective of how I could help them or how they could help me. I didn't have a well developed proposition.

People I was meeting were finding what I said interesting. That was it. There was no call to action.

I had a good idea of what might work. After all they say the fastest way to become a millionaire is to sit opposite one. All I needed was to find someone who was successful and to model or copy them.

However of the people I knew, everyone had different business models to me, there was no one I could exactly replicate.

I turned to the internet. On the one hand it was causing me problems as I struggled to get my arms around it to develop my marketing. On the other hand, I figured there would be a large number of people like me out there who have similar business challenges - perhaps they can provide me with some new ideas.

I was a member of a variety of on-line networking communities. I went on some of their forums. It was here that I came across the concept of guerrilla marketing.

Just like guerrilla fighters taking on an army by focussing on small, key areas of attack, so guerrilla marketing focuses on finding what has the most effect, then repeating it over and over again. The more I looked into it the more I began to recognise that this might be a way forward for me.

### **Don't do too much!**

The first key with guerrilla marketing is to seize responsibility and analyse the best marketing activities to undertake.

One of my problems was that I was trying to do too much at the same time.

I was trying to assemble a lot of great and lovely pieces of marketing collateral that would stand out. I'd seen other people do it and it worked for them.

I was also trying to build really compelling websites as I knew this worked for other people.

On top of this I was attending a lot of networking meetings as I knew other people had very successful businesses through having a wide and deep network.

I'd failed to realise that all these other people had achieved initial success through one of the strategies, not all of them, all at once!

### **Narrow your focus!**

The second key is to focus on a small number of marketing activities and carry them out to your absolute best ability. Every time you do something do it better than the last.

CJ Hayden, author of *Get Clients Now!*, says a number of businesses struggle with their marketing because of the vast range of activities that can be undertaken. She says that businesses often know what to do - they just don't do enough of it, or get distracted.

I decided to focus on a small number of marketing activities and do them much better. I concentrated my efforts on networking and following up. By doing this I was able to focus on building relationships with people who I already knew and to go to events to meet new people.

I stopped promoting my website. I suspended my newsletter. I did not send any marketing collateral out. Instead I went out and met people. When they showed an interest in what I did, I handed them some of my marketing material.

My focus was on meeting new people, making a good first impression and speaking with them at a later date.

By putting people first my business increased rapidly. Now I began to meet people and follow up with them, rather than meet people and then rush away to begin some other marketing activity.

## **Repeat it again and again!**

The third key is to execute and repeat whatever works over and over again.

In his Guerrilla Marketing books, Jay Conrad Levinson says **“Mediocre marketing with commitment works better than brilliant marketing without commitment.”**

When I read this I felt annoyed - It didn't seem fair. Then I realised this was the third key element. I could have the best marketing collateral, website and network of contacts yet still not succeed. However, if I could make one marketing activity work I could repeat it over and over again and my business would grow.

I started a programme and five weeks later my business doubled. Admittedly my business was relatively new but this growth was far greater than I could have expected if I'd continued with my previous approach.

Part of my business involves running workshops. I decided to take out a licence so that I could run the programme for other people.

To make sure it really works, I thought I better run the programme on my business for a second time. Again, my business doubled.

### Factors for success

The two consistent strategies I chose were networking and following up. I go to three regular networking events now. Two of them are weekly, and one happens every month. I meet people there, and I tell them what I do. If I can't talk to them about my services on the spot, I call them on the phone later. My goal is to have personal conversations with people. I don't rely on marketing material to sell my business. I have some flyers, but I put them in people's hands, not in the mail

Here are some other factors that are critical to success.

- Establish how much business you have today
- Establish how much business you would like long term
- Establish how much business you could add in 28 days, if you put your mind to it
- Pick a reward that you will give yourself on accomplishment of the 28 day plan

TIP: Do something to recognise your achievement – give yourself a treat, or if you've been putting in a lot of hard graft, take a Friday afternoon off.

- Work out where you are stuck or need most effort
  - Filling the Pipeline
  - Following Up
  - Getting Presentations
  - Closing Sales

TIP: Most people think they need to fill the pipeline. Most people need to focus on Following Up!

- Pick three success ingredients that if they were in place would make achievement of the goal a lot easier. For example, if new business comes from referrals, what do you have in place in order to get referrals? Do you ask existing clients and/or do you have a networking strategy?
- Pick 10 activities that you can carry out on a daily basis that make other people think about you and your business
- Work every day on putting the success ingredients in place
- Every day carry out the daily activities
- Monitor your progress every day
- Congratulate yourself for everything you do
- Stick to your plan and it will work

### **It Works!**

Guerrilla marketing doesn't just work for me. Andy McCabe of Ignite took his business from zero to a pipeline worth over £250k in just 3 months.

"Although most of it is common sense, we don't always practise what we like to think we preach", says Andy. "I have taken the daily task sheet and worked it into my Outlook Diary and am flagging follow ups and the likes, this ensures a steady work flow and keeps my finger on the pulse, so as to not let any potential business slip through the system.

A little piece of advice is to book your time for phone calls or emails as an appointment in your diary and don't break it."

So what are you waiting for? Grab your weapons and start your own bit of guerrilla marketing.

Colin's Sales & Marketing Consultancy specialises on the use of Guerrilla Marketing techniques for both small and large organisations. He regularly holds open Get Clients Now!<sup>tm</sup> workshops.

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