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Guerrilla Insights Into Direct Response

By Jay Conrad Levinson

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Direct response marketing is a lot different from indirect response marketing, although guerrillas like it best when the two are teamed up. The first is geared to obtain orders right here and right now. The second is geared to obtain orders eventually. Although a fair amount of standard, indirect marketing often is necessary to set the stage, to make prospects ready to buy, and to separate your company from strangers, it's when you initiate direct marketing that you first taste blood.

As you well know, we are living in the Age of Information, most of it very easy to obtain. But information is hardly enough for

a guerrilla. And information is not insight. It's the combination of information and thought that leads to insight and it's insight that's going to make you a stand-out in the direct response arena.

The first insight for you to absorb is that direct response

marketing either works immediately or not at all. Unlike standard marketing which changes attitudes slowly and ultimately leads to a sale if you go about things right, guerrilla direct response marketing changes minds and attitudes instantly and leads to a sale instantly if you go about things right.

When it works, you know it. You don't have to sit around and wonder. You don't have to wait months and months for your message to penetrate the mind of your prospect. Your time-dated direct marketing offer either results in a sale right now -- or

it doesn't.

To succeed with direct marketing in any medium, remember always:

1. Your offer is omnipotent. The best presentation in the world has a major uphill battle if you make a weak or ordinary offer.
2. The market to whom you direct your message can make or break your campaign. Saying the right thing to the wrong people results in no sale.
3. What you say and how you say it is easily as important as to whom you say it. Talk in terms of your prospects and how your offer benefits them.
4. Carefully planning every cent of your campaign for maximum profits requires as much creativity as your message. Guerrillas excel at this.
5. The more that people have been exposed to your other marketing, the more readily they'll accept what you offer with your direct marketing.

Some principles of indirect marketing apply to direct marketing. You must still talk of the prospect, not yourself, and you must make a clear and cogent offer. But from that point on, direct marketing is a whole new ballgame. And its one that you can win with the insights of the guerrilla.

Stupid mistakes in horrid abundance have been made by otherwise bright companies when testing the direct response waters. Fortunately, guerrillas can learn from these blunders, making those waters a bit safer. Listing them would take an endless series of books, but it's worth your time if I make a start by providing insight into ten of the most notable:

- * Failure to attract attention at the outset dooms many brilliant campaigns before they have a chance to shine. Envelopes, opening lines, mail subject lines and first impressions are the gates to your offer. Open them wide.
- * Not facing the reality of a direct marketing explosion relegates your attempt to the ordinary, which means the ignored. Guerrillas say things to rise above the din, to be noticed and

desired in a sea of marketers.

* Focusing your message on yourself instead of your prospect will usually send your effort to oblivion. Prospects care far more about themselves than they care about you. So talk to them about themselves.

* Not knowing precisely who your market is will send you into the wrong direction. Research into pinpointing that market will be some of the most valuable time you devote to your direct marketing campaign.

* Mailing or telephoning to other than honest prospects wastes your time and money. If you make your offer to people who don't really have a need for your offering, they'll be an incredibly tough sale.

* Initiating direct response marketing without specific objectives gives you too hazy a target for bullseyes. Begin by creating the response method for your prospects so you'll know what your message should say.

* Featuring your price before you stress your benefit will be telling people what they don't want to know yet. First, your job is to make them want what you are offering, then you can tell them the price.

* Concentrating on your price before your offer is wasting a powerful selling point. Even if your price is the lowest, people care more about how they'll gain from purchasing. Give your low price at the right time.

* Failing to test all that can be tested is a goof-off of the highest order. Test your price points, opening lines, subject lines, envelope teaser lines, benefits to stress, contact times and mailing lists to know the real winners.

* Setting the wrong price means you've failed in your testing and your research. Guerrillas are sensitive to their market and their competition, testing prices and constantly subjecting them to the litmus test of profits.

As direct response vehicles become more sophisticated and prolific, guerrillas have the insight to zero in on the exact people to contact, so as not to waste time or money on

strangers. Successful mailings to strangers net as high as two percent response rates. Successful mailings to customers and qualified prospects net up to ten percent. Precision leads to profits.

Guerrilla Marketing Comes of Age

By Shannan Hearne–Fortner

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When Jay Conrad Levinson first began writing and speaking about Guerrilla Marketing, he was part of a team developing the most successful ad campaign ever. The Marlboro Man. Whether you smoke or not, unless you've lived under a rock you are familiar with The Marlboro Man.

Guerrilla Marketing is in effect the use of wide and varied unconventional marketing tactics to achieve the most conventional of business goals, which is profits. Back in the day when Levinson coined the philosophy, the internet age hadn't arrived. And still, he developed hundreds of guerrilla marketing tactics that millions of successful businesses used to grow and prosper.

Now that the internet age is moving beyond its infancy, and the majority of homes have at least one PC with access to the internet, guerrilla marketing is ready to come of age. The internet lends itself to guerrilla marketing because it makes optional so many low-cost, viral marketing alternatives.

By the standards of a guerrilla, a successful business is one that is making a profit. Obviously, Amazon.com wouldn't have been considered successful by guerrillas even though they were growing by leaps and bounds.

Guerrilla marketing is perfect for small business working on shoestring budgets. As I've heard many a Success Promotions client say, "frayed and short shoestring budgets". According to the original list of Guerrilla Marketing Arsenal Techniques (which included 100 weapons) sixty-two were free. Guerrilla marketing is incredibly useful to internet marketers because there are so many free and low cost advertising tools and tactics available via the internet.

Jay Conrad Levinson always preached using ALL the technology available to you. Your computer. Your fax machine. Your telephone. Your cellular phone. Your pager. Your Palm device. Your laptop. Your digital camera. Your wireless accessories. EVERYTHING.

Guerrilla Insights Into Direct Response

In an age where technology is advancing by leaps and bounds, Guerrilla Marketing is truly coming of age. I was just cutting my teeth in marketing when Levinson was fine tuning Guerrilla Marketing. And I bought into the concept lock, stock, and barrel. As a result, I am all about marketing on a frayed and short shoestring budget.

So the next time you are in the store or on e-Bay or thumbing through a

catalog and trying to decide if a digital camera or a web design program or an contact management program is a good investment, listen for the drum beat and the rolling thoughts of Jay Conrad Levinson. If you don't think the technology item is a good investment, perhaps you should pick up a copy of one of Jay's latest books. If you do think it is, instead of letting it lie around your office collecting dust while you wait for time to learn how to use it, plug it in and get rolling.

The day of the Guerrilla is upon us. And the worm no longer just goes to the early bird. It goes to the bird who uses every tool in his work hunting arsenal to catch the worm. Be the Guerrilla. Buy the technology. And get started marketing. Guerrilla Marketing has come of age.



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