

100 Guerilla Marketing Ideas: Grow Sales with Zero Budget

08-08-2012 by [Neil Sisson](#)

The following post is a joint collaboration between [Elish Bul-Godley](#) (@elishbulgodley) and [Neil Sisson](#) (@neilsisson).

Not everyone can afford to hire a marketing consultant, so we offer you a spectrum of kick-ass guerrilla weapons to arm your marketing war chest with. A lot of small businesses are facing budgeting setbacks and low cash-flow which can lead to a downward spiral of less advertising, less promotional activity and less sales. The ultimate result? Staring into that dark abyss of zero revenue.

*Don't surrender to these cash-strapped times. Instead, don some Recessionista fatigues and arm your business with these creative cost-saving tactics. **We'll show you how great sales and marketing campaigns can be low on cost if big on innovative ideas, imagination and creativity.***

The revolution starts here...Read on to pick up 100 low cost marketing ideas that include both online and offline activities.

Definition of Guerilla Marketing

[Jay Conrad Levinson](#)'s Guerrilla Marketing site simply puts it as "The achievement of conventional goals (e.g. Profit) using unconventional methods such as investing energy and ideas instead of money."

Here is a great blog outlining the tactical thinking and mindset that can help you win the war.

[Guerrilla versus Gorilla – Small Companies Can Win.](#)

50 Offline Guerilla Tips to help you win the war

Guerrilla marketing behavior delivers publicity via local unconventional marketing activity that makes people sit up and notice... think "Shock & Awe".

Public Relations and Publicity

1. The oldest guerrilla trick is old fashion PR so keep at it. Pick up the phone and give local journalists what they need most; great news content – its all about spinning your activity to make it a human interest story. The Guerrilla marketing tactics below are your means to this end.

Treat Your Premises like A Billboard

2. Give a Graffiti artist some free drawing space by letting him use his artistry on your shutters or paint a mural on the side of your Building e.g., Homeless Charity Simon Community building.

3. Create in-house exhibitions in vacant display space on your premises to make it more trendy, appealing and noticeable. [E.g.](#)

[Flagship Department store Brown thomas use art installations from 17 local Artists.](#)

Edgy Window Displays

Your Window Display is your Billboard. Get their attention with a head turning window display even if it comprises stuff you may not eventually sell and chances are, passers-by can be turned into passing trade. You may be mentioned by word of mouth and profiled in the media. Some ideas:

4. Get a live display real human beings like your staff work in your windows.
5. Create a [Smashed window effect](#) as seen in this Apple Store just using window paint.
6. Put up a controversial Political slogan to get noticed.

Occupy & Pop-up

If you need to trial a regional market or neighborhood or need to sell on a seasonal basis, use vacant or slack premises that are unused and help regenerate the city in the process.

7. Local municipal councils are a **great source of vacant units** as they need to regenerate old neighborhoods. Approach the **landlord of a vacant block** by offering to spruce up their neighborhood and entice long term tenants through your pop-up activity. There are agencies that help you find them or start a pop up space too.

Urban Art, Reverse-Graffiti & Street Propaganda

Great for evoking curiosity and planting brand awareness in specific geographical points in your city. Clever if its used on a route like a bridge with high footfall, allowing you to target specific locations or neighborhoods.

Caveat: Be careful when engaging in street tactics as you are encroaching on public space – people usually forgive you for imposing your image or promotion on a public space only if it is entertaining, temporary, and an improvement to the environment or aesthetic.

8. Use floor stenciling on vacant urban spaces, e.g., the Movie Troll-hunter was marketed using a stencil on Bridges in the city saying “Troll Below” sparking off curiosity.
9. Use 3d Floor artist to do something mind-boggling outside your premises front door
10. Chalk it up: write your website in chalk outside a major event related to what you do say in the carpark or registration driveway
11. Use Reverse Graffiti: Street artists use soap instead of a spray can and a stencil to scrub out an image in public space.

Check out some great examples of Street Propaganda

12. [Sustainable design blog, In habitat posts some in “Clean Green Street Art hits San Francisco!”](#)
13. [“20 Cool and Creative Street Ads” by Bored Panda.](#)

Urban Hacktivism

14. Play with **outdoor installations**: turn an outdoor sign or piece of public works into something new and entertaining.
15. **Yarn bombing** is a good example of people decorating the urban environment & using a product in an unexpected but decoratively visible way – an arts and craft supplier for example could supply free yarn to a knitting Circle and encourage Guerrilla Yarn bombing in the locality. Catch some enjoyable examples in [Time Magazine’s photogallery on “The Fine Art of Yarn Bombing”](#)
16. Create **Projections** onto a blank wall at night and it becomes a natural billboard/ cinema screen e.g. Nokia Snake Game.

17. Another great example: LeCool and Dublin city council used **open-sourced collaboration** on [Dublin Park\(ing\) Day](#). The message: re-using parking spaces by turning them into landscaped gardens as a way reclaim city space. If I was a garden center, I would jump on a campaign like this with product placement.

Get Inked

18. Body art as Advertising: using temporary body art / tattoos on your staff as they man events, exhibitions or hand-out flyers in the street. Brand them with your supplier's logo, your logo barcodes or QR code even.

Hack your Product

Use your products in a way you never did before

19. If you are in electronics, hardware or engineering set up a hacker group workshop or offer your products to a hackerspace in your premises and challenge people e.g. engineering students to find new ways to use your products as part of their thesis.

In House, and Community Events

Tap into the people in your neighborhood who use your business by providing them with meaningful events in-store or on your premises:

20. Service your existing customers with social events that allow them to make a positive association e.g. a book club in a book store after hours, storytelling evenings in a cafe, coffee mornings with toys for Mums to socialize in a nursery goods store.

21. Offer free exhibition space on your premises to new edgy performance artists, a nearby visual merchandising school looking for practice or Design students. You will be getting some amazing visual merchandising for free that may spread via word of mouth.

22. Trade marketing events Get your suppliers to offer a workshop or educational lecture to your clients or customers for free thus getting their collaboration. a DIY store could hold free DIY or upcycling classes using supplier's sponsorship or in-house expertise.

Demonstrations

23. Conversely if you supply into retail: do free in-house events via demonstrations of your product with Q & A sessions and tips on how to use your products in radical new ways.

Old Fashioned Door to Door Selling

24. Need I say more?

Flash mobbing and Crowd sourcing as advertising

25. Use **your own staff as Cast** or your own customers as a captive audience : [Finnair used their hostesses to flash mob passenger with a Bollywood routine to tap into the Indian Market](#)

26. If you are selling hospitality, or are in catering organize a [Community Street feast](#) or urban Picnic in a vacant lot and or on your high street with neighboring businesses.

27. My favourite example of using grassroots communities to promote an event: the [Haka Flash mobs](#) that took place during the NZ Rugby World Cup

Offline Gamification

Playful and Entertaining promotions engage people, tap into their competitive streak and can target sales.

28. The most basic application is a loyalty **points system** on your **reward card** e.g. Starbucks allows you to collect stars with every purchase. Or award a badge for targeted buying activity and let customers qualify for the next level of rewards.

29. Gamify the In-store experience: e.g. encourage customers to buy a special basket or combination of goods and reward with a prize, Or the classic “be the 100th customer today and win a free prize” and so on.

30. Other games challenge the public to **look out for the product** and keep it in the public’s consciousness, e.g., a Treasure hunt: find the hidden prize in the packaging and you win a year’s supply, get the golden ticket in our next Flyer mailout, spot our Product on the street... and so on.

31. The key is to blend this offline activity with online tools in this blog: [5 brands with Winning Gamification Strategies](#).

Find a Champion

32. Social enterprises and Charities use this all the time: find an important influencer in your sector or celebrity personality that buys or uses their product and use their fame, endorsement and connections to get noticed. It usually helps if you tie this in with charitable activity.

Collaboration

33. Sell your business face to face via **Free Business Networking events** / Business Speed Dating.

34. Shared Services & Collective bargaining– learn from Cooperatives: collaborate with your business network to pool marketing resources, procurement and engage in collective bargaining.

35. Barter Products and Services within your business network or set up a system of your own between local stakeholders, e.g. [Clonakilty Favour Exchange](#) : A skills and labor system set up to service a local business community.

36. Secret Tours get together with other businesses in your high street, local business network or town and organize a secret tour around a theme: for example, if you are in hospitality : a secret food trail showcasing the best culinary experiences for tourists and locals e.g. [Fabulous Food & Tasting Trails in Dublin](#)

Random Acts of Kindness

37. Do something to raise a smile and bring **Goodwill**. For example, if you are in the business of providing, e.g., Give Free hugs in a busy high street area outside your premises.

38. Pay it forward: be a parking fairy pay for someone’s parking outside a key establishment like Google perhaps and stick your business card in with the parking receipt on their windscreen.

Give it away

39. In the “Nicked” viral campaign from Ben Sherman, Display shirts were stuck on the Outside of their flagship window and cameras captured those passing by, as word of mouth spread that the products were free : [take a look at the Ben Sherman Nicked Window display viral](#)

Product placement

40. Offer your display products as **Props** to local visual Merchandisers, Theatre or film producers, not the big names of course as they will charge you.

41. **Support Local community events** like family days or parish fairs by offering your products for use – e.g., Beanbag company sponsors a chillout zone at local festival proving the durability of its products.

Need Inspiration?

Take a look at what marketing, events & design creatives are using around the world today.

Scan through some of these Global Cool hunting curators:

42. [The Inspiration Room](#) a space for viewing creative content from all forms of media around the world

43. [LeCool](#) has published a compilation of 111 City projects around Europe ranging from popup events, urban farming to sustainable design via their book: [“Smart Guide to Utopia“ Cool Hunting](#)

44. Design Trends and Ideas blog [The Pop-Up City](#) have great examples of urban hacktivism and outdoor guerrilla campaigns

45. The [Trendhunter.com](#) community features micro trends, and cutting edge ideas

46. For spontaneous raw trending information you can also checkout [Trendline online magazine](#)

How do you know when you've nailed Guerrilla marketing?

“It's when the public can't tell what's advertising and what's not.”

[Gavin Lucas defines it in his book Guerrilla Advertising](#)

Expert Roundup

47. Robert Lum of shares creative and unconventional marketing strategies in his blog:

[“Top 7 Guerrilla Marketing agencies to Watch”](#)

48. Here's 50 more ideas! Short snappy ones from “Bootstrapping blog “a great site for startups needing cost effective strategies:

[50 Guerrilla Marketing Tactics you should be using](#)

49. Luke Abbott Social media professional in paddypower.com rounds up:

[“10 Low Budget Guerrilla Marketing examples”](#)

50. Amy-Mae Elliot has a cool roundup of videos in Mashable in:

[“10 Excellent Examples of Guerrilla Marketing Campaigns”](#)

In Short: Offline Guerrilla Marketing is about using your Marketing Mix in an unexpected way in unexpected places with unexpected tools: shock, raise eyebrows, titillate and pull at your public's emotional strings at street level. Or do something altruistic and service your community thus buying you a positive human interest story spin and goodwill in the press.

Key takeaway: Keep it Local: It's got to be high concept, appealing and relevant to your local community and target audience.

What Next? Go Global: These real world tactics are extremely effective in themselves for getting your brand and business noticed out there. But combine these marketing tactics with the power of the Internet, social media and the various online tools available today, and hey Presto! You've just generated food for viral online content.

50 More Effective Online Guerilla Marketing Ideas

Online tactics can broadcast and amplify the local Guerrilla Marketing activities you've executed offline, but they can also help you build an online following, raise your brand's awareness, connect to prospects and customers you would never have previously been able to reach, and transform all of your efforts into a comprehensive, strategic, global dominating marketing plan.

But how to get started on the Intra-web? Below are 50 more idea's for you to turn into Guerilla Marketing weapons.

Start with the basics:

Social media presents a huge opportunity for Guerilla Marketing and increasing your revenue and customer loyalty.

Below are a number of steps you can take that will allow you to maximize the possibility of traffic and connecting with new customers. Think of having these social media accounts as setting up an online platform (HQ) for you to conduct your guerilla marketing campaigns from.

51. Spend a little bit of time setting up a **Facebook business page** and [configure your timeline view](#) for best results. Add lots of content in the about section and be personable so that people can connect with you as a person and not just your brand.

Facebook is free, and your customers (and a lot of new prospects) are more than likely already using it, so it can be a great source of direct traffic.

52. Find other pages where your customers and prospects hang out already and post there as your page. Other people viewing those pages will see your posts and if what you've said is interesting (or if your logo is interesting) they will click over to your page to check you out. Add value to the conversations and avoid (at all costs) putting out promotional updates for your products/services on other people's fan pages.

53. Make it as easy as possible to [get more likes](#) for your Facebook page

54. Setup a [Google+ business page](#). Google+ is probably the best single thing you can do at the moment to boost the organic placement of your website in Google's search results.

55. Setup a Twitter Account. Twitter can be an incredibly powerful tool for finding new customers for your business and its important to have an account so that you can secure your brand name on Twitter if possible.

When setting up the profile make sure to be personable in your profile box and [customize the](#) background. Put your brand name in the background if possible and the URL to your website in both the background and more importantly in the profile section.

56. Connect all of your social media accounts so that you only need to post to one place for all accounts to be updated. [This free tool](#) will allow you to distribute your Facebook posts to Twitter, Google+ and LinkedIn. Now you will be able to focus on being really active on just one social network; whichever you feel has the largest number of your target demographic of customer.

Content Marketing for Success:

Content marketing involves creating valuable or entertaining content and publishing it online so that people can find it, become interested in it, take value from it and get to know you and your business before they've bought from you. It helps establish your authority in your industry.

57. Write blog posts

If you don't already have a blog, perhaps its time to start one? You can start a free blog on WordPress.com or Tumblr.com, if your current website doesn't have blog functionality built in and you don't have the budget to get one added. Just make sure that you put a clickable URL back to your main site on your new free blog. Also use your brand name as the account name when setting the blog up.

Think about whether you have the time to commit to a blog before starting it however, as it will be a waste of time if you don't post at least twice a week over an extended period of time.

58. You could write guest posts on other blogs where your target market read. This is a great way of getting yourself in front of potential future customers and making them aware of your existence and your knowledge of your industry.

There is a hidden bonus with these posts. Not only will you potentially get direct traffic when prospects read your post and click through to your website, but you will also get an SEO boost from the link to your website at the bottom of your post.

59. Write how-to articles for article directories and how-to blogs. For example, perhaps you own a building company. You could write DIY how to articles showing people how to hang pictures, paint a room correctly, fix taps in the bathroom. These could be published on your own blog or on an article directory like ezine

60. Sign up for a Dlvr.it account. Dlvr.It is a free service which will facilitate you publishing an RSS feed to your social media accounts. RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication and it is a quite straightforward to setup. If you have a blog, it will have an RSS feed that you can easily copy and paste in to Dlvr.it which will automate posting about your blog update on social media.

61. Create videos and post them to YouTube. YouTube is a completely free resource and the 2nd largest search engine in the world. It is a great place to get direct traffic to your website and also to get an SEO benefit as video's regularly show up in the first page of search results (SERPs) on Google. You can also publish the videos to your Facebook stream and your Google+ account.

All you need is a good smart phone or a digicam and you are all set to make a video starring your gorgeous self, or something else related to your industry. For example if you are a Veterinarian perhaps you could take some video of the animals in your practice doing something cute.

[YouTube] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAcdivmnZ_GM [YouTube]

62. Post your videos on your blog and add a bit of descriptive text around them to activate interest and conversation in the comments section of your blog. Ask questions at the end of the piece.

63. Does your business involve something that you could take photos of? Perhaps you are on the road a lot and could take pictures as you drive around of scenery? Or maybe you do something creative (nail artwork, tattoos or graphic design)? Why not take your completed designs or photographs and post them to Pinterest, your Facebook timeline and Google+ stream.

64. After a month take all your photo's and pictures and create a photo collage video and upload it to YouTube for extra traffic and an SEO boost.

Amplifying what you do offline:

Having a plan that incorporates online and offline can make a big difference to the success or failure of your guerilla marketing campaign. Below are some idea's of how you might give your offline efforts a big boost.

65. Amplify your offline graffiti art campaign by videoing the whole thing. Film meeting up with your graffiti artist, travelling to the venue, the preparation of the work and everything that happens until the end. Think of a few questions to ask the artist and yourself. Turn the result into a cool viral video for YouTube and Facebook.

[YouTube] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJwUB0sYPeA> [YouTube]

66. Amplify your everyday activities. Do you or your staff do something during the normal course of your working day that people would find interesting? Why not film it and create a viral video of the daily activities in your premises?

67. For ideas, online PR & Social Marketing firm Simply Zesty sends the latest viral posts

[Check out the Simply Zesty viral video archives.](#)

68. Run online/offline promotions

Does your business service the public in some way? Maybe you could give away a freebie like this pop up eatery

< <http://www.cheapeats.ie/2011/02/18/crackbird-pop-up-restaurant-starts-next-week/> > did in exchange for having prospects & customers tweet about your business.

69. Put a QR code in the window of your premises and connect it to a **mobile page** on your website with the details of your business and a list of the benefits of using your firm versus your competition.

70. Run a QR street campaign

Simon on the streets used QR codes very creatively to raise funds for homeless people last Christmas

< <http://theinspirationroom.com/daily/2011/simon-on-the-streets-qr-codes/> >

71. A funny word of caution – How not to use QR codes:

[YouTube] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2rVYvylvZc> [YouTube]

Digital marketing you can do for less than \$5:

Below are some ideas about how you can leverage the website Fiverr.com to create cheap but potentially beneficial marketing effect online.

72. Hire a cool sounding voiceover guy to speak over a video you create from images or PowerPoint slides to showcase your business

73. Create a mobile landing page for your QR code that will increase the number of likes to your page.

74. Get a bunch of people who live near interesting places to hold up signs with part of a message you want to transmit on them. Compile the videos into a promotional clip

75. Have **Ozzy the dog** draw a picture or create a marketing message for your product or services

76. Can't afford a graphic designer but you want a **professional Timeline cover** image for your Facebook company page? Lydia will do it for \$5

77. If you are comfortable editing your website, **Marcus will create** an SEO report and email it to you

78. Maybe you could use something like **this** in the intro part of a company video.

79. A good selection of guerilla marketing **options** can be found here

80. Perhaps you need a catchy jingle or other original and whacky music to accompany your video? Check [this out](#)

81. Need a script written? Check this out: [Script Writing](#)

82. A cautionary tip: on Fiverr.com you will find a lot of people that will be happy to increase the number of fans, followers and connections in the various social networks. You will also find offers promising to tweet a massive following with your marketing message. These services are a waste of your money because the fans/followers you will receive will not be targeted and as such will be low quality.

Guerilla Marketing Traffic Getters:

Traffic is the online equivalent of people walking into your shop or office. Your website should be designed to turn the casual visitor into a customer who is dying to spend their cold hard cash in your business. However, before your website has that conversion opportunity, you will need to get the traffic to your website in the first place.

83. Post a link to your latest blog posts on [Digg](#), [Reddit](#) and [Delicious](#). Well you've written the content, why leave it to gather dust?

84. Start a discussion about your latest blog post topic. Use big forums like boards.ie or whatever your regional hub of activity to start a discussion around the topic you've blogged about. You can usually paste a link to your post in on most forums as long as you are genuinely trying to have a conversation about the topic, and as long as its not your first post on the forum.

85. Give your exact target market **something fun** to do online. @betfairpoker do this really well.

86. Join some community forum's where your target market would typically hang out. Put a link to your website in your forum profile signature and then join the conversations happening on the website. Say valuable things and make a contribution that is helpful.

87. Search on Google+ for people who would enjoy or find value in your product/service. Particularly those who are very active in your niche. Add them to a special circle and message them asking for their feedback on what you are doing.

88. Have you got something to say? Why not [host your own Radio Show](#)?? Don't just drone on about your products and services, talk about issues relating to your niche and give tons of value away for free.

89. Interview someone your target audience would find interesting. Blog about it, or have them on your Blog Talk Radio show. Or have them on your Podcast. Or even better do all three, and then bundle the MP3 and a transcription as a downloadable reward for joining the email list on your website.

90. Setup an email newsletter. Even if you are just emailing special offers out once a month its better to have on your website than nothing. You can use Mailchimp who are free and will keep you compliant! This will be huge for bringing traffic back to your site.

91. Create an on-line community specific to the primary related area of interest of your target market. For example say you have a clothes shop for babies. Perhaps you could setup a Facebook page or group, designed to help mum's with issues they're experiencing with their newly born babies.

92. Record a weekly podcast, and publish it to a page on your blog and to iTunes. [This free software](#) and some time is all you need!

93. Team up with another business owner in a related but non competing business and do a **Joint Marketing Venture** online. Your JMV should involve the creation of content (any form) designed to attract the perfect target market for both of your businesses.

94. Setup a LinkedIn group for your **niche**. [Social Media Ireland](#) is a very successful example of this run by Niall Devitt.

- 95.** Setup a LinkedIn group for your **target market**. For example, if the decision maker who decides to buy your products/services is the CFO or Financial Director of a company, why not setup a group called Chief Financial Officers Ireland?
- 96. Setup or join a meetup group** where you can make industry or customer connections. For example I run the user group for [WordPress in Dublin](#), because my company builds primarily WordPress web solutions and because I love WordPress and want to connect with other users.
- 97. Host a weekly webcast.** At the moment [this awesome new tool](#) is free. CynoCast will allow you to offer a new level of interactive webcast experience to an almost unlimited number of attendees.
- 98. Run a multi-platform competition** to generate interest in your brand and products. If you give something you sell as the prize you'll ensure you attract your exact target market.
- 99. Showcase your expertise** by answering questions in [LinkedIn's Answers](#) section.
- 100.** Finally, and this isn't exclusively an online tip but more of a general one, wherever possible show people the passion you have for what you do.

Conclusion:

Guerrilla Marketing is a growing trend: executed correctly, it can be targeted at the people you want to turn on the most. Be diligent and consistent. Be creative and have fun with it!