

Секция «Реклама в США и Великобритании: современное состояние и перспективы развития»

UNCONVENTIONAL MARKETING: GUERILLA MARKETING

Нижулина Екатерина Владимировна

Студент (бакалавр)

Российский экономический университет имени Г.В. Плеханова, Москва, Россия

E-mail: katrin.2804@mail.ru

Many communication approaches are considered by their practitioners to be unconventional or alternative approaches. For the perpetual flow of new terms describing these approaches, the term *guerilla marketing*, introduced in 1984 by Jay Conrad Levinson, has come to serve as a generalizing term. Levinson (1984) defines guerilla marketing as the art of being able to execute marketing activities, in unconventional way, mobilizing imagination more than money. To reach this goal, guerilla marketing has revived several pre-Kotlerian methods of communication: word of mouth, the sandwich man, subliminal advertising, etc. For a long time, the term guerilla marketing existed in the popular language to designate every unconventional marketing approach [Baack, Wilson and Till, 2008; Hutter and Hoffmann, 2011]. In fact, these kinds of promotional and communication campaigns broke the habits of companies and consumers, passing from traditional platforms to original and more attractive ones. Common among all these approaches is the intent to achieve equal and even superior communication outcomes compared to conventional approaches, but with less expenditure: “It allows firms to promote their products and services with very low budgets and still reach the same levels of awareness that are usually only achievable with high-frequency TV advertising” [Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011, p. 254]. Furthermore, “It is considered to be a viable alternative to conventional advertising because it is perceived as softer and more personal than traditional advertising” [Kaikati and Kaikati, 2004, p. 6].

During the last thirty years, following the publication of Levinson’s (1984) pioneering book, guerilla marketing has structured itself according to four principal types of unconventional communication: one type that has seen massive development during the last decade is known as *viral marketing*; a second type, called *ambush marketing*, recycles approaches originating in sports marketing; a third type, *stealth marketing*, responds to the current trend of new way of communication; and a fourth type, which reaches consumers through a presence on the street and in public spaces, is called *ambient marketing*. All these principles have their own features, as detailed below.

Viral marketing. The origins of viral marketing can be found in buzz marketing and practices that arose from the pioneering work of Katz and Lazarsfeld in the 50’s, who examined the potential for consumers to influence one another. Kaplan and Haenlein, [2011, p. 255] define viral marketing “as electronic word-of-mouth whereby some form of marketing message related to a company, brand, or product is transmitted in an exponentially growing way, often through the use of social media applications”. Viral marketing is also known as buzz marketing.

Stealth marketing. This form of communication has origins in subliminal advertising, a practice that was denounced in 1967 by Vince Packard in his book, *The Hidden Persuaders*. “Stealth marketing is a deliberate act of entering, operating in, or exiting a market in a furtive, secretive or imperceptible manner, or an attempt to do so” [Roy and Chattopadhyay, 2010, p. 71]. Stealth marketing is also known as undercover marketing or covert marketing. The goal of this form of marketing is to promote a product or service without clearly presenting the brand name. Consumers confronted with this kind of operation do not immediately understand which brand is behind the campaign. For example, Sony Ericsson used

stealth marketing in the US to promote its T68i phone in 2003 through the 'Fake Tourists' campaign: fake tourists asked people to take their photo in front of major city sights while handing over their T68i (the first phone in the US with an integrated camera).

Ambush marketing. The origins of ambush marketing can be assigned to the Los Angeles Summer Olympics in 1984, when some companies that had not been approved by the IOC tried to use the buzz surrounding the international event in their own promotional activities. "Ambush marketing is a form of associative marketing, utilised by an organization to capitalise upon the awareness, attention, goodwill, and other benefits, generated by having an association with an event or property, without that organisation having an official or direct connection to that event or property" [Burton and Chadwick, 2009, p. 305]. It is also known as *parasitic marketing*. For example, the underwear brand Dim took advantage of a rugby match between France and Ireland in 2007 to promote its own products. To achieve this, they circulated an image of attractive young women supporting the French team in just their underwear. The strategy paid off: the buzz grew very quickly and the picture, which clearly benefited from the excitement surrounding the international match, was relayed many times on the Internet, despite the lack of approval from the International Rugby Board.

Ambient marketing. This kind of unconventional marketing operation has its origins in the "sandwich man" - a promoter who takes a brand's message to the street - and painting walls with brand imagery on the roadside. "Ambient communication is a complex form of corporate communication that uses elements of the environment, including nearly every available physical surface, to convey messages that elicit customer engagement" [Gambetti, 2010, p.]. For example, in 2009, the Copenhagen Zoo in Denmark worked with communication agency Bates Y&R to create a bus covering which made it appear that a snake was constricting the vehicle. This example represents the effectiveness of outdoor marketing as a way to promote a product or a service through the customization of a public space or object.

These four principal dimensions of unconventional communication are interdependent and encompass other similar types. All of them helped marketing to reach new level of communication, to build new kind of relations between brand and customer and, of course, they paved the way for other unconventional marketing techniques, which nowadays seen as future of unconventional marketing (street marketing, tribal marketing and collaborative marketing).

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