

by Jay Conrad Levinson

Here's the problem: Your prospects and customers have short attention spans and millions of businesses attempting to attract their attention.

Here's the solution: 360 degree guerrilla marketing. It communicates with your prospects and customers from all directions and across long periods of time.

Here's the bonus: This kind of marketing is never intrusive, such as telephone calls during dinner, and very inexpensive -- even when you employ the wide range of weapons available to you, more now than ever because of the staggering growth of the Internet.

Most business owners select a wimpy arsenal of marketing weapons, figuring that if they spend enough, they're covering the bases. Today, there are more bases than ever and if you're not attending to most of them, opportunities are speeding past you at lightning speed.

The reason to employ 360 degree guerrilla marketing is because most prospects are in the market for what you sell only a small fraction of the time. If you're not talking to them at that time, they'll talk to somebody else. With less than 360 degree guerrilla marketing, your chances of connecting with them at that fleeting moment are cut down dramatically.

The fragmenting of media is still another reason to go all-out with marketing and still another opportunity to go easy on your budget because fragments cost much less than whole parts -- TV to selected neighborhoods runs a teeny fraction of the cost of TV to the nation.

Guerrillas employ 360 degree marketing by blending low tech and high tech with high touch and high care. They are always available to their customers via their Website, email address, answering device, fax, snail mail address and telephone, with many also connecting by pager and fax-on-demand software. They're involved in their communities, connecting with prospects face-to-face in non-business settings.

You can be sure they have an active referral system, tapping the enormous referral power of past customers to learn the names of potential customers. They produce and mail brochures -- printed, audio or video, or all three. They take networking seriously and appreciate that rare chance to ask questions, listen to answers and learn of problems they can solve.

Guerrillas are joiners of clubs to learn industry information, meet movers and shakers, and contribute their time and energy to the organization. They offer free consultations and demonstrations whenever possible and set up alliances with other companies in co-marketing ventures -- especially online. They are linkers of the highest order.

There's a good chance they publish a newsletter, possibly even a catalog. Many pen a column for a publication read by their prospects and run a stand-out Yellow Pages ad if businesses such as theirs gain customers that way. They offer their speaking services for free to local

groups and have warm, trusting relationships with people at the media in which they hope to gain publicity. When they get it, they make reprints to post and mail.

360 degree guerrilla marketing means they may run classified or small display ads offering their brochure and directing people to their Website. Many maintain awareness on the radio, with cable TV, in business magazines or regional editions of national magazines. They use signs wherever feasible and stay in touch regularly with both prospects and customers with postcard and standard mailings.

Do they send questionnaires to prospects and customers? Bet on it. Even when they're doing all this, they're still engaging in only 180 degree guerrilla marketing. Reality today means the other 180 degrees comes from their wise presence and impressive activity online.

The magic words are presence and activity. Onliners see them not only at their own content-rich website, but also actively participating in forums, chatrooms, and with email that Netizens have requested. 360 degree guerrillas are frequently mentioned in online news reports, host online conferences, and run contests at their site. As new opportunities arise online, and arise they do on a daily basis, guerrillas seize and test them, making sure their aim encompasses all 360 degrees of marketing.

Combining all this weaponry on a continuing basis, over a long period of time rather than in spurts, is a tough job. But succeeding with a small business isn't supposed to be fast or easy. By using 360 degree guerrilla marketing, succeeding does become far more of a certainty.