

GUERRILLA ADVERTIS- ING

**MORE UNCONVENTIONAL BRAND
COMMUNICATION**

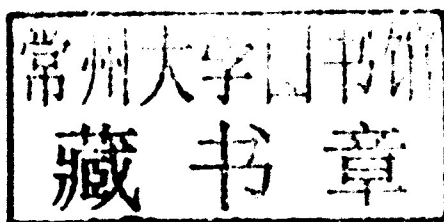
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**GUERRILLA ADVERTISING 2
MORE UNCONVENTIONAL BRAND
COMMUNICATION**

GAVIN LUCAS





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INTRODUCTION

Whosoever desires
constant success must
change his conduct
with the times.

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI, THE PRINCE, 1513

Advancing technology provides us with ever more sophisticated and complex ways of communicating, accessing and sharing information. It is hard to believe that just five years ago, when *Guerrilla Advertising* was published, most of us had never heard of Facebook or Twitter – and Apple had yet to unleash its first mobile phone, the iPhone. It is also hard to conceive now that in another five years, Facebook, Twitter and the iPhone and iPad may well be replaced by new technologies and concepts that will seem more relevant or pertinent to the way we live our lives. C'est la vie.

As with the first volume, the aim of *Guerrilla Advertising 2* is to showcase campaigns from around the world, all of which engage the public in ways that are remarkable for their originality, using means and methods that are strikingly appropriate to the product or service being promoted.

Did you see the hot-air balloon that was dressed to look just like the house buoyed by balloons in the Disney/Pixar film, *Up*, as it flew over Europe to promote the film's DVD launch? Were you there when a flash-mob of dancers performed a routine at a packed Liverpool Street train station in a T-Mobile promotion? Perhaps you found a circular sticker stuck to the sole of your shoe, which, on closer inspection, warned of the horrors of landmines. Or maybe you were impressed by AC/DC's video, delivered to fans by Sony's inventive digital department as animated text embedded in an Excel spreadsheet. Maybe you didn't witness these things but heard about them from a friend who did, read about them on a blog or saw them on the news. All these events and activities are evidence of the variety of methods which brands and their agencies are employing to get their messages across.

The continuing challenge for brands and advertisers is that established, obvious forms of advertising simply become background noise in the busy lives of today's consumers. 'If we continue to define ourselves as an industry as being in "advertising", my belief is we're pretty much doomed,' wrote Ty Montague for the foreword of the original *Guerrilla Advertising* book, when he was co-president and chief creative officer at JWT New York. 'The advertising business – the business of interrupting what people are interested in with a commercial message about something they're not interested in – is a business that is already in decline,' he continued. 'The good news: there is a new business being born simultaneously, literally all around us. Call it engagement, interactivity, participation ... The fact is that it doesn't really have a satisfactory name yet. That will probably come later. But it is being born ...

Small groups of people, working in isolation from one another and often employing untested new technologies are creating new ways of telling stories.'

Montague's prediction that traditional advertising agencies must reject old formulas in favour of investigating new methods of brand communication has come to pass – although there is no sign of the industry adopting a new name for what it now offers. Rather, the definition of the word advertising has changed. It has become a blanket term which covers the different approaches to brand communication that these agencies now have to consider: PR, guerrilla, experiential, ambient, TV, press, digital, behavioural and integrated – or 360 degree – marketing.

Currently there are a huge number of media options available for advertisers to consider when planning a campaign strategy. Yet it seems futile to list them here. Why? Because – and please forgive the cliché – the advertising industry is in a state of flux. This isn't a phase it's going through. In all probability, it will forever be in flux because technology is constantly reshaping the media landscape at such a rate that it's now impossible for the ad industry to settle on a formula for creating advertising in the way that it did in the latter half of the twentieth century, when the 30-second TV spot was king. It's not just impossible to come up with a new advertising formula – it is now completely inappropriate.

Even television itself has changed, and long gone are the days when a handful of channels each promised massive viewing figures for advertisers. Watching TV used to be a passive activity, but more and more it is an active one, with viewers subscribing to digital television services now having the option of pausing, fast-forwarding and rewinding programmes

as they wish. Online media stores such as Apple's iTunes, along with internet TV services such as BBC iPlayer and video sharing websites YouTube and Vimeo, offer their users the opportunity to watch whatever they want, whenever they want. Add to this the arrival of the iPhone and other smart phones with their big, high-resolution screens, built-in cameras and fast internet access. These hand-held gadgets allow us to watch TV, send and receive emails, investigate and forward links to content that is engaging enough to warrant our interest, and create and share our own content – wherever we might be.

Consumers can also use their pocket-sized computers to buy products online. And brands have realized that they can offer services through these devices – brand communications that are actually useful to consumers and relevant for that particular gadget. Hundreds of thousands of applications, or apps, for the iPhone are downloaded every week from Apple's app store. These apps could be games, or handy tools that make use of the iPhone's functionality – its touchscreen, accelerometer, camera, or built-in GPS. The device and the larger, more recently launched iPad, are interesting new additions to the media advertisers can explore. London agency Brothers and Sisters, for example, created a clever iPhone app that made use of Google Maps and geotagging technology to link historical images of London scenes from the Museum of London's art and photographic collections to the locations they actually depict on the map (see pages 90–95). Not only that, but users in one of the featured locations can click the '3D View' button and the app will recognize the user's location and overlay the historical image on the view through the iPhone's camera lens. Rather than

simply telling consumers about their client, with this campaign agency Brothers and Sisters successfully created an engaging way to use the technology in people's pockets to allow them to interact and explore the image collection of the Museum of London.

Consumers now play a crucial role in the distribution of brand messages. It is up to them to get involved and pass the message on, either digitally or physically. The Japanese edition of *Guerrilla Advertising* (see pages 26–27) sported a hardback cover that extended beyond the pages of the book and featured cut-out carrier bag-style handles. This allowed the book to be carried around, rather like a shopping bag, meaning the book itself became the medium for a clever guerrilla campaign that would appeal to the very people who might buy it.

This is not to say that TV advertising (or mass media advertising, for that matter) is dead. Nothing could be further from the truth. On one hand, there are still media slots to be bought during huge TV events, such as international sporting fixtures, that will be viewed by millions. On the other hand, more specialized television channels mean that advertisers have a chance to communicate directly to target audiences. Digital television also offers new opportunities to advertisers. A seemingly traditional ad could prompt users to explore interactive content by pressing the red button on their remote controls.

TV advertising, although still a hugely expensive undertaking, is now just one of innumerable tools in the box of media options that can be combined in a process of integrated brand promotion. This approach to brand communication might make use of any number of media channels, conspiring to communicate an over-arching idea, in order to

effectively engage consumers. A good example of this kind of approach is Saatchi & Saatchi's Dance campaign for T-Mobile (see pages 178–179). On the morning of January 15, 2009, dozens of dancers, dressed to blend in with the hundreds of commuters passing through London's Liverpool Street train station, performed a lively routine to a medley of feel-good dancefloor classics, played over the station's intercom system while hidden cameras filmed the activity – which included the spontaneous reaction of the commuters among whom the action took place. Within 48 hours, a three-minute film of it was aired on TV, filling an entire commercial break during *Celebrity Big Brother* on Channel 4. After the TV premiere, a shorter, 60-second version ran for two weeks, followed by ads that included specific product and price plan information. Viewers of the ad were encouraged to press the red button on their remote to view extra footage of the making of the advert.

In tandem with this activity, T-Mobile also created a dedicated YouTube channel where users could upload their own videos and view films of celebrities being taught how to do the T-Mobile dance by choreographer Bryony Albert. All of the campaign's various iterations supported T-Mobile's advertising strapline: 'Life's for sharing' – the idea being that as a network, T-Mobile lets its customers share with each other the things in life worth sharing, which, presumably, includes a seemingly spontaneous outbreak of synchronized dancing in a train station at rush hour. Bizarre, perhaps, but it paid off. At the time of writing, the three-minute version of the film has been watched on YouTube nearly 24.5 million times.

Increasingly, as this campaign demonstrates rather well, brand communication is less about sending out

messages, and more about engagement and social interaction. Brands want to nurture communities of loyal consumers. And to do that effectively, they need to understand their audience. Consumer insight is a must when conceiving any brand campaign in the twenty-first century. If you misunderstand your audience's wants, needs and expectations, how can you hold their attention, earn their respect and, ultimately, persuade them to invest in what you have to offer?

Of course, funding an advertising campaign can be an expensive business. At the time of writing, the world is still recovering from the global recession that began in late 2007. We also live in a time when many companies like to have green credentials and be ethically sound in principle and practice. Anyone with an internet connection can look up information about a company so businesses have to operate in a way that reflects this. Advertising agencies have to offer more than good ideas and solutions to brands' communication problems – they have to offer value for money and practise what they preach, now more than ever. And paying clients have never wanted more bang for their buck. Brands don't just want us to simply see their adverts anymore. They want us to engage with, respond to, photograph, talk and blog about them.

Mass media approaches to brand communications, while ever more tricky to orchestrate, will never be redundant. In this book there are several campaigns that, while implemented in specific locations – themselves chosen because of the sheer volume of people passing through daily – were designed to be impressive or engaging enough to attract the attention of the press and thus reach an even wider audience. For example, TBWA\Berlin's Impossible Huddle campaign for adidas (featured on pages 154–155),

consisted of giant sculptures of eleven top European football players (all sponsored by adidas, naturally) placed in the main concourse of Zurich's Central Station for the duration of the UEFA EURO 2008 soccer tournament. The Swiss rail authority reported that an estimated 13 million people passed through the station during the three-week period, and the enormous installation was impossible to miss. As well as this, various news titles such as the BBC, *Financial Times*, *Die Welt*, *Gazetta dello Sport*, *Le Parisien* and *NRC Handelsblad* featured the campaign on their front pages or online editions – and it was picked up by dozens if not hundreds of blogs worldwide.

So, it is clear that advertising is no longer confined to TV ad breaks and poster sites, and never will be again. As many of the campaigns gathered in this book attest, there is no surface or space that brands will not utilize or fill with their communication strategies – both online, and offline in the real world.

But as we move forward in an increasingly media- and internet-savvy world, brand campaigns will have to be clever and pitched perfectly in order to impress and engage their intended audiences. Otherwise, we the public will use those same places and spaces to ridicule their efforts, rather than applaud them.

STREET PROPAG- ANDA

