

## **THE EFFECT OF GUERRILLA MARKETING ON PURCHASING DECISIONS: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW**

*Pengaruh Guerilla Marketing terhadap Keputusan Pembelian:  
Sebuah Tinjauan Literatur Sistematis*

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### **Abstract**

In a company environment that is becoming more and more competitive, guerrilla marketing has become a potent and economical marketing tactic. The purpose of this study is to methodically examine how guerrilla marketing affects consumer choice. In this study, 7 pertinent prior papers were gathered, filtered, and analysed from a variety of academic sources using the systematic literature review (SLR) method. The analysis's findings demonstrate that guerrilla marketing has a major impact on consumer choices in a number of ways, such as through inventiveness, surprise, humour, message clarity, and emotional appeal. Additionally, this study reveals crucial mediators in the relationship between guerrilla marketing and purchase decisions, including brand image, innovation, and relevancy to the target demographic. The research's conclusions offer scholars and marketers important new information for comprehending guerrilla marketing's workings and creating more successful campaigns.

**Keywords:** guerrilla marketing, purchasing decision, systematic literature review, marketing

### **Abstrak**

Dalam lingkungan perusahaan yang semakin kompetitif, pemasaran gerilya telah menjadi taktik pemasaran yang efektif dan ekonomis. Tujuan studi ini adalah untuk secara sistematis menganalisis bagaimana pemasaran gerilya mempengaruhi pilihan konsumen. Dalam studi ini, 7 artikel relevan dikumpulkan, disaring, dan dianalisis dari berbagai sumber akademik menggunakan metode tinjauan literatur sistematis (SLR). Temuan analisis menunjukkan bahwa pemasaran gerilya memiliki dampak signifikan terhadap pilihan konsumen melalui berbagai aspek, seperti kreativitas, kejutan, humor, kejelasan pesan, dan daya tarik emosional. Selain itu, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi mediator penting dalam hubungan antara pemasaran gerilya dan keputusan pembelian, termasuk citra merek, inovasi, dan relevansi terhadap demografi target. Kesimpulan penelitian ini memberikan informasi baru yang penting bagi akademisi dan pemasar untuk memahami cara kerja pemasaran gerilya dan merancang kampanye yang lebih sukses.

**Kata kunci:** guerrilla marketing, keputusan pembelian, systematic literature review, pemasaran

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Businesses must cultivate imaginative and original marketing in this era of intense market competition. However, setting aside a sufficient budget for marketing is usually the most difficult task for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). Guerrilla marketing is a non-traditional, low-cost, and highly effective alternative marketing strategy that was developed to address this issue (Alsheikh, 2024). Jay Conrad Levinson first used the term "guerrilla marketing" in 1984. It was inspired by guerrilla warfare, which uses unconventional techniques in addition to being innovative and swift in defeating big adversaries (Situmorang, 2016).

As technology has advanced and consumers have evolved, guerrilla marketing is no longer the exclusive domain of small business enterprises. Major companies, for example Nike, IKEA, and Coca-Cola also adopted such a tactic to stimulate and reinforce brand image (Mustafa et al., 2023). The success of guerrilla marketing campaigns has much to do with not just creativity, however. The detailed knowledge of the target population, and broader social and cultural context as well as implementation are vital aspects that message passed does not create negative perceptions (Mustafa, Ismail, et al., 2025). The purpose of this study is to methodically examine how guerrilla marketing affects consumer choice. This study will find, assess, and synthesise evidence from pertinent prior research using the systematic literature review (SLR) method (Akbar, 2024; Akbar et al., 2024). It is intended that this analysis will provide a thorough grasp of the mechanics underlying guerrilla marketing, the variables influencing it, and how it affects customer purchase decisions. It is anticipated that the findings of this study will benefit scholars and marketing professionals both conceptually and practically.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

In The systematic literature review (SLR) approach was used in this investigation. Because of its capacity to methodically and objectively find, assess, and interpret all research pertinent to certain research topics, topic areas, or phenomena of interest, the SLR technique was selected (Mustafa, Mustafa, et al., 2025). In this study, the SLR process was divided into three primary phases: planning, execution, and reporting.

### Planning

The planning stage began with the formulation of a clear research question, namely: 'How does guerrilla marketing influence consumer purchasing decisions?' Next, a research protocol was developed that included inclusion and exclusion criteria for articles to be reviewed. The inclusion criteria were:

- 1) Articles published in reputable scientific journals;
- 2) Articles that specifically discuss guerrilla marketing and purchasing decisions;
- 3) Articles that use quantitative, qualitative, or mixed research methods; and
- 4) Articles published within the last 10 years (2013-2023) to ensure relevance and novelty.

Exclusion criteria included:

- a) Articles that did not undergo peer review;
- b) articles that were not available in full text format; and
- c) articles that were not relevant to the research top.

### Implementation

The implementation stage involved a systematic literature search in several academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science. The keywords used in the search included: 'guerrilla marketing', 'consumer purchasing decision', 'buying behaviour', 'unconventional marketing', and combinations thereof. The initial search process yielded a large number of articles, which were then filtered based on their titles and abstracts. Articles that passed the initial screening were then read in full to assess their suitability based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. From this process, 7 articles were selected as the most relevant for further analysis.

### Reporting

The reporting stage involves synthesising and analysing data from selected articles. Data extracted from each article includes:

- 1) Author and year of publication;
- 2) Research objectives;

- 3) Methodology used;
- 4) Key findings; and
- 5) Research limitations.

This data is then analysed qualitatively to identify key themes, patterns, and relationships between guerrilla marketing and purchasing decisions. This data is then analysed qualitatively to identify key themes, patterns, and relationships between guerrilla marketing and purchasing decisions. The results of the analysis are presented in narrative and tabular form to provide a clear and comprehensive overview of the research findings.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the 7 articles analysed, several key themes were found to consistently emerge in discussions regarding the influence of guerrilla marketing on purchasing decisions. These themes cover the main dimensions of guerrilla marketing, the role of brand image and innovation, and the importance of relevance to the target audience.

#### Key Dimensions of Guerrilla Marketing

Most of the studies reviewed identified several key dimensions of guerrilla marketing that significantly influence purchasing decisions. These dimensions include:

- 1) Creativity and Innovation: Creative and innovative guerrilla marketing campaigns have proven to be more effective in attracting attention and creating a lasting impression on consumers (Mahfud et al., 2024).
- 2) Surprise: The element of surprise is one of the main strengths of guerrilla marketing. Campaigns that appear in unexpected places and at unexpected times are able to cut through the 'noise' of traditional advertising and increase brand awareness (Behal & Sareen, 2014; Dimobi & Anyasor, 2022; Firdaus, 2022).
- 3) Humour: The use of humour in guerrilla marketing can create positive associations with the brand and increase purchase intent, provided it is executed well and is not offensive (Gegung, 2025).
- 4) Emotional Arousal: Campaigns that evoke emotions, whether laughter, touched, or even surprise, tend to be more memorable and shareable, thereby expanding the message's reach (Behal & Sareen, 2014).
- 5) Clarity: Although unconventional, the message conveyed in a guerrilla marketing campaign must remain clear and easily understood by the target audience to avoid misinterpretation (Dimobi & Anyasor, 2022).

#### The Role of Brand Image and Innovation

Brand image plays an important role in determining the success of guerrilla marketing campaigns. Research by Arafei et al. (2023) found that the impact of guerrilla marketing on purchasing decisions is highly dependent on how consumers view the brand image before and after the campaign (Mustafa et al., 2018). Innovative campaigns that align with the existing brand image will strengthen consumers' positive perceptions. Conversely, inconsistent or 'cheap' campaigns can damage the brand image that has been painstakingly built.

#### Relevance to Target Audience

The relevance of the campaign to the target audience is another crucial factor. Haeruddin and Haeruddin (2020) in their study of young consumers in Iraq found that the dimensions of aesthetics, reliability, and activation were more influential than humour and originality (Musa et al., 2020). This indicates that preferences for types of guerrilla marketing campaigns can vary across demographic and cultural segments. Therefore, marketers need to conduct in-depth research to understand the characteristics and preferences of their target audience before launching a campaign.

## Synthesis of Findings

Overall, this literature review confirms that guerrilla marketing has a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. This influence is mediated by various psychological factors such as attention, interest, memory, and emotion. When consumers are exposed to successful guerrilla marketing campaigns, they tend to:

- 1) Pay More Attention: Its unique and unexpected nature makes consumers more likely to pay attention to the message being conveyed;
- 2) Remember the Brand: Memorable and emotional experiences make the brand easier to remember in the long term;
- 3) Talk About the Brand (Word-of-Mouth): Viral and engaging campaigns will encourage consumers to share their experiences with others, both verbally and through social media;
- 4) Forming Positive Attitudes: Positive associations formed through enjoyable and creative campaigns will enhance brand image and consumer preference; and
- 5) Increasing Purchase Intent: The combination of all the above factors will ultimately encourage consumers to try and purchase the products or services offered.

The following Table is a summary of the 7 studies analysed:

Table 1: Summary of Analysed Studies

No	Authors and Year	Research Title	Research Methods	Key Findings
1	Cahyani (2023)	The Role of Guerrilla Marketing in Purchasing Decisions in Europe	Literature Review	GM is popular in Europe, effective, low-cost, and has a significant impact on purchasing decisions.
2	Aldebe, et al. (2021)	The Influence of Guerrilla Marketing on Consumers' Purchasing Behaviour	Qualitative	The impact of GM depends on brand image and campaign innovation.
3	Mohapatra (2023)	Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis of Guerrilla Marketing	Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis	Proposes a new taxonomy for GM and highlights research trends.
4	Hussein & Al-Qaysi (2023)	The effect of guerrilla marketing advertising on consumer purchasing behaviour	Quantitative	Aesthetics, reliability, and activation have a positive effect on young customers.
5	Milak & Dobrinic (2017)	Customer Perception on Guerrilla Marketing	Quantitative	GM effectively attracts purchase interest, emphasising the importance of innovation.
6	Navrátilová & Milichovský (2015)	Ways of Using Guerrilla Marketing in SMEs	Quantitative	The importance of adapting strategy GM with target demographics is important.
7	Onorlubas (2017)	A Research on the Determination of Consumer Perceptions Related to Guerrilla Marketing Methods	Quantitative	GM perceptions vary based on age, education, and marital status.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review has confirmed that guerrilla marketing has a significant and multifaceted influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Through an analysis of 7 previous studies, it was identified that the success of guerrilla marketing campaigns

depends on the intelligent execution of various key dimensions, including creativity, surprise, humour, emotional passion, and clarity of message. Additionally, factors such as a strong brand image, continuous innovation, and relevance to the target audience serve as important moderators that can either strengthen or weaken the impact of this marketing strategy. The practical implication of this study is that marketers need to carefully design guerrilla marketing campaigns, not only focusing on creativity, but also ensuring that the campaign is aligned with the brand identity and values embraced by the target consumers. In-depth market research is key to understanding the preferences and sensitivities of different audiences. Theoretically, this study enriches our understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying the influence of guerrilla marketing on consumer behaviour. However, there is still room for further research, especially in different cultural contexts and with the emergence of new technologies that can be integrated into guerrilla marketing campaigns. Future research could also explore the long-term impact of guerrilla marketing on brand loyalty and overall brand equity.

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