



# Creative Marketing Strategies for Your Business

*Stand Out With Innovative Strategies*

Presented by Lisa Li

# A Bit About Me...

Hi, I'm Lisa Li, a web developer and graphic designer. While I specialize in building websites and designing graphics, I like to help small businesses, non-profits, and churches with marketing ideas and tactics.

Today, I want to share with you some creative marketing ideas and strategies that you can use to stand out and get some attention – potentially even some viral attention.

As always, the ideas and strategies are relatively low-cost and can be generally easy to implement depending on what you try to do. I hope these ideas will give you some inspiration!



# Class Agenda

- **Lecture Part 1: Guerrilla Marketing & Digital Platforms**
  - Learn about guerrilla marketing tactics, how to capture attention with unconventional marketing strategies and make a big impact on a small budget, and online strategies to maximize reach.
- **10-Minute Break**
  - Grab a drink or snack, take a restroom break, or simply engage in the class live chat
- **Lecture Part 2: Partnerships, Collaborations & Budget-Friendly Strategies**
  - Leverage partnerships and collaborations, engage with your community, build meaningful relationships that benefit your business, and learn more budget-friendly marketing strategies.
- **Q&A Session (Optional)**



# The Power of Thinking Outside the Box

Creative marketing strategies are attention-grabbing tactics that set your brand apart by using unconventional approaches. These methods are designed to capture interest and create a memorable impression, often leading to viral attention or word-of-mouth promotion.

## Why Think Outside the Box?

- **Stand Out from the Competition:** In a crowded marketplace, businesses are constantly competing for attention. Creative marketing helps you break through the noise by surprising, entertaining, or engaging your audience in ways they don't expect.
- **Memorable and Shareable:** Unconventional marketing tactics are often more memorable and shareable than traditional ads. Whether it's a viral social media post or a unique in-person experience, these strategies encourage people to talk about and share your brand.
- **Build Authentic Connections:** Creative strategies allow you to connect with your audience on a deeper level. By offering something unique, you create opportunities for customers to feel personally engaged with your brand.



# Low-Cost, High-Impact Strategies

- **Maximize Impact with Minimal Investment:** Instead of relying on expensive channels like TV ads, online advertisements, or large sponsorship deals, creative marketing uses resourceful, low-cost methods that can deliver equally powerful results.
- **Leverage Existing Resources:** Many creative marketing strategies make use of what you already have—whether it's your social media platforms, physical locations, or connections within the community. This helps reduce costs while maximizing the reach and effectiveness of your efforts.
- **Scalable and Adaptable:** These strategies are flexible and can be scaled up or down depending on your budget and goals. They allow you to start small and experiment, adjusting your approach based on what works best for your business and audience.



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# What is Guerrilla Marketing?

Use surprising, creative stunts or flash performances to grab attention in public spaces. These unexpected events can be filmed and shared across social media, multiplying the reach of your campaign.

## Why it works:

- It can be free or low-cost
- Can be fun and memorable
- Has viral potential
- People often share it on social media leading to free advertising for you

*Examples: Chalk art, street stunts, musicians or dancers doing a surprise performance*



# Guerrilla Marketing Strategies

- **Branded Stickers:** Distribute them in high-traffic areas with QR codes for discounts.
- **Chalk Art Advertising:** Use sidewalk chalk to draw attention to your business location.
- **Flash Sales with Flyers:** Announce flash sales via low-cost flyers or pop-up signage.
- **Flash Performances:** Spontaneous performances with songs, dancing, costumes, or other entertainment.





# Flash Performances

A flash performance is an unexpected, spontaneous act in a public or highly visible location designed to capture attention. It can be used to promote your business in a memorable way.

## Why It Works:

- It surprises and delights people, making it more likely they'll talk about it, record it, and share it on social media.
- It doesn't need to involve a large group or expensive props—creativity is key!
- People often post about flash performances online, increasing your business's visibility without additional cost.



# Flash Performances

## Where to Find Performers?

- Partner with teens or young adults who want to go viral on TikTok.
- Invite friends, family, or even local church members.
- Post online ads inviting people to be part of a fun guerrilla marketing campaign that has a chance to go viral.

## What Kind of Performance Should You Do?

- The stunt could be a dance, a skit, or something creative related to your brand.
- Sing, dance, or perform at your business location or a busy public space.
- The performance could be simple—performers can be in plain clothes or you can use fun additions like balloons, costumes, or props.



# Flash Performances

## Do I Need to Pay for Performers?

- You may be able to find people willing to do it for free, others may be willing to in exchange for food, gift cards, free products, or something else of value.
- Offer participants snacks, food, or small products as a thank-you for participating.

## Pro Tips to Maximize Impact:

- Have business signage in multiple places so people recording will capture it and give you free exposure.
- Give out stickers, t-shirts, flyers, or other promotional items to the audience that has your business information on it.
- Have performers wear a QR code or your business branding for greater exposure.



# Guerrilla Marketing Pro Tips

- Use social media posts and ads to help amplify your guerrilla marketing tactics
- Encourage people to share photos of your guerrilla campaigns online
  - *Examples: Request photos of themselves wearing a branded t-shirt, holding a sticker, or other fun promotional item*
- Encourage people to use hashtags when posting photos and videos online
- Theme your guerrilla marketing around currently trending keywords and phrases
- Get creative, have fun, and focus on providing entertainment that is exciting, positive, and memorable so people experience a positive emotion to associate with your business



# Using QR Codes for Engagement

- QR codes are square scannable barcodes that people can scan with their smartphone to quickly load a website or app.
- QR codes can be used to promote special offers or exclusive content, direct people to your website, and more.
- You can place them in pop-up shops, public spaces, product packaging, business cards, flyers, signs, and anywhere that is permitted.
- *A Word of Warning: Though generally rare, scammers have been hijacking some QR codes signs by covering them with a malicious QR code sticker that will direct people to their scam website instead of the intended destination.*



# Using Memes for Viral Marketing

Mememes are entertaining images, videos, or GIFs that are humorous and easily shareable, often with cultural or social references. They are designed to convey a relatable, funny, or thought-provoking message in a highly visual and engaging format.

## Why Memes Work:

- **Drive Engagement:** Memes catch attention quickly and are often shared widely, making them ideal for increasing engagement on social media platforms.
- **High Visibility, Low Cost:** Memes are inexpensive to create, and their viral nature can result in significant visibility with little to no ad spend.
- **Cultural Relevance:** Memes tap into current trends, making them relatable and appealing to specific audiences, especially younger demographics.



# How to Use Memes Effectively

- **Leverage Humor:** The key to a successful meme is humor. Make sure the meme reflects your brand's voice but also resonates with your audience's sense of humor.
- **Relatability:** Create memes that speak directly to the daily experiences, pain points, or interests of your target audience. This increases shareability.
- **Timely Content:** Stay on top of trends by quickly creating memes that relate to current events, pop culture, or internet challenges. Jumping on a trend early increases the chance of going viral.



# Using Memes in Marketing

- **Meme Contests:** Host a contest where customers create and share their own memes related to your brand or industry. Offer prizes for the most creative or popular meme.
- **Meme Challenges:** Launch a meme challenge on social media where participants post memes using a branded hashtag. This amplifies reach and engages your community.
- **Branded Memes:** Create memes that subtly integrate your brand's products, services, or messaging while keeping the focus on entertainment and humor.

## Examples of Memes in Marketing:

- Brands like Wendy's, Netflix, and Old Spice have used memes to connect with younger audiences, engaging millions with humorous, relatable content.
- Meme formats like "Expectation vs. Reality" or "Starter Pack" can easily be adapted to showcase your product or service in a funny, relatable way.





# Benefits of Memes for Small Businesses

- **Viral Potential:** Memes have the power to spread rapidly across platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok, boosting brand awareness.
- **Audience Engagement:** Memes encourage interaction—people comment, tag friends, and share them across their own networks.
- **Easy to Create:** You don't need professional graphic design skills to create memes—many free tools and templates are available (e.g., Canva, Meme Generator).



# Partnerships and Collaborations

Collaborating with another business or organization to mutually benefit from shared resources, audiences, or marketing efforts. This allows both businesses to increase exposure without significantly increasing costs.

## Benefits of Partnerships:

- **Expand Your Reach:** By partnering with another business, you tap into their customer base, gaining exposure to a wider audience that may not be familiar with your brand.
- **Reduce Marketing Costs:** Collaborations often allow you to share the costs of marketing campaigns, events, or promotions, making it more affordable for both parties.
- **Shared Resources:** Pooling resources—whether it's venues, marketing materials, or promotional efforts—can lower expenses while offering more value to both businesses.



# Types of Collaborations

- **Cross-Promotion:** Partner with a complementary business to promote each other's products or services. For example, a coffee shop could collaborate with a local bakery to offer joint promotions. *Example: "Buy a coffee, get a discount on a pastry next door!"*
- **Joint Events:** Host an event or pop-up shop together. This could be a co-hosted workshop, a seasonal sale, or a community event that draws both businesses' audiences. *Example: A yoga studio and a wellness shop team up for a "Health and Wellness Day."*
- **Collaborative Giveaways:** Run a giveaway where both businesses contribute to the prize. This helps engage both of your audiences and encourages participants to follow both businesses. *Example: A clothing boutique and a beauty salon team up for a "Makeover Giveaway."*
- **Product Bundling:** Create special offers or product bundles that combine items from both businesses. This encourages cross-shopping and boosts sales. *Example: A candle shop and a home décor store bundle their products for a "Cozy Home Kit."*



# How to Find Ideal Partners

- **Look for Complementary Businesses:** Partner with businesses that align with your brand but aren't direct competitors. For example, a fitness center might partner with a healthy meal service, but not another gym.
- **Shared Audience:** Identify businesses that cater to a similar target market but offer different products or services. This ensures that the collaboration benefits both parties equally.
- **Values Alignment:** Ensure your potential partner shares similar values and business ethics to maintain consistency and trust with your audience.



# Tips for Successful Collaborations

- **Clear Goals:** Define what each business hopes to achieve from the partnership, whether it's increased sales, brand awareness, or new customer acquisition.
- **Mutual Benefit:** Ensure both businesses bring something valuable to the table and that the partnership is a win-win for both.
- **Promote Together:** Use both partners' platforms (email lists, social media, websites) to promote the collaboration and maximize visibility.



# Engage with Your Community

- Building strong relationships within your local community helps foster trust and loyalty. Customers are more likely to support businesses they feel a personal connection with.
- Community engagement goes beyond selling—it's about establishing your business as a positive force in the local area, aligning your brand with goodwill, and strengthening word-of-mouth marketing.

## Ways to Engage with Your Community

- Host Free Workshops or Classes
- Hold Community Events or Open Houses



# Ways to Engage with Your Community

- **Host Free Workshops or Classes:** Offer free or low-cost educational workshops or classes that relate to your business or expertise (e.g., a bakery could host a cake decorating class, a tech store could offer a “how-to” tech session).
- **Hold Community Events or Open Houses:** Organize open houses or events where local residents can visit your business, meet your staff, and learn more about what you offer.
- **Sponsor Local Events or Charity Drives:** Partner with local organizations, charities, or schools to sponsor events like fundraisers, community festivals, or charity drives.
- **Cross-Promotion with Community Organizations:** Collaborate with local nonprofits, schools, or community groups to co-host events, share resources, or create special offers for their audience.
- **Support Local Causes through Donations or Volunteer Days:** Organize a donation drive or designate certain days for your business and employees to volunteer at local charities or community projects.



# Benefits of Community Engagement

- **Builds Trust and Loyalty:** When customers see that your business cares about the local community, they are more likely to support you long-term.
- **Increased Word-of-Mouth:** Community engagement leads to positive word-of-mouth marketing, as people love to support businesses that give back.
- **Creates Brand Awareness:** Being active in your community makes your business more visible, helping people remember you when they need your products or services.





# Low-Cost Digital Marketing Ideas

- **Interactive Polls and Quizzes:** Interactive polls and quizzes allow you to engage your audience on social media or your website by asking them fun, relevant questions that encourage participation.
- **Referral Programs:** A referral program encourages your existing customers to refer new clients to your business, offering a reward (discounts, freebies, etc.) to both the referrer and the new customer.
- **Customer Loyalty Programs:** A loyalty program rewards repeat customers with points or perks that they can redeem for discounts, free products, or other incentives.



# Low-Cost Digital Marketing Ideas

- **Email Marketing:** Sending regular emails to your subscribers to share updates, promotions, and content relevant to their interests.
- **Social Media Giveaways:** Hosting a contest or giveaway on social media where users must engage with your content (like, share, comment) to enter for a chance to win.
- **Google My Business & Local SEO:** Optimizing your Google My Business listing and focusing on local SEO (Search Engine Optimization) to ensure your business shows up in relevant local searches.



# Branded Merchandise

Branded merchandise includes physical items like t-shirts, tote bags, mugs, and other promotional items that carry your logo, slogan, or brand message. These items serve as mobile advertisements, helping to keep your brand top of mind for both the person using the item and those who see it.

## Why Branded Merchandise Works:

- **Lasting Brand Visibility:** Unlike digital ads that are temporary, branded merchandise lasts for months or even years. Every time someone wears your t-shirt or uses your branded mug, your business is being promoted.
- **Tangible Brand Connection:** Giving customers or potential customers something physical creates a more personal connection to your brand. This increases loyalty and helps reinforce your brand identity in their daily lives.
- **Widespread Reach:** Branded items are used in everyday life—whether it's a tote bag carried to the store or a mug sitting on someone's desk—leading to exposure beyond the initial recipient.



# Strategies for Branded Merchandise

- **Giveaways and Contests:** Offer branded items as part of social media giveaways, asking participants to follow, like, or tag friends in exchange for a chance to win.
- **Loyalty Program Incentives:** Include branded merchandise as a reward for loyalty program participants who earn a certain number of points or make multiple purchases.
- **Event Giveaways:** Hand out branded t-shirts, tote bags, or mugs at community events, pop-up shops, or as part of a promotional offer.
- **Social Media Engagement:** Encourage users to post photos of themselves using your branded merchandise on social media, offering a reward for the best or most creative posts.
- **Collaborations and Cross-Promotions:** Partner with other businesses for cross-promotions, bundling your branded items with their products in a mutually beneficial promotion.



# Types of Branded Merchandise

- **T-shirts:** One of the most effective items, turning customers into walking advertisements. Easy to customize and wear, making them great for long-term visibility.
- **Tote Bags:** Useful, eco-friendly, and frequently used in public spaces. They provide consistent exposure as customers carry them while running errands, going to the gym, or attending events.
- **Mugs:** Perfect for desks, kitchens, and daily use. Mugs offer repeated exposure as people use them regularly for coffee or tea, ensuring long-term brand visibility.
- **Stickers:** Low-cost, high-visibility option that can be placed on laptops, notebooks, water bottles, or personal items, making them versatile tools for getting your brand in front of many eyes.



# Types of Branded Merchandise

- **USB Drives:** Handy and functional, USB drives are excellent for keeping your brand top of mind in professional and personal settings. They're useful for tech-savvy customers and are often carried around, giving your brand visibility in multiple environments.
- **Pens:** Low-cost and highly effective, branded pens are perfect for giveaways. Pens travel everywhere with their owners, offering consistent brand exposure every time they are used.
- **Magnets:** Branded magnets can be placed on refrigerators or other magnetic surfaces, ensuring they are always in sight. Great for keeping your brand in mind every time the customer opens the fridge.



# Key Takeaways

- **Creative Marketing Doesn't Have to Be Expensive:** Use low-cost strategies like branded merchandise, guerrilla marketing, and social media engagement to reach new audiences.
- **Engage Your Local Community:** Hosting events, workshops, and collaborating with other local businesses creates lasting relationships and increases brand loyalty.
- **Leverage Partnerships:** Collaborations help expand your reach without significant costs, while shared resources can drive mutual success.
- **Go Digital with a Low Budget:** Interactive polls, quizzes, referral programs, and loyalty rewards are all cost-effective ways to boost engagement and conversions online.



# What You Can Do Today

- **Choose One Strategy:** Start with one marketing strategy from today's presentation that fits your business model and budget.
- **Set Clear Goals:** Decide what you hope to achieve—more customers, better engagement, or increased brand awareness.
- **Get Started:** Implement your chosen strategy with small steps—whether that's creating branded merchandise, planning an event, or launching a referral program.
- **Monitor and Adjust:** Track the results and adjust your approach based on what works best for your audience.





# Stay Connected with Your Audience

- **Build Long-Term Relationships:** Keep your community engaged through consistent communication—newsletters, social media updates, and events.
- **Engage on Multiple Channels:** Use a mix of in-person and digital marketing strategies to reach customers where they are most active.
- **Ask for Feedback:** Customer input is invaluable for refining your strategies and ensuring your marketing efforts resonate with your audience.



# Final Thoughts

- **Be Creative and Consistent:** Success in marketing comes from finding unique ways to stand out and staying consistent in your efforts.
- **Don't Be Afraid to Experiment:** Test different strategies to see what works best for your brand and audience.
- **Keep the Conversation Going:** Marketing is a continuous process—stay engaged with your customers and adapt as needed.
- **Have Fun:** With any experimental strategy, expect mistakes and things to go wrong, but roll with it and try to have fun.



# Q&A



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