

Impact of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image: Evidence from the cosmetics industry in Sri Lanka.

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Abstract

Guerrilla marketing is not a new concept and has originated from the idea of guerrilla warfare. According to that, guerrilla marketing means the unconventional marketing tactics which allow marketers to grab the attraction of the customers by surprise and within a small marketing budget. As the development of technology and the advent of social media navigates, the guerrilla marketing turned into a new direction since it allows marketers to reach many people through the internet. This study is an empirical investigation on the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image with evidences from the cosmetics industry in Sri Lanka. Based on this primary objective, there are two specific objectives were identified; identifying the impact of guerrilla marketing in social media on functional brand image and identifying the impact of guerrilla marketing in social media on symbolic brand image. Consequently, guerrilla marketing in social media is the independent variable and functional brand image and symbolic brand image are the two dependent variables of the study. The constructs were measured by using fifteen-items validated scale for consumer perception of guerrilla marketing in social media with three dimensions as extraordinary, interesting and surprising, and communication. Further validated three-items and four-items scales used for functional brand image and symbolic brand image respectively. Data were collected using online questionnaire from 237 respondents aged between 15-29 years old. The data were analysed using structural equation modelling under the partial least squares (PLS) technique in SmartPLS software. The results confirm that, guerrilla marketing in social media has a strong positive effect on both functional and symbolic brand image with 0.8 and 0.808 path coefficient values respectively. This study fills the gap of applying guerrilla marketing in social media in cosmetic industry in Sri Lanka and provides empirical evidence regarding this area for future research. Sri Lankan marketers may make use of the results to develop effective marketing strategies in social media to have the attraction of the customers.

Keywords: *Functional brand image, guerrilla marketing, social media, symbolic brand image*