

A Randall Data Systems White Paper

# Guerilla Marketing Tactics for Retailers

14 high-powered methods you can implement TODAY!

By Randy Overly

**Randall Data Systems, Inc.**  
138 E. Ann Arbor Trail  
Plymouth, Michigan 48170

Tel: 734.453.9200  
Fax: 734.453.9201

Email: [sales@randalldata.com](mailto:sales@randalldata.com)  
Web site: <http://www.randalldata.com>

Randall Data Systems, Inc. is a Michigan-based company dedicated to providing retailers with the finest in automation solutions. These solutions are designed to help the retailer control their inventory, monitor sales activity, promote gift cards and loyalty programs, manage the operational aspects of their business and provide for the information needs of the progressive retailer.

Established in 1982, Randall Data Systems has been improving the lives and businesses of retailers throughout Michigan, the U.S. and Canada.

## Introduction

Did you know there are many free or low-cost ways to drive business into your store? Have you considered the many little activities to drive sales to your business? There is no *one* activity that will bring *many* new customers to your store. But, there are many activities that can bring a *few* new customers to your store.

### Guerilla Activity 1: Take advantage of “Personal Marketing” opportunities

Are you an expert in your field? If so, tell everyone! Calling yourself an expert is not arrogant. Becoming an expert and sharing your expertise is an easy way to set yourself apart from your competition. People will begin to think of you and your staff as the local experts, and they begin to trust you and your products. With trust comes customer loyalty... and with loyalty comes more sales!

So call your local rotary club, chamber of commerce, or any other business-networking group you can think of and start setting yourself apart from your competition! Offer to do a free 20-minute presentation on one of the following topics (depending on your audience):

- How to dress like a millionaire, without breaking the bank
- What makes a good running shoe and why
- A properly fit golf club will save you strokes
- How much will my home's value increase by doing some home improvement yourself

### Guerilla Activity 2: Implement a Customer Loyalty program

Are you rewarding your repeat customers with incentives? I am sure that you have a good product and good service; you wouldn't be in business if you didn't. However, do your customers feel that they are appreciated for being loyal customers?

There is an easy solution for this...set up a customer loyalty program. A powerful and simple loyalty program is designed to provide points to your customers for every dollar that they spend at your store, which can later be used to buy more from you... not your competitor. You can even provide your loyalty customers with a plastic ID tag to place on their key chain... so they never forget. When they come into your store, just scan their ID tag and ring in their sales. It really can be that easy!

If every one of your customers came into your store one, two or even three more times a year... how would that affect your bottom line? Do the math and see just how powerful a customer loyalty program can be for you and your business!

### Guerilla Activity 3: Dig into your data

Want to know your hottest selling items? How often are you putting a certain brand of items on clearance? Are you sick of being in the dark about the sales and inventory trends of your business? There are great reporting tools out there that will help you stay on top of your business activities. Some examples are:

- What is not selling?
- What are you selling out of that is in high demand?
- What time of day are most of your sales taking place?
- How much do I need to order to obtain the perfect amount of inventory?
- How many do I have in stock right now?
- Which of my customers are spending the most money, and on what?
- What % of business is retail/wholesale?
- Who are my top 50 customers?
- Who are my best sales reps?

Having a solid and reliable reporting system is a key asset to a strong business. Don't be left in the dark about your business; use your resources to keep your store properly stocked and staffed. With your business knowledge and the information provided on these reports, you can easily keep your sales high, expenses low and inventory properly managed. You will also be able to free up your cash flow!

### Guerilla Activity 4: Become an aggressive Email Marketer

How often do you market to your customers? Vendors? Friends? Family? Do you ask them for an email address at checkout? Email marketing is a great way to keep your name in front of your customers... and entice them back to your store. You can notify them of upcoming sales, provide them with valuable offers, and remind them that you are still in business.

Email marketing is the lowest-cost marketing tool available, and the most popular in today's Internet age. With in-depth sales reporting tools, you can group your customers based on their purchasing habits and craft messages specifically to them. Some messages are:

- "We miss you! Come back to us and receive 10% off any item in the store"
- "All golf balls are 25% off this Saturday and Sunday"
- "Spend \$50 and get \$10 off"
- "End of winter sale. All jackets and sweaters are 20% off this weekend only"

*Our Guerilla Rule: Go bananas with this! The sky is the limit!*

## Guerilla Activity 5: Ask for referrals

Do you ask your happy, loyal customers for referrals? And, why not? You already go out of your way to make and keep customers happy, but you are only getting 2/3 of the benefits of a happy customer. A happy customer can provide 3 benefits:

1. Great word of mouth advertising (it's free!)
2. They come back and buy more product (loyalty)
3. They can provide you with referrals

Ask your customers “Do you know of anyone who can benefit from coming to our store?” What's the worst thing that can happen? They say no. What's the best thing that can happen? They provide you with a new customer or two.

## Guerilla Activity 6: The ‘news world’ is hungry for news

Have you dreamed of being published? Is there something you know that other people may not know? Is there an upcoming special event that involves your store? Then notify the press! Write press releases that will be picked up by the news media. Most newspapers and magazines are looking for useful information that their readership would be interested in. This is closely related to activity 1, as your goal is to become a subject matter expert and to tell everyone. Do you have an idea about your industry? Write about this new idea, and send it to your local newspaper.

## Guerilla Activity 7: Think it... Write it... Blog it

For activity #1, you will write a short and simple presentation. You can use the same topic for activity #6 in a press release format. Now, use that same material and create a blog. A blog is short for “Web log”, and is typically a web site where you control the content (pictures, text, links, etc.). There are many blog sites out there, and you can sign up for free at most of them. Note: Check out Google and [www.wordpress.org](http://www.wordpress.org) to start.

Now you have created your blog, start posting your material. Keep it short, sweet, and to the point. Now you can take the blog material, and include it in your email marketing program as well. Make sure to include a link to your homepage, and include a phone number and email address for more information.

## Guerilla Activity 8: Gift Cards = Free Money

Did you know that 17% of gift cards/certificates are never redeemed? Did you also know that the average person spends 120% of the face value of their gift card/certificate when they come to redeem it? Based on these statistics alone, you would be crazy not to implement a gift card program at your business.

Don't get too crazy though. There are many credit card merchants out there who will provide you with a gift card program. However, they are going to charge you every time you sell, redeem, or check the balance of a gift card. Don't do it! There are ways to manage all of your gift cards in-house right through your point of sale program, without paying any 3<sup>rd</sup> party transaction fees at all.

### **Guerilla Activity 9: A consistently told message leads to consistently good business**

Does your staff know why your business is the best? Are they constantly sending the same message time and time again? I hate to ask... but does your business have a story that people like to hear? If not...create a message right away! Once you have a clear and concise message, make sure that everyone in your organization knows it, lives it, and tells it. A good message may be something like:

"We have been in business for over 60 years, and have found success by providing the best service on the best products and services in the area. Our people will make you smile, and our prices will make you cheer!"

This message may be a little over the top, but I wanted to make a point. You have to believe that your business is better than your competitors, or else you wouldn't be in business. So tell everyone why, and make sure your staff is telling everyone as well.

### **Guerilla Activity 10: Be your own Brand**

Do you know anyone that hasn't heard of Nike, Coca-Cola or Apple? I don't. Does everyone in your city know the name of your business? Have you branded yourself? Become a brand and separate yourself from every other business like yours in the area. Personal promotion is a great way to become a brand name.

Make sure that your business is being branded for the right reasons though... you don't want to be branded as expensive, poor service, and lousy products. Instead, become a brand that is associated with outstanding service, friendly staff, and fair prices. This is not so much as a specific activity, as it is more of a result of all the other guerilla activities included here.

### **Guerilla Activity 11: "I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine"**

Do you have any buddies in your area? Have you set up a "buddy marketing" plan with them? Swap 100 business cards with your buddy, and ask him to put them up on his counter at his store and offer to do the same for your buddy.

If your buddy's business provides a service that is related to your business, team up with him/her and offer some bundle pricing. You can also start a promotion for both businesses, like:

- Free car wash (buddy's business) with purchase of 10 bags of top soil (your business)
- Free delivery and installation (buddy's business) with purchase of treadmill or elliptical (your business)
- \$50 gas card (buddy's business) with purchase of any new riding lawn mower (your business)

### **Guerilla Activity 12: Your own traveling billboard**

This activity is different depending on whether you are a retail business or wholesale business:

**Retail:** This is simple! Get a big sticker, or magnetic graphics that have your company's name, address and phone number, and put it on your car/truck. You can even go the extra mile and have a custom design painted to your vehicle that will promote your business. Like I said, that is a simple way to advertise your company.

**Wholesale:** Create a contest for your wholesale customers; "The business who buys the most product from us will get to advertise on our fleet of 5 delivery trucks". You can do this monthly, quarterly, or however you want to handle it. You can offer to pay for the graphics and let them choose a standard design, or customize their graphic. The whole point of this is to offer a service (free and powerful advertising) in return for a customer's business.

### **Guerilla Activity 13: Refer a friend, and get some cash**

Much like Activity 5, here is another powerful referral option. Give your loyal customers a 'personalized coupon book' with 10 or 20 coupons for 10% discounts. They will pass these out to their friends, and when their friends bring in the 10% off coupons, you track who the 'coupon giver' is and provide them with incentives for each coupon brought into the store. The coupon could be for a discount on items in your store, or for a free sign up to your customer loyalty program as well.

Another great way to find referrals is to ask your employees. Offer your staff \$5 for each person they bring into the store to buy products. If your staff believes in your business, and is interested in making more money, this plan will work great.

If you have a business where great products and/or services are provided and the customers receive outstanding customer service when they come into your store, then you can do whatever is necessary to bring new customers into the store and grow your loyal customer base!

## Guerilla Activity 14: Write your way to success

Many actives listed here involve writing (i.e. blogging, public speaking, press releases, etc.). Rather than duplicate work, use a core piece of writing to drive all of these other activities. Choose a topic that you are an expert at and write about it. Name it something like “The 36 reasons that you should \_\_\_\_\_”.

Create a weekly newsletter that covers 3 of the 36 reasons from this initial writing, and after 12 weeks you will have covered all 36. Submit the article to a magazine in your industry and see how they can publish it. Take the top 10 out of the 36 reasons from your writing, and turn it into a presentation to use in your first public speaking appearance. All of these activities are a direct result of a well-written piece in the areas where you are “the expert”.

\* \* \* \* \*

*These are only a few of the proven tactics we have to share with you. We invite you to discover the many benefits that our solutions can bring do your company by giving us a call, or sending us an email. Our consultations are always free and there is no obligation.*