

eISSN: 2981-1554

Original Article (Qualitative)

Presenting a Model for Guerrilla Marketing in Sports Retail

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Receive:

26 August 2025

Revise:

03 November 2025

Accept:

29 November 2025

Abstract

The aim of this study is to present a guerrilla marketing model in sports retail. This study was conducted qualitatively, using a data-driven approach with the Glaser approach. The statistical population of the study included 15 elites in the field of sports management and marketing and sports product sales managers. The data collection tool was a semi-structured interview. The data-driven method was used to collect and analyze data. Data analysis was carried out in three stages of open, axial and selective coding. MAXQDA 24 software was used to analyze the data. The findings showed that the proposed model with six main dimensions; which include customer market analysis, goal setting, marketing mix, customer experience management, result achievement and guerrilla environment, is designed based on innovative strategies and unconventional marketing tools. In this regard, each of these dimensions plays an important role in the successful implementation of guerrilla marketing in sports stores and can lead to tangible and significant results in attracting and retaining customers. Overall, designing a guerrilla marketing model for Iranian sports retailers can help businesses achieve positive results in attracting customers and increasing sales through innovative, creative, and low-cost approaches. This model, relying on accurate market analysis, specific targeting, effective use of the marketing mix, customer experience management, and results evaluation, allows sports stores to operate effectively in the current competitive market and ultimately achieve profitability and sustainable growth.

Keywords:

Marketing,
Guerrilla
Marketing,
Retail,
Guerrilla
Environment,
Sports Products

Please cite this article as (APA): Rezagholi, R., Aliabadi, S. and Veisi, K. (2025). Presenting a Model for Guerrilla Marketing in Sports Retail. *Journal of New Approaches in Management and Marketing*, 4(3), 136-159.



<https://doi.org/10.22034/jnamm.2026.568647.1237>



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Publisher: Research Center of Resource Management Studies and Knowledge-Based Business

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Today, the significant entry of small and large companies into various industries has created a highly competitive environment in the business world; an environment in which companies compete with each other to gain a larger share of the market and use various advertising and marketing tools in this competition. Excessive use of traditional marketing techniques has caused many people in society to ignore them and even rebel against the onslaught of such advertising. Therefore, companies, especially smaller ones, are looking for marketing techniques more innovative and attractive than traditional marketing, and of course more effective. Guerrilla marketing is a modern marketing method that uses unusual and unconventional methods to attract as many customers as possible. The term guerrilla marketing was first used in 1982 by J. Conrad Levinson, a marketing expert. This term can be defined as “the use of unusual tactics in marketing in order to gain visibility, attract attention, and achieve results with minimal resources” (Levinson, 1982).

Since the advantage of guerrilla marketing is that it is easy to implement, has a quick learning ability, and has high mental persistence (Navarratilva & Milichovsky, 2015), and the best way to gain profitability is agility and the ability to change the program; guerrilla marketing is of particular importance based on the market conditions, and this is what distinguishes small and newly established agencies from others. As organizations grow, they seek and apply logical and new approaches to survive and grow in this turbulent path of competition, which has increased to some extent in the context of globalization. Two approaches, creativity and innovation, are concepts that can help organizations increase their organizational capabilities in this environment (Chen et al., 2013).

Also, with the increase in competition in the sports products and equipment market and the efforts of sports companies and brands at the macro level, sports stores at the retail level have increasingly appeared in ways to attract and retain customers. Sports stores try to inform their products by introducing their products on their websites and survey capabilities, and to increase the intention to buy through electronic word-of-mouth advertising. According to researchers, companies can increase their market share by using word-of-mouth marketing, which is one of the most efficient and effective marketing methods (Sabbaghizadeh, 2025).

Theoretical Framework

Guerrilla Marketing

Guerrilla marketing is a type of advertising strategy that relies on unconventional, low-cost tactics to achieve maximum returns. The term was first coined by J. Conrad Levinson in his 1980 book "Guerrilla Marketing." The term guerrilla marketing is inspired by guerrilla operations and refers to a type of unconventional warfare that involves small-scale strategic tactics for use by armed civilians (Pirayesh et al., 2019).

Rostami Ganjineh Kebat (2024) investigated the role of influencer marketing in the relationship between guerrilla marketing and purchase intention for home appliance products. This study examined the effect of guerrilla marketing on consumers' purchase intention by considering the mediating role of influencer marketing. The results showed that guerrilla marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention and influencer marketing can strengthen this effect. It was also found that trust in influencers and their digital interaction play a key role in the effectiveness of guerrilla marketing campaigns.

Qaleh Kani & Dasht Lali (2024) investigated the role of guerrilla marketing in advertising using the meta-synthesis method. This study has presented a comprehensive model of the effects of guerrilla marketing in advertising using the meta-synthesis method. According to

the results of the study, in addition to increasing brand awareness, guerrilla marketing also has a significant effect on customer loyalty, brand image, and business performance. The conceptual model presented shows that innovative methods of guerrilla advertising can increase interaction with customers and leave a lasting emotional impact on them.

Research Methodology

This research was conducted qualitatively and utilized a data-driven approach with the Glaser approach. The statistical population of the research included 15 elites in the field of sports management and marketing and sports product sales managers. The data collection tool was a semi-structured interview. The data-driven method was used to collect and analyze data.

Research Findings

Data analysis was carried out in three stages of open, axial and selective coding. MAXQDA24 software was used for data analysis. The findings showed that the proposed model with six main dimensions, which include customer market analysis, goal setting, marketing mix, customer experience management, result achievement and guerrilla environment, is designed based on innovative strategies and unconventional marketing tools. In this regard, each of these dimensions plays an important role in the successful implementation of guerrilla marketing in sports stores and can lead to tangible and significant results in customer attraction and loyalty. In summary, designing a guerrilla marketing model for Iranian sports retailers can help businesses achieve positive results in attracting customers and increasing sales through innovative, creative, and low-cost approaches. This model, relying on accurate market analysis, specific targeting, effective use of the marketing mix, customer experience management, and results evaluation, allows sports stores to operate effectively in the current competitive market and ultimately achieve profitability and sustainable growth.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the aim of presenting a guerrilla marketing model in sports retailers. The results of this study are consistent with the results of Rostami Ganjineh Kebat (2024), Qaleh Kani & Dasht Lali (2024), Mohammadi et al. (2024), Sharma et al. (2024), Badreldin et al. (2024), Sulaiman et al. (2024), Seifollahi & Naghavi (2023), Arzam et al. (2023), Raval & Reddy (2023), and Arfaei et al. (2022). Badreldin et al. (2024) showed that combining digital and traditional strategies in guerrilla marketing has positive effects on brand recognition and increasing customer loyalty. Researchers suggest that companies should use a combination of unexpected, creative, and interactive advertising to attract customers and build long-term relationships with them.

Designing a guerrilla marketing model for Iranian sports retailers can help businesses achieve positive results in attracting customers and increasing sales through innovative, creative, and low-cost approaches. This model, based on accurate market analysis, clear targeting, effective use of the marketing mix, customer experience management, and results evaluation, allows sports stores to operate effectively in the current competitive market and ultimately achieve profitability and sustainable growth.