

by Jay Conrad Levinson

Because more marketing funds are invested in advertising than in any other weapon of guerrilla marketing, and because an embarrassingly huge amount of that investment is just plain wasted, marketing guerrillas know home truths about copy, graphics, what makes commercials good or bad, and why so much advertising fails.

Guerrillas know ten things that advertising copy should always be:

1. Readable
2. Informative
3. Clear
4. Honest
5. Simple
6. On strategy
7. Motivating
8. Competitive
9. Specific
10. Believable

They know ten things not to do with advertising graphics:

1. Don't let the art overpower the idea.
2. Don't let the art overpower the headline.
3. Don't let the art overpower the copy.
4. Don't let the art fail to advance the sale.
5. Don't let the art fail to grab casual readers or viewers.
6. Don't let the art fail to get the ad or spot noticed.
7. Don't let the art fail to be different.
8. Don't let the art be created in a hurry.
9. Don't let the art fight the product's identity.
10. Don't let the art dominate the ad.

Guerrillas know what makes a TV commercial a total loser.

1. It is more entertaining than motivating.
2. It is not clear with its promise.
3. It is not visual, but depends on words.
4. It is schlocky, lacking in credibility.
5. It is high-pressure or exaggerative.
6. It is a fabulous film but a terrible commercial.
7. It is so clever you forget who ran it.
8. It is so wrapped up in special effects, it's devoid of an idea.
9. It is too complex for an idea to come shining through.
10. It is boring, boring, boring.

Guerrillas also know what makes a TV commercial a winner.

1. It is clear about its competitive advantage.
2. It is intensely visual.
3. It is professional looking.
4. It is believable and credible.
5. It creates a powerful desire.
6. It is focused on advancing the sale, not being clever.
7. It is wrapped up with the product.
8. It demonstrates the benefit.
9. It is fascinating even the tenth time you see it,

Guerrillas are fascinated by the failures of advertising and know the main reasons why so much of it falls short:

1. Premature abandonment
2. Silly positioning
3. Failure to focus
4. Starting without a plan
5. Picking the wrong media for the right audience
6. Picking the right media for the wrong audience
7. Being unclear to prospects
8. Not understanding customers
9. No understanding self
10. Exaggeration that undermines truth
11. Not keeping up with change
12. Unrealistic expectations
13. Overspending or under-spending
14. Saving money in the wrong places

15. Inattention to tiny, but nuclear-powered details
16. Missing the point about profitability
17. Thinking it can be done without hard work
18. Unimpressive first impressions
19. Committees and layers of management
20. Not using media to their greatest advantage
21. Not supporting advertising with other marketing
22. Starting out in the wrong direction
23. Allowing success to beget lethargy
24. Judging the future by the past
25. Boring advertising