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## The Designated Guerrilla

Reality in running a small business means knowing exactly what you've got to do but not having enough time to do it. If you understand how guerrilla marketing can propel you into hyperprofitability but can't take the steps to activate and maintain the process, your understanding is wasted.

Here's the deal: Marketing can succeed only if time and energy are devoted to it regularly. Insight and understanding, savvy and skill are useless unless action is taken and somebody is paying close attention to the marketing process. Maybe that somebody will be you. But perhaps you're too busy attending to the details of operations, finance, production, sales or service. If that's the case, that somebody should be your designated guerrilla -- an individual who has the expertise, interest, desire and time to mastermind your marketing.

Select that person from within your company or from the outside. There are lots of hired guns who will be delighted to eat, sleep and obsess over your marketing. Just be sure you select somebody. Find someone who will approach the marketing function in true guerrilla fashion -- with enthusiasm, confidence, high energy, and a killer instinct. If the person running your marketing show now doesn't have those attributes, get yourself another guerrilla.

Marketing, for all its sophistication, is just like a little baby in that it needs constant attention and thrives best when it is nurtured and guided. Unless you or your designated guerrilla provide this parenting, your company will begin to fade from your customers' and prospects' minds. The companies that get into trouble are often those that establish marketing momentum, then move on to other things. Those other things should always include more and better marketing -- because marketing is a continuing connective process and not a series of disconnected events.

Your designated guerrilla should be a person who knows how many marketing weapons are available to you, how many you can create right in your own office, which ones are free, what your competition is up to, and what kind of new technology can help you. Perhaps your designated guerrilla will be your marketing director or director of sales. It might be a marketing consultant, the account supervisor at an ad agency. It might be you. Just be sure it's someone who shares your vision and absolutely loves every aspect of marketing.

If you don't have a good one, you're going to miss a lot of opportunities. You'll constantly be in a position where your marketing must react rather than act. And the spirit of your company will never come shining through. If the person you need to shepherd your marketing doesn't quite know how to plan, launch, maintain and succeed with a guerrilla marketing attack, train them. The science, art and business of marketing can be learned. You don't have to be a born guerrilla. There are books, seminars, lectures, courses, newsletters, Internet sites, and audio cassettes that can give a bright person more solid and realistic information about marketing than four years of study at a university that teaches Dark Ages tactics for companies with billion-dollar budgets.

How much time should your designated guerrilla spend attending to the actions required by guerrilla marketing? The most time will be necessary at the outset; when the planning is done. Less time will be required during the launch phase, when the weapons are fired. And still less time, but constant time -- must be devoted as you sustain the attack. That time will be devoted to three tasks: maintaining the attack, tracking your marketing efforts, and developing improved marketing. It is rare for time to be spent more valuable in your pursuit of profits and joy.

Of the many reasons for business failures, an inability to market aggressively and constantly ranks right near the top. When that happens, the finger of fault always points to the CEO -- the person who is too busy with other business functions to give proper attention to marketing, too egotistical to delegate the function to someone else, or too ignorant of the power of marketing to realize the need for consistent nurturing.

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