GO GUERRILLA

Many marketers feel there are limitless possibilities and great value for marketing in creative ways using unconventional methods. This type of marketing that focuses on creativity and effort vs. spending a great deal of money is called guerrilla marketing. But how does guerrilla marketing translate to your local awareness campaign?

Geek the Library was designed to get noticed and to provide an avenue for libraries to do things they may not otherwise have thought to try. So, whether you are adopting the original Geek framework or using your own theme for your local awareness campaign, guerrilla marketing is about getting attention. The good news is that it doesn't have to be complicated. Below are ideas that are simple, affordable and easy to implement. Many of these ideas have been used successfully by libraries who participated in Geek the Library!

T-shirts:

- Purchase custom campaign t-shirts and send to local influencers (i.e., anyone who is well-known or influential in the community). Be sure to package the t-shirt with a letter explaining the campaign that also tells your library's story and the need for a local funding conversation. Ask them to wear the t-shirt at a particular event or just around town to show their support. Provide contact information so they know who to talk to find out more information. You can also invite the people you approach to staff your booth at an event, and ask that they wear the t-shirt there.

- Ask local high schools or local amateur or professional sports teams if you could provide the mascot, the halftime singer, the coach, etc., with a t-shirt. Since they may be willing to allow the mascot or coach to wear the t-shirt for only one event, capitalize on this with other marketing efforts at the same event (e.g., hand out information and stickers, set up an information table with a geek / passion board and speak at halftime).

- Get noticed when doing an interview or when your staff is out in the community by wearing your custom library t-shirts.

Stickers:

- If you don't have enough t-shirts for your entire staff, ask them to wear stickers, buttons, hats, aprons, or campaign lanyards at all campaign-related events, and ask volunteers to wear them.

- Customize, print and distribute stickers whenever possible and ask people to wear them in support of the library on a particular day or at a particular community event.

- Use blank 'I geek' stickers to allow community members to 'fill in' what they enjoy.

Signs and flyers:

- Make bold, eye-catching signs and use them at events or around your community (e.g., develop a poster using one impactful local statistic about library usage).

- Make yard signs and ask supporters to put them up in their yards.

- Start a windshield campaign by giving out cards/signs that reflect your campaign theme (e.g. "I geek XX library") and ask people to place it in the windshield of their vehicles. This can also be done with bumper clings.

- Work with schools and start a backpack campaign by getting permission to send home information, stickers, buttons, and/or bookmarks to parents. You can give children who come into the library or see staff at an event a small prize for wearing the sticker on their backpacks.

- Ask a local grocery store if you can add stickers to paper bags that they use for their customers.

Temporary tattoos*:

- Give them out at events—kids will love them!

- Ask staff to wear them in the same place (e.g., their right arm) on a particular day or at an event. Show the media and ask them to include a photo, if possible, in their publications. Ask a local celebrity to wear one at a community event.

  *You can use any of the artwork available on WebJunction's Advocacy in Action section for temporary tattoos. We recommend the sticker art or the logo art. Also, there are many vendors willing to create small custom orders; you can find a local vendor or find a company online.

Geek /Passion wall or board:

- Display boards for people to record their "geek" or "passion" whenever possible. Build a simple wearable board and use it to get attention anywhere you go. Make the board your local campaign mascot!

Free publicity:

- This is where you can really get creative. The objective is to get your local campaign out to the public as much as possible --start conversations. Be inspired by the Homer Township Public Library in Illinois, which sent in a short clip with staff wearing t-shirts to Good Morning America. It worked and they were featured on the 'Your Three Words' segment. We geek libraries!

- Organize a flash mob at an event or out in the community, and ask everyone to wear custom t-shirts under another shirt that can be exposed at some point during the routine. Have additional volunteers hand out information about the campaign and stickers after the performance. Tip off the media and don't forget to ask someone to record it, so you can post it on YouTube and other social networks, as well as your web site.

- At a large sporting event, talk to event organizers to feature your group (wearing custom library t-shirts) on the jumbo screen or during halftime.

*It's important to combine all of these efforts with handing out campaign and library information and using staff or volunteers as additional help with any attention-getting initiatives to promote your campaign.