

Surprise Me with Your Ads!

The Impacts of Guerrilla Marketing in Social Media on Brand Image

Abstract

Purpose – The advent of social media brought a new perspective for guerrilla marketing since it allows ads to reach more people through the Internet. The aim of this research is to investigate the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image.

Design/methodology/approach – A conceptual model was developed based on the Information Acceptance Model (IACM). The research model was validated through structural equation modelling (SEM) based on surveys of 385 university students.

Findings – The results support the proposed model and confirm that guerrilla marketing in social media has a positive effect on both functional and symbolic brand image.

Originality/value – Current studies regarding the influence of guerrilla marketing mostly focuses on consumers, where the possible impacts on brands have been relatively neglected. This study attempts to fill this gap by focusing on brand image.

Keywords Guerrilla marketing, Social media, Information acceptance model (IACM), Functional brand image, Symbolic brand image

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The term “guerrilla marketing” was first coined by Jay Conrad Levinson in the 1980s (Dinh and Mai, 2016; Levinson, 1984; Tam and Khuong, 2015). Levinson et al. (2010) describes the guerrilla marketing concept as follows: “achieving conventional goals, such as profits and joy, with unconventional methods, such as investing energy instead of money.” This concept was first adopted for small businesses as a means of helping them to become noticed using a small budget (Langer, 2006). It later also became popular among global brands with large companies such as Nike, Audi and IKEA having implemented this concept during various stages of their marketing strategies (Tam and Khuong, 2015). Guerrilla marketing involves untraditional advertising activities such as eye-catching street graphics, surprising product placements and memorable events; and it is therefore considered effective to grab consumers’ attention (Baltes and Leibing, 2008; Wanner, 2011).

On the other hand, although guerrilla marketing has been found influential on consumers’ purchase intentions, and considered advantageous for marketers (Tam and Khuong, 2015), it also has some disadvantages. While other traditional advertising channels allow marketers to reach a huge number of consumers, guerrilla marketing activities were only able to reach people who were passing close to the advertising activity. For example, when a company designed an unconventional bus stop to promote itself, it was only seen by people who used or passed close to that bus stop. The number of people who could see the marketing activity was thus limited. However, the advent of the Internet has changed this situation. Examples of effective guerrilla marketing can spread rapidly among Internet users; therefore, more and more consumers can see the ad even if they do not pass close to the guerrilla marketing activity. Particularly, on social media, there are many accounts such as “Marketing Birds” (e.g. @marketing_birds on Twitter) which share excellent guerrilla marketing ideas executed by a variety of companies, including both small businesses and big global brands. The content shared by Marketing Birds and other accounts are liked and shared by many users; the ads are spread through social media. Social media websites thus increase the visibility of guerrilla marketing. This study therefore has focused on the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media.

However, although the guerrilla marketing has potential to reach large audiences via social media, and it has been found influential on consumers’ purchase intentions; its possible impacts on brand image have not been known. Prior studies have mostly focused on

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3 consumers' side; the effects of guerrilla marketing on consumer behaviour (Fong and
4 Yazdanifard, 2014), buying behaviour (Iqbal and Lodhi, 2015), and purchase intention (Tam
5 and Khuong, 2015) have been examined. Yet the possible impacts on brands have been
6 relatively neglected. Uncertainty on this issue is an important obstacle for marketers to take
7 advantage of guerrilla marketing. We therefore aim to provide better understanding of
8 guerrilla marketing through examining its impacts on brand image. For this purpose, we
9 developed a research model based on Information Acceptance Model (IACM) (Erkan and
10 Evans, 2016). IACM was deemed appropriate for this study as it explains how consumers
11 adopt the information shared on computer-mediated communication platforms. The results
12 provide theoretical insights regarding guerrilla marketing on social media. On the managerial
13 side, findings could help marketers as they reveal the determinants of guerrilla marketing
14 which influence brand image.
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23 **Literature review**

24 *Guerrilla marketing*

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27 With the constant exposure of advertisements on traditional channels such as billboards,
28 newspapers and even social media, consumers' attitudes towards them has become
29 questionable (Marsden, 2006; Shenk, 1998). This leads marketers to find alternative, creative,
30 and innovative ways to reach out to prospective customers, engage with them and
31 communicate their messages.
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37 There is an increasing dissatisfaction towards marketing communication as consumers often
38 seek to avoid it (e.g. skipping adverts on YouTube), and therefore marketers need to expand
39 these various techniques in order to reach more people (Johansson, 2004). Brands apply
40 various strategies to attract consumer attention, such as publicity stunts and product placement
41 (Martin and Smith, 2008). At this point, guerrilla marketing emerges as a perfect opportunity
42 to take a proactive approach in breaking clusters and conveying the message.
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47 According to Hatch (2005, p. 53), guerrilla marketing is defined as "any activity that uses a
48 means other than traditional media to communicate a brand's name and position to prospects.
49 Also called extreme marketing, grassroots marketing, or feet-on-the-street marketing, a
50 guerrilla campaign has no pre-set rules or boundaries." The creativity involved in guerrilla
51 marketing is acknowledged as it rides on engaging a range of channels, including elements of
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3 public relations, advertising, and marketing to create an outrageous campaign which enables
4 consumers to become aware of the brand (Simone, 2006; Zuo and Veil, 2006).
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7 Guerrilla marketing can also be seen in the light of viral, ambush, buzz or stealth marketing as
8 these involve advertising in an untraditional manner concept, aiming to reach a large number
9 of people with a small budget (Ay et al., 2010; Hutter and Hoffmann, 2011). Guerrilla
10 marketing strategies have been used by a significant number of brands in various situations
11 across different countries. Nestle, Lipton, Ray-Ban, and Ponds are among these brands; they
12 use public objects (i.e. billboards, bus stops) to grab consumer attention. Attracting
13 consumers' attention while conveying the marketing message is often considered a successful
14 guerrilla marketing campaign (Hatch, 2005).
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20 The advent of the Internet and social media have made guerrilla marketing examples more
21 visible. Successful campaigns can go viral and even reach audiences of millions through the
22 Internet and social media. This means of communication, however, can also be risky for
23 brands, particularly when the message of the campaign is misunderstood by consumers. If the
24 campaign is not properly designed, or is directed at the wrong audience, it can be harmful for
25 the brand's image (Shang et al., 2006). This study therefore focuses on the possible influences
26 of guerrilla marketing on brand image. Although previous researchers have conducted studies
27 which explain guerrilla marketing definition, the possible impacts of guerrilla marketing on
28 brand image ~~however~~ have been relatively neglected.
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35 36 *Brand image*

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38 Brand image simply refers to consumers' mental image of the brand (Dobni and Zinkhan,
39 1990), including meanings related to specific attributes of the products and services of brands
40 (Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Padgett and Allen, 1997). One of the most popular definitions of
41 brand image was made by Keller (1993, p. 3); who defines brand image as "perception about
42 a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory," Additionally, a
43 further definition of brand image was given by Low and Lamb (2000, p. 352) as follows: "the
44 reasoned or emotional perceptions consumers attach to specific brands." Brand image can be
45 divided into two constructs: (a) Functional Image, (b) Symbolic Image (Bhat and Reddy,
46 1998; Simms and Trott, 2006). Wu and Wang (2014) claim that "experiential brand image"
47 could be another sub-construct of brand image, in this study however we preferred the stick
48 with two main constructs (i.e. functional image and symbolic image) since they were
49 confirmed by more studies in the literature. Functional image refers to what consumers think
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3 about the performance of products and services. Functional image is considered strong if
4 consumers consider that the products and services of brands would solve their problems (Bhat
5 and Reddy, 1998). Symbolic image, however, refers to how consumers feel with the products
6 and services. Symbolic image is considered strong if the brand can satisfy consumers' inner
7 desires, such as social status and self-value (Bhat and Reddy, 1998).
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11 Shamma and Hassan (2011) draws attention to the possibility of purchasing intention when
12 the brand image is strong in the consumers mind; brand image therefore has been considered
13 important by both marketers and researchers. Marketers use different advertising methods in
14 order to enhance the image of their brands. According to Meenaghan (1995), advertising
15 plays a central role in developing brand image. Previous studies have also examined various
16 advertising methods; celebrity endorsement (Chan et al., 2013), event sponsorships (Gwinner
17 and Eaton, 1999), television brand placement (van Reijmersdal et al., 2007) have been found
18 influential on brand image. In this study, however, we focused on the influence of guerrilla
19 marketing on brand image.
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26 27 **Theoretical background of the research model**

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29 This study builds a theoretical model to identify the determinants of guerrilla marketing in
30 social media on brand image. To do so, the IACM (Erkan and Evans, 2016) was redeveloped
31 through considering the needs of this research. IACM was found appropriate for this study
32 since it explains how people adopt the information shared on computer-mediated
33 communication platforms. The model, however, focuses on purchase intention, while this
34 study investigates the effects of guerrilla marketing on brand image.
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40 *Information acceptance model (IACM)*

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42 IACM was first developed in order to explain the determinants of electronic word of mouth
43 (eWOM) information on social media which affect consumers' purchase intentions. The
44 model postulates that information usefulness, which is the antecedent of information adoption
45 and purchase intention, is decided by information quality, information credibility, needs of
46 information, and attitude towards information (Erkan and Evans, 2016). The authors built this
47 model by considering two well-established theories: Information Adoption Model (IAM)
48 (Sussman and Siegal, 2003) and Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein and Ajzen,
49 1975). The IAM explains how the information on computer-mediated communication
50 platforms are adopted by people, and focuses on the characteristics of information: quality,
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3 credibility, and usefulness. However, the IAM was criticised since it only focuses on
4 characteristic of information and neglects behaviours of consumers towards information
5 (Erkan and Evans, 2016). This is the point where it was extended by considering TRA. TRA
6 is a well-known model which explains consumers' behavioural intentions (Fishbein and
7 Ajzen, 1975). Recent studies used TRA in order to identify the relationship between online
8 information and purchase intention (Prendergast, Ko and Yuen, 2010; Cheung and Thadani,
9 2012; Reichelt, Sievert and Jacob, 2014). According to TRA, behavioural intention has two
10 antecedents; attitude towards information and subjective norms (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).
11 Attitude towards information refers to customer's assessment about the information. The
12 IACM mostly focuses on "attitude towards information" part of TRA (instead of subjective
13 norms), because the model investigates the influence of online information in social media
14 that influences consumers' purchase intentions.

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23 In the IACM model, the authors claim that they fulfil the gap of IAM by adding two more
24 constructs: "needs of information" and "attitude towards information" (Erkan and Evans,
25 2016). The constructs "attitude towards information" and the "behavioural intention" are the
26 parts where they applied TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). As this study does not focus on
27 behavioural intention, we did not borrow the final part of the IACM. Instead, we used
28 functional and symbolic brand image as the aim of this research is to investigate the influence
29 of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image. However, the IACM is deemed
30 appropriate since it provides a comprehensive approach to understand the influence of online
31 information by considering both the characteristics of information and consumer behaviour
32 towards information together. It is therefore preferred in this study.

33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 *Research model and hypotheses development*

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42 Figure 1 shows the research model of this study, explaining the determinants of guerrilla
43 marketing on social media which influence brand image. This study claims that guerrilla
44 marketing examples shared on social media are influential on brand image. To understand
45 this, the IACM has been developed; our model eventually examines the relationships between
46 following variables: information quality, information credibility, needs of information,
47 attitude towards information, information usefulness, information adoption, functional brand
48 image, and symbolic brand image.

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Information quality

Information quality refers to the persuasive power embedded in the message (Bhattacharjee and Sanford, 2006; Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017; Shu and Scott, 2014). Information which satisfies appreciation criteria of people is considered to be high quality information (Koivumaki et al., 2008; Salaün and Flores, 2001; Ul-Islam and Rahman, 2017). When the quality of information is both high and satisfying, consumers regard the information to be useful. Information quality therefore has been found to be an essential determinant of information usefulness by previous researchers (Saeed and Abdinnour-Helm, 2008; Zhu et al., 2015). Both information adoption model (Sussman and Siegal, 2003) and information acceptance model (Erkan and Evans, 2016) confirmed that information quality has a strong relationship with information usefulness (Jin et al., 2009). However, we believe that information quality is not only important to information usefulness, but also to information adoption. People who perceive higher information quality will be more likely to adopt the information. This relationship has been indirectly proposed by previous models (Sussman and Siegal, 2003), whereas in this study we propose a direct relationship in our research model. We therefore hypothesised that:

- H1.** Information quality is positively related to information usefulness (H1a), and information adoption (H1b).

Information credibility

Information credibility refers to a message receiver's perception of the trustworthiness of that message (Grewal et al., 1994; Kim et al., 2016; Ma and Atkin, 2016). It has been found to be a further essential determinant of information usefulness in the information adoption model (Chung et al., 2015; Shu, 2014; Sussman and Siegal, 2003). People tend to consider the information useful when they perceive the information credible (Castillo et al., 2013; Jin et al., 2009). This relationship has also been validated by information acceptance model (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Significant importance has also been given to the information credibility by other previous researchers; Awad and Ragowsky (2008) found it to be the main determinant in the decision making process of consumers, while Wathen and Burkell (2002) consider information credibility to be the initial factor in the individuals' persuasion process.

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3 Information credibility has also been found influential on information adoption (McKnight
4 and Kacmar, 2006) and purchase intention (Prendergast et al., 2010). In this study, we
5 therefore believe that information credibility is not only important to information usefulness,
6 but also information adoption. People who perceive higher information credibility will be
7 more likely to adopt the information. We therefore hypothesised that:
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11 **H2.** Information credibility is positively related to information usefulness (H2a), and
12 information adoption (H2b).
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16 17 18 *Needs of information*

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20 Needs of information have previously been studied using different research questions. It has
21 been used as ‘advice seeking’ (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Wolny and Mueller, 2013) and
22 ‘opinion seeking’ (Chu and Kim, 2011; Wang et al., 2016). In information acceptance model,
23 Erkan and Evans (2016) proposed that people who need information on social media are more
24 likely to find it useful; this relationship was also validated in their study. As this study
25 investigates the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media, we also considered using
26 ‘needs of information’ appropriate for this research and it is therefore included to our research
27 model. However, we believe that the impact of needs of information cannot be limited to
28 information usefulness only; it has potential to have a direct influence on information
29 adoption. The following hypothesis is thus proposed:
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37 **H3.** Needs of information is positively related to information usefulness (H3a) and
38 information adoption (H3b).
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44 *Attitude towards information*

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46 Attitude towards information is another variable which we considered as one of the
47 determinants of guerrilla marketing in social media which influences brand image. This
48 construct is adapted from theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). In addition to
49 Fishbein and Ajzen’s theory, two further theories have also proposed a relationship between
50 attitude and behavioural intention: Technology Acceptance Model (Bagozzi et al., 1992), and
51 Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Erkan and Evans (2016) thus adapted this
52 variable to the information acceptance model and proposed that attitudes of social media users
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3 towards the information can have a positive impact on information usefulness. Although this
4 hypothesis was not supported in their study, another research show that attitude towards
5 eWOM information has positive influence on perceived eWOM usefulness (Erkan and
6 Elwalda, 2018). In this study we therefore believe that people who have positive attitudes
7 towards information in guerrilla advertisements are more likely to find them useful. In
8 addition, we propose that attitude towards information is not only important to information
9 usefulness, but also information adoption. People who have positive attitudes towards
10 information will be more likely to adopt the information. The following hypothesis is thus
11 proposed:
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18 **H4.** Attitude towards information is positively related to information usefulness (H4a), and
19 information adoption (H4b).
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24 *Information usefulness*

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27 Information usefulness refers to the perceptions of individuals' that using information will
28 improve their performance (Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn 2008; Davis 1989; Ku 2011). Both
29 information adoption model (Sussman and Siegal, 2003), and information acceptance model
30 (Erkan and Evans, 2016) considered information usefulness as a main determinant of
31 information adoption. Previous studies have also found information usefulness influential on
32 purchase intention (Lee and Koo, 2015; Liu and Zhang, 2010; Wu and Lin, 2017), and
33 technology adoption (Yeh and Teng, 2012). People who perceive the information useful will
34 be more likely to adopt the information; we therefore hypothesised the H5. Moreover, in this
35 study we proposed the information usefulness as a predictor of brand image. Brand image is
36 defined as the consumer's mental image of the brand (Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Dobni and
37 Zinkhan, 1990). The brand image can be divided into two constructs, functional and symbolic
38 (Bhat and Reddy, 1998; Simms and Trott, 2006). The products of brands can help consumers
39 solve their problems; the functional brand image refers to what consumers think about brands
40 in this regard (Bhat and Reddy, 1998). The symbolic image, however, refers to whether the
41 brands can satisfy consumers' inner desires such as social status and self-recognition (Bhat
42 and Reddy, 1998). The advertisements and other brand activities can shape their image in
43 consumers' minds. We therefore hypothesised that information usefulness can have a positive
44 effect on both functional and symbolic brand image (H6).
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3 **H5.** Information usefulness is positively related to information adoption (H5).
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5 **H6.** Information usefulness is positively related to functional brand image (H6a), and
6 symbolic brand image (H6b).
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10 11 *Information adoption*

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14 Information adoption is defined as the process by which people intentionally engage in using
15 information (Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn 2008). On social media, people are exposed to a
16 significant amount of brand-related information through advertisements. However, not all
17 information on social media has the same influence on users; the level of impact can vary
18 (Erkan and Evans, 2016; Yang, 2012). Consumers individually assess the validity of
19 information, and tend to adopt it if they find it meaningful (Zhang and Watts, 2008).
20 Information adoption has been studied by previous researchers and found influential on
21 purchase intention (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Yet, in this study, we proposed the information
22 adoption to be a further predictor of brand image. Park et al. (1986) argued that brand image
23 can be affected by the communication activities of companies; information shared through
24 advertisements is therefore considered important for both the functional and symbolic brand
25 image. We thus hypothesised that information adoption can have a positive effect on both
26 functional and symbolic brand image (H7).
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36 **H7.** Information adoption is positively related to functional brand image (H7a), and
37 symbolic brand image (H7b).
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42 **Method**

43 44 *Sample*

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47 In order to test the hypotheses of this study, a survey was conducted. Before the data
48 collection, we did pilot tests in order to select the most generic guerrilla advertisements. This
49 helped us to eliminate those which were difficult to understand. Then we showed four
50 selected guerrilla advertisements to participants before they commenced filling in the
51 questionnaire. A total of 385 university students participated to our study. This sample was
52 considered appropriate since the majority of the age group of university students are social
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3 media users. According to the latest statistics, 89% of Internet users aged between 18 and 29
4 use social media websites (PRC, 2014). As this study investigates the influence of guerrilla
5 marketing in social media, we required a sample who use both the Internet and social media.
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7 Eventually the descriptive statistics of this study shows that more than half of the participants
8 (67.8%) had been using the Internet for six years or more, and 89.6% of the participants stated
9 that they used social media every day. Further sample demographics are presented in Table I.
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18 *Measures*

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21 This study uses a multi-item approach in the design of the survey. In order to enhance the
22 reliability and validity of this study, eight constructs were measured; information quality,
23 information credibility, needs of information, attitude towards information, information
24 usefulness, information adoption, functional brand image and symbolic brand image. A five-
25 point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree - 1 to strongly agree - 5) was used.
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27 Applicable items were adopted from previous literature and enhanced according to the context
28 of this study.
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33 The constructs; 'Information Quality' and 'Attitude towards Information' were adopted from
34 the study of Park et al. (2007) with two-items and three-items scales. Three-scale items for the
35 'Information Credibility' construct was adopted from Prendergast et al. (2010). 'Needs of
36 Information' was measured by adapting three-items used by Erkan and Evans (2016). The
37 'Information Usefulness' construct was measured by three-items adopted from Bailey and
38 Pearson (1983). The 'Information Adaption' construct with three-items was generated from
39 the study of Cheung et al. (2009). Three-items and four-items scales for 'Functional Brand
40 Image' and 'Symbolic Brand Image' were adopted from Wu and Wang (2014). Table II
41 provides all the constructs and items for this study.
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51 **Results**

52 *Measurement model evaluation*

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3 A structural equation modelling approach fits better with the predictive models (Bentler and
4 Chou, 1987) and is therefore preferred for this study. The research model was tested using
5 AMOS software. Primarily, the reliability and validity of each scale was analysed.
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7 Convergent validity refers to the how the measures are related to each other or if measures
8 belong to same scale (Hair et al., 2010). Simply, it represents the degree of which measures of
9 the same scale are in an agreement (Kerlinger, 1986). To assess the convergent validity of the
10 measurements, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest to measure composite reliability ($CR >$
11 0.70) for each construct and the average variance extracted ($AVE > 0.50$) for each construct.
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16 Table III shows that all variables are higher than the minimum acceptable level of CR
17 between a range of 0.794 to 0.909. (Information Quality = 0.905, Information Credibility =
18 0.815, Needs of Information = 0.868, Attitude towards Information = 0.894, Information
19 Usefulness = 0.866, Information Adoption = 0.909, Functional Brand Image = 0.794,
20 Symbolic Brand Image = 0.870). Besides, all the variables are higher than the minimum
21 acceptable level of AVE between a range of 0.562 to 0.827. (Information Quality = 0.827,
22 Information Credibility = 0.596, Needs of Information = 0.687, Attitude towards Information
23 = 0.737, Information Usefulness = 0.684, Information Adoption = 0.769, Functional Brand
24 Image = 0.562, Symbolic Brand Image = 0.627). All variables achieve the recommended
25 factor loading level which is 0.70. Factor loading of each variable is between the range of
26 0.70 to 0.96. (See Table III)
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40 The discriminant validity was measured to ensure whether or not a measurement is a
41 reflection of any others (Hair et al., 2010). It is shows the degree to which measurement
42 differs from another (Kerlinger, 1986). The square root of average variance extracted (AVE)
43 of each variable should be greater than the other correlation coefficients for satisfied
44 discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Table IV demonstrates that the square root
45 of AVE for each variable is greater than its shared variance within a construct, therefore
46 discriminant validity is supported. As such, the results show that the convergent validity is
47 achieved.
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Structural model evaluation

With reference to Table V, there are significant relationships between the variables of ten hypotheses, while three hypotheses were found to be insignificant. Information quality was not found to be influential on information usefulness and information adoption; (respectively) H1a ($\beta = 0.040$) and H1b ($\beta = 0.023$) were not supported. Information credibility and needs of information were found to have significant positive influence on information usefulness; H2a ($\beta = 0.341$, $p < 0.05$) and H3a ($\beta = 0.292$, $p < 0.05$) were supported. However, no significant relationship was found between attitude towards information and information usefulness ($\beta = 0.144$, $p < 0.05$), H4a was therefore not supported. Furthermore, consistent with H2b, H3b, H4b, and H5; information credibility, needs of information, attitude toward information and information usefulness were found to be influential on information adoption; (respectively) H2b ($\beta = 0.218$, $p < 0.05$), H3b ($\beta = 0.272$, $p < 0.05$), H4b ($\beta = 0.216$, $p < 0.05$) and H5 ($\beta = 0.184$, $p < 0.05$) were supported. Information usefulness and information adoption have a positive influence on functional brand image. H6a ($\beta = 0.349$, $p < 0.05$) and H7a ($\beta = 0.320$, $p < 0.05$) were therefore supported. Finally, consistent with H6b and H7b, information usefulness and information adoption have a positive influence on symbolic brand image. H6b ($\beta = 0.216$, $p < 0.05$) and H7b ($\beta = 0.332$, $p < 0.05$) were supported.

In addition, goodness-of-fit indices demonstrate that the model fits well with the data; $\chi^2 / d.f. = 1.914$; $p < 0.05$; GFI = 0.915; AGFI = 0.889; CFI = 0.963; RMSEA = 0.049, PCLOSE = 0.605. Table V presents both the goodness-of-fit indices of the structural model; and the results for hypotheses testing.

[Table V near here]

Discussion and conclusion

This study investigates the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image. For this purpose, a conceptual model was developed based on the Information Acceptance Model (IACM) (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Results from the structural equation model indicate that the determinants of the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media are influential on both functional and symbolic brand image. The model of this study tests eight constructs: (1) Information Quality, (2) Information Credibility, (3) Needs of information, (4) Attitude

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3 towards Information, (5) Information Usefulness, (6) Information Adoption, (7) Functional
4 Brand Image, and (8) Symbolic Brand Image.

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6 Ten hypotheses of the study were supported while three of them (i.e. H1a, H1b, H4a) were
7 not supported. The first hypothesis of the study proposes the influence of information quality
8 on information usefulness (H1a) and information adoption (H1b). However, unlike the
9 previous studies which confirms the H1a (Saeed and Abdinnour-Helm, 2008; Sussman and
10 Siegal, 2003), no significant relationships were found between the mentioned variables of the
11 study. One possible explanation for this result may be the selected guerrilla advertisements
12 used in this study. We showed four different guerrilla advertisements to participants before
13 they commenced filling in the questionnaire. Although we selected the most generic guerrilla
14 advertisements during the pilot tests and eliminated those which were difficult to understand,
15 it might still be a possible reason for this result.

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17 The second hypothesis of the study proposes the influence of information credibility on
18 information usefulness (H2a) and information adoption (H2b). The results confirmed the
19 described relationships, which were in line with the previous studies (Erkan and Evans, 2016;
20 McKnight and Kacmar, 2006; Sussman and Siegal, 2003). Furthermore, the third hypothesis
21 of the study proposes the effect of needs of information on information usefulness (H3a) and
22 information adoption (H3b). The findings show positive relationships between the described
23 variables of the study. People, who need information on social media, are more likely to find
24 it useful and adoptable.

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26 The fourth hypothesis of the study proposes the influence of attitude towards information on
27 information usefulness (H4a) and information adoption (H4b). The findings did not support
28 the H4a; however, the relationship between attitude towards information and information
29 adoption (H4b) was supported. This means people who have positive attitudes towards
30 information provided by guerrilla advertising are more likely to adopt them (H4b). Moreover,
31 H5 proposes the relationship between information usefulness and information adoption.
32 People who perceive the information useful will be more likely to adopt the information. The
33 results of this study confirmed the described relationship, which is also consistent with the
34 previous studies (Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn 2008; K. Y. Lee and Yang 2015; Sussman and
35 Siegal 2003).

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37 The sixth hypothesis of the study proposes the information usefulness as a predictor of
38 functional brand image (H6a) and symbolic brand image (H6b). The findings confirmed these

relationships; both parts of the hypothesis were supported. Information usefulness has a positive impact on functional and symbolic brand image. Finally, the last hypothesis of the study proposes the information adoption as a predictor of functional brand image (H7a) and symbolic brand image (H7b). The results confirmed these relationships; both H7a and H7b were supported.

Theoretical and managerial implications

Guerrilla marketing has been considered worth studying by researchers; previously, the effects of guerrilla marketing on consumer behaviour (Fong and Yazdanifard, 2014), buying behaviour (Iqbal and Lodhi, 2015), and purchase intention (Tam and Khuong, 2015) have been examined. These studies, however, mostly focused on the influences of guerrilla marketing on consumers, where the possible impacts on brands have been relatively disregarded. In order to fulfil this gap, our study investigated the influence of guerrilla marketing on brand image. The results show that guerrilla advertisements on social media have a positive influence on both functional and symbolic brand image. Communication activities of companies have long been considered influential on brand image (Park et al., 1986); yet our findings specifically prove the influence of guerrilla marketing activities, it is therefore important for the literature.

Secondly, within this study we contribute to Information Acceptance Model (IACM) by expanding its scope. IACM was developed in order to explain how people accept the information on computer-mediated communication platforms (Erkan and Evans, 2016). The model presents important determinants while using “purchase intention” as a dependent variable. In this study we expand the scope of IACM through testing its determinants on “brand image.” This proves that the IACM is not only valid for one context, the model is appropriate for using in different fields. Researchers who want to understand how people adopt / accept the information on computer-mediated communication platforms can apply this model in a variety of contexts. This finding is especially valuable for information systems (IS) researchers as they test different models to explore the influence of online information.

On the managerial side, this study provides marketers with a frame of reference to understand the information adoption process of guerrilla marketing on social media. Effective guerrilla marketing examples spread rapidly among Internet users; they have potential to reach a lot of people in a short period of time. As this study shows the determinants of guerrilla marketing on social media which affect the functional and symbolic brand image, it provides valuable

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3 insights for marketers. The findings could help marketers to develop better guerrilla
4 marketing strategies and enhance their brand image.
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6 7 *Limitations and future research*

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9 The results of this study should be evaluated with the following limitations. This study was
10 conducted with university students. This sample was deemed appropriate since the study had
11 to be conducted with people who use social media. However, although the age group of
12 university students constitutes the majority of social media users, they may not fully represent
13 the whole population. Future studies may test the influence of guerrilla marketing across a
14 range of demographic groups. Also, as previously mentioned, this study showed four guerrilla
15 marketing examples to participants before they commenced filling in the questionnaire.
16 Although we selected the most generic guerrilla advertisements during the pilot tests and
17 eliminated the ones which were difficult to understand, this can still be considered as a
18 limitations of the study. Future researchers could use more examples, or could retest our study
19 using different guerrilla advertisements.
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Surprise Me with Your Ads!

The Impacts of Guerrilla Marketing in Social Media on Brand Image

Abstract

Purpose – The advent of social media brought a new perspective for guerrilla marketing since it allows ads to reach more people through the Internet. The aim of this research is to investigate the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image.

Design/methodology/approach – A conceptual model was developed based on the Information Acceptance Model (IACM). The research model was validated through structural equation modelling (SEM) based on surveys of 385 university students.

Findings – The results support the proposed model and confirm that guerrilla marketing in social media has a positive effect on both functional and symbolic brand image.

Originality/value – Current studies regarding the influence of guerrilla marketing mostly focuses on consumers, where the possible impacts on brands have been relatively neglected. This study attempts to fill this gap by focusing on brand image.

Keywords Guerrilla marketing, Social media, Information acceptance model (IACM), Functional brand image, Symbolic brand image

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The term “guerrilla marketing” was first coined by Jay Conrad Levinson in the 1980s (Dinh and Mai, 2016; Levinson, 1984; Tam and Khuong, 2015). Levinson et al. (2010) describes the guerrilla marketing concept as follows: “achieving conventional goals, such as profits and joy, with unconventional methods, such as investing energy instead of money.” This concept was first adopted for small businesses as a means of helping them to become noticed using a small budget (Langer, 2006). It later also became popular among global brands with large companies such as Nike, Audi and IKEA having implemented this concept during various stages of their marketing strategies (Tam and Khuong, 2015). Guerrilla marketing involves untraditional advertising activities such as eye-catching street graphics, surprising product placements and memorable events; and it is therefore considered effective to grab consumers’ attention (Baltes and Leibing, 2008; Wanner, 2011).

On the other hand, although guerrilla marketing has been found influential on consumers’ purchase intentions, and considered advantageous for marketers (Tam and Khuong, 2015), it also has some disadvantages. While other traditional advertising channels allow marketers to reach a huge number of consumers, guerrilla marketing activities were only able to reach people who were passing close to the advertising activity. For example, when a company designed an unconventional bus stop to promote itself, it was only seen by people who used or passed close to that bus stop. The number of people who could see the marketing activity was thus limited. However, the advent of the Internet has changed this situation. Examples of effective guerrilla marketing can spread rapidly among Internet users; therefore, more and more consumers can see the ad even if they do not pass close to the guerrilla marketing activity. Particularly, on social media, there are many accounts such as “Marketing Birds” (e.g. @marketing_birds on Twitter) which share excellent guerrilla marketing ideas executed by a variety of companies, including both small businesses and big global brands. The content shared by Marketing Birds and other accounts are liked and shared by many users; the ads are spread through social media. Social media websites thus increase the visibility of guerrilla marketing. This study therefore has focused on the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media.

However, although the guerrilla marketing has potential to reach large audiences via social media, and it has been found influential on consumers’ purchase intentions; its possible impacts on brand image have not been known. Prior studies have mostly focused on

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3 consumers' side; the effects of guerrilla marketing on consumer behaviour (Fong and
4 Yazdanifard, 2014), buying behaviour (Iqbal and Lodhi, 2015), and purchase intention (Tam
5 and Khuong, 2015) have been examined. Yet the possible impacts on brands have been
6 relatively neglected. Uncertainty on this issue is an important obstacle for marketers to take
7 advantage of guerrilla marketing. We therefore aim to provide better understanding of
8 guerrilla marketing through examining its impacts on brand image. For this purpose, we
9 developed a research model based on Information Acceptance Model (IACM) (Erkan and
10 Evans, 2016). IACM was deemed appropriate for this study as it explains how consumers
11 adopt the information shared on computer-mediated communication platforms. The results
12 provide theoretical insights regarding guerrilla marketing on social media. On the managerial
13 side, findings could help marketers as they reveal the determinants of guerrilla marketing
14 which influence brand image.

24 **Literature review**

26 *Guerrilla marketing*

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30 With the constant exposure of advertisements on traditional channels such as billboards,
31 newspapers and even social media, consumers' attitudes towards them has become
32 questionable (Marsden, 2006; Shenk, 1998). This leads marketers to find alternative, creative,
33 and innovative ways to reach out to prospective customers, engage with them and
34 communicate their messages.

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39 There is an increasing dissatisfaction towards marketing communication as consumers often
40 seek to avoid it (e.g. skipping adverts on YouTube), and therefore marketers need to expand
41 these various techniques in order to reach more people (Johansson, 2004). Brands apply
42 various strategies to attract consumer attention, such as publicity stunts and product placement
43 (Martin and Smith, 2008). At this point, guerrilla marketing emerges as a perfect opportunity
44 to take a proactive approach in breaking clusters and conveying the message.

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49 According to Hatch (2005, p. 53), guerrilla marketing is defined as "any activity that uses a
50 means other than traditional media to communicate a brand's name and position to prospects.
51 Also called extreme marketing, grassroots marketing, or feet-on-the-street marketing, a
52 guerrilla campaign has no pre-set rules or boundaries." The creativity involved in guerrilla
53 marketing is acknowledged as it rides on engaging a range of channels, including elements of
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3 public relations, advertising, and marketing to create an outrageous campaign which enables
4 consumers to become aware of the brand (Simone, 2006; Zuo and Veil, 2006).
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8 Guerrilla marketing can also be seen in the light of viral, ambush, buzz or stealth marketing as
9 these involve advertising in an untraditional manner concept, aiming to reach a large number
10 of people with a small budget (Ay et al., 2010; Hutter and Hoffmann, 2011). Guerrilla
11 marketing strategies have been used by a significant number of brands in various situations
12 across different countries. Nestle, Lipton, Ray-Ban, and Ponds are among these brands; they
13 use public objects (i.e. billboards, bus stops) to grab consumer attention. Attracting
14 consumers' attention while conveying the marketing message is often considered a successful
15 guerrilla marketing campaign (Hatch, 2005).
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22 The advent of the Internet and social media have made guerrilla marketing examples more
23 visible. Successful campaigns can go viral and even reach audiences of millions through the
24 Internet and social media. This means of communication, however, can also be risky for
25 brands, particularly when the message of the campaign is misunderstood by consumers. If the
26 campaign is not properly designed, or is directed at the wrong audience, it can be harmful for
27 the brand's image (Shang et al., 2006). This study therefore focuses on the possible influences
28 of guerrilla marketing on brand image. Although previous researchers have conducted studies
29 which explain guerrilla marketing definition, the possible impacts of guerrilla marketing on
30 brand image however have been relatively neglected.
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38 *Brand image*

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41 Brand image simply refers to consumers' mental image of the brand (Dobni and Zinkhan,
42 1990), including meanings related to specific attributes of the products and services of brands
43 (Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Padgett and Allen, 1997). One of the most popular definitions of
44 brand image was made by Keller (1993, p. 3); who defines brand image as "perception about
45 a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory," Additionally, a
46 further definition of brand image was given by Low and Lamb (2000, p. 352) as follows: "the
47 reasoned or emotional perceptions consumers attach to specific brands." Brand image can be
48 divided into two constructs: (a) Functional Image, (b) Symbolic Image (Bhat and Reddy,
49 1998; Simms and Trott, 2006). Wu and Wang (2014) claim that "experiential brand image"
50 could be another sub-construct of brand image, in this study however we preferred the stick
51 with two main constructs (i.e. functional image and symbolic image) since they were
52 confirmed by more studies in the literature. Functional image refers to what consumers think
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3 about the performance of products and services. Functional image is considered strong if
4 consumers consider that the products and services of brands would solve their problems (Bhat
5 and Reddy, 1998). Symbolic image, however, refers to how consumers feel with the products
6 and services. Symbolic image is considered strong if the brand can satisfy consumers' inner
7 desires, such as social status and self-value (Bhat and Reddy, 1998).
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12 Shamma and Hassan (2011) draws attention to the possibility of purchasing intention when
13 the brand image is strong in the consumers mind; brand image therefore has been considered
14 important by both marketers and researchers. Marketers use different advertising methods in
15 order to enhance the image of their brands. According to Meenaghan (1995), advertising
16 plays a central role in developing brand image. Previous studies have also examined various
17 advertising methods; celebrity endorsement (Chan et al., 2013), event sponsorships (Gwinner
18 and Eaton, 1999), television brand placement (van Reijmersdal et al., 2007) have been found
19 influential on brand image. In this study, however, we focused on the influence of guerrilla
20 marketing on brand image.
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28 29 **Theoretical background of the research model**

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31 This study builds a theoretical model to identify the determinants of guerrilla marketing in
32 social media on brand image. To do so, the IACM (Erkan and Evans, 2016) was redeveloped
33 through considering the needs of this research. IACM was found appropriate for this study
34 since it explains how people adopt the information shared on computer-mediated
35 communication platforms. The model, however, focuses on purchase intention, while this
36 study investigates the effects of guerrilla marketing on brand image.
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42 43 *Information acceptance model (IACM)*

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45 IACM was first developed in order to explain the determinants of electronic word of mouth
46 (eWOM) information on social media which affect consumers' purchase intentions. The
47 model postulates that information usefulness, which is the antecedent of information adoption
48 and purchase intention, is decided by information quality, information credibility, needs of
49 information, and attitude towards information (Erkan and Evans, 2016). The authors built this
50 model by considering two well-established theories: Information Adoption Model (IAM)
51 (Sussman and Siegal, 2003) and Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein and Ajzen,
52 1975). The IAM explains how the information on computer-mediated communication
53 platforms are adopted by people, and focuses on the characteristics of information: quality,
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3 credibility, and usefulness. However, the IAM was criticised since it only focuses on
4 characteristic of information and neglects behaviours of consumers towards information
5 (Erkan and Evans, 2016). This is the point where it was extended by considering TRA. TRA
6 is a well-known model which explains consumers` behavioural intentions (Fishbein and
7 Ajzen, 1975). Recent studies used TRA in order to identify the relationship between online
8 information and purchase intention (Prendergast, Ko and Yuen, 2010; Cheung and Thadani,
9 2012; Reichelt, Sievert and Jacob, 2014). According to TRA, behavioural intention has two
10 antecedents; attitude towards information and subjective norms (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).
11 Attitude towards information refers to customer`s assessment about the information. The
12 IACM mostly focuses on “attitude towards information” part of TRA (instead of subjective
13 norms), because the model investigates the influence of online information in social media
14 that influences consumers` purchase intentions.

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17 In the IACM model, the authors claim that they fulfil the gap of IAM by adding two more
18 constructs: “needs of information” and “attitude towards information” (Erkan and Evans,
19 2016). The constructs “attitude towards information” and the “behavioural intention” are the
20 parts where they applied TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). As this study does not focus on
21 behavioural intention, we did not borrow the final part of the IACM. Instead, we used
22 functional and symbolic brand image as the aim of this research is to investigate the influence
23 of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image. However, the IACM is deemed
24 appropriate since it provides a comprehensive approach to understand the influence of online
25 information by considering both the characteristics of information and consumer behaviour
26 towards information together. It is therefore preferred in this study.

27 28 29 *Research model and hypotheses development*

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32 Figure 1 shows the research model of this study, explaining the determinants of guerrilla
33 marketing on social media which influence brand image. This study claims that guerrilla
34 marketing examples shared on social media are influential on brand image. To understand
35 this, the IACM has been developed; our model eventually examines the relationships between
36 following variables: information quality, information credibility, needs of information,
37 attitude towards information, information usefulness, information adoption, functional brand
38 image, and symbolic brand image.

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[Figure 1 near here]

Information quality

Information quality refers to the persuasive power embedded in the message (Bhattacharjee and Sanford, 2006; Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017; Shu and Scott, 2014). Information which satisfies appreciation criteria of people is considered to be high quality information (Koivumaki et al., 2008; Salaün and Flores, 2001; Ul-Islam and Rahman, 2017). When the quality of information is both high and satisfying, consumers regard the information to be useful. Information quality therefore has been found to be an essential determinant of information usefulness by previous researchers (Saeed and Abdinnour-Helm, 2008; Zhu et al., 2015). Both information adoption model (Sussman and Siegal, 2003) and information acceptance model (Erkan and Evans, 2016) confirmed that information quality has a strong relationship with information usefulness (Jin et al., 2009). However, we believe that information quality is not only important to information usefulness, but also to information adoption. People who perceive higher information quality will be more likely to adopt the information. This relationship has been indirectly proposed by previous models (Sussman and Siegal, 2003), whereas in this study we propose a direct relationship in our research model. We therefore hypothesised that:

H1. Information quality is positively related to information usefulness (H1a), and information adoption (H1b).

Information credibility

Information credibility refers to a message receiver's perception of the trustworthiness of that message (Grewal et al., 1994; Kim et al., 2016; Ma and Atkin, 2016). It has been found to be a further essential determinant of information usefulness in the information adoption model (Chung et al., 2015; Shu, 2014; Sussman and Siegal, 2003). People tend to consider the information useful when they perceive the information credible (Castillo et al., 2013; Jin et al., 2009). This relationship has also been validated by information acceptance model (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Significant importance has also been given to the information credibility by other previous researchers; Awad and Ragowsky (2008) found it to be the main determinant in the decision making process of consumers, while Wathen and Burkell (2002) consider information credibility to be the initial factor in the individuals' persuasion process.

Information credibility has also been found influential on information adoption (McKnight and Kacmar, 2006) and purchase intention (Prendergast et al., 2010). In this study, we therefore believe that information credibility is not only important to information usefulness, but also information adoption. People who perceive higher information credibility will be more likely to adopt the information. We therefore hypothesised that:

H2. Information credibility is positively related to information usefulness (H2a), and information adoption (H2b).

Needs of information

Needs of information have previously been studied using different research questions. It has been used as ‘advice seeking’ (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Wolny and Mueller, 2013) and ‘opinion seeking’ (Chu and Kim, 2011; Wang et al., 2016). In information acceptance model, Erkan and Evans (2016) proposed that people who need information on social media are more likely to find it useful; this relationship was also validated in their study. As this study investigates the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media, we also considered using ‘needs of information’ appropriate for this research and it is therefore included to our research model. However, we believe that the impact of needs of information cannot be limited to information usefulness only; it has potential to have a direct influence on information adoption. The following hypothesis is thus proposed:

H3. Needs of information is positively related to information usefulness (H3a) and information adoption (H3b).

Attitude towards information

Attitude towards information is another variable which we considered as one of the determinants of guerrilla marketing in social media which influences brand image. This construct is adapted from theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). In addition to Fishbein and Ajzen’s theory, two further theories have also proposed a relationship between attitude and behavioural intention: Technology Acceptance Model (Bagozzi et al., 1992), and Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Erkan and Evans (2016) thus adapted this variable to the information acceptance model and proposed that attitudes of social media users

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3 towards the information can have a positive impact on information usefulness. Although this
4 hypothesis was not supported in their study, another research show that attitude towards
5 eWOM information has positive influence on perceived eWOM usefulness (Erkan and
6 Elwalda, 2018). In this study we therefore believe that people who have positive attitudes
7 towards information in guerrilla advertisements are more likely to find them useful. In
8 addition, we propose that attitude towards information is not only important to information
9 usefulness, but also information adoption. People who have positive attitudes towards
10 information will be more likely to adopt the information. The following hypothesis is thus
11 proposed:
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19 **H4.** Attitude towards information is positively related to information usefulness (H4a), and
20 information adoption (H4b).
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26 *Information usefulness*

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28 Information usefulness refers to the perceptions of individuals' that using information will
29 improve their performance (Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn 2008; Davis 1989; Ku 2011). Both
30 information adoption model (Sussman and Siegal, 2003), and information acceptance model
31 (Erkan and Evans, 2016) considered information usefulness as a main determinant of
32 information adoption. Previous studies have also found information usefulness influential on
33 purchase intention (Lee and Koo, 2015; Liu and Zhang, 2010; Wu and Lin, 2017), and
34 technology adoption (Yeh and Teng, 2012). People who perceive the information useful will
35 be more likely to adopt the information; we therefore hypothesised the H5. Moreover, in this
36 study we proposed the information usefulness as a predictor of brand image. Brand image is
37 defined as the consumer's mental image of the brand (Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Dobni and
38 Zinkhan, 1990). The brand image can be divided into two constructs, functional and symbolic
39 (Bhat and Reddy, 1998; Simms and Trott, 2006). The products of brands can help consumers
40 solve their problems; the functional brand image refers to what consumers think about brands
41 in this regard (Bhat and Reddy, 1998). The symbolic image, however, refers to whether the
42 brands can satisfy consumers' inner desires such as social status and self-recognition (Bhat
43 and Reddy, 1998). The advertisements and other brand activities can shape their image in
44 consumers' minds. We therefore hypothesised that information usefulness can have a positive
45 effect on both functional and symbolic brand image (H6).
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3 **H5.** Information usefulness is positively related to information adoption (H5).
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6 **H6.** Information usefulness is positively related to functional brand image (H6a), and
7 symbolic brand image (H6b).
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10 11 12 *Information adoption*

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15 Information adoption is defined as the process by which people intentionally engage in using
16 information (Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn 2008). On social media, people are exposed to a
17 significant amount of brand-related information through advertisements. However, not all
18 information on social media has the same influence on users; the level of impact can vary
19 (Erkan and Evans, 2016; Yang, 2012). Consumers individually assess the validity of
20 information, and tend to adopt it if they find it meaningful (Zhang and Watts, 2008).
21 Information adoption has been studied by previous researchers and found influential on
22 purchase intention (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Yet, in this study, we proposed the information
23 adoption to be a further predictor of brand image. Park et al. (1986) argued that brand image
24 can be affected by the communication activities of companies; information shared through
25 advertisements is therefore considered important for both the functional and symbolic brand
26 image. We thus hypothesised that information adoption can have a positive effect on both
27 functional and symbolic brand image (H7).
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32 **H7.** Information adoption is positively related to functional brand image (H7a), and
33 symbolic brand image (H7b).
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45 **Method**

46 47 *Sample*

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50 In order to test the hypotheses of this study, a survey was conducted. Before the data
51 collection, we did pilot tests in order to select the most generic guerrilla advertisements. This
52 helped us to eliminate those which were difficult to understand. Then we showed four
53 selected guerrilla advertisements to participants before they commenced filling in the
54 questionnaire. A total of 385 university students participated to our study. This sample was
55 considered appropriate since the majority of the age group of university students are social
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3 media users. According to the latest statistics, 89% of Internet users aged between 18 and 29
4 use social media websites (PRC, 2014). As this study investigates the influence of guerrilla
5 marketing in social media, we required a sample who use both the Internet and social media.
6
7 Eventually the descriptive statistics of this study shows that more than half of the participants
8 (67.8%) had been using the Internet for six years or more, and 89.6% of the participants stated
9 that they used social media every day. Further sample demographics are presented in Table I.
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14 [Table I near here]
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20 *Measures*

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22 This study uses a multi-item approach in the design of the survey. In order to enhance the
23 reliability and validity of this study, eight constructs were measured; information quality,
24 information credibility, needs of information, attitude towards information, information
25 usefulness, information adoption, functional brand image and symbolic brand image. A five-
26 point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree - 1 to strongly agree - 5) was used.
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28 Applicable items were adopted from previous literature and enhanced according to the context
29 of this study.
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35 The constructs; 'Information Quality' and 'Attitude towards Information' were adopted from
36 the study of Park et al. (2007) with two-items and three-items scales. Three-scale items for the
37 'Information Credibility' construct was adopted from Prendergast et al. (2010). 'Needs of
38 Information' was measured by adapting three-items used by Erkan and Evans (2016). The
39 'Information Usefulness' construct was measured by three-items adopted from Bailey and
40 Pearson (1983). The 'Information Adaption' construct with three-items was generated from
41 the study of Cheung et al. (2009). Three-items and four-items scales for 'Functional Brand
42 Image' and 'Symbolic Brand Image' were adopted from Wu and Wang (2014). Table II
43 provides all the constructs and items for this study.
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55 **Results**

56 *Measurement model evaluation*

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3 A structural equation modelling approach fits better with the predictive models (Bentler and
4 Chou, 1987) and is therefore preferred for this study. The research model was tested using
5 AMOS software. Primarily, the reliability and validity of each scale was analysed.
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7 Convergent validity refers to the how the measures are related to each other or if measures
8 belong to same scale (Hair et al., 2010). Simply, it represents the degree of which measures of
9 the same scale are in an agreement (Kerlinger, 1986). To assess the convergent validity of the
10 measurements, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest to measure composite reliability ($CR >$
11 0.70) for each construct and the average variance extracted ($AVE > 0.50$) for each construct.
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18 Table III shows that all variables are higher than the minimum acceptable level of CR
19 between a range of 0.794 to 0.909. (Information Quality = 0.905, Information Credibility =
20 0.815, Needs of Information = 0.868, Attitude towards Information = 0.894, Information
21 Usefulness = 0.866, Information Adoption = 0.909, Functional Brand Image = 0.794,
22 Symbolic Brand Image = 0.870). Besides, all the variables are higher than the minimum
23 acceptable level of AVE between a range of 0.562 to 0.827. (Information Quality = 0.827,
24 Information Credibility = 0.596, Needs of Information = 0.687, Attitude towards Information
25 = 0.737, Information Usefulness = 0.684, Information Adoption = 0.769, Functional Brand
26 Image = 0.562, Symbolic Brand Image = 0.627). All variables achieve the recommended
27 factor loading level which is 0.70. Factor loading of each variable is between the range of
28 0.70 to 0.96. (See Table III)
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43 The discriminant validity was measured to ensure whether or not a measurement is a
44 reflection of any others (Hair et al., 2010). It is shows the degree to which measurement
45 differs from another (Kerlinger, 1986). The square root of average variance extracted (AVE)
46 of each variable should be greater than the other correlation coefficients for satisfied
47 discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Table IV demonstrates that the square root
48 of AVE for each variable is greater than its shared variance within a construct, therefore
49 discriminant validity is supported. As such, the results show that the convergent validity is
50 achieved.
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Structural model evaluation

With reference to Table V, there are significant relationships between the variables of ten hypotheses, while three hypotheses were found to be insignificant. Information quality was not found to be influential on information usefulness and information adoption; (respectively) H1a ($\beta = 0.040$) and H1b ($\beta = 0.023$) were not supported. Information credibility and needs of information were found to have significant positive influence on information usefulness; H2a ($\beta = 0.341$, $p < 0.05$) and H3a ($\beta = 0.292$, $p < 0.05$) were supported. However, no significant relationship was found between attitude towards information and information usefulness ($\beta = 0.144$), H4a was therefore not supported. Furthermore, consistent with H2b, H3b, H4b, and H5; information credibility, needs of information, attitude toward information and information usefulness were found to be influential on information adoption; (respectively) H2b ($\beta = 0.218$, $p < 0.05$), H3b ($\beta = 0.272$, $p < 0.05$), H4b ($\beta = 0.216$, $p < 0.05$) and H5 ($\beta = 0.184$, $p < 0.05$) were supported. Information usefulness and information adoption have a positive influence on functional brand image. H6a ($\beta = 0.349$, $p < 0.05$) and H7a ($\beta = 0.320$, $p < 0.05$) were therefore supported. Finally; consistent with H6b and H7b, information usefulness and information adoption have a positive influence on symbolic brand image. H6b ($\beta = 0.216$, $p < 0.05$) and H7b ($\beta = 0.332$, $p < 0.05$) were supported.

In addition, goodness-of-fit indices demonstrate that the model fits well with the data; $\chi^2 / d.f. = 1.914$; $p < 0.05$; GFI = 0.915; AGFI = 0.889; CFI = 0.963; RMSEA = 0.049, PCLOSE = 0.605. Table V presents both the goodness-of-fit indices of the structural model; and the results for hypotheses testing.

[Table V near here]

Discussion and conclusion

This study investigates the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image. For this purpose, a conceptual model was developed based on the Information Acceptance Model (IACM) (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Results from the structural equation model indicate that the determinants of the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media are influential on both functional and symbolic brand image. The model of this study tests eight constructs: (1) Information Quality, (2) Information Credibility, (3) Needs of information, (4) Attitude

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3 towards Information, (5) Information Usefulness, (6) Information Adoption, (7) Functional
4 Brand Image, and (8) Symbolic Brand Image.
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7 Ten hypotheses of the study were supported while three of them (i.e. H1a, H1b, H4a) were
8 not supported. The first hypothesis of the study proposes the influence of information quality
9 on information usefulness (H1a) and information adoption (H1b). However, unlike the
10 previous studies which confirms the H1a (Saeed and Abdinnour-Helm, 2008; Sussman and
11 Siegal, 2003), no significant relationships were found between the mentioned variables of the
12 study. One possible explanation for this result may be the selected guerrilla advertisements
13 used in this study. We showed four different guerrilla advertisements to participants before
14 they commenced filling in the questionnaire. Although we selected the most generic guerrilla
15 advertisements during the pilot tests and eliminated those which were difficult to understand,
16 it might still be a possible reason for this result.
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25 The second hypothesis of the study proposes the influence of information credibility on
26 information usefulness (H2a) and information adoption (H2b). The results confirmed the
27 described relationships, which were in line with the previous studies (Erkan and Evans, 2016;
28 McKnight and Kacmar, 2006; Sussman and Siegal, 2003). Furthermore, the third hypothesis
29 of the study proposes the effect of needs of information on information usefulness (H3a) and
30 information adoption (H3b). The findings show positive relationships between the described
31 variables of the study. People, who need information on social media, are more likely to find
32 it useful and adoptable.
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40 The fourth hypothesis of the study proposes the influence of attitude towards information on
41 information usefulness (H4a) and information adoption (H4b). The findings did not support
42 the H4a; however, the relationship between attitude towards information and information
43 adoption (H4b) was supported. This means people who have positive attitudes towards
44 information provided by guerrilla advertising are more likely to adopt them (H4b). Moreover,
45 H5 proposes the relationship between information usefulness and information adoption.
46 People who perceive the information useful will be more likely to adopt the information. The
47 results of this study confirmed the described relationship, which is also consistent with the
48 previous studies (Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn 2008; K. Y. Lee and Yang 2015; Sussman and
49 Siegal 2003).
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58 The sixth hypothesis of the study proposes the information usefulness as a predictor of
59 functional brand image (H6a) and symbolic brand image (H6b). The findings confirmed these
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relationships; both parts of the hypothesis were supported. Information usefulness has a positive impact on functional and symbolic brand image. Finally, the last hypothesis of the study proposes the information adoption as a predictor of functional brand image (H7a) and symbolic brand image (H7b). The results confirmed these relationships; both H7a and H7b were supported.

Theoretical and managerial implications

Guerrilla marketing has been considered worth studying by researchers; previously, the effects of guerrilla marketing on consumer behaviour (Fong and Yazdanifard, 2014), buying behaviour (Iqbal and Lodhi, 2015), and purchase intention (Tam and Khuong, 2015) have been examined. These studies, however, mostly focused on the influences of guerrilla marketing on consumers, where the possible impacts on brands have been relatively disregarded. In order to fulfil this gap, our study investigated the influence of guerrilla marketing on brand image. The results show that guerrilla advertisements on social media have a positive influence on both functional and symbolic brand image. Communication activities of companies have long been considered influential on brand image (Park et al., 1986); yet our findings specifically prove the influence of guerrilla marketing activities, it is therefore important for the literature.

Secondly, within this study we contribute to Information Acceptance Model (IACM) by expanding its scope. IACM was developed in order to explain how people accept the information on computer-mediated communication platforms (Erkan and Evans, 2016). The model presents important determinants while using “purchase intention” as a dependent variable. In this study we expand the scope of IACM through testing its determinants on “brand image.” This proves that the IACM is not only valid for one context, the model is appropriate for using in different fields. Researchers who want to understand how people adopt / accept the information on computer-mediated communication platforms can apply this model in a variety of contexts. This finding is especially valuable for information systems (IS) researchers as they test different models to explore the influence of online information.

On the managerial side, this study provides marketers with a frame of reference to understand the information adoption process of guerrilla marketing on social media. Effective guerrilla marketing examples spread rapidly among Internet users; they have potential to reach a lot of people in a short period of time. As this study shows the determinants of guerrilla marketing on social media which affect the functional and symbolic brand image, it provides valuable

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3 insights for marketers. The findings could help marketers to develop better guerrilla
4 marketing strategies and enhance their brand image.
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7 *Limitations and future research*

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10 The results of this study should be evaluated with the following limitations. This study was
11 conducted with university students. This sample was deemed appropriate since the study had
12 to be conducted with people who use social media. However, although the age group of
13 university students constitutes the majority of social media users, they may not fully represent
14 the whole population. Future studies may test the influence of guerrilla marketing across a
15 range of demographic groups. Also, as previously mentioned, this study showed four guerrilla
16 marketing examples to participants before they commenced filling in the questionnaire.
17 Although we selected the most generic guerrilla advertisements during the pilot tests and
18 eliminated the ones which were difficult to understand, this can still be considered as a
19 limitations of the study. Future researchers could use more examples, or could retest our study
20 using different guerrilla advertisements.
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Surprise Me with Your Ads!

The Impacts of Guerrilla Marketing in Social Media on Brand Image

Abstract

Purpose – The advent of social media brought a new perspective for guerrilla marketing since it allows ads to reach more people through the Internet. The aim of this research is to investigate the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image.

Design/methodology/approach – A conceptual model was developed based on the Information Acceptance Model (IACM). The research model was validated through structural equation modelling (SEM) based on surveys of 385 university students.

Findings – The results support the proposed model and confirm that guerrilla marketing in social media has a positive effect on both functional and symbolic brand image.

Originality/value – Current studies regarding the influence of guerrilla marketing mostly focuses on consumers, where the possible impacts on brands have been relatively neglected. This study attempts to fill this gap by focusing on brand image.

Keywords Guerrilla marketing, Social media, Information acceptance model (IACM), Functional brand image, Symbolic brand image

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The term “guerrilla marketing” was first coined by Jay Conrad Levinson in the 1980s (Dinh and Mai, 2016; Levinson, 1984; Tam and Khuong, 2015). Levinson et al. (2010) describes the guerrilla marketing concept as follows: “achieving conventional goals, such as profits and joy, with unconventional methods, such as investing energy instead of money.” This concept was first adopted for small businesses as a means of helping them to become noticed using a small budget (Langer, 2006). It later also became popular among global brands with large companies such as Nike, Audi and IKEA having implemented this concept during various stages of their marketing strategies (Tam and Khuong, 2015). Guerrilla marketing involves untraditional advertising activities such as eye-catching street graphics, surprising product placements and memorable events; and it is therefore considered effective to grab consumers’ attention (Baltes and Leibing, 2008; Wanner, 2011).

On the other hand, although guerrilla marketing has been found influential on consumers’ purchase intentions, and considered advantageous for marketers (Tam and Khuong, 2015), it also has some disadvantages. While other traditional advertising channels allow marketers to reach a huge number of consumers, guerrilla marketing activities were only able to reach people who were passing close to the advertising activity. For example, when a company designed an unconventional bus stop to promote itself, it was only seen by people who used or passed close to that bus stop. The number of people who could see the marketing activity was thus limited. However, the advent of the Internet has changed this situation. Examples of effective guerrilla marketing can spread rapidly among Internet users; therefore, more and more consumers can see the ad even if they don’t pass close to the guerrilla marketing activity. Particularly, on social media, there are many accounts such as “Marketing Birds” (e.g. @marketing_birds on Twitter) which share excellent guerrilla marketing ideas executed by a variety of companies, including both small businesses and big global brands. The content shared by Marketing Birds and other accounts are liked and shared by many users; the ads are spread through social media. Social media websites thus increase the visibility of guerrilla marketing. This study therefore has focused on the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media.

However, although the guerrilla marketing has potential to reach large audiences via social media, and it has been found influential on consumers’ purchase intentions; its possible impacts on brand image have not been known. Prior studies have mostly focused on

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3 consumers' side; the effects of guerrilla marketing on consumer behaviour (Fong and
4 Yazdanifard, 2014), buying behaviour (Iqbal and Lodhi, 2015), and purchase intention (Tam
5 and Khuong, 2015) have been examined. Yet the possible impacts on brands have been
6 relatively neglected. Uncertainty on this issue is an important obstacle for marketers to take
7 advantage of guerrilla marketing. We therefore aim to provide better understanding of
8 guerrilla marketing through examining its impacts on brand image. For this purpose, we
9 developed a research model based on Information Acceptance Model (IACM) (Erkan and
10 Evans, 2016). IACM was deemed appropriate for this study as it explains how consumers
11 adopt the information shared on computer-mediated communication platforms. The results
12 provide theoretical insights regarding guerrilla marketing on social media. On the managerial
13 side, findings could help marketers as they reveal the determinants of guerrilla marketing
14 which influence brand image.

24 **Literature review**

26 *Guerrilla marketing*

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30 With the constant exposure of advertisements on traditional channels such as billboards,
31 newspapers and even social media, consumers' attitudes towards them has become
32 questionable (Marsden, 2006; Shenk, 1998). This leads marketers to find alternative, creative,
33 and innovative ways to reach out to prospective customers, engage with them and
34 communicate their messages.

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39 There is an increasing dissatisfaction towards marketing communication as consumers often
40 seek to avoid it (e.g. skipping adverts on YouTube), and therefore marketers need to expand
41 these various techniques in order to reach more people (Johansson, 2004). Brands apply
42 various strategies to attract consumer attention, such as publicity stunts and product placement
43 (Martin and Smith, 2008). At this point, guerrilla marketing emerges as a perfect opportunity
44 to take a proactive approach in breaking clusters and conveying the message.

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49 According to Hatch (2005, p. 53), guerrilla marketing is defined as "any activity that uses a
50 means other than traditional media to communicate a brand's name and position to prospects.
51 Also called extreme marketing, grassroots marketing, or feet-on-the-street marketing, a
52 guerrilla campaign has no pre-set rules or boundaries." The creativity involved in guerrilla
53 marketing is acknowledged as it rides on engaging a range of channels, including elements of
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3 public relations, advertising, and marketing to create an outrageous campaign which enables
4 consumers to become aware of the brand (Simone, 2006; Zuo and Veil, 2006).
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8 Guerrilla marketing can also be seen in the light of viral, ambush, buzz or stealth marketing as
9 these involve advertising in an untraditional manner concept, aiming to reach a large number
10 of people with a small budget (Ay et al., 2010; Hutter and Hoffmann, 2011). Guerrilla
11 marketing strategies have been used by a significant number of brands in various situations
12 across different countries. Nestle, Lipton, Ray-Ban, and Ponds are among these brands; they
13 use public objects (i.e. billboards, bus stops) to grab consumer attention (See Appendix A).
14 Attracting consumers' attention while conveying the marketing message is often considered a
15 successful guerrilla marketing campaign (Hatch, 2005).
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22 The advent of the Internet and social media have made guerrilla marketing examples more
23 visible. Successful campaigns can go viral and even reach audiences of millions through the
24 Internet and social media. This means of communication, however, can also be risky for
25 brands, particularly when the message of the campaign is misunderstood by consumers. If the
26 campaign is not properly designed, or is directed at the wrong audience, it can be harmful for
27 the brand's image (Shang et al., 2006). This study therefore focuses on the possible influences
28 of guerrilla marketing on brand image. Although previous researchers have conducted studies
29 which explain guerrilla marketing definition, the possible impacts of guerrilla marketing on
30 brand image however have been relatively neglected.
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38 *Brand image*

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41 Brand image simply refers to consumers' mental image of the brand (Dobni and Zinkhan,
42 1990), including meanings related to specific attributes of the products and services of brands
43 (Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Padgett and Allen, 1997). One of the most popular definitions of
44 brand image was made by Keller (1993, p. 3); who defines brand image as "perception about
45 a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory," Additionally, a
46 further definition of brand image was given by Low and Lamb (2000, p. 352) as follows: "the
47 reasoned or emotional perceptions consumers attach to specific brands." Brand image can be
48 divided into two constructs: (a) Functional Image, (b) Symbolic Image (Bhat and Reddy,
49 1998; Simms and Trott, 2006). Wu and Wang (2014) claim that "experiential brand image"
50 could be another sub-construct of brand image, in this study however we preferred the stick
51 with two main constructs (i.e. functional image and symbolic image) since they were
52 confirmed by more studies in the literature. Functional image refers to what consumers think
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3 about the performance of products and services. Functional image is considered strong if
4 consumers consider that the products and services of brands would solve their problems (Bhat
5 and Reddy, 1998). Symbolic image, however, refers to how consumers feel with the products
6 and services. Symbolic image is considered strong if the brand can satisfy consumers' inner
7 desires, such as social status and self-value (Bhat and Reddy, 1998).
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12 Shamma and Hassan (2011) draws attention to the possibility of purchasing intention when
13 the brand image is strong in the consumers mind; brand image therefore has been considered
14 important by both marketers and researchers. Marketers use different advertising methods in
15 order to enhance the image of their brands. According to Meenaghan (1995), advertising
16 plays a central role in developing brand image. Previous studies have also examined various
17 advertising methods; celebrity endorsement (Chan et al., 2013), event sponsorships (Gwinner
18 and Eaton, 1999), television brand placement (van Reijmersdal et al., 2007) have been found
19 influential on brand image. In this study, however, we focused on the influence of guerrilla
20 marketing on brand image.
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28 29 **Theoretical background of the research model**

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31 This study builds a theoretical model to identify the determinants of guerrilla marketing in
32 social media on brand image. To do so, the IACM (Erkan and Evans, 2016) was redeveloped
33 through considering the needs of this research. IACM was found appropriate for this study
34 since it explains how people adopt the information shared on computer-mediated
35 communication platforms. The model, however, focuses on purchase intention, while this
36 study investigates the effects of guerrilla marketing on brand image.
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42 43 *Information acceptance model (IACM)*

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45 IACM was first developed in order to explain the determinants of electronic word of mouth
46 (eWOM) information on social media which affect consumers' purchase intentions. The
47 model postulates that information usefulness, which is the antecedent of information adoption
48 and purchase intention, is decided by information quality, information credibility, needs of
49 information, and attitude towards information (Erkan and Evans, 2016). The authors built this
50 model by considering two well-established theories: Information Adoption Model (IAM)
51 (Sussman and Siegal, 2003) and Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein and Ajzen,
52 1975). The IAM explains how the information on computer-mediated communication
53 platforms are adopted by people, and focuses on the characteristics of information: quality,
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3 credibility, and usefulness. The IACM, however, criticises this model since it only focuses on
4 the characteristics of information and neglects the behaviours of consumers towards
5 information. The IACM proves that both the characteristics of information and consumer
6 behaviour towards information should be evaluated together in order to understand the
7 influence of online information. We therefore selected this model to investigate the influence
8 of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image.
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13 14 *Research model and hypotheses development*

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17 Figure 1 shows the research model of this study, explaining the determinants of guerrilla
18 marketing on social media which influence brand image. This study claims that guerrilla
19 marketing examples shared on social media are influential on brand image. To understand
20 this, the IACM has been developed; our model eventually examines the relationships between
21 following variables: information quality, information credibility, needs of information,
22 attitude towards information, information usefulness, information adoption, functional brand
23 image, and symbolic brand image.
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30 [Figure 1 near here]
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35 *Information quality*

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37 Information quality refers to the persuasive power embedded in the message (Bhattacharjee
38 and Sanford, 2006; Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017; Shu and Scott, 2014). Information which
39 satisfies appreciation criteria of people is considered to be high quality information
40 (Koivumaki et al., 2008; Salaün and Flores, 2001; Ul-Islam and Rahman, 2017). When the
41 quality of information is both high and satisfying, consumers regard the information to be
42 useful. Information quality therefore has been found to be an essential determinant of
43 information usefulness by previous researchers (Saeed and Abdinnour-Helm, 2008; Zhu et al.,
44 2015). Both information adoption model (Sussman and Siegal, 2003) and information
45 acceptance model (Erkan and Evans, 2016) confirmed that information quality has a strong
46 relationship with information usefulness (Jin et al., 2009). However, we believe that
47 information quality is not only important to information usefulness, but also to information
48 adoption. People who perceive higher information quality will be more likely to adopt the
49 information. This relationship has been indirectly proposed by previous models (Sussman and
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Siegal, 2003), whereas in this study we propose a direct relationship in our research model.

We therefore hypothesised that:

H1. Information quality is positively related to information usefulness (H1a), and information adoption (H1b).

Information credibility

Information credibility refers to a message receiver's perception of the trustworthiness of that message (Grewal et al., 1994; Kim et al., 2016; Ma and Atkin, 2016). It has been found to be a further essential determinant of information usefulness in the information adoption model (Chung et al., 2015; Shu, 2014; Sussman and Siegal, 2003). People tend to consider the information useful when they perceive the information credible (Castillo et al., 2013; Jin et al., 2009). This relationship has also been validated by information acceptance model (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Significant importance has also been given to the information credibility by other previous researchers; Awad and Ragowsky (2008) found it to be the main determinant in the decision making process of consumers, while Wathen and Burkell (2002) consider information credibility to be the initial factor in the individuals' persuasion process. Information credibility has also been found influential on information adoption (McKnight and Kacmar, 2006) and purchase intention (Prendergast et al., 2010). In this study, we therefore believe that information credibility is not only important to information usefulness, but also information adoption. People who perceive higher information credibility will be more likely to adopt the information. We therefore hypothesised that:

H2. Information credibility is positively related to information usefulness (H2a), and information adoption (H2b).

Needs of information

Needs of information have previously been studied using different research questions. It has been used as 'advice seeking' (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Wolny and Mueller, 2013) and 'opinion seeking' (Chu and Kim, 2011; Wang et al., 2016). In information acceptance model, Erkan and Evans (2016) proposed that people who need information on social media are more likely to find it useful; this relationship was also validated in their study. As this study

investigates the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media, we also considered using 'needs of information' appropriate for this research and it is therefore included to our research model. However, we believe that the impact of needs of information cannot be limited to information usefulness only; it has potential to have a direct influence on information adoption. The following hypothesis is thus proposed:

H3. Needs of information is positively related to information usefulness (H3a) and information adoption (H3b).

Attitude towards information

Attitude towards information is another variable which we considered as one of the determinants of guerrilla marketing in social media which influences brand image. This construct is adapted from theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). In addition to Fishbein and Ajzen's theory, two further theories have also proposed a relationship between attitude and behavioural intention: Technology Acceptance Model (Bagozzi et al., 1992), and Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Erkan and Evans (2016) thus adapted this variable to the information acceptance model and proposed that attitudes of social media users towards the information can have a positive impact on information usefulness. However, in this study we believe that attitude towards information is not only important to information usefulness, but also information adoption. People who have positive attitudes towards information will be more likely to adopt the information. The following hypothesis is thus proposed:

H4. Attitude towards information is positively related to information usefulness (H4a), and information adoption (H4b).

Information usefulness

Information usefulness refers to the perceptions of individuals' that using information will improve their performance (Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn 2008; Davis 1989; Ku 2011). Both information adoption model (Sussman and Siegal, 2003), and information acceptance model (Erkan and Evans, 2016) considered information usefulness as a main determinant of information adoption. Previous studies have also found information usefulness influential on

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3 purchase intention (Lee and Koo, 2015; Liu and Zhang, 2010; Wu and Lin, 2017), and
4 technology adoption (Yeh and Teng, 2012). People who perceive the information useful will
5 be more likely to adopt the information; we therefore hypothesised the H5. Moreover, in this
6 study we proposed the information usefulness as a predictor of brand image. Brand image is
7 defined as the consumer's mental image of the brand (Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Dobni and
8 Zinkhan, 1990). The brand image can be divided into two constructs, functional and symbolic
9 (Bhat and Reddy, 1998; Simms and Trott, 2006). The products of brands can help consumers
10 solve their problems; the functional brand image refers to what consumers think about brands
11 in this regard (Bhat and Reddy, 1998). The symbolic image, however, refers to whether the
12 brands can satisfy consumers' inner desires such as social status and self-recognition (Bhat
13 and Reddy, 1998). The advertisements and other brand activities can shape their image in
14 consumers' minds. We therefore hypothesised that information usefulness can have a positive
15 effect on both functional and symbolic brand image (H6).

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26 **H5.** Information usefulness is positively related to information adoption (H5).

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29 **H6.** Information usefulness is positively related to functional brand image (H6a), and
30 symbolic brand image (H6b).
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36 *Information adoption*

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38 Information adoption is defined as the process by which people intentionally engage in using
39 information (Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn 2008). On social media, people are exposed to a
40 significant amount of brand-related information through advertisements. However, not all
41 information on social media has the same influence on users; the level of impact can vary
42 (Erkan and Evans, 2016; Yang, 2012). Consumers individually assess the validity of
43 information, and tend to adopt it if they find it meaningful (Zhang and Watts, 2008).
44 Information adoption has been studied by previous researchers and found influential on
45 purchase intention (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Yet, in this study, we proposed the information
46 adoption to be a further predictor of brand image. People who adopt the information are more
47 likely to have a positive brand image in their minds. Park et al. (1986) argued that brand
48 image can be affected by the communication activities of companies; information shared
49 through advertisements is therefore considered important for both the functional and symbolic
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brand image. We thus hypothesised that information adoption can have a positive effect on both functional and symbolic brand image (H7).

H7. Information adoption is positively related to functional brand image (H7a), and symbolic brand image (H7b).

Method

Sample

In order to test the hypotheses of this study, a survey was conducted. We showed four different guerrilla advertisements to participants before they commenced filling in the questionnaire (See Appendix A). We selected the most generic guerrilla advertisements during the pilot tests and eliminated those which were difficult to understand. A total of 385 university students participated to our study. This sample was considered appropriate since the majority of the age group of university students are social media users. According to the latest statistics, 89% of Internet users aged between 18 and 29 use social media websites (PRC, 2014). As this study investigates the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media, we required a sample who use both the Internet and social media. Eventually the descriptive statistics of this study shows that more than half of the participants (67.8%) had been using the Internet for six years or more, and 89.6% of the participants stated that they used social media every day. Further sample demographics are presented in Table I.

[Table I near here]

Measures

This study uses a multi-item approach in the design of the survey. In order to enhance the reliability and validity of this study, eight constructs were measured; information quality, information credibility, needs of information, attitude towards information, information usefulness, information adoption, functional brand image and symbolic brand image. A five-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree - 1 to strongly agree - 5) was used.

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3 Applicable items were adopted from previous literature and enhanced according to the context
4 of this study.
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7 The constructs; 'Information Quality' and 'Attitude towards Information' were adopted from
8 the study of Park et al. (2007) with two-items and three-items scales. Three-scale items for the
9 'Information Credibility' construct was adopted from Prendergast et al. (2010). 'Needs of
10 Information' was measured by adapting three-items used by Erkan and Evans (2016). The
11 'Information Usefulness' construct was measured by three-items adopted from Bailey and
12 Pearson (1983). The 'Information Adaption' construct with three-items was generated from
13 the study of Cheung et al. (2009). Three-items and four-items scales for 'Functional Brand
14 Image' and 'Symbolic Brand Image' were adopted from Wu and Wang (2014). Table II
15 provides all the constructs and items for this study.
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23 [Table II near here]
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29 **Results**

30 *Measurement model evaluation*

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32 A structural equation modelling approach fits better with the predictive models (Bentler and
33 Chou, 1987) and is therefore preferred for this study. The research model was tested using
34 AMOS software. Primarily, the reliability and validity of each scale was analysed.
35 Convergent validity shows the relationships of items with each other. To assess the
36 convergent validity of the measurements, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest to measure
37 composite reliability (CR > 0.70) for each construct and the average variance extracted (AVE
38 > 0.50) for each construct.
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47 Table III shows all variables are higher than the minimum acceptable level of CR between a
48 range of 0.794 to 0.909. (Information Quality = 0.905, Information Credibility = 0.815, Needs
49 of Information = 0.868, Attitude towards Information = 0.894, Information Usefulness =
50 0.866, Information Adoption = 0.909, Functional Brand Image = 0.794, Symbolic Brand
51 Image = 0.870). Besides, all the variables are higher than the minimum acceptable level of
52 AVE between a range of 0.562 to 0.827. (Information Quality = 0.827, Information
53 Credibility = 0.596, Needs of Information = 0.687, Attitude towards Information = 0.737,
54 Information Usefulness = 0.684, Information Adoption = 0.769, Functional Brand Image =
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0.562, Symbolic Brand Image = 0.627). All variables achieve the recommended factor loading level which is 0.70. Factor loading of each variable is between the range of 0.70 to 0.96. (See Table III)

[Table III near here]

The discriminant validity was measured to ensure whether or not a measurement is a reflection of any others. The square root of average variance extracted (AVE) of each variable should be greater than the other correlation coefficients for satisfied discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Table IV demonstrates that the square root of AVE for each variable is greater than its shared variance within a construct, therefore discriminant validity is supported. As such, the results show that the convergent validity is achieved.

[Table IV near here]

Structural model evaluation

With reference to Table V, there are significant relationships between the variables of ten hypotheses, while three hypotheses were found to be insignificant. Consistent with H1a and H1b, information quality was not found to be influential on information usefulness and information adoption; (respectively) H1a ($\beta = 0.040$) and H1b ($\beta = 0.023$) were not supported. Information credibility and needs of information were found to have significant positive influence on information usefulness; H2a ($\beta = 0.341$, $p < 0.05$) and H3a ($\beta = 0.292$, $p < 0.05$) were supported. However, no significant relationship was found between attitude towards information and information usefulness ($\beta = 0.144$), H4a was therefore not supported. Furthermore, consistent with H2b, H3b, H4b, and H5; information credibility, needs of information, attitude toward information and information usefulness were found to be influential on information adoption; (respectively) H2b ($\beta = 0.218$, $p < 0.05$), H3b ($\beta = 0.272$, $p < 0.05$), H4b ($\beta = 0.216$, $p < 0.05$) and H5 ($\beta = 0.184$, $p < 0.05$) were supported. Information usefulness and information adoption have a positive influence on functional brand image. H6a ($\beta = 0.349$, $p < 0.05$) and H7a ($\beta = 0.320$, $p < 0.05$) were therefore supported. Finally; consistent with H6b and H7b, information usefulness and information

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3 adoption have a positive influence on symbolic brand image. H6b ($\beta = 0.216$, $p < 0.05$) and
4 H7b ($\beta = 0.332$, $p < 0.05$) were supported.
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8 In addition, goodness-of-fit indices demonstrate that the model fits well with the data; $\chi^2 / d.f.$
9 = 1.914; $p < 0.05$; GFI = 0.915; AGFI = 0.889; CFI = 0.963; RMSEA = 0.049, PCLOSE =
10 0.605. Table V presents both the goodness-of-fit indices of the structural model; and the
11 results for hypotheses testing.
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15 [Table V near here]
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23 **Discussion and conclusion**

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25 This study investigates the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image.
26 For this purpose, a conceptual model was developed based on the Information Acceptance
27 Model (IACM) (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Results from the structural equation model indicate
28 that the determinants of the influence of guerrilla marketing in social media are influential on
29 both functional and symbolic brand image. The model of this study tests eight constructs: (1)
30 Information Quality, (2) Information Credibility, (3) Needs of information, (4) Attitude
31 towards Information, (5) Information Usefulness, (6) Information Adoption, (7) Functional
32 Brand Image, and (8) Symbolic Brand Image.
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40 Ten hypotheses of the study were supported while three of them (i.e. H1a, H1b, H4a) were
41 not supported. The first hypothesis of the study proposes the influence of information quality
42 on information usefulness (H1a) and information adoption (H1b). However, unlike the
43 previous studies which confirms the H1a (Saeed and Abdinnour-Helm, 2008; Sussman and
44 Siegal, 2003), no significant relationships were found between the mentioned variables of the
45 study. One possible explanation for this result may be the selected guerrilla advertisements
46 used in this study. We showed four different guerrilla advertisements to participants before
47 they commenced filling in the questionnaire (See Appendix A). Although we selected the
48 most generic guerrilla advertisements during the pilot tests and eliminated those which were
49 difficult to understand, it might still be a possible reason for this result.
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58 The second hypothesis of the study proposes the influence of information credibility on
59 information usefulness (H2a) and information adoption (H2b). The results confirmed the
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3 described relationships, which were in line with the previous studies (Erkan and Evans, 2016;
4 McKnight and Kacmar, 2006; Sussman and Siegal, 2003). Furthermore, the third hypothesis
5 of the study proposes the effect of needs of information on information usefulness (H3a) and
6 information adoption (H3b). The findings show positive relationships between the described
7 variables of the study. People who need information on social media, are more likely to find it
8 useful and adoptable.
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14 The fourth hypothesis of the study proposes the influence of attitude towards information on
15 information usefulness (H4a) and information adoption (H4b). The findings did not support
16 the H4a; however, the relationship between attitude towards information and information
17 adoption (H4b) was supported. This means people who have positive attitudes towards
18 information provided by guerrilla advertising are more likely to adopt them (H4b). Moreover,
19 H5 proposes the relationship between information usefulness and information adoption.
20 People who perceive the information useful will be more likely to adopt the information. The
21 results of this study confirmed the described relationship, which is also consistent with the
22 previous studies (Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn 2008; K. Y. Lee and Yang 2015; Sussman and
23 Siegal 2003).
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32 The sixth hypothesis of the study proposes the information usefulness as a predictor of
33 functional brand image (H6a) and symbolic brand image (H6b). The findings confirmed these
34 relationships; both parts of the hypothesis were supported. Information usefulness has a
35 positive impact on functional and symbolic brand image. Finally, the last hypothesis of the
36 study proposes the information adoption as a predictor of functional brand image (H7a) and
37 symbolic brand image (H7b). The results confirmed these relationships; both H7a and H7b
38 were supported. People who adopt the information are more likely to have a positive brand
39 image in their minds.
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46 47 *Theoretical and managerial implications* 48

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50 Guerrilla marketing has been considered worth studying by researchers; previously, the
51 effects of guerrilla marketing on consumer behaviour (Fong and Yazdanifard, 2014), buying
52 behaviour (Iqbal and Lodhi, 2015), and purchase intention (Tam and Khuong, 2015) have
53 been examined. These studies, however, mostly focused on the influences of guerrilla
54 marketing on consumers, where the possible impacts on brands have been relatively
55 disregarded. In order to fulfil this gap, our study investigated the influence of guerrilla
56 marketing on brand image. The results show that guerrilla advertisements on social media
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3 have a positive influence on both functional and symbolic brand image. Communication
4 activities of companies have long been considered influential on brand image (Park et al.,
5 1986); yet our findings specifically prove the influence of guerrilla marketing activities, it is
6 therefore important for the literature.
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11 Secondly, within this study we contribute to Information Acceptance Model (IACM) by
12 expanding its scope. IACM was developed in order to explain how people accept the
13 information on computer-mediated communication platforms (Erkan and Evans, 2016). The
14 model presents important determinants while using “purchase intention” as a dependent
15 variable. In this study we expand the scope of IACM through testing its determinants on
16 “brand image.” This proves that the IACM is not only valid for one context, the model is
17 appropriate for using in different fields. Researchers who want to understand how people
18 adopt / accept the information on computer-mediated communication platforms can apply this
19 model in a variety of contexts. This finding is especially valuable for information systems (IS)
20 researchers as they test different models to explore the influence of online information.
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29 On the managerial side, this study provides marketers with a frame of reference to understand
30 the information adoption process of guerrilla marketing on social media. Effective guerrilla
31 marketing examples spread rapidly among Internet users; they have potential to reach a lot of
32 people in a short period of time. As this study shows the determinants of guerrilla marketing
33 on social media which affect the functional and symbolic brand image, it provides valuable
34 insights for marketers. The findings could help marketers to develop better guerrilla
35 marketing strategies and enhance their brand image.
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41 *Limitations and future research*

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44 The results of this study should be evaluated with the following limitations. This study was
45 conducted with university students. This sample was deemed appropriate since the study had
46 to be conducted with people who use social media. However, although the age group of
47 university students constitutes the majority of social media users, they may not fully represent
48 the whole population. Future studies may test the influence of guerrilla marketing across a
49 range of demographic groups. Also, as previously mentioned, this study showed four guerrilla
50 marketing examples to participants before they commenced filling in the questionnaire.
51 Although we selected the most generic guerrilla advertisements during the pilot tests and
52 eliminated the ones which were difficult to understand, this can still be considered as a
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3 limitations of the study. Future researchers could use more examples, or could retest our study
4 using different guerrilla advertisements.
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Appendix A. Examples of Guerrilla Marketing



Pond's Billboard



Ray-Ban Bus Stop



Lipton Shrubbery



KitKat Bench

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Tables

Table I. Sample demographics ($n = 385$)

Measure	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	208	54.0
Female	177	46.0
Age		
18 – 22	274	71.2
23 – 27	100	26.0
28 – 32	8	2.1
33 – 37	3	0.8
Education Level		
Associate Degree	44	11.4
Bachelor's	323	83.9
Master's	10	2.6
PhD	8	2.1
Favourite Social Media Website		
Facebook	52	13.5
Twitter	44	11.4
Instagram	197	51.2
Snapchat	21	5.5
YouTube	64	16.6
Others	7	1.8
Social Media Usage		
Everyday	345	89.6
4 - 5 days per week	24	6.2
Once or twice a week	7	1.8
Very rare	9	2.4
Internet Familiarity		
1 to 3 years	23	6.0
4 to 6 years	101	26.2
More than 6 years	261	67.8

Table II. Measures

Variable	Items
Information Quality (D.-H. Park, Lee, and Han 2007)	IQ1 Messages of these ads are understandable.
	IQ2 Messages of these ads are clear.
Information Credibility (Prendergast, Ko, and Yuen 2010)	IC1 Messages of these ads are strong.
	IC2 Messages of these ads are convincing.
	IC3 Messages of these ads are effective.
Needs of Information (Erkan and Evans 2016)	This type of ads...
	NOI1 I like to apply them when I consider new products.
	NOI2 I usually consult them to choose best alternative for me.
	NOI3 I frequently gather them before making a purchase.
Attitude towards Information (D.-H. Park, Lee, and Han 2007)	ATI1 I always consider them when I buy a product.
	ATI2 They are helpful for my decision making when I buy a product.
	ATI3 They make me confident in purchasing product.
Information Usefulness (Bailey and Pearson 1983)	IU1 I think they are generally informative.
	IU2 I think they are generally useful.
	IU3 I think they are generally helpful.
Information Adoption (Cheung et al. 2009)	IA1 They make easier for me to make purchase decision.
	IA2 They enhance my effectiveness in making purchase decision.
	IA3 They motivate me to make purchase decision.
Functional Brand Image (S.-I. Wu and Wang 2014)	Brands that use guerrilla marketing...
	FBI1 They consider their customers' needs.
	FBI2 They satisfy their customers.
	FBI3 It is wise to choose these brands.
Symbolic Brand Image (S.-I. Wu and Wang 2014)	Brands that use guerrilla marketing...
	SBI1 They are good brands.
	SBI2 They are leading brands.
	SBI3 They are better than their rivals.
	SBI4 Customers of these brands gain social status.

Table III. Factor loadings, CR and AVE values

Variable	Item	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Information Quality ($M = 4.14$, $SD = 0.76$, $\alpha = 0.90$)	IQ1	0.86	0.905	0.827
	IQ2	0.96		
Information Credibility ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.74$, $\alpha = 0.81$)	IC1	0.75	0.815	0.596
	IC2	0.82		
	IC3	0.74		
Needs of Information ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.99$, $\alpha = 0.84$)	NOI1	0.77	0.868	0.687
	NOI2	0.87		
	NOI3	0.84		
Attitude towards Information ($M = 3.15$, $SD = 1.06$, $\alpha = 0.89$)	ATI1	0.86	0.894	0.737
	ATI2	0.87		
	ATI3	0.81		
Information Usefulness ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.94$, $\alpha = 0.86$)	IU1	0.70	0.866	0.684
	IU2	0.81		
	IU3	0.88		
Information Adoption ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.93$, $\alpha = 0.90$)	IA1	0.91	0.909	0.769
	IA2	0.91		
	IA3	0.80		
Functional Brand Image ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.82$, $\alpha = 0.79$)	FBI1	0.77	0.794	0.562
	FBI2	0.76		
	FBI3	0.73		
Symbolic Brand Image ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.88$, $\alpha = 0.87$)	SBI1	0.73	0.870	0.627
	SBI2	0.83		
	SBI3	0.86		
	SBI4	0.75		

Notes: CR - Composite Reliability, AVE - Average Variance Extracted

Table IV. Correlation matrix of key variables

	IQ	IC	NOI	ATI	IU	IA	FBI	SBI
Information Quality (IQ)	<i>0.910</i>							
Information Credibility (IC)	0.559	<i>0.772</i>						
Needs of Information (NOI)	0.121	0.366	<i>0.829</i>					
Attitude towards Information (ATI)	0.049	0.267	0.798	<i>0.859</i>				
Information Usefulness (IU)	0.271	0.473	0.492	0.436	<i>0.827</i>			
Information Adoption (IA)	0.236	0.470	0.627	0.587	0.516	<i>0.877</i>		
Functional Brand Image (FBI)	0.218	0.519	0.455	0.403	0.507	0.503	<i>0.749</i>	
Symbolic Brand Image (SBI)	0.319	0.577	0.301	0.252	0.379	0.444	0.687	<i>0.792</i>

Notes: Italicised elements are the square root of AVE for each variable.

Table V. Results and goodness-of-fit indices

Relationship		Std R.W	C.R	P Value
H _{1a}	Information Quality → Information Usefulness	0.040	0.646	0.519
H _{1b}	Information Quality → Information Adoption	0.023	0.425	0.670
H _{2a}	Information Credibility → Information Usefulness	0.341	4.628	***
H _{2b}	Information Credibility → Information Adoption	0.218	3.212	***
H _{3a}	Needs of Information → Information Usefulness	0.292	2.712	***
H _{3b}	Needs of Information → Information Adoption	0.272	2.844	***
H _{4a}	Attitude twd. Information → Information Usefulness	0.144	1.385	0.166
H _{4b}	Attitude twd. Information → Information Adoption	0.216	2.370	***
H ₅	Information Usefulness → Information Adoption	0.184	2.994	***
H _{6a}	Information Usefulness → Functional Brand Image	0.349	4.900	***
H _{6b}	Information Usefulness → Symbolic Brand Image	0.216	3.178	***
H _{7a}	Information Adoption → Functional Brand Image	0.320	4.706	***
H _{7b}	Information Adoption → Symbolic Brand Image	0.332	4.938	***
<u>Goodness-of-fit indices</u>				
	X ² / d.f.	1.914		
	Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	0.915		
	Adjusted GFI (AGFI)	0.889		
	Comparative fit index (CFI)	0.963		
	RMSEA	0.049		
	PCLOSE	0.605		

Notes: *** $p < 0.05$.

Std R.W - Standardized Regression Weights, C.R - Critical Ratio

Figures

Figure 1. The proposed research model

