

# IMPACT OF UNCONVENTIONAL ADVERTISING ON PERFORMANCE OF CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN CITY OF OSIJEK

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## **Abstract**

*In time of crises, some cultural institutions in city of Osijek are having difficulties with attracting the audience, so they decided to go along with unconventional advertising methods. Cultural institutions and unconventional advertising are compound of old and new ways of acting.*

*The main goal of this paper is to explain how unconventional advertising impacts on performance of cultural institutions in city of Osijek. The question is can cultural institutions in city of Osijek that for years used conventional marketing, go along with new ways of innovative advertising, like unconventional advertising. Since unconventional advertising is not yet widely spread among cultural institutions in city of Osijek, the intention of this paper is to analyze how audience reacts on new, creative and unconventional advertising of cultural institutions.*

*In July 2014 the author carried out a research on wider audience of Croatian national theatre who attended four performances included in a theatre's project of introducing unconventional advertising in promotional activities of the current theater season. The aim of presented research was to gather information about general attitude of the audience on the experience of unconventional advertising. The research covered the general questions about whether the viewers were attracted to the national theatre program because they liked the new way of advertising, how much they support unconventional advertising of theatre program and what did they liked the most about the new way of advertising. The results of the survey indicate that the opinions of the respondents are quite positive about the new and unconventional way of theater program advertising.*

*At the end of this paper, there will be a conclusion in which the experience and knowledge acquired during the writing of this paper and during the conducted research will be summed up.*

**Key words:** *advertising, guerrilla advertising, unconventional advertising, cultural institution, theatre, marketing in culture*

JEL Classification: M3, M37, Z1

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1990s, the use of marketing in the institutions of culture and art is becoming more and more important and there is a lot of examples of its quality and systematic practical application. Marketing in culture in its basis is concerned with identifying which products, services and ideas of culture are offered or claimed on their application-specific market, on the basis of that, there are specific measurable marketing goals. The latter goals will be achieved if cultural institutions use the appropriate marketing strategy that is focused on building loyalty, and long-term relations with the audience. This relationship will be long-termed if the institution of culture has a good image, has a high quality program and if the ratio between quality and price is reasonable. (Meler; 2006, 65) Marketing and advertising in culture cannot exist without strategy.

Some of the pioneers of marketing communications in the field of culture and art is considered meritorious for the development of other areas in marketing. (Pavičić, et al; 2006, 151). An interesting fact is that marketing in culture is for two centuries represented in the Republic of Croatia and that marketing in culture encouraged development of other marketing practices.

Cultural and art institutions in Eastern Europe usually still do not have a special marketing departments whose existence could assume its own audience research and establishing many forms of connection with the audience. Advertising is very important activity of cultural institutions but mostly overlooked. There are two main reasons of advertising existence in cultural institutions:

- to increase market cultural products (economic objective) within the market-oriented society, it becomes especially important after the great social and political changes of the system;
- to help the development of cultural needs and habits of the population.

Cultural institutions should not think only how to attract more audience (selling tickets), but to think how to win over an audience that will be a real cultural audience- that is able to react and interact with the artwork. (Šešić-Dragičević, Stojković; 2013,184)

Especially cultural institutions in Croatia have no special marketing departments or marketing programs. Thru previous empirical experience, the authors has already realized how directors of museums or theaters custodians have “fear of marketing,” especially of unconventional marketing. To reduce the fear and animosity towards unconventional marketing, the leading people of the cultural institutions should be familiar with it and its good sides. The leading people of Croatian national theatre were very open to new ideas of advertising, but also at the same time they hesitate because they practice for many years conventional advertising.

The author carried out a research with the aim of gathering the information and drawing conclusions of advertising and marketing elements in culture in city of Osijek, Croatia. The study was carried with the purpose of improvement marketing in cultural in city of Osijek, and indirectly with the aim of strengthening the culture in general.

## 2. DEFINITION OF ADVERTISING

From the moment we wake up in the morning until we fall asleep at night we are exposed to advertising messages that try to persuade us to buy. Newspapers, magazines, television, internet, and even the streets outside, all of them are suffocated by ads that are trying to get the customer’s attention. However, few of them if any, are capable of driving us to the store just to buy the product they advertised. The ads have become part of our live, influencing us in ways that we are not always aware of. (Jurca; 2010., 323)

Advertising has long been viewed as a method of mass promotion in that a single message can reach a large number of people. But, this mass promotion approach presents problems since many exposed to an advertising message may not be within the marketer’s target market, and thus, may be an inefficient use of promotional funds. However, this is changing as new advertising technologies and the emergence of new media outlets offer more options for targeted advertising. Advertising also has a history of being considered a one-way form

of marketing communication where the message receiver (i.e., target market) is not in position to immediately respond to the message (e.g., seek more information). This too is changing. For example, in the next few years technologies will be readily available to enable a television viewer to click a button to request more details on a product seen on their favorite TV program. In fact, it is expected that over the next 10-20 years advertising will move away from a one-way communication model and become one that is highly interactive. Another characteristic that may change as advertising evolves is the view that advertising does not stimulate immediate demand for the product advertised. That is, customers cannot quickly purchase a product they see advertised. But as more media outlets allow customers to interact with the messages being delivered the ability of advertising to quickly stimulate demand will improve.<sup>1</sup>

To make the definition of advertising even more clearly, the author decided to present some of the definitions from various sources.

Advertising might be defined as any device which first arrests the attention of the passer-by and then induces him to accept a mutually advantageous exchange.<sup>2</sup> When we are talking about the “exchange” it is important for the passer-by to accept it and to interact with the ad, so the passer-by stay longer influenced by the ad.

Advertising is a non-personal form of promotion that is delivered through selected media outlets that, under most circumstances, require the marketer to pay for message placement.<sup>3</sup>

Advertising is paid, non-personal form of sending the message to consumers and the public about products or services through the media of mass communication or by mail to inform or sale. Advertising is a component of the promotional mix. It is carried out in newspapers, catalogs, TV and radio commercials, billboards, mail and other advertising means. The most expensive form of advertising is television<sup>4</sup> advertising. (Ekonomski leksikon; 2011, 609)

<sup>1</sup> <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/asr/v006/6.3unit01.html> (17-02-2015)

<sup>2</sup> <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/asr/v006/6.3unit01.html> (17-02-2015)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.knowthis.com/advertising/what-is-advertising> (16-02-2015)

<sup>4</sup> Television advertising is notoriously expensive. Ads on television signal your audience that you are successful and making money. On the other hand, many young people are insensitive and even hostile towards television ads. You may reach them more effectively through Internet broadcasts of shows produced exclusively for an online audience. This kind of advertising costs

According to American Marketing Association the term advertising is defined as placement of announcements and persuasive messages in time or space purchased in any of the mass media by business firms, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and individuals who seek to inform and/ or persuade members of a particular target market or audience about their products, services, organizations, or ideas.<sup>5</sup>

For advertising is important to have a pro-active communication with the users of product or service, so that the advertising stays longer in users sub consciousness.

### 3. UNCONVENTIONAL ADVERTISING

The term unconventional stands for curiosity, instability, inventiveness, originality, un-ordinariness, alternation and etc. With the release of the book on the market called “Guerrilla marketing”, back in 1983 by the author and “father” of guerrilla marketing Jay Conrad Levinson public was introduced to the new revolution in marketing, revolution which presented two beliefs: marketing does not have to be expensive to be successful and sales is the easiest job in the world.

Unconventional advertising is now the subject of interest of many scientists (and people from practices such as entrepreneurs, managers, etc.). Guerrilla advertising is nowadays also called the art and it is not just focused on a great idea, but also on the idea that is able to connect well-defined and the targeted audience. Typical guerrilla advertising campaigns are unexpected and unusual, in the environment they causes surprise in unexpected situations and in unexpected places to impressively create interest. Unconventional advertising wants to surprise environment and seeks exceptional creativity and innovation but it gives a great advantage and unsurpassed advantage to cultural institutions, security in an uncertain market, speed and ease of communicating with the users of cultural institutions. Wide open mouth caused by surprise will replace sarcastically eye rolling. (Margolis, Garrigan; 2008, 16)

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a fraction of what it costs to place a network ad, and the audience may be more receptive to it, especially if it is not flashy and fits in with the theme of the online broadcast. Available on: <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/traditional-advertising-vs-unconventional-advertising-26379.html> (16-02-2015)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ama.org/resources/Pages/Dictionary.aspx> (16-02-2015)

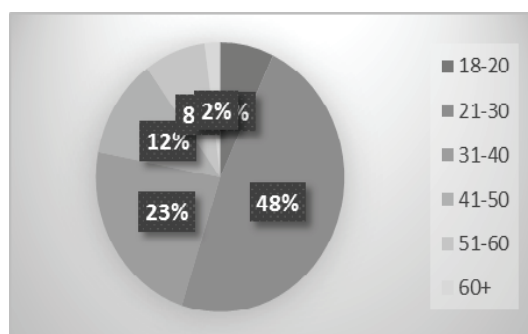
In world where consumer is suffocated by commercials that all sound and look alike, unconventional advertising is the breath of fresh air, delivering messages in unexpected forms that most of time entertain the viewers. Unconventional advertising is able to pass the protective shield that marketing literate consumers nowadays have built as a protection against the commercial messages that bombard them every day.

This happens because unconventional advertising is unexpected and it catches them in locations and situations where they aren't expecting to be advertised at and where they are off guarded. Also, unlike traditional advertising, the unconventional ads don't use persuasive message trying to convince the audience to buy, but rather they address to customer's subconscious creating memorable images of the promoted brands which last in the mind of consumers. (Jurca; 2010., 331)

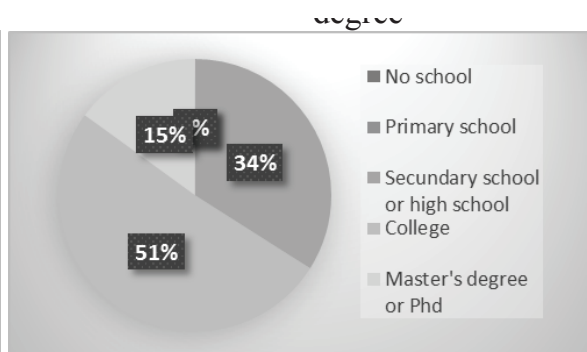
#### 4. DESCRIPTION OF EXAMINEE IN THE SAMPLE AND SURVEY

Research was carried out in eastern Croatia, in Osijek, on a sample of 508 various respondents. Data was collected by contacting respondents via e-mail so as their responses. Examinees were mostly the students of Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek (mostly of them were from Department of cultural studies), employees and unemployed and others. Structured questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part of the questionnaire contained four general questions like gender, age, years of working experience etc. The second part of the survey contained couple of questions about marketing and advertising of Croatian national theatre.

**Chart 1.** Distribution of sample by age      **Chart 2.** Distribution of sample by education degree



Source: By author



Source: By author

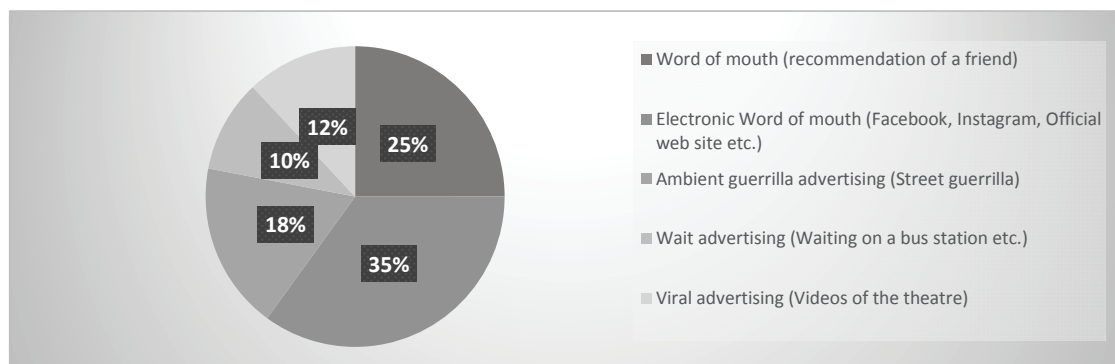


Chart 1 shows that the most of the examinees were between 21 and 30 years old and least of them were 60 years and plus.

Chart 2 shows that the most of the respondents graduated from the university, school or college (51%) and also large number of examinees have a secondary school or high school (34%). A small number of respondents have a Master's degree or PhD (15%).

## 5. REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

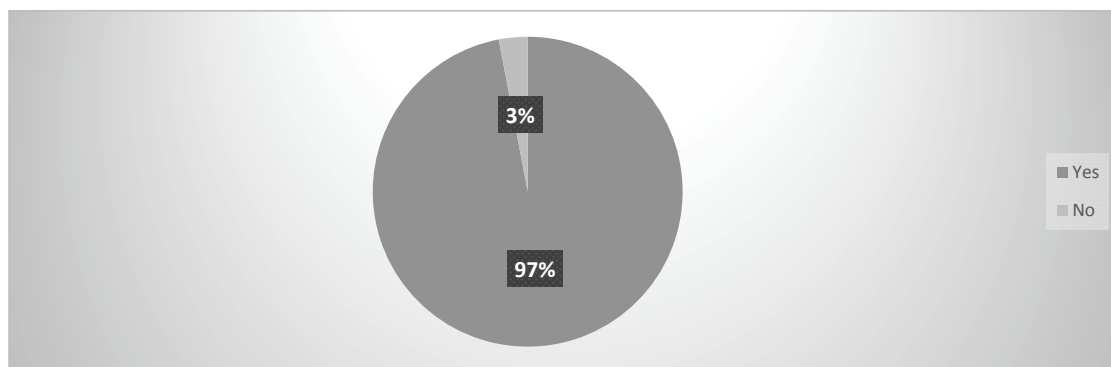
**Chart 3.** Through which advertising was the audience most attracted to the performances



Source: By author

Chart 3 shows us that most of the respondents (35%) was most attracted through electronic word of mouth advertising to attend the theatres performances. Electronic word of mouth was most attractive because most of the responses were young audience and most of them use social media like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to find out new information's. Second most attractive advertising was word of mouth (25%) advertising, which means that respondents got a recommendation from a friend or family to attend the performances. No less important part of this unconventional advertising are street guerrilla (18%), wait advertising (10%) and viral advertising (12%).

**Chart 4.** Do the audience in the future support unconventional advertising in Croatian National theatre



Source: by author

The audience was asked do they in the future support unconventional advertising in Croatian national theatre. From the chart 4 it can be seen that the most of them answered with yes (97%) and minority answered with no (3%). It is very important, that the audience recognize the new and creative way of advertising in culture institutions and for cultural institutions it is important to find a new way to communicate with the audience.

This research was carried out because the cultural institutions in city of Osijek and also Croatia are having lack of financial resources so they have to find low budget and creative way of advertising. Not only can those kind of advertising save lots of money but also it can help the cultural institutions to make more visibility and increase the sale.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Cultural institutions, especially in Croatia are confronted with many challenges, like lack of financial and human resources, keeping up with rapid progress of information and communication technologies and therefore they are having a hard time to make a good marketing strategy.

On the basis of this study, it can concluded that unconventional advertising can be a great solution for cultural institutions in city of Osijek, because of several reasons:



- most of cultural institutions have a lack of finance resources, so with unconventional advertising they can make cheap, memorable and creative advertise;
- with unconventional advertising the cultural institutions can more get more visibility on the market and in the environment;
- the audience in city of Osijek are supporting the unconventional advertising, so they will be more attracted in future to performances thru unconventional advertising.

Cultural institutions are the important represent of a one city, so it is important for them to keep sustainability and thru good marketing strategy, using unconventional advertising (mixed with conventional advertising), they can achieve that.

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