

Armchair Geurrilla Part 2

Famously, one of their members spotted her winning slogan in their magazine but had not received the brand new car on offer.

An embarrassed marketing manager had to explain that his company had 'forgotten' to notify her that she had won. And most competitions can be entered with 'no purchase necessary' - Mark spent half an hour in Specsavers Opticians recently whilst they confirmed he was entitled to enter their £2000 holiday competition without having to buy a pair of glasses. (Games of chance must allow 'no purchase' entries, otherwise they become a lottery, for which a licence is required. That's why so many of them have tie-breaker slogans, and so can be called games of skill). And guerrilla compers always share the news of a good comp - mass action is much more effective (remember the Hoover free-flight giveaway? - it almost bankrupted the company).

Fancy being an armchair guerrilla?

Here are Mark's tips:

Never enter telephone competitions - unless they are freephone - as these are designed to rip you off via premium rate phone charges.

Pretend you have a company car, the make of which you can choose yourself. You will then be inundated with free offers of champagne, Marks & Spencer vouchers, 24 hour test drives and entry into scores of competitions simply for letting other manufacturers know when your 'car' is due for renewal.

Ring the freephone number in car ads for their bumf, which can be put in your local re-cycling bin after you've completed their questionnaire. (Mark can't drive)

Always lie on consumer questionnaires by saying you buy 'supermarket own brand' products. You will then receive numerous free offers for the products you really purchase. Wherever possible, use the facility to submit postcard or plain paper entries to avoid having to purchase the goods. Re-cycle prize-winning slogans (available on the Web) in different competitions - the same ones win time and again. Never pay full price for the Financial Times, Telegraph, Independent or The Times.

They always have long-running 'promotions offering copies at reduced cost, supposedly to introduce you to the newspaper, but in reality to massage their circulation figures.

Guardian readers should avoid entering the excellent competitions in The Guide (published with The Guardian on Saturdays) by telephone (which is a rip-off), but instead enter via the Web or with a freepost postcard, as detailed in the small print (Mark won a runners-up prize this way).

PS Since writing this, my friend Mark has been away in Majorca for a fortnight. When relaxing on his hotel balcony, his mobile went off. A bathroom furnishings company rang him to say he had won a £2500 bathroom re-fit. He had collected a weeks tokens from the local paper running this promotion. He hadn't bothered to buy the paper, of course. He simply clipped the coupons at the end of the week from the papers in his company's press office. He says the jacuzzi will be useful for keeping the coal in. And, encouraged by Mark, Ive just won £1,000 from a Guardian cricket comp.

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About the Author

Davinus Greeno works for the [organic food](#) and [ethical clothes](#) directory that lists 100s of Organic and Ethical Companies and we also have [Health Articles](#) for you to read or publish.