

HOW TO ORGANISE...

GUERRILLA LIGHTING

This guide is intended as an open source instruction set detailing how the events described and documented on guerrillalighting.net are organised and staged.

It is offered in good faith and intended to be used to spread the word about guerrilla lighting and our **manifesto**. We accept no responsibility of liability for events that we don't personally organise.



'TIME TO START A REVOLUTION IN LIGHT'...

GuerrillaLighting.net was set up in 2008 as a low cost, high impact way of demonstrating the power of well designed urban lighting in transforming public spaces through hands on workshops and engagement.

Guerrilla Lighting is not a new idea, there have been many examples, events and ways of creating temporary lighting installations all around the world. The ideas and approaches described in this document are the result of an initial idea developed by BDP Lighting in 2007 that has grown and expanded with the contribution of many collaborators.

The purpose of this document is to describe the general approach that has been used to generate the events and results that are described on www.guerrillalighting.net with the aim of growing the movement even more. If you download this document and follow this formula we would ask that you follow a few simple "rules" in the way you operate and promote your event and also that you make sure you share the results with the world via guerrillalighting.net.

Rule #1: The approach was developed to promote lighting design in general, not one specific company or product supplier - please don't overly commercialise your event. The designers, organisers and sponsors should get publicity but the main brand should be GuerrillaLighting.net.

Rule #2: All events must be registered with GuerrillaLighting.net and follow the basic guidelines given in this document. E-mail info@guerrillalighting.net to start the discussion - we will gladly help you with promotion and advice.

Rule #3: All lighting designs should be well developed and designed by qualified experienced lighting designers.

Rule #4: The results must be documented and published on GuerrillaLighting.net.

Rule #5: Have fun!



Birmingham City Centre, 2009
This Guerrilla Lighting event was organised with Birmingham City Council to promote the launch of the Birmingham Big City Plan. It was designed by BDP Lighting and the guerrilla included local architects, council employees and men-in-suits.

RESULTS:



with really big thanks....

This has all only been possible due to the kind sponsorship from many manufacturers (see web site for name checks) and also the good will of the different designers. We also owe our many photographers big thanks for their support. Especially David Barbour and Sanna Fisher-Payne.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- * Several months before the event the city is visited and the targets are selected. From experience we suggest that this happens at least two months in advance of the event to give enough time to design, test and refine the designs (but then we did all have day jobs too!).
- * The actual guerrillas can be recruited from anywhere but it is important that they do not know what they are actually going to be doing on the night in terms of lighting effects and usually also the sites.
- * The event is publicised in an intriguing and mysterious way with participants only finding out about the sites on the night of the event. Mass text messaging, the guerrilla lighting web site and e-mails are used to raise interest and supporters. People will be given an e-mail address to respond to if they want to register.
- * On the night of the event the guerrillas are called to a briefing meeting. We would envisage approximately 50-70 guerrillas for one event divided into around 6-8 teams.
- * One of the keys to success is to have good strong team leaders who are briefed in advance and understand the aims of the project.
- * Immediately following the briefing the volunteers are divided into teams and led out onto the street by the team leaders.
- * The guerrillas approach each site en-mass, take aim with their lighting equipment and fire on the sound of an air horn. The results are recorded by professional photographers and then the lighting is switched off and we move on to the next site. Each site is usually lit for around 5 minutes in total.
- * The lighting appears spontaneous but actually is carefully planned in advance and the team leaders ensure the design is delivered.
- * After all sites are complete the participants proceed to a central venue for an after-show party where the photographs of the lighting schemes are projected onto the wall. In the case of a light festival this could form a more public or semi permanent part of the event with the slide being projected on to the side of a building for a number of nights.
- * The results of the mission are documented and posted on the web.



every light effect in this photo is created using hand held battery equipment such as torches and LED dots.

RESULTS:



taking it to the next level...

We would be really interested in hearing your ideas about how to move guerrilla lighting on to the next level or any idea you have for cool locations to do events.

STAGE ONE: MISSION PLANNING

- * Visit the areas and select the sites. Spaces that have low ambient light work best, also a degree of architectural detail and rhythm is useful. The torches are narrow beam and do not generally light big flat areas well. We also like dirty, gritty urban spaces - they just work best!
- * You will start with a "long list" of sites - probably 10 and then narrow it down to a final set in the following steps. You will probably need to reduce the sites to a maximum of 7 - we have done as few as 3 and it's better to do less really well! The route between the sites is important, you need to form a walk from the briefing point to the after-show venue. About 1.5 miles is a reasonable distance. Don't have too long between sites.
- * Previous missions have also had an overarching theme. In Manchester 2007 we wanted to use the event to draw attention to the fact that the architectural lighting of the city was poor or none existent. In London 2008 we wanted to use the event as a platform to write to the Mayor about the waste of light and energy. This is a great platform to generate interest in the local mainstream press - it's not about talking to the lighting industry.
- * Viewing position is also important - it is essential to take a before and after photo from the same position that the concept sketch has been produced. At this stage it is worth investigating a couple of viewing positions for each site. Think of the city as your stage.
- * Once you have your long list of the sites produce some quick sketch designs and go out and test them.
- * Mock-up. The core team go to site with torches and test some effects and different positions and test the feasibility of delivering the lit effect with the limitations of the available hardware (i.e. the torches). Normally this would involved 5-6 people. The mock-up's should be photographed from the appropriate viewing positions to make sure they work on camera.
- * Review the mock-up photo's and refine the designs. It may be necessary to return to the sites to get better day time images on which to base the design sketches. We use the sketches are an important part of the process and the publicity material generated after the event - it demonstrates the good lighting needs to be designed, it doesn't just happen.
- * Hold a second round of mock-ups on your short-listed sites to make sure your elements work together well.
- * From concept designs develop a series of "instructional" images that show where people need to stand, where they need to aim and what filters they should be using. This will form the briefing notes for the team leaders and also will be used to determine the number of torches and the number of people required as active participants..



RESULTS:



this was finland...

In Finland we helped local designers to stage their own event. They did all the design/organisation and we helped them to select sites and work the process. The results were brilliant and the publicity they managed to attract was massive.

They also developed the cool logo!

STAGE TWO: THE EVENT

- * Prepare briefing presentation for opening night to introduce guerrilla lighting, explain the mission and set the scene for the evening.
- * Using the designs developed in the first stage, work out how many torches, LED's, filters, etc you need and what each group is responsible for.
- * The Team Leaders should arrive about 1 hour before everyone else and be briefed in detail about their role. It is their responsibility to get everyone in their
- * Get everyone to turn up about 1 hour before sunset. Give them a drink and maybe a snack. Preparation is everything. Do the presentation!
- * Divide the volunteers into groups with the team leaders. They are now Guerrillas!
- * Proceed en-masse onto the streets.
- * Arrive at first site, team leaders instruct volunteers where to stand and where to aim. A laser pointer can be useful here to assist in aiming.
- * Photographers set up and take the "before" image showing the site without any lighting whilst guerrillas setting up.
- * The Mission Leader sounds an air horn, the guerrillas turn the torches on and adjust the aiming so effect is perfect. Team Leaders make sure aiming is good and lights are held still!
- * Take the after photographs! Get a few exposures.
- * Sound the air horn, turn torches off and proceed to next site. (Repeat this until at last site!)
- * Return to mission HQ or after-show venue, open the beers, turn up the music and upload all digital images onto laptop.
- * Project images onto wall in venue for participants to enjoy - we tend to select a before followed by an after for each site and some other general shots. The idea is that the participants can see the amazing transformation with light that they were a key part of.
- * Collate results and send to martin@guerrillalighting.net for uploading onto www.guerrillalighting.net



RESULTS:



don't forget...

Lighting without permission can get you into trouble.

It is fun though....

OTHER THOUGHTS AND ADVICE

- * We use high powered hand held torches (or Flashlights to our American cousins) as the main lighting tool. Our original batch were sourced from [ScrewFix](#) in the UK but if you google 5M Candle Power torch/spotlight/flashlight you should get several sites. Screwfix are not the only source of torch but they worked okay for us. They generally retailed at around £25-35. Here's a link to some suitable kit on [Amazon](#).
- * We also use [Dot-lts](#) from Osram - they usually donated these and we are eternally grateful for their amazing support.
- * One other cool tool is the battery powered versions of Philips LedLine - again donated/loaned and we are equally grateful! Philips developed these for their sales engineers as demo's and we saw another use!
- * It is important that a professional (or very good amateur!) photographer records the event, including at least a before and after from the same view for each site. We have also had some good success with filming events. All photographs must be made available to go onto [GuerrillaLighting.net](#) and for reproduction to promote Guerrilla Lighting. The photographs are one of the most important parts of the whole initiative - they are the permanent record of the lit effect.
- * Sponsorship of the event can be possible to usually cover the cost/organisation of party venues and catering, provision of "uniforms" for active guerrillas, and some incidental expenses. In the past we have used multiple sponsors for each event to try to keep it as brand neutral as possible.
- * To maximise the impact of 50-70 people walking through the streets with high-powered torches we would normally ask everyone to dress in black/dark clothes. In London we organised as series of Guerrilla Lighting sweatshirts and in Glasgow we organised some coats. This "uniform" created a real spectacle
- * All guerrilla lighting equipment is battery powered. The torches we use generally have a life of 20 minutes so it is essential that they are not used unnecessarily. This also limits the number of sites one group can cover. Four should be possible with 20 minutes battery life.
- * Torches, accommodation, travel, equipment transport and photography are some of the usual expenses associated with this project.

