

Super-size your sales through up-selling and cross-selling

Would You Like Fries With That Order? by Craig Harrison

Recently while navigating an online bookstore I came across the James Frey book popularized by Oprah's book club: *A Million Little Pieces*. As I read about this book I was informed that "readers who bought *A Million Little Pieces* also bought the books *Lies My President Told Me* and *Pinocchio*." Folks, I was being cross-sold, yet I wasn't cross about it.

The reality of business is that customers want to be sold. They love to buy for their own reasons. Not manipulatively bombarded with sales pitches or indiscriminately pressured with endless offerings, but intelligently informed, guided and suggested with related, logical and natural purchases that further their goals.

Up-selling and cross-selling are two sales techniques used by professional sales and service staffs to increase sales. Are you making the most of suggestive selling?

UP With Selling

Up-selling refers to situations where your customer buys a product or service, and you encourage them to spend more for additional features or packages. They are upping the amount they are spending, albeit for more or better services or products.

Consider the customer seeking a point-of-sale solution for handling charge cards, yet opts to purchase a deluxe POS model for more money when learning of additional capabilities, security and flexibility.

You are shopping for a bare-bones SUV. The salesperson informs you soccer moms tell him they love having the model with the DVD player in the backseat for the kids. Thus you buy that model with a fancy video system and the extended warranty too.

Sales Crossing Ahead

Cross Selling refers to situations where a customer buys a product or service, and is simultaneously sold related items that often complement their purchase.

For example: A customer buys a computer and is then sold training services or tutorial software to go with it at additional cost.

Ditto when a man buys a suit and is then offered a colour coordinated silk tie and dress shirt to go with it.

While we think of these as advanced sales techniques, they are actually rooted in the power of suggestion.

People, once they've decided to buy, are naturally swayed by more and better options, additional value, and the excitement following their initial purchase. Many customers don't know about additional items or options, or how well they complement the initial item they bought. Up-selling enhances their initial purchase, making them more powerful, capable and effective. Cross-selling similarly enhances their purchase, often maximizing its impact on their business.

Suggestive Selling Salient in Our Lives

Quite frankly, we've been up-sold and cross-sold every day. And it's not necessarily a manipulative process.

Consider the following examples:

- "Would you like fries with that order?"
- "For just 49 cents we can super-size that for you."
- "When you buy 2 today you get 1 Free!"
- "Would you like to purchase our extended warranty coverage on this? It's only...."

I've worked with customer service staffs afraid to sell, others who felt it was manipulative and smarmy to sell. Yet here's a secret: It's really a form of service!

Service Through Sales

When you up-sell and cross-sell:

- You are making informed suggestions as a knowledgeable rep
- You are apprising customers of options they may not be aware of
- You are often anticipating future needs
- It's a way to further help your customer to be more powerful, to enjoy more benefits, to maximize the usefulness of the products or services they're acquiring.

Remember this, when you are the rep who is selling and serving: You are in the business of solving problems, generating solutions and making customers happy, or even happier.

- You are the subject matter expert when it comes to the products and services you are representing.
- To the extent you listen and understand the situation of your clients, customers or constituents, you are ideally suited to provide solutions, recommendations and remedies.
- To withhold this from others would be selfish, and poor service.
- Any time you can fulfill more needs, address more issues or solve more problems you are easing your client's /customer's life. After all, they already trust you, like you, and are doing business with you.

So, how does one UPSELL or CROSS-SELL? It's easy.

Let's Play Bridge

After you've completed the initial transaction or gotten the initial indication your customer wants to buy, you can then bridge to the Up- or Cross-Sell:

Mr. Randle, while I have you on the line, were you aware you can work in multiple advanced speech manuals at the same time?

Oh, by the way Ms. Kennison, did you know that the book you bought for new hire also has a companion CD for just \$9 more?

Mr. Younger, I'd like to take a moment to inform you of a new nationwide program just for businesses such as yours.

Incidentally were you aware that you are 2/3's of the way toward qualifying for a discount on shipping of your office supplies?

Using BRIDGE statements allows you to transition from your initial sale to up-sells and cross-sells.

Look anew at the offerings you're selling. For each, what is an up-sell? What can you cross-sell with it? Make sure your salespeople know the migration paths so they can suggestively up- and cross-sell with ease.

In closing, I'd like to thank you for your engagement with this material. Before concluding, could I interest any of you in a related article on up-selling and cross-selling? Perhaps you'd prefer a training course on suggestive selling? Shall I customize that for you? Consider yourself super-sized!