

Up-Selling Strategies

Don't Leave Money on the Table!

The difference between men and boys in the food concession business (and any other business as well) is their ability to Up sell. McDonald's didn't invent "Super size me" just to be funny. Every single business can learn something from the phenomenal success of fast food franchises over the past few decades. "Would you like fries with that sir?" That one single tactical question almost doubled McDonald's profits overnight. That's the remarkable power of up selling at its finest.

Basically there are only THREE ways to build any business.

1. **Attract more customers.** This is the one everyone concentrates on. It's the most difficult of the lot and the most expensive.
2. **Increase customer's frequency of purchase.** Now we're getting somewhere. Loyalty programs, free samples and coupons work wonders. FACT: A customer who has bought a hot dog from you once (assuming it was a good experience) is TEN times more likely to return and purchase again, than is a normal passerby.
3. **Increase the volume of each transaction through UPSELLING.** This is the cheapest method, easiest method and most effective method IF you do it right.

What is up-selling anyhow?

Is it about selling more and more to a client?

Is it about selling more of the same or simply different product or services?

Is it about making them aware of other products or services your company has to offer, even if you don't personally sell them?

Is it about making them aware of products or services your company doesn't sell but could be of benefit to them?

It's all of the above and more, and you're leaving money on the table if you don't learn how to up sell, and do it with grace and ease.

Relationship Building

Sometimes the simplest methods are the best, and with sales, this is certainly true. The foundation of all effective sales is building a relationship. Without a strong relationship, your customer will not be inclined to buy a second time, or to think of your company as one to refer to friends and associates. Up-selling and cross-selling are not only methods, but also tools to use in the building of strong relationships. Up-selling involves more than working hard to understand client needs; it also requires a high level blend of empathy for the customer's business challenges and staying alert for opportunities to move relationships forward in the sales process. Every time you talk to a client you have an opportunity to service them that you aren't taking advantage of. And many clients would buy more but they don't know what you have to offer, they're not asked, or they're not asked in the right way.

So when and how do you present new ideas and offerings to clients? There truly is no right or wrong answer to this. It's about being in conversation with your clients all the time. It's about listening to them. It's about hearing what they aren't saying and what's between the lines of what they are saying. It's asking questions. Salesmanship is more about listening and questioning than telling and selling. Up-selling simply takes this to a new level.

It is a fact that most customers have a higher level of satisfaction when they receive a high-quality product or service than they would ever have with a cheaper, lower-quality version. By listening to your customers and matching their needs with your best product or service for their circumstances, even if it's a higher priced version than they originally wanted, you will not only increase the profit margin of your sale, but you will also boost your customer's satisfaction with your company. And we all know that a satisfied customer means a repeat customer - one who refers your business to others.

So now we've established the importance of listening in building a relationship with your customers. But what do you listen for? What questions should you be asking? And how do you know when it's the right time to present a new sales concept? The answer to these questions is bigger than can be addressed in this article, but here are a few hints:

1. Don't simply sell them what they ask for? If a customer walks up to your hot dog stand and says, "Give me a hot dog." Do Not just give him a hot dog, but in a tactful manner, segue into the choices that he may not be aware of. "Yes sir coming right up. By the way would you (as you point to your sign board) like the regular dog, the jumbo dog or the Texas sausage dog?"

2. If time permits you can talk to your customers and gather information about them. Always smile and be friendly. Be careful not to appear too pushy with your up selling. If the customer refused the first up sell and is sticking to his "plain hot dog" choice, then you can ask him, "No problem, do you want the combo? Hot dog, chips and soda for only \$4.00." If he went with the first up sell, DO NOT try to bump him again until he hands you the money. Then you ask him, "Would you like the combo? Sausage Dog, chips and soda only \$6.00."

3. Cross Selling is another technique that we'll get into during the training session. If you sell one line of products or services, but your company sells additional lines, ask them if they use these others. For example, if you sell a customer a hot dog for \$2.50, as he hands you the \$5 bill ask, "Would you care for a SOFT pretzel to go? I can put it in an insulated bag and it will stay fresh and warm for hours." This is a form of what is called Cross Selling, another sales technique that we'll get into in more detail during your training session.

Up selling isn't a one time activity. It's a mindset about being in service to your customers and clients all the time. It's about thinking bigger than just the one sale in front of you, and focusing on building long-term high trust relationships. It's about genuine concern and interest in the client. Up selling isn't a technique, it's an attitude. Develop it and you'll make more sales, bigger sales and have those referrals coming to you all the time.

Your customers have money that they will willingly spend with you. Don't leave that money on the table!