Increase Product Sales with Cross-Selling and Up-Selling

By Janice King

Sometimes buying a product is difficult because of the variety of models—with options, add-on items, and services, the customer must choose from in order to obtain a complete solution. Promotional materials for these products must present the choices clearly and take advantage of opportunities for cross-selling and up-selling.

Cross-Selling Adds More Items

Cross-selling promotes an add-on or accessory product or service that, when combined with the primary product, makes a better or complete solution. A classic example of cross-selling is the question, "Do you want fries with that?"

In many cases, cross-selling involves helping customers assemble a tailored product from a variety of options. An effective cross-sell presents these options clearly and makes it easy for customers to choose among them.

Up-selling Adds More Value

Up-selling promotes a more powerful or higher level model than the one the customer is considering. To use the fast-food metaphor again, an up-sell would be "The deluxe burger is not only bigger, but it includes the special sauce and only costs a little more. Would you like that instead?"

A product model that offers greater capabilities, flexibility, or capacity might be suitable for up-sell. In this case, the seller's job is to make sure a customer is aware this model exists and to encourage consideration of both models before the purchase decision.

Promotional Ideas

Both cross-selling and up-selling can be done in print materials and on the Web. The following ideas can be used for print materials such as brochures, catalogs, and selection guides:

- Include a brief "Related Products" section that lists the names or model numbers of up-sell and cross-sell products.
- Present a chart of available options, describing the target use or environment for each.
- Describe typical packages or product combinations, especially when a customer must purchase multiple components. This can be done with a simple bullet list that describes the content of each package.

Because of dynamic links between pages, cross-selling and up-selling are especially easy to implement on a web site. For example, you can create links among catalog pages to show related products, or link to a services page from a product page. The navigation process you define for purchase transactions on a web site can also guide a visitor through pages that present cross-sell or up-sell options.

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More Choices, More Sales

If handled correctly, cross-selling and up-selling can help customers choose the best products for their needs and generate a stronger customer relationship for your company. And of course, more revenue too.

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About the Author

Janice is an award-winning freelance copywriter who helps technology companies around the world produce clear, compelling sales and PR materials. This article is excerpted in part from Janice’s latest book, Copywriting That Sells High Tech, which has been called ”a superb guide to great copy for any technology-based product or service.” Learn about the book and find many valuable resources for high-tech marketing at Janice’s site: www.writinghightech.com

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Janice_King

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