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16A Journey, Suite 200
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656-3317

toll-free 877-626-2776
local calls 949-859-4040
fax 949-855-2973

MANAonline.org

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WOULD YOU LIKE
FRIES WITH THAT?

UP-SELLING BRINGS ADDITIONAL REVENUE WITH RELATIVELY LOW EXPENSE AND EFFORT

EDITORIAL | JOHN BOE



JOHN BOE

John Boe presents a wide variety of motivational and sales-oriented keynotes and seminar programs for sales meetings and conventions. John is a nationally recognized sales trainer and business motivational speaker with an impeccable track record in the meeting industry. To have John speak at your next event, visit www.johnboe.com or call 877-725-3750. Visit the website for a free newsletter.

While you may not have recognized it, the last time you ordered from a fast food restaurant or went to the post office, there is a good chance you experienced some form of cross-selling or up-selling. **Cross-selling and up-selling are well-established and highly effective marketing practices used by a wide variety of industries.**


What is cross-selling? It is a proactive, ongoing sales process designed to provide your customers with a full spectrum of your company's products and services. The good news is cross-selling is one of the most profitable and least risky endeavors a sales rep can undertake. My first exposure to cross-selling was as a teenager in high school working part-time at McDonalds during summer vacation. Looking back on my brief tenure selling hamburgers, I can still hear my manager's daily refrain; be polite, keep the counter clean and always, always ask if they would like fries with their meal.

A couple of years later while attending college, I took a part-time job selling shoes at the mall. I was paid an hourly wage to sell the shoes, but I received a commission whenever I cross-sold any accessory items such as shoe polish, socks or purses. This was my first taste of commission and as a starving college student, I took to cross-selling and up-selling like a duck to water.

Some shortsighted salespeople might suggest that customers are irritated by cross-selling and perceive it as an aggressive sales technique. Interestingly enough, consumer research indicates that the reverse is true. The majority of consumers surveyed actually preferred a full range of products and services and appreciate the convenience that is provided through a comprehensive cross-selling approach. Top-producing salespeople understand the power of cross-selling and recognize it as a critical component for promoting both customer retention and revenue growth. Not surpris-

ingly, two of the key elements that make cross-selling and up-selling work are trust and convenience. Your customers already possess a degree of trust in your company and this can be converted into additional sales that are not directly related to their existing products.

The best place to introduce your customer to the concept of cross-selling is during your initial needs-analysis meeting. Unfortunately, many salespeople fail to take the time to conduct a thorough needs analysis and as a result do not uncover potential products and services that would be of benefit to their customer. Ask questions and take good notes. Effective cross-selling is all about guided self-discovery. Through a series of thought provoking, open-ended questions, successful salespeople assist their customers to uncover potential needs. During the needs analysis interview, I highly recommend the use of a checklist that incorporates all of your company's products and services. Relying on your memory alone is a poor business decision; so take the time to jot down key information.

Developing a systematic approach to cross-selling and up-selling brings in additional revenue with relatively low expense and effort. As you prepare for your next client appointment, I challenge you to look for cross-selling and up-selling opportunities that you can incorporate into your presentation. Sales reps who fail to implement an effective cross-selling program actually do a disservice to their customers and leave the back door open to their competitors! 

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