



UP-SERVICING: CREATING SUPERIOR CUSTOMER VALUE THROUGH UP-SELLING VALUABLE ADD-ONS

About once a week I grab my laptop and head to a café to work, brainstorm, and map out business plans. I usually enjoy a latté, cappuccino, or green tea while I work and I've found the change of scenery ignites my creativity and jump starts my productivity. For years I've gone to the same café on Yale Avenue for my weekly ritual, but last week I stopped into a Barnes & Noble Cafe. I approached the counter to purchase a latté and the sales person immediately responded with an "up selling" offer. She asked, "Can I get you a slice of cheesecake to go with your Caramel Macchiato?"

I wasn't even thinking about dessert, yet I somehow let the unexpected query: "Can I get you a slice of cheesecake to go with your Caramel Macchiato?" entice me into accepting a rich slice of cheesecake.

The lady at the Barnes & Noble Café flawlessly executed the "up-selling" technique and without any hesitation I accepted. Not once in the three years of my attending my usual café has anyone tried to upsell me. As I enjoyed each delectable bite of the cheesecake I wondered, "What would it mean to Barnes & Noble's bottom line if every salesperson in the Café attempted to upsell beverage seekers? What would it mean to the bottom line if just 2% of customers everyday were upsold?" What would it mean to your bottom line if every one of your employees flawlessly upsold your customers?

In my experience both as a consumer and as a Business Growth Strategist, I have discovered that many businesses avoid up-selling because they're concerned that the customer may feel irritated or pressured, and often customer service professionals are reluctant to upsell because they're uncomfortable with a "selling" role. But here's the thing: If you don't try to upsell you are 1) Leaving money on the table and 2) Withholding value-added services from your customers. When done right, upselling offers translate into sales 5-20% of the time. And research shows that most customers appreciate up-selling when they are offered additional benefits that are relevant to their needs. Read on to get 5 tips to help you confidently and successfully upsell your customers.

Think of upserving as "Up-Servicing" - When done right, upselling is simply offering a "suggestion" to an already receptive buyer to enhance the value of her service. This is exactly what I experienced at Barnes & Noble Cafe. I was already a receptive buyer and the cheesecake most definitely enhance the value of my experience. When viewed as truly upserving as opposed to upselling, selling doesn't feel so overwhelming.

Make sure your upserving offer is always relevant to the customer's needs. Offering a buyer of a latté a book on Feng Shui tips may not be relevant and is likely to be rejection waiting to happen. But offering dessert truly offers to enhance the receptive customer's experience.

Be more interested in being of service than in getting a commission. Always focus on offering products or services that are relevant to the customer's needs and will arguably enhance the customer's experience. If your sole objective is to get a commission, customers will smell you a mile away. And trust me, they will not buy.

Recognize that upserving increases customer satisfaction. Surveys and research has found that offering products your customers might find useful is a proactive effort on your part that conclusively leads to increased satisfaction and loyalty.

Think of "up-servicing" as a proactive service initiative. When you add upserving to your skill repertoire, you will increase customers satisfaction and grow your bottom line.

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