

# Cross-Sell and UpSell Your Members

No matter whether you work in a membership, marketing, or circulation capacity at a trade association or a professional society, you have to turn your contact with members into a revenue generating opportunity. A great way to do this is by maximizing your cross-sell and up-sell strategies.

The ability to properly cross-sell and up-sell starts with having a strong database or association management system. There are many currently on the market and the most popular for associations include TIMMS, iMis, NetForum, and Advantage.

When it comes to cross-selling and up-selling, the main benefit of having a good database is that it allows you to see all of a member's data in one place—which

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track who actually came by the booth. Who did your staff speak with? Were they vice presidents' level or lower? What were their industries? What information were they looking for? What types of questions did they ask? This information provides an insider's view of who you and your booth staff may be meeting and talking with for the upcoming show. Keep a record of these types of questions and answers so that the following year you're ahead of the game.

## NOW MAKE DECISIONS

Once you've identified your attainable objectives and goals and targeted your attendees, you can set the parameters to measure return on investment. The data you gather will help you determine—and hopefully *demonstrate*—the success of every show you attend. ■

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means that every transaction or interaction that a member has had with your association needs to be included on the system. It doesn't matter whether contact is made to change an address, purchase a book, request a replacement copy of a magazine, or simply renew a membership. All of this information must be collected in the same place and is critical to a successful cross-sell or up-sell.

## There are a thousand opportunities to up-sell and cross-sell during a member's tenure with an association.

Some of them are simple to implement, while others require sophisticated programming by your association management system or your IT people. I suggest you try the following:

**Renewal-at-birth:** In my experience, convincing people to renew immediately after they have joined is cost effective. You can do this very innocuously by sending an email or letter thanking the member for joining, along with an offer of something special if they immediately sign up for another year or go to another membership level.

**Product offers:** Understanding the prior purchasing history of a member opens the door to multiple up-sell and cross-sell opportunities. For example, your annual meeting is being held in the Northeast and you know that a member has attended every annual meeting held in a Northeastern locale for the last five years. This member calls your customer service department to say that he received a damaged copy of the association magazine. As long as the member is satisfied with his interaction, this would be a great time to remind the member that the annual meeting is coming up in his area and that you would be happy to sign him up right there on the phone. Another good time to offer a cross-sell is when a new book or program comes out. Since your database is tracking past purchases of members and also knows that a member is interested in a certain topic, it would be effective to offer this member a special discount on the new product or program the next time the individual has contact with your organization.

**Gift offers:** There are numerous times during the year when you can offer a member the opportunity to give a gift membership to a friend or colleague. One particularly good time to present these offers is during the holiday season. Say your database tells you that a member has been with the association for five years. Obviously that member values their membership and would be a prime candidate for a gift up-sell. The next time this individual contacts you for any reason—as long as it is not to complain or cancel their membership—your system should be set up to present them with a limited time offer to give a gift membership to a friend at a special price or with a premium that they would find useful.

**Call-Ins:** Cross-selling and up-selling tend to be used most frequently when individuals call into customer service departments. Your association management system should arm reps with scripts that make it easy for them to present offers that make sense to members.

**Web up-selling:** Another interesting option is web up-selling. True, it requires more sophisticated programming, but it opens the door to new opportunity. For instance, if a member signs on to change their address online and it's almost time for membership to be renewed, you can present a pop-up featuring a special offer. Or, if a member has purchased books and attended programs on certain topics, you can present topic-specific banners or buttons that this member is more likely to respond to.

There are a huge number of opportunities for an association to increase revenues through up-selling and cross-selling and increase their revenues. The only potential limitations are your association database system and your creativity. As long as you are targeting your members with the right offers at the right time, you are sure to make revenue you didn't know existed. ■

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