

# 4 Tips to Master the Art of Upselling and Cross-Selling



Upselling and cross-selling have obvious benefits for ecommerce companies: bigger revenue. The problem is that savvy buyers see right through the “You may also like...” and often skip the additional purchase. To really see success with your product suggestions, there’s an integral part of the formula: customer delight. When you can convince the buyer that your suggestions are for their benefit, then you can master the art of upselling and cross-selling. So, how can you go about doing that?

## Know the Difference

The word “upsell” is applied to pretty much any instance where you suggest (or push) a product in addition to the one being purchased. By knowing the difference between upselling and cross-selling, you put yourself at an advantage.

Upselling is encouraging the purchase of anything that would make the primary product more expensive. For instance, a camera might come with an offer of batteries. A printer purchase might prompt the suggestion for ink. Cross-selling is the suggestion of any other product to be purchased in conjunction with the primary product—a printer suggestion when a computer is purchased or a conditioner suggestion when shampoo is selected.

# Know Which Gets Results

You don't want to bombard your buyers with product suggestions—not when getting them all the way to the checkout page is such a chore to begin with. With limited opportunities to upsell or cross-sell, you want to use the technique that will get the best results.

It's probably not surprising that upselling works 20 times better than cross-selling. Once buyers have a product in mind, they don't really want to be distracted by something else. A product or service that makes their first choice better, though? That's something they can usually get on board with.

Sometimes up-selling isn't an option, though, like the previous example of shampoo purchases. A cross-selling suggestion could still make that shampoo selection better. With a conditioner, frizz control products, curl enhancing sprays, and other items, you can help the buyer make sure they're fully happy with their hair after the purchase.

## Offer Upsells and Cross-Sells that Make Sense

If you've ever been on a site searching for a new throw pillow, only to see a suggestion for an outdoor furniture set, then you know the frustration that buyers often feel. The truth is, it's hard enough to get those buyers all the way to the finish line as it is. You can't throw them off course with a suggestion from out of left field.

In fact, the suggestion of an upsell or cross-sell that does fit the original purchase could still derail a purchase. Your suggestion has to fit the buyer's exact needs at the very moment he or she plans to buy. Otherwise, you could lose it all.

## Keep It Honest

We already know buyers can be skittish. If they feel at any point that something's not quite right, they'll bolt. The more open and honest and transparent your site is during the purchase process, the more likely those buyers will hang around to finish the purchase.

Some sites keep a running tally of the purchases, which can be accessed at any time. This lets the buyer know how much money has already been spent and maybe let them know they have a bit more in their budget. If that amount is unclear—as in the tax and shipping costs aren't included—then buyers might get a nasty surprise when it's time to check out.

If they're surprised by the actual total, they probably won't make that upsell purchase. If the actual total really makes them angry, they may not even finish the purchase at all.

With these tips in mind, you just might be able to increase your revenue through upselling and cross-selling. Just remember that these should always come second to the primary purchase and you'll be just fine.