

Increase Your Follow On Sales

By Tony L. Callahan

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Tony L. Callahan
tony@link-promote.com

Link-Promote <http://www.link-promote.com>

You might ask, "What is a follow on sale?" A follow on sale is the sale of any product or service that comes as a direct result of a previous sale. An example of this type of sale would be selling an upgrade to an existing software product.

As we have discussed in other articles, there are companies out there making much more money from follow on sales than from original sales. We have also discussed some specific strategies for increasing your follow on sales, strategies such as: mentioning your complimentary products on the thank you page that should follow your order page, giveaways, free training courses, e-zine subscriptions, and mailing lists.

All of the strategies mentioned above are excellent ways to increase your follow on sales but they are not the only techniques you should be employing. I have also found the following methods to be very successful.

1. If you ship a physical product, include sales and order information for your complimentary products. At minimum include a picture (preferably full color) of your product and a URL that the customer may visit to get information or order the product. A toll free number is a great item to include here. Also include a postcard for the customer who does not have ready access to the Internet.
2. If your product is electronic, like software or an e-book, include an ad for your additional products. This option should be used with caution, people do not like to be nagged by products they paid for. Have the ad come up only the first time the product is used or have a disable button on the pop up.
3. Establish a "private" area of your web site and grant access, for free, to any customer purchasing your products. In the unique content of this "private" area you have the opportunity to do some follow on selling.
4. Consider gathering more information on your customers, such as mailing address, date of birth and telephone number. You will need to decide if providing this information is mandatory or optional. There is the potential that some customer will not want to provide such information. Making it required information may cost you some sales. Guard the information you collect carefully and use it only for the purposes defined in your privacy statement. Send a thank you letter for purchases, send your customers a birthday card and follow up with them via telephone to be sure that they are satisfied with the product. These are all opportunities for follow on selling.

5. On your order form, ask customers if they want to be notified of new products, updates and upgrades. Maintain a separate mailing list for those customers who indicate their willingness to receive this information. You could also offer the option of allowing the customer to be notified via postal mail.

As mentioned before, the follow on sale is not easy to master. It is a delicate balance between salesmanship and becoming a nuisance. As with most powerful tools, these techniques hold the promise of great success or spectacular failure. Take the time to test and refine your methods before attempting widespread application with real customers. With practice and careful application, these techniques will contribute greatly to your profits. And as always, that is the real bottom line.

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Tony L. Callahan is president of his own Internet marketing company, Link-Promote <http://www.link-promote.com> . He also publishes Web-Links Monthly, a newsletter full of tips, tricks, tools and techniques for successful web site promotions. To subscribe, e-mail: <mailto:Web-Links-subscribe@topica.com>

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