

Operation Local Sales

By Tim Huckabee

Tips for luring local customers to your shop

OK, with the extras we added on, your single red rose comes to \$61.12.



Say it With Spunk

The tone employees use when offering add-ons is critical. The teenager in the burger joint can get away with asking in a monotone voice, but flowers don't make customers' mouths water the way fries do. Enthusiasm is essential. There's a difference between, "Do you want to add a balloon, too?" and "Would you like to add a Happy Birthday balloon to your Mom's arrangement?" Make it easier

for employees to sell add-ons by setting up a list of trigger words. Whenever they hear or write "Happy Birthday," "Happy Anniversary" or "Congratulations" on a card, they should automatically suggest an add-on.

Simpler As Separates

Add-ons need to be treated as a separate sale. "OK, we'll send her a pretty arrangement and can include a few balloons for \$60" is a common approach. But, how much are those balloons? Since only one price was offered, the balloons have to be backed out of the total — impacting the size of the design. Instead, once you've sold the arrangement, offer an add-on as a separate sale. "OK, we'll send her a pretty arrangement for \$60 and include a bunch of balloons for an additional \$15."

The bottom line: Teach your staff to sell add-ons effectively, and watch profits rise.

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Ask and You Shall Receive

I read recently that a major burger chain adds an astounding 15 percent to its annual sales simply by consistently asking customers if they'd like to "mega-size" meals. The florist's version of that question, "Would you like to add balloons, candy or a stuffed animal to your purchase?" might have the same impact, but often, customers don't hear it enough.

Make it Mandatory

The burger chain achieves those impressive numbers because asking the "mega-size" question is mandatory. I often hear about a flower-shop employee who is a champ at selling add-ons because she or he always asks for that sale (when appropriate). Simple, right? Most of the shops I train don't catch on that quickly. When I ask owners why selling add-ons is not a standard part of the sales presentation for the entire staff, I usually get a shrug. Remember, it's your name on the paycheck — tell everyone on staff to offer add-ons.

Web Wise

Smart Ways to Win Online Customers



The best way to prolong a flower's vase life is to keep it in optimal conditions at all times, even once it leaves your shop. That's why Gina Phillips of Adelaide's Flowers in La Jolla, Calif., designates an entire section of her shop's Web site, www.adelaidesflowers.com, to customer care-and-handling instructions. Instructions are organized in categories — roses, fresh-cut, European garden and orchids (top-sellers at Adelaide's) — and include specific advice on preservative solution, premature wilting, light requirements and more. Phillips says she plans to add a green-plants category to the Web site soon.