

Dear Tim...

DON'T BE PUSHY!

Customers often call to order after they have picked out the cheapest item on the website. Can't I just tell them they won't be happy and try to upsell them?

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My advice might surprise you here.

I think people expect me to respond to that question with a roaring, **SELL BIGGER ALL THE TIME!** Ironically, I hate to sell, hate to be sold and never advocate pushing a customer to spend more than he or she intended. We can all use our Jedi mind powers to get customers, like the web shoppers Tiffanni mentioned, to spend more, but my overwhelming fear is that they'll hang up the phone thinking, "Gosh, they were pushy, I'm not calling there again!" So you made the extra \$20, but you lost the customer. Not a winning scenario in my playbook. Here's my easy approach for handling those customers.

Work Your Site

You can't chide a customer for choosing a \$34.99 arrangement if that price dominates your home page, or worse, your site. Customers will buy what you lead them to buy, so maybe your first step in dealing with shoppers who migrate from the web to the phone is to take a critical look at their choices, i.e., price points. Don't be afraid of showing more everyday designs at higher price points. If I searched your site by price, over \$150, would I just be staring at funeral work, or would I have other options?

Validation Is the Trick

After hearing that the customer has chosen a white wicker basket filled with pastel side-of-the-roadia for \$34.99, chime in by saying, "Great choice, she's going to love that! That's what we call a small basket, perfect for your mom to place on the corner of her desk at work." Most customers will just acknowledge the comment and keep going. However, others, upon hearing "small," some people will ask how much more they need to spend to get a larger design.

(Some staff I've encouraged to follow this strategy reply, "I don't want to say that she's going to love it because it's one of those images photographed to look like an

all-around design, but it will never look that good at that price!" To that, I say, "Why do you continue to use only those images on your site? Come on, it's 2016; you can buy affordable, decent-quality equipment and take your own shots, hire a photographer or buy images online!")

Don't Forget the Finishing Touch

Now that I have forbidden you from trying to shame or scare customers into spending more, I want to remind you that there's still an opportunity to increase the sale by offering add-ons, or what I like to call "finishing touches." Once you have validated the customer's choice, and he or she has acknowledged the size, then give the customer the chance to personalize the sale: "As a finishing touch, I can attach a Happy Birthday balloon to your mom's flowers for just \$5."

Had your customer finished shopping online instead of calling the store, he or she would have been offered the chance to add a teddy bear, candy or balloon, regardless of the price of the main item he or she chose. So make sure the customer gets that same chance to spend more when he or she picks up the phone instead of the mouse!

Finally, we never really know customers' financial situations, so make them feel like rock stars no matter how little they spend! 🎤



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Got a sales or service challenge? Tell Tim about it, and he'll tackle it in an upcoming column. Email tim@floralstrategies.com, or call him, (800) 983-6184.

