



AGENT'S SALES JOURNAL

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Why cross-selling can be the modern agent's sales savior

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Published 6/1/2011

Whether you call it "the hat trick," "the bundled sale," "three-in-one" or the more common "combo sale," if you are selling multiple products, you are protecting yourself during this health care reform storm.

But there may be more you can do. The best way to protect your commissions — and your clients — is through a technique I like to call the "Reform Ready sale." With current health care commissions giving you the blues and customers coming up with new and unique reasons not to buy, you might want to continue reading this article.

Technically speaking, I'm not going to tell you anything different than you've heard from dozens of other articles and IMOs and GAs. I will tell you that you need to sell critical illness, accident and health insurance every time you go on an appointment. The difference I will provide is style. And, as we all know, when you're a salesperson, style is everything.

What does it mean to be Reform Ready?

I like low not-taken rates and I love high persistency numbers. I absolutely hate when my clients get turned down for health insurance, get rated up for health insurance or have a huge rate increase that makes them contemplate canceling their health insurance.

However, in the face of health care reform, these are the last things that I need to worry about — so I choose not to. Don't get me wrong: I didn't decide to blow off the problem. Instead, I decided to fix it. My fix is the Reform Ready sale, a thing of beauty.

I like to provide my clients with the best possible plans at the best possible price. This is something I am sure we can all agree on. And, as mentioned earlier, I like low not-taken rates, high persistency rates and clients that don't get bent out of shape because they didn't get exactly what they wanted from a health carrier.

Eight secrets to success

My Reform Ready sale is a way to make all of these things come true, and it's as easy as asking eight questions. Yes, you read me right: eight questions.

There is a movie where an actor says, "If you build it they will come." (I am sure all of you are picturing cornfields and baseball greats, and getting a bit nostalgic.) Well, I like to say "if you pitch it Reform Ready, they will buy." I start by using these eight questions.

- Do you know someone who has suffered from a heart attack, stroke or cancer?
- Was their quality of life affected in a negative manner?
- If I had a product that could give you \$10,000, \$25,000, even up to \$250,000 if you suffered a covered critical illness, would you want that money?
- If you called me in six months, after having a heart attack, stroke or cancer, would you want a get well card or a check for \$25,000? You would want \$25,000, right?
- Has anyone in your family ever had an accident?
- Did you have to go to a medically qualified physician because of that accident?

- Did you incur out-of-pocket expenses because of that accident?
- If I had a plan that covered you and your whole family for \$5,000 of accident protection with only a \$100 deductible, would you be interested?

Your clients said “yes” to questions 1-8! Suppose this means that you just sold critical illness protection to the husband and wife, and accident coverage for the whole family. Now it’s time to sell them health insurance. Raise the deductible on the health, add in the critical illness and accident and still save them money

The big question: why?

At this point, you are probably wondering why these questions make cross-selling so much easier. This is a great question, and I have the answer for you — or should I say answers. There are a number of things that separate this technique from the rest, namely these four points.

Three products sold at the same time doesn’t make any sense unless your client knows how each product stands on its own merit.

Creating the need is easy, maintaining the need is a bit more difficult. When a client is declined or rated up for health insurance, it will actually drive the point home for you if you have done your job correctly.

A rate increase on a major medical policy after 12, 17 or 24 months does not have to be a bad thing. Selling the Reform Ready way shows that this type of sale creates customer loyalty, which in turn helps with persistency.

Always remember that clients strongly dislike companies that decline them for coverage. This means they will love a company that accepts them for coverage — and they will want to keep that coverage.

The Reform Ready sale is a way for you to thrive during health care reform. It is a way to make more money than you did prior to the legislative changes, and to give your clients the best coverage they have ever had. What’s not to like about that?

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