

## Upselling Opportunities for Print Service Providers

In a time of ongoing pressure on costs and margins, upselling opportunities are more important than ever. According to the recent PRINTING United Alliance ***Effects of Tariffs on the Printing Industry Survey***, 70.0% of respondents expect higher tariffs to increase operating costs, 62.0% to reduce profit margins, and 36.6% to limit sales growth.

Broad industry upselling research shows that systematic upselling can add between 10% and 30% to overall company revenue, depending on the sector and implementation quality.

[Read the full article here](#) for suggested ways to present these potential upsells.

### Checklist – Print Service Provider Upsell Opportunities

Below is a checklist of upselling opportunities. Some are obvious and widely used. Others may not be so well known.

#### Overs – the Easiest Upsell

Let's start with one of the easiest upsells of all—that of selling “overs” at a reduced rate. It doesn't require any expertise or in-depth conversation. It only requires an overage/underage billing policy that clients clearly understand. For companies without an over/under policy, then the question of whether either is acceptable should be discussed when the order is being quoted.

#### Consultative Selling

For those companies not already doing so, a consultative sales approach can position them better to sell add-on products and services. As the name implies, consultative selling is a matter of positioning the salesperson as an expert consultant. This can include some or all of the following methods:

- ☐ Discovery questions to identify opportunities
- ☐ Needs assessment techniques
- ☐ Building value propositions
- ☐ Problem-solution pairing
- ☐ Sample-driven discussions

#### Premium Print Finishing Options

The following are some common and [specialty print finishing techniques](#). The added value of all the finishes listed below is extensive and depends on which finish is being discussed, the product to which it will be applied, and what the client needs.

- ☐ Spot UV and [specialty coatings](#)
- ☐ Overall UV coating
- ☐ Raised spot gloss UV coating

- ☐ Foil stamping and metallic effects
- ☐ Raised foil stamping
- ☐ Soft-touch lamination and tactile finishes
- ☐ Gloss lamination
- ☐ Dull or Matte lamination
- ☐ Aqueous coating with matte or gloss finishes

### Die Cutting Options

Custom shapes can really stand out in a crowded marketplace. A unique silhouette, for example, can reflect a brand's identity. Die cutting and embossing lets brands create unique promotional pieces.

- ☐ Die cutting and custom shapes
- ☐ Embossing and debossing
- ☐ Die cut transparent windows in packaging

### Design and Creative Services

Design and creative services are another area of expertise to offer clients as an upsell or as a "foot in the door" sales method.

Design adds value by ensuring print and digital materials align with brand identity and marketing goals. It helps prevent costly reprints through a more streamlined, internal process. It gives clients access to professional insight for color palettes, layouts, and typography. It makes for faster approvals and fewer revisions.

This can include:

- ☐ Design consultation packages
- ☐ File preparation services
- ☐ Custom illustration
- ☐ Brand identity development
- ☐ Template creation
- ☐ Variable data design and implementation
- ☐ Design for websites

### Mailing and Distribution Services

**Direct mail services** can save clients time by offering a seamless transition from printing to mailing. Correct handling of data minimizes errors, reduces postage costs, and increases ROI.

There is also the opportunity for repeat mailings in ongoing campaigns and in newsletters.

Some mailing services include:

- EDDM (Every Door Direct Mail) services
- [Sectional Center Facility \(SCF\) Entry Discount](#)
- Address Change Service (ACS)
- National Change of Address (NCOA)
- Walk Sequence Discounts
- Other List Enhancements
- Tracking and reporting
- International mailing expertise
- Multi-channel campaign integration

## Binding Services

Clients sometimes don't know which binding method is best for a job. A common scenario is the [saddle-stitched book with too many pages](#). That's when a perfect bound book or a lay-flat binding is the better option.

Some of the common binding methods include:

- ☐ [Perfect binding](#)
- ☐ [Saddle stitching](#)
- ☐ Wire-O binding (double loop)
- ☐ GBC binding (plastic comb)
- ☐ Custom edging and gilding
- ☐ Inserts and outserts
- ☐ Side stitching or corner stitching of collated sets

## Fulfillment and Inventory Management

One-stop shopping saves clients time and money. It reduces overhead for clients who don't have or don't want their own storage and shipping facilities. It adds an ongoing revenue stream and positions you as provider of ongoing services rather than one-off print jobs. Some areas of fulfillment and inventory management include:

- ☐ Warehousing solutions
- ☐ Pick and pack services
- ☐ Inventory tracking systems
- ☐ Just-in-time delivery
- ☐ Returns processing
- ☐ Kitting and assembly

## Specialty Papers and Substrates

The inventory of available papers and substrates is constantly changing. Your up-to-date knowledge can be an asset for clients. Some areas to consider include:

- ☐ Premium paper options
- ☐ Sustainable materials
- ☐ Synthetic substrates
- ☐ Unique paper textures
- ☐ Security features
- ☐ Custom material sourcing

## Digital Integration Services

Many clients might be surprised at the extent to which [data can be integrated into print](#) marketing campaigns. Some of these areas for potential integration include:

- ☐ QR code integration
- ☐ AR (Augmented Reality) features
- ☐ Variable Data
- ☐ PURL (Personalized URL) campaigns
- ☐ Cross-channel marketing
- ☐ Marketing automation integration (print + digital + CRM)
- ☐ Analytics and tracking

## Additional or Ancillary Products

Perhaps there are ancillary products that you don't currently offer that are a good fit for your client base. Outsourcing these products is a fast, effective way to add revenue without adding overhead. Some products for consideration include:

- ☐ Packaging
- ☐ Labels
- ☐ Signage and Banners
- ☐ Promotional items
- ☐ Large format
- ☐ Apparel
- ☐ Forms

## Value-Added Project Management

Larger companies and enterprise clients might appreciate help in print project management. Your industry expertise can fill in gaps in their internal management in areas such as:

- ☐ Production scheduling
- ☐ Project coordination
- ☐ Vendor management
- ☐ Quality control oversight
- ☐ Timeline optimization
- ☐ Budget management

### Upsell Presentation Techniques

We listed quite a few services above to consider as potential upsells. It also helps to think about how these services might be convincingly presented. These could include:

- ☐ Sample kit development – tangible print examples and swatch books of coatings, foils, papers, inks
- ☐ ROI demonstrations
- ☐ Case study presentations
- ☐ Before/after comparisons
- ☐ Interactive demonstrations
- ☐ Cost-benefit analysis
- ☐ Bundled service packages – combine multiple services at discounted rate
- ☐ Marketing packages – Present packages that align with common client objectives such as launching a product, rebranding, or event promotion.
- ☐ Add digital reminders, pop-ups and “you might also like” suggestions in online ordering

### Upsell Training and Implementation

Once a decision is made on what to upsell, it comes down to training and implementation. Upselling is a sales and customer service skill that can be taught and systematized. Some of the items to cover include:

- ☐ Implementation checklist
- ☐ Staff training program on upselling
- ☐ Timing strategies
- ☐ Objection handling
- ☐ Price presentation
- ☐ Customer education approaches
- ☐ Sample scripts and dialogues
- ☐ Follow-up procedures

*(continued)*

## Key Performance Indicators in an Upsell Program

There are several key performance indicators (KPI) that are helpful to track in an upselling program.

- ☐ **Add-on penetration rate.** What percentage of orders currently have upsells added? Set a target for future growth, for example, 35% of orders to have at least one add-on.
- ☐ **Average upsell value.** What is the current average value of an upsell? What is a reasonable target value for future upsells?
- ☐ **Average lifetime customer value (LTV).** What does an average client currently spend over their lifetime with your company? How long is the current average life span of their relationship with you? Monitor periodically to see how well your upsell program is working. LTV and life span will grow with a successful upsell effort.

**Want to discuss how we can help with an upsell opportunity?**

Call 559-251-8595 today to take advantage of our decades of print industry experience.