



Sales & Service in Sync

How to keep sales from selling unsupported products

Compiled by: Elizabeth Marvel, Office Technology Magazine

Following is a question submitted by a dealer member as part of BTA's Dealers Helping Dealers resource and many of the answers received. These answers and others can be found in the members-only section of the BTA website. Visit www.bta.org/DealersHelpingDealers. You will need your username and password to access this member resource.



What tips can you give to stop salespeople from selling things that service has not been trained on and/or has never even seen?

"When you sell said item, make it a training moment. When the item comes in, have your service team members take the time to look at and use the item. This way they will at least understand how to use it. Every day is a day to learn something new; it helps you be a better you."

Don Lucas, general manager

Purvis Business Machines, Meridian, Mississippi

"Do formal product kickoffs and get training done immediately. Communicate to your team and make sure you have a plan to deplete current stock before you have a formal product kickoff."

Louis Usherwood, CEO

Usherwood Office Technology, Boston, Massachusetts

"If you cannot support it, do not sell it. Unless, perhaps, you can partner with another resource to outsource the support. This is very common with PaperCut and finishing solutions."

Dave Aulisio, vice president of business development

Automated Business Solutions, Warwick, Rhode Island

"We use an inventory list. If a salesperson has a request, it must be approved by the general managers, service manager and sales manager."

Cody Webster, general manager

JQ Office, Omaha, Nebraska

"We use Salesforce with AgentDealer X to control our price books, and what we can and cannot sell."

Tommy McCrury, owner/partner

Total Office Solution of West Texas, Odessa, Texas

"Do not pay them for it. Remove those items from the commission plan. However, if the items in question fall under your core competencies and align with the products you want to sell, service needs to be trained."

Luke Maucher, president

ABM Office Resources, Fort Wayne, Indiana

"As new product lines appear, we typically have our techs get ready for training. Our service manager attends the weekly sales meeting, so there is always good communication between the two departments. If sales does sell something we are not trained on, we arrange the training."

Jeffrey Taylor, president

Kingsport Imaging Systems Inc., Kingsport, Tennessee

"Implement a 'no training, no selling' policy. New products or services should only be released to the sales team after service training is completed, support materials are available and both departments have signed off. Regular meetings between the sales and service teams can also ensure everyone stays aligned on new offerings and customer expectations."

Kiara Brown, marketing coordinator

Dove Technologies, Florence, South Carolina

"Hire a strong sales manager who prohibits rogue behavior. Executive management should set what is available to sell. Suggestions are welcome to consider expanding the scope of product offerings."

Mike Boyle, president

Base Technologies, Bethel, Connecticut

"Do not tell them about the products. Give them a list of products to sell from that service is trained on."

Stephen Valenta, president/owner

Offix, Gainesville, Virginia

"Do not put them in the price book. If they are part of the regular line of products (i.e., a new model), then it is service's responsibility to stay up to date with training."

Ron Hulett, president & CEO

U.S. Business Systems Inc., Elkhart, Indiana ■

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