



New Zealand Automobile Association: Meeting the cross-sell and up-sell challenge

With 7000 customers contacting your organisation each day, you've got a captive market. They all want at least one of your products, so it should be dead easy to sell them something else in the range, right?

Yes absolutely. But despite having sales training and management systems in place, the Automobile Association simply couldn't be sure it was achieving the best possible sales results.

The opportunity for cross-selling was perfect. A customer visits an AA Centre to renew a driver's license. As a driver he needs vehicle insurance. He may be interested in changing his vehicle with the help of an AA loan. Is she an AA member? If not, is she aware of all the benefits of AA membership?

It's that simple, that obvious. But was it happening?

General Manager Central Networks Trevor Pilkington says the AA needed more structure around delivery and management of services.

"I'd go so far as to say we were probably doing a lot of order-taking, as opposed to selling."

The AA engaged Front-Line Leadership specialists Brava, who spent almost two weeks reviewing processes in the Centre Network. Brava Managing Director Blair Stevenson then presented a proposal to implement a Front-Line Leadership programme customized to meet AA objectives.

"We got Brava to inspect some of our sites and see what we needed," said Trevor. "We wanted a tailored product, not just something off-the-shelf. Having an outside consultant reinforced how serious AA was about it.

"We weren't going to invest in this programme and then let it die. You come across a lot of programmes which are here today and gone tomorrow. But Brava has a system to ensure there is on-going benefit from the effort involved.

"The results were immediate and tangible. Implementing the Brava system had an amazing impact on sales, staff morale and retention, and on the whole culture of the organisation.

“I thoroughly recommend Brava. They analysed our needs and met them.”

Centre Network National Sales Manager Jo Dillon says Brava’s involvement has resulted in sustained excellent results.

“There is a process for everything. It sounds regimented, but I no longer think about it. It has become everyday practice.”

Four years later Trevor reported the Brava system embedded in AA’s culture:

“We have just completed one of the best years ever in the history of the NZAA in terms of sales and service results. Overall the Centre Network achieved 106% of target, which can be directly attributed to the success of the Brava system.”

Six years after introducing the Brava system, the AA continues to achieve consistent financial results with every region exceeding sales targets.

General Manager Human Resources Romana Meden describes Brava as an objective system which relies on observation, self-monitoring, and a high ratio of positive reinforcement to corrective feedback.

“If sales results are down, we should be able to go through and work out why. Brava has given us a process for managing the performance of staff on day-by-day and week-by-week basis.”

“It introduces measuring and monitoring which people don’t necessarily like at first. But what they notice is that someone is taking notice of them and giving constructive feedback. I haven’t heard any negatives from staff at all.

“From an HR perspective, we have had fewer headaches as well. The issue of how to raise performance is more assured.”