Increasing Per Reservation Spend

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As a travel advisor, increasing the per-reservation spend isn't just about selling higher-priced vacations—it's about crafting unforgettable experiences that clients value. The key is positioning premium options in a way that feels natural, beneficial, and enticing.

Let's step back and numerize this. Consider these two travel advisors:

- **Annie Advisor** manages an annual portfolio of $500,000 in vacation sales. Her average booking is $5,000 per trip, meaning she is managing 100 vacations per year.
- **Avery Advisor** also manages an annual portfolio of $500,000, but her average booking is $15,000 per trip. This means she only needs to manage 34 vacations per year, or roughly three per month, to reach the same sales.

Which advisor likely has the lighter workload? That's the point—by increasing your per-reservation spend, you can achieve the same financial success while managing fewer bookings and avoiding overwhelm.

Here's how to elevate your sales strategy while providing top-tier service to your clients.

1. Market What You Want to Sell
If you want to sell luxury resorts, high-end cruises, or premium vacation experiences, make sure your marketing reflects that. Regularly post about destinations and experiences that align with your target market. For example, if you want to book clients at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa, highlight its luxurious accommodations, exclusive dining, and convenient access to Magic Kingdom.

2. Be Selective About the Sales You Promote
While promotions and discounts can be helpful, avoid marketing deals that attract primarily budget-conscious travelers. Instead, focus on value-added offers that enhance the experience without diminishing the quality of the booking.

3. Build Comprehensive Quotes
When providing vacation quotes, include all premium options—such as Tours, upgraded tickets, Memory Maker, dining plans, and travel insurance. Instead of asking clients what they want to add, present the complete package and let them remove items. This approach encourages them to see the full value before deciding where to scale back.

4. Don't Sell Based on Your Own Budget
Your clients' financial comfort levels may be different from yours. Avoid projecting personal spending habits onto your clients, and instead, focus on the level of service and experience that best suits their needs.

5. Provide Three Tiers of Pricing
Instead of offering a single quote, present three options:
- One that fits their general expectations (based on their initial interests).
- One that is a step above with additional amenities or upgrades.
- A dream option that showcases the ultimate experience.

This strategy allows clients to compare options and often leads them to select a higher-tier package than they initially considered.

6. Avoid Asking About Budget Too Soon
Starting the conversation with budget constraints can limit opportunities. Instead, discuss experiences, travel style, and preferences before bringing up cost. Once they're excited about the possibilities, they'll be more open to premium options. Also remember, travelers rarely know the exact cost of their vacation dreams. Education will be a key to setting budget expectations.

7. Present Additional Options to Enhance Their Trip or Educate
When quoting a resort-based vacation, also provide a quote for a cruise or another premium add-on. Many clients may not realize how combining experiences—like a land and sea vacation—can elevate their trip. By introducing these options, you expand their possibilities and increase the likelihood of a higher-value booking.

8. Introduce Clients to Exclusive Experiences
Clients can't purchase what they don't know exists. Many travelers aren't aware of private VIP tours, after-hours events, or luxury resort club levels. By presenting these options upfront and explaining their benefits, you position yourself as an expert while increasing the likelihood of an upgraded booking.

9. Highlight the Value of Upgrades
Some upgrades are worth the extra spend. For example, at Universal Orlando, staying at a Premier Resort includes unlimited Express Pass—often a better deal than purchasing it separately. Walk clients through these comparisons to demonstrate why certain options provide greater overall value.

10. Know the Amenities of Different Resorts
Luxury travelers care about the details. Knowing which resorts offer private airport transfers, exclusive lounges, or top-tier dining experiences helps you match clients with the best accommodations for their needs. Instead of just quoting a price, highlight what sets a premium resort apart.

11. Travel Where You Want to Sell
Your own travel experiences build credibility and enthusiasm. If you want to sell Oceania Cruises, you should take Oceania Cruises—and post about them. Share firsthand experiences, showcase your expertise, and inspire your audience to book through you.

12. Encourage Clients to Step Out of Their Comfort Zones
Some travelers stick to what they know. If they always book moderate resorts, introduce them to a deluxe stay. If they've only done all-inclusives in Mexico, suggest a Hawaiian adventure. Helping clients explore new experiences can increase per-reservation spend while elevating their vacations.

14. Add Premium Transportation Options
Small upgrades can enhance a client's trip. Offer a rental car instead of relying on standard transfers, or suggest private airport transfers for a seamless arrival experience. These additions improve the overall vacation while increasing the booking value.

Final Thoughts
Upselling isn't about pushing higher prices—it's about providing exceptional service and ensuring your clients get the best possible experience. By strategically positioning premium options and guiding clients toward upgrades that enhance their trip, you increase both their satisfaction and your sales. Focus on value, be confident in what you're offering, and remember: clients are willing to spend more when they see the benefit.