Decoy Offers

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Key takeaways

- Decoy offers are a flexible attraction offer that advertises a free or discounted, lesser version of your premium offer to get leads in the door.
- Advertise a simple promise (e.g., “free 21-day transformation”) without listing the premium features in the ad so you can present the vehicle and price in the sales conversation.
- When leads engage, present both the decoy (lesser) option and the premium option, but emphasize the premium one so prospects see the value gap and upgrade.
- Use education in the sales conversation (e.g., the “turkey talk” tanning analogy) to explain why the premium version is needed and to justify the upsell.
- The money model is 100% based on the upsell — properly structured, 70–80% of people should take the premium version.
- Upsells are acceptable as long as the free/decoy offer still delivers on the advertised promise.
- Put bonuses, guarantees, and additional features on the premium offer to increase perceived value and close more upgrades.
- This is an “assumed close” model: everyone buys either the decoy or the premium, which makes acquisition cheap and profitable.
- You can give a couple premium bonuses to decoy buyers later (or use short consults) to upsell additional products/services (example: supplements).

Checklist

1. Create the decoy attraction offer
    - Advertise a lesser, smaller, or simpler version of your premium offer (free or discounted) as the headline promise (e.g., “Free 21-day transformation” or “$5 VIP”).
    - Why: The simple advertised promise gets leads in without committing you to premium features, allowing you to present the actual vehicle and price in the sales conversation.
2. Keep the ad focused on results, not vehicle or features
    - In the advertisement, state the result or short promise only and omit the premium features so you can choose the vehicle in-person (e.g., “free week of lemonade” rather than listing premium ingredients).
    - Why: Advertising results rather than the vehicle gives flexibility in the sales presentation and prevents having to deliver all premium features to every respondent.
3. Present both options when leads engage

- When a lead arrives, offer both the decoy option and the premium option side-by-side, but emphasize the premium benefits, bonuses, guarantees, and personalization.
- Why: Showing the two options together creates a clear value contrast that encourages upgrades and produces an assumed close where everyone buys one option.

4. Use education to justify the premium (the “turkey talk” approach)
   - Explain why the simple decoy won’t achieve the promised result and show why the premium approach is necessary (use analogies, session requirements, or demonstrations).
   - Why: Education helps prospects understand the value gap and accept the premium as the sensible choice to achieve the advertised result.
5. Design the premium with clear extra features, guarantees, and bonuses
   - Build a premium offering that includes more sessions/access, personalization (e.g., personalized nutrition), guarantees (e.g., 10–15 lb loss or extra 21 days free), and exclusive bonuses.
   - Why: Added features and guarantees increase perceived value and reduce purchase resistance, driving higher upgrade rates.
6. Use credits or price anchoring to convert decoy payments
   - Allow the decoy payment to be credited toward the premium (e.g., $21 credited toward a $421 program) to make upgrading easier at point-of-sale.
   - Why: Crediting reduces friction and makes the premium offer feel like a better deal, increasing conversions.
7. Intentionally make the decoy less personalized or lower quality
   - Offer fewer components, older models, or less personalized versions as the decoy (e.g., one workout/week, at-home course, cheaper ingredients).
   - Why: A clearly inferior decoy highlights the value of the premium and drives prospects to choose the upgrade.
8. Sprinkle select premium bonuses into decoy sales strategically
   - Give a couple of the premium bonuses to decoy buyers (e.g., a personal nutrition consult) or invite them back soon for additional consults that can lead to add-on sales.
   - Why: This builds goodwill, creates upsell opportunities, and can lead to additional purchases (example: $300 in supplements).
9. Aim for a high premium take rate and structure offers accordingly
   - Design pricing, guarantees, and bonuses so that 70–80% of buyers opt for premium when the model is working properly.
   - Why: The profitability of the decoy model typically depends on a high percentage of premium conversions.
10. Ensure compliance with what you advertised

- Make sure the decoy still genuinely delivers on the advertised promise (e.g., free week, free 21-day program) even if it’s the lower-value option.
- Why: You must keep the advertised promise to avoid false claims; this also allows you to ethically upsell without breaking your initial commitment.

Examples:

- Tanning salons: $5 VIP five-day pass (decoy) vs. $19.99/month unlimited membership (premium). Use “turkey talk” to show multiple sessions needed so customers upgrade to recurring EFT membership.
- Gym launch: Advertised “Free 21-day transformation.” Decoy = one workout/week + at-home nutrition course (3 workouts total). Premium = unlimited workouts, personalized nutrition, grocery instructions, guaranteed weight loss or extra 21 days free.
- Price-credit example: Charge $21 for decoy and credit it toward a $421 premium to upsell by asking for the extra $400 today.

Notes:

- Upselling is fine as long as the free/decoy offer still complies with the original ad promise.
- This model relies on advertising results (not vehicle) and using the sales conversation to present the vehicle and price.
- The decoy approach creates an assumed close: everyone buys either the decoy or the premium, making customer acquisition cheap and profitable.