



The eBay Auction Newsletter

Issue 8904 - April 26, 2006

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Proudly published for over 4 years by Brian McGregor

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<http://www.auctioninnercircle.com>

Welcome from Brian McGregor



Hello and welcome.

A particularly warm welcome to you if you're a new subscriber. It's good to have you as part of the family taking my eBay auction newsletter.

I don't know if anyone from eBay gets my newsletter, but it may be!

You may recall in the last edition we talked about email phishing, and how fraudsters try everything they can to make their emails look like they're from the real company.

One of the typical phishing attacks is one which purports to be offering you a Second Chance offer. This is a good topic for the fraudster to use, as Second Chance is a legitimate device open to eBay sellers.

Now, eBay are to tighten up the Second Chance process and thus, hopefully, make it easier for the receiver to determine if the offer is legitimate.

Well done eBay.

More of the same please.

You can read about the changes to Second Chance offer here.

<http://www2.ebay.com/aw/core/200604.shtml#2006-04-20114031>

It's interesting that about you, but recently I've noticed a significant increase in phishing emails relating to eBay.

Keep yourself safe online, and I look forward to speaking with you again.



1. Inspirational Quote of the Day

"It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer."

Albert Einstein

2. News and Views

1. eBay Quarterly Results

eBay has just published its Quarter 1, 2006, company figures.

They make very impressive reading.

Q1 covers the three months of trading from 1st January, 2006 to 31st March, 2006. Also included is the performance of PayPal, which is owned by eBay.

"Q1 was an excellent quarter for the company, with strong growth across our portfolio of businesses," said Meg Whitman, President and CEO of eBay Inc. "eBay, PayPal and Skype are successful businesses on their own, and together they create additional opportunities for innovation and expansion."

It's difficult to argue against.

Here are some highlight numbers which I hope you find interesting:

- > 575.4 million listings in Q1, 2006. Up 33% over Q1, 2005.
- > \$12.5 billion value of auctions sales in Q1, 2006. Up 18% over Q1, 2005.
- > \$1.39 billion Gross Profit in Q1, 2006. Up 35% over Q1, 2005.
- > 192.9 million eBay members as at 31 March, 2006. Up 31% as at 31 March, 2005.
- > On average, 136,670 new members joined eBay each day throughout Q1, 2006.
- > \$8.8 billion PayPal payments in Q1, 2006. Up 41% over Q1, 2005.
- > 105.0 million PayPal accounts as at 31 March, 2006. Up 47% as at 31 March, 2005.

Whichever way you look at, this is another excellent performance by eBay.

And the benefit to you and to me is that a thriving eBay market place is great news for all of us!

If you'd like to read the full report, you can view it from here:

<http://investor.ebay.com/results.cfm>

2. Be Alert - eBay is a Business

I received an email recently from a reader who was having a problem with eBay. His email explains the predicament:

Hi Brian

Please have a look at the message I sent to ebay below and their fully expected reply.

I would like some advice as to whether there is anything further I can do.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards
[Readers name removed]

Original Message Follows:

Message: Dear eBay Customer Support

My wife submitted a number of listings during the past few days using the Turbo Lister program. This is the first time she has used Turbo Lister and she made a serious mistake by clicking on 'Gallery featured' instead of 'Gallery' i.e. she thought that was the 15p option. When I checked the 'Seller Account' tonight I was shocked to see that the balance was over £300! There were 21 entries for the Gallery Featured fee of £15.95 - a total of £334.95.

This is an obvious mistake because all the listings are low value items that would never sell for more than a few pounds.

I cancelled one of the listings (4452844718) hoping that the fees would be refunded - but this was not the case.

My wife is extremely upset about this but I told her not to worry as I would contact eBay and explain the mistake.

I would be extremely grateful if you would accept this situation as a genuine mistake and refund these fees.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards
[Readers name removed]

Brian here again....

What we have here is clearly a genuine error. However, the last I heard of the case was that eBay weren't inclined to refund the fees incurred.

I was hoping that eBay would take customer service a little more seriously than the typical corner shop. You've no doubt seen the notice - "Please check your change, as mistakes cannot be rectified after you leave the premises".

The lesson for all of us is that whenever you create an eBay auction, make sure you check the fee which you're going to be charged before you hit the Submit button. Mistakes found afterwards cannot be rectified!

Remember, eBay IS a business.

3. Now, This is What I Call A Free Giveaway!!

If you'd like to get your hands on \$4,197 of free products, this is the place for you.

Called the Underground Giveaway, you'll find hundreds of ebooks, software and memberships, all free and waiting for you to collect at zero cost.

Many of these items come with Resell Rights, so you can offer them for sale on eBay or via websites.

To date, I haven't seen anything like this before.

Happy downloading. To get your free access, click on this link:

<http://www.workwinners.com/nlr0401.htm>

4. Talking About Something of Value...

A woman's husband dies.

He had \$30,000 to his name.

After everything is done at the funeral home and cemetery, she tells her closest friend that there is none of the \$30,000 left.

The friend says, "How can that be?"

The widow says, "Well, the funeral cost was \$6,500. And of course I made donation to the church...that was \$500, and I spent another \$500 for the wake, food and drinks, you know. The rest went on the memorial stone."

The friend does a quick calculation and says, "\$22,500 for the memorial stone? My God, how big is it?"

The widow says, "Three carats!!"

5. Is This the Future?

eBay have launched eBay Express.

To be slightly more accurate, eBay have launched eBay Express in preview mode.

eBay Express look like an attempt to compete with Amazon and other online stores. Items for sale are mostly new, are all at fixed price and buyers can add items to their shopping basket from several sellers and make just one payment at the checkout.

If you want to look at this preview, go to <http://www.ebay.com/> and you'll see eBay Express in the menu group just under the eBay logo.

3. How Long to Run an eBay Auction?

This is a question which every eBay seller asks themselves from time to time.

As you will know, you have a choice of a number of days for your auction to run. These are 1, 3, 5, 7, and 10 days.

Now you might wonder why you would never give your auction maximum exposure? In the UK, for the same fee you can run your auction for any length of time from 1 to 10 days. Surely 10 days of traffic is better than 1 day?

On ebay.com there is a slight difference in that 10 day auctions attract a small additional listing fee. But even here, a 7 day auction incurs the same fees as an auction of 1 day duration.

However, different auction durations can be useful to you.

For example, if you want a quick turnaround on your auction, choose the shortest duration. The potential downside is that you may be sacrificing profit. But if quick cash is your priority, a fast auction could be to your benefit.

If you're patient, and have no particular reason to sell quickly, then a long auction will normally perform better.

The number and value of your items are other considerations. If your item is of a higher price, and you have more than one to sell, it may be worth running 3 day auctions. With higher priced items the listing fee is a small percentage of the item cost. And, by running 3 day auctions, your item will be consistently higher up in search results.

Also, if you have items that usually get a good number of bidders, it is to your advantage to list for longer periods.

You can also do your own research into other sellers who offer similar products to yours. Take a look at their selling history and see what auction durations are proving successful for them. You can do such a search by noting your competitors eBay ID, go into Advanced Search, select Items by Seller, and ask to include completed listings.

A further factor for you to consider is the popularity of your item. For example, if it's an item related to a holiday period like Christmas or Easter, you can try shorter term auctions.

The final word on this topic has to be a general one which applies to pretty much everything you do on eBay. And that is - test it out. Try different durations. After all, you are the best placed person to see what works for your items in your eBay market.

4. Nine Reasons Why Your eBay Auction Won't Work

If you're not having the success you hoped in eBay selling, this list might be helpful to you.

Take a look at these "sales prevention" issues, and see if you are preventing your auctions from working as best as they can.

High Start Price

Many eBayers will simply avoid auctions with a high start price. Most people bidding on eBay are turned on by the thought of getting a bargain, and a high starting price rules this out. If you can bear the risk, you are far better having a low start price so as to encourage a bidding activity.

High Buy it Now Price

As we've seen, eBayers are looking for bargains. If your fixed price is too high, your item probably won't sell. One strategy you can try after the item fails to sell, is to reduce the price by a small amount and try again. Repeat this until you find the optimum Buy it Now price for your item.

Lack of Pictures

If you think about it, you're asking a buyer to pay you money for something they can't see or touch. The best way around this is to place quality images of your item on the auction page. Conversely, if you have no pictures on your auction, prepare for a failed auction.

You Use a Reserve Price

A Reserve Price will cause many eBay members to avoid your auction. Reserves are a real deterrent for many people. I would advise you never to use a Reserve Price. Interestingly, on eBay Australia, the Reserve Price option has been removed and is not available for use by sellers. Maybe other eBay countries should follow suit.

Thoughtless Use of Words

Bad spelling or poor grammar in your auction will cause a proportion of eBayers not to bid on your item. Indeed, if your auction title contains incorrect spelling, then your item may not even be returned in searches. It is highly recommended that you have your auction text checked for spelling and for grammar. And make sure your auction title does not contain incorrect spellings.

Greedy Shipping

The spirit of eBay is that you charge your buyers the cost price for shipping. It is perfectly acceptable to charge a reasonable amount which covers your time, packaging materials costs and the actual cost of shipment, but don't be tempted to overdo it.

Some eBayers will move on very quickly if they feel you're being unfair on shipping costs. You could try giving your buyers shipment options. They may be prepared to wait for their delivery via a cheaper service.

Negative Feedback

If you have negative feedback which pulls your percentage rating down to below 90%, you can expect some eBayers to avoid your auctions. There are two actions you can take. First, you can try buying and selling low cost items with a view to improving your percentage rating. Also, you could create a new eBay account, and build up a good feedback rating on this account using the low cost buy and sell technique.

Unreasonable Terms

Its' amazing how often sellers seem to go out of their way to insult prospective buyers. The classic such term is "Serious bidders only, no time wasters!" If I see this or similarly unreasonable words on an auction, I will move on. These kind of statements are entirely unnecessary, and indeed they make the seller appear to be the one who could be difficult to deal with. Don't use them in your auctions.

PayPal Free Zone

Not everyone likes PayPal. I understand this. However, if you want to succeed on eBay, it is essential that you accept PayPal on your auctions. You only have to look at the figures relating to the proportion of eBay business which is paid for via PayPal. It is now running at over 70%. It is a fact that some eBay buyers will ignore auctions which don't offer PayPal as a method to pay. So, even if you're not a fan of PayPal, you need to offer it on your eBay auctions.

Check your auctions and see if you're guilty of any of the above.

Correct some of these and you may find your auctions start to produce the results you're looking for.

You could, of course, take a look at my ebook 'The eBay Formula'.

<http://www.more-auction-sales.com/>

This is probably the ultimate ebook in showing you how to create auctions that work. Even though I say so myself!

5. Seven Tips on How to Buy a Work From Home Website on eBay

Guest Article by Khemal Dole

Are you looking to buy a ready-made work at home website of business on eBay? I'm floored at how many work at home "websites" and "businesses" are listed daily. They all promise to make you a millionaire fast or that you can earn \$5000 a month starting right now. Although there are legitimate listings, there are an alarming number of listing that simply scream out "SCAM!". Unfortunately many people don't hear it or don't look for the signs. Before you fall victim to such a scam and waste your money, here are 7 tips to help find the right website.

1) Look out for Outrageous "Income" or "Income Potential"

Many listings claim that the website or business makes HUGE amounts of profit or has the "potential" of making a huge profit. This is your first sign of a possible scam because if YOU had a website that made \$500 a day would YOU sell it? I know I wont. So why is this person selling his or her website? They always list a few "excuses" like, "I have no time to run this website" or "I build them so I can sell them". Honestly, if you had a website that's making you money, you would FIND the time to run it and improve it, not sell it off. Be weary about these claims of HUGE profits. If it looks too good to be true, it just might be!

2) Ask for Verifiable proof of income.

If the website is claimed to be making profit, the seller might show you a PICTURE of his or her income statement. Sadly these PICTURES can be easily altered to say ANYTHING that a person wants to - including showing profits. Pictures of Paypal statements can be easily doctored to show profits. If the profit statements are real, the owner should have no objection to faxing you a copy of the statement, plus statements for previous months. Plus the owner should be able to show DIRECT relations between the website being sold and the statements. Often owners will have multiple websites that tie into ONE paypal address. And they might show you a statement of that profitable paypal account. But the fact of the matter is that the actual profit is from multiple websites and the particular website on sale might not even be profitable. This is a business transaction so make sure you treat it like one and ask for verifiable proof. Don't settle for mere PICTURES on a website as proof.

3) How long has the website been established for?

Many websites are claimed to be "established". This means that the seller claims that the website has been around for some time and has regular traffic and customers. Look into the source of the traffic. The seller might have purchase "guaranteed" traffic just to make it LOOK like an established website. Demand website statistics for at least 6 previous months and study them. If you see a sudden spike in traffic, then you know something's up.

And even if you don't see a sudden increase, where is the traffic coming from? What are the seller's advertising methods used to get that traffic? Once you purchase the website, will you continue to get the same benefits of advertising and traffic? Is the seller willing to show you how to advertise? If so, how much will it cost per month? Do the math and see if the website will indeed be profitable after the costs. Don't buy websites that are new yet claim to be established. Really profitable websites are at least an year old and can show you proof of its establishment. Also use tools such as www.Alexa.com and type in the URL of the website to see exactly WHEN it was established. Alexa's reports can't be doctored by the seller and is a credible source. Do your research before you place your bid.

4) Beware of so-called Millionaires promising to make you a millionaire.

If YOU were a millionaire why would YOU be selling information about how to become one on eBay? If you were that generous, why don't you donate your money to charity? Or better yet GIVE that information away for free? Why CHARGE for information? I see many so called Millionaires selling their "secrets" starting at \$49.00. If you had so much money what would \$49 be worth to you? It's a drop in the ocean. Unless the seller BECAME a millionaire by selling his "secrets" for \$49 to people who thought they can be millionaires themselves. So if you bought such a website, would YOU automatically become a millionaire? Or would you have to sell the SAME information to others at \$49.00 a pop to become one? You'll need to make 20408 sales at \$49.00 to become a millionaire. Often, there's always a catch like that in offers by these so-called self made millionaires. They don't love you. They love your money and they ask it upfront. If they were in a charitable mood why don't they just GIVE you the secret and once you make your million let you pay them \$49.00 of out it? Ask them that before you buy these websites or "secrets".

5) Be wary of instant "Cookie Cutter" websites.

Many websites on sale are simply replicates of a site and are put up for sale many times. This means that you are not the only one who's got a website like that. This produces competition and when you are starting out, you don't want to have a fierce completion.

These types of "cookie cutter" websites lose their identity in the market. Basically the mentality of your visitors would be "You see one, you've see them all". YOUR website won't be unique. And you end up fighting an uphill battle. Opt to buy unique websites that aren't sold many times over and over again. You can easily spot cookie cutter websites if you search eBay. You'll see the same theme such as "legal forms" or "paid to drive" websites. Don't waste your time or money on these. Save your money to buy a unique website. It will pay your back many times over.

6) Beware of Adsense Earning statements

Adsense is the new way of starting an instant income stream. You get paid by Google for showing ads on your website. Many websites claim they have a daily Adsense income of say \$50 or a monthly income of say \$3000.

Work at home businesses that are SOLELY built on adsense are a disaster waiting to happen. Don't get me wrong. Adsense is a very good source of income. But it should NOT be your ONLY income. The Adsense revenue is directly related to your website traffic. If you lose traffic you lose income. If a seller boasts high profits through adsense, ask for verifiable proof of income for previous months and see how much profits were from adsense and if it was the ONLY source of income. Don't put all your eggs in one Adsense basket. It's tempting but you'll be flirting with trouble if your website doesn't have another method of income.

7) Pay attention to the number of bids.

If a website catches your attention don't bid on it until you can get a feel for it's worth. The number of bids on it can give you a rough idea about what kind of an opportunity it is and whether it's worth your time and money. If a website has 0 bids and has a buy it now price of \$49.00 it's probably not worth your money. It could well be another cookie cutter website. If the website has many bids and there's still plenty of time before the auction ends, and the price is fairly high then it might be actually worth that price. Remember that you aren't the only person doing research. Many bids means many others have done research and like what they found. Make sure you check out WHO those bidders are and their feedback as well. Don't be fooled by false bids.

There you go. 7 tips on how to select a work at home website at eBay. I hope that your search will reveal the ideal business for you and I pray that you follow my tips and not end up losing your money. Take care this holiday season and spend your money wisely.

Khemal Dole owns and operates <http://www.PaychecksDirect.com> a completely FREE service that teaches many beginners and even experts how to work at home.

Sign up for his FREE 14 day Work At Home Beginner's Course and learn how real people make money from the internet.

6. A Gift from Me to You

The gift this time is in answer to a question I get asked regularly. The question is how do I sell information products on eBay?

"Info Products on eBay" takes you step by step through the process of creating information products.

Not only does this ebook show you how to create your products, it also tells you how to research the market to find niches for which the creation of information products will be profitable.

You can download "Info Products on eBay" here.

<http://www.workwinners.com/nl042601.htm>

7. Someone's auctioning what? Unusual items currently available

Nothing surprises me when it comes to internet auctions. Amuse yourself with some of these beauties.

[This is an interesting piece of initiative](#)

[As they say where I come from - "Shy bairns get nowt". Put more politely that means if you don't ask you don't get!](#)

[But what about global warming?](#)

[Dash it! It's not for my age group!](#)

[Might be useful in my office!](#)

Disclaimer - I have no association with any of the sellers of the above items.



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<http://www.auctioninnercircle.com>

NOTE: Depending on when you view this newsletter, you may find some links to third party sites no longer work. I know how frustrating this can be. But please don't shoot the messenger! The internet is a fast moving environment and, as the newsletters age, it is to be expected that some links may become obsolete over time.

The moral of the story?

If the newsletter sends you to a site that interests you, and you think you might want to refer to it later, make sure you store the site address in YOUR favorites.