



The eBay Auction Newsletter

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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



Welcome to the latest edition of the eBay Auction Newsletter.

If you're a new subscriber, a particularly warm welcome to you.

eBay recently announced their first quarter results for 2008.

The market reaction has been mixed, although generally positive.

The cash figures are bewildering. But I like to look at other numbers - the people.

There were 309 million registered user accounts on eBay as at 31 March 2008. This means that, on average, every day from 1st January to 31st March 362,637 people join eBay. That's 15,109 per hour! Or 252 every minute.

This is great news for eBay sellers. Every 3 days, around a million new prospects are on eBay potentially looking for bargains which you and I wish to offer.

I know we can all get down about eBay occasionally - like when they tinker with their rules or systems. But the plain fact is, with all its flaws, eBay is far and away the quickest and easiest place to make money on the internet.

I think I'll put a new listing on eBay now. There are tens of thousands of new potential customers who have joined since I last listed.

Take care, and good luck in your eBay business.

Speak to your soon.



1. Thought for the Day

"Appreciation can make a day, even change a life. Your willingness to put it into words is all that is necessary."

Margaret Cousins

2. Don't Try This at Home Folks!

There is any amount of information about what you CAN sell on eBay.

I thought it was about time that somebody put together a list of what you CAN'T sell on eBay.

That time is now, and that somebody is me...

eBay is chock full of regulations and policies. Many of these are aimed at preventing you and me from getting into trouble by selling things that we aren't entitled to.

Here are examples - some are obvious, but others may be less so:

1. Copies of music, TV shows or movies. In the vast majority of cases you will be infringing copyright. It is very easy nowadays to download music and videos. Not to mention, the bootleg versions you know you can buy from various sources which quite simply are counterfeit.
2. Software and computer games can likewise be copied and their sale is illegal. Naturally, items above that you legitimately purchased or received as a present and which you no longer want can be offered for sale. However, you may find eBay even rejects these for fear of upsetting the copyright owners.
3. There is a market for so-called replica designer handbags, sunglasses and clothing. However, the owners of these designs don't wish to have low priced "replicas" impacting their market. eBay is very hot on preventing replicas from appearing in its auctions.
4. Don't steal material from other sellers' auction listings. This includes images, wording and design. If they are notified by the offended seller, eBay will remove such listings. For continual breaches, eBay can suspend your account.

5. Alcohol is generally not allowed to be sold on eBay. Beverage containers, such as those used for wine, are!
6. Cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco or coupons for such items are not permitted on eBay. Sales of containers for these items are allowed.
7. Firearms, real and replica, may not be sold on eBay.
8. Satellite and cable TV descramblers are forbidden to be sold on eBay.
9. Animals and some wildlife products may not be sold. This includes stuffed birds and pelts from endangered species. There are limited sales of ivory, tortoise shell, marine products and other items relating to animals. The area is quite complex and you need to thoroughly understand the various laws before getting involved in these sales.
10. Listing a catalogue of items that a seller has for sale is forbidden. This comes under the rule of not listing something which takes the buyer off-eBay to buy a product direct from the seller. The only type of catalogues which can be sold on eBay are memorabilia, where current merchandise is not made available for sale.
11. Raffles and prizes are prohibited. Such promotions are highly regulated and eBay doesn't want to get involved!

There are other items that a seller may not offer on eBay, so it is always prudent to check the rules before listing anything.

You can find the latest information about what eBay allows and doesn't allow here:

http://pages.ebay.com/help/policies/ia/prohibited_and_restricted_items.html

http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/ia/prohibited_and_restricted_items.html

3. eBay People - They're Not as Tough you Might Think!

You probably agree, eBay comes in for a fair share of condemnation from many quarters - including mine from time to time.

However, eBay usually does try and do the right thing. For example, have you heard of the eBay Foundation? I hadn't until very recently.

I never realised it, but philanthropy has been an important part of eBay since its very beginning. eBay Foundation was established in 1998 and was the first corporate foundation to equity stock to endow philanthropic programs.

eBay Foundation's mission is to contribute to the economic and social well-being of local communities. In carrying out this mission, the Foundation engages eBay Inc.'s Community members and employees, and supports their pursuit of charitable giving and volunteerism.

Each year eBay Foundation provides grants of more than \$2 million to improve the lives of those who most need help, with many of the recipient organizations selected based on Community member and employee recommendations. Consistently recognized as one of the Bay Area's top corporate foundations, eBay Foundation has made over \$16 million in grants since its creation.

A new campaign has just begun called the "Community Gives" campaign, which offers any eBay member an opportunity to participate in the eBay Foundation giving efforts.

To this end, the eBay Foundation is donating \$1 million to three worthy non-profit organizations – to be split equally among them – and is asking the eBay Community to join in. For each Community member who contributes to one of the nonprofits during the campaign, the Foundation will donate an additional dollar, up to \$100,000.

The three beneficiary organisations, and their selected specific projects, are:

First Book

Providing new books so that hundreds of thousands of low-income children can discover the magic of reading,

Best Friends Animal Society

Building a puppy care centre so that hundreds of abused and injured puppies can have a chance to find loving permanent homes, and

Oxfam

Supplying access to clean, safe water to alleviate poverty for tens of thousands of people in Ethiopia and Zambia.

You are welcome to participate in the Community Gives campaign! It runs from now through to the "eBay Live" conference in June.

You can read more about the campaign here:

<http://www.communitygives.org>

4. A Gift From Me to You

OK time to relax!

Do you like Lego?

How about playing with a Lego set which contains an unlimited number of bricks?

Now you can, with an entertaining piece of software called Lego Building Designer.

With software you can build a Lego model on-screen of any size and type.

Have fun!

http://www.download.com/8301-2007_4-9930925-12.html?tag=nl.e415

You have to register to download, but it's n-o cost.

5. News & Views

A Bad Penny Always Turns Up!

Do you recall last year when eBay decided that if you listed on ebay.co.uk, your auctions no longer appeared on ebay.com?

eBay justified this on 27 February 2007, by saying, and I quote, " For several years, items listed on eBay.co.uk have also appeared in the default search results on eBay.com, our US site. As eBay.co.uk has grown over time, the volume of items listed on eBay.co.uk that appear on eBay.com can make it difficult for US-based buyers to find and buy the items they want.

We are currently testing different options for displaying UK-listed items on eBay.com, with the aim of balancing the needs of buyers with the visibility of items listed on eBay.co.uk. As a result, items listed on eBay.co.uk will no longer be guaranteed to appear within the default search results on eBay.com."

Well. Guess what?

There's another policy change on the way....

It seems our USA based eBay buyers are now able to cope with the growth in listings on ebay.com caused by UK sellers.

<http://www2.ebay.com/aw/uk/200803.shtml#2008-03-31160906>

If you're a USA based seller, eBay has an announcement for you too:

<http://www2.ebay.com/aw/core/200803.shtml#2008-03-31074923>

The Power of Google on eBay?

If you've ever wanted to search eBay's forums, but found the search function limiting this could be for you. There are so many forums, but you know the item you're interested could well have posts in more than one board. Unfortunately, eBay only lets you search one selected forum at a time.

Let Google ride to the rescue!

If you place the following into Google's search box, you'll get the results from all of eBay's forums in one place:

site:http://forums.ebay.com/ your search word(s)

site:http://forums.ebay.co.uk/ your search word(s)

Note, you need to leave a space between the "/" and the words you want to search on.

Low Cost Listing Day - a Coincidence?

If you're an eBay seller registered in the UK, you'll no doubt have received an email from them telling you a 5p listing fee day on May 1st.

As you will know, these low cost listing days occur from time to time. However, I wonder if there is a little more to this than meets the eye?

Here is an excerpt from an article in The Sunday Times of 20 April, "A worldwide one-day boycott of eBay, which has annual revenues of £3.8 billion, is being organised for May 1 and British users of the site are among those intent on implementing it."

What better way for eBay to counteract a potential dip in auction listings due to a boycott, than to tempt potential boycottees with a listing fee sweetener?

Doesn't it put your faith back into free enterprise in this world we live in?

A Tool to Test Your Auction Title Before You List

As you probably know, your auction title is still the most important element in determining where your auction appears in eBay's search return list.

There is a new tool which eBay have been humming and hahring (is that how you spell it?) about in recent months. First they released it, then they withdrew it. Then they released it again!

Well, the current position is that the tool is available. Although based on ebay.com data, the information it provides can be useful for sellers in every english speaking eBay market.

The tool itself is called BayEstimate and can be found here:

<http://labs.ebay.com/raghavgupta/demoto/to?>

Unfortunately, the BayEstimate page is pretty bland, and uninformative. However, here is a superb write-up by Chris Dawson of tamebay blog.

<http://www.tamebay.com/2008/04/how-to-use-bayestimator-for-best-match.html#more-2620>

Talking About Auction Titles

Here is a really useful list of the top searched words on eBay. It's updated weekly:

<http://category-keyword.ebay.com/default-category.html>

<http://category-keyword.ebay.co.uk/default-category.html>

Now for the Good News...

If you've ever had a listing terminated by eBay, you'll know how annoying it can be. First, you (probably reluctantly) entered the eBay email Customer Service labyrinth in an attempt to find out what caused the cancellation. Then, by terminating the auction it meant your listing had totally disappeared. Even if you wanted to relist it, you had to re-create the listing from scratch.

Well, as the title says, there is some good news...

If you have an auction removed due to a policy breach, it will now be placed in the Unsold section of My eBay.

You can simply modify the auction so that any problems eBay have with it are corrected, and then relist it.

Marvellous! Well done, and thank you eBay.

Here's more information about this announcement:

<http://www2.ebay.com/aw/core/200803.shtml#2008-03-25163634>

<http://www2.ebay.com/aw/uk/200803.shtml#2008-03-27120601>

Selling on Amazon - The Time is Right

With eBay announcing so many changes recently, and with some of these attracting negative publicity, it can be expected that eBayers will look for alternative ways to sell their wares.

One such alternative which has attracted a reasonable amount of attention recently is Amazon.

If you want to investigate the viability of adding Amazon as an additional revenue stream, you can check out how easy it is to try here:

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/seller/sell-your-stuff.html/105-0269836-8068472?ie=UTF8&ref=ya%5Fhp%5Faz%5F2>

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/seller/sell-your-stuff.html/105-0269836-8068472?ie=UTF8&ref=ya%5Fhp%5Faz%5F2>

If you feel Amazon could be a useful selling platform for you, an excellent ebook has been released. It's called "Selling on the River". Do you get it ... river... Amazon..? Actually, the ebook's sub-title explains it much better - "The eBay Seller's Guide to Selling on Amazon".

I have the ebook and I've read it. It is well written, which is probably due to the fact that the author Steve Lindhorst was an instructor for eBay University and spent several years teaching people how to buy and sell on eBay.

This is a timely and useful tool if you're an eBay seller wanting to expand your business or simply spread your risk.

You can check the ebook out here:

<http://tinyurl.com/5vxqlt>

eBay on Facebook

The last count I saw, Facebook had 70 million users. If you're one of these, you're probably familiar with your Facebook News Feed. Well, this News Feed can now automatically show your current eBay auctions - providing you're registered on ebay.com that is!

If you'd like to check it out, you activate the Facebook link from My eBay. In My eBay, click on Site Preferences down the left side. Then click on Share your eBay items with friends, and there you will see a link you can activate to Facebook.

Hopefully this will get more traffic to your auctions. And hopefully too, the facility will appear on ebay.co.uk soon!

Maybe this will also be extended to other social networking sites in the future. You can find out more here:

<http://pages.ebay.com/help/sell/share-listings.html>

6. Someone's Auctioning What???

Nothing surprises me when it comes to internet auctions. Amuse yourself with some of these beauties in our regular trawl through eBay's auctions.

Here are some auctions I've spotted as I trawled eBay recently:-

[I guess this is what eBay class as a hot auction...](#)

[This guy definitely needs a new job. One that keeps him busy!](#)

[I guess this is delivered to you by the toastman?](#)

[Not much luck so far!](#)

[And second prize is 2 weeks? \(Only kidding!!\)](#)

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.