



The eBay Auction Newsletter

Issue 2406 - June 30, 2008

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Proudly published for over 4 years by Brian McGregor

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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.

I don't know about you, but I'm getting a little bit worried about eBay.

Every place I turn, all I can find is bad news, negative press and anti-eBay feelings.

Maybe it is that old syndrome of the silent majority not being given a platform to air their views. I have to hold my hands up here, and acknowledge that I sometimes give eBay a beating in my own newsletter.

But when I write my newsletter, I conduct a wide range of research to find things of (hopeful) interest about eBay to report to you. I must tell you that the vast majority of references to eBay I find on the internet are negative.

Can there be something seriously amiss with the auction giant?

I would be very interested to hear your views. If you've a spare five minutes can you jot down your views of eBay, and email them to me?

Speak to you soon.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian McGregor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

1. Thought for the Day

"You must welcome change as the rule but not as your ruler."

Denis Waitley

2. eBay Live - A View To A Kill?

June 20, 2008

A live report from Dan Wilson, live at eBay Live! from the Live! keynote address by John Donohoe (CEO) and Lorrie Norrington (President of Global Marketplaces - no, really, that is her job title!)

- Trying to count empty seats... there is a whole unoccupied block. Possibly thousands of bumless seats. But there are donuts and coffee.
- John Donohoe takes the stage. Bit starchy. eBay Live attendees sold \$1.3bn last year. Collective feedback - 20 638 040. His feedback? 172..
- How touching that JD's Parents are in the audience. And he's showing us childhood snaps... more like a wedding than a keynote.
- JD has a strange selection of messianic hand gestures. Lots of out-stretched arms and hands clasped as in prayer.
- JD: eBay's values haven't changed. But buyers are more sophisticated and have so many choices. Change is difficult but essential.
- Anyone watch the West Wing? JD is very reminiscent of Arnie Vinnick in season 6 & 7. He's offering 'sensible solutions'.
- JD: eBay works for the 'collective good' and will 'do right by people who do the right thing'. 20 minutes in. No substantive announcements.
- JD is saying Thank You. He thinks we should all say Thank You more. (no John, thank you!) Run VT. Lorrie Norrington is on next.
- Whoooooosssshhh... Lorrie Norrington bounds on to the stage. Lively. Girls do keynotes better.
- Saints preserve us. Norrington has just shown us a picture of her dog. Half an hour in. No substantive announcements.

- In the film of eBay Live, Alan Alda is playing JD and Jodie Foster is Lorrie Norrington. Hugh Grant is the non-paying bidder.
- Fast Facts: 2007 GMV was \$60bn. 84m active buyers. Lorrie Norrington's dog is called Lucy.
- Seller Protection to be available on all items paid by PayPal for US sellers. No cost. No limits. Available when buyer overseas.
- DSR visibility and discounts are working. Average rates are up. 33% have 4.8 or better, up from 15%.
- Powersellers with 4.9 on DSRs will get extra 20% FVF discount from July.
- Postal services discounts for PowerSellers. Coupons for buyers. Top buyer phone support. Fee changes coming up?
- Lorrie Norrington booed over the removal of the right of sellers to leave negative feedback for buyers.
- Mutual Feedback Withdrawal back on the table. Encouraging buyers to remove the negs and neuts they leave.
- Full buyer protection when you pay with PayPal... on eBay.com. Lots of people leaving the hall... Norrington hasn't finished.
- So many people have left the hall because they thought it was all over... it isn't.
- Community Hall of Fame award winners. All very nice but Meg really did do this better. Lorrie, John: smile like you mean it.
- Keynote ends. Not a classic. Exit Music? Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting...from Elton John. Prophetic?

Footnote

eBay Live! 2009 has been cancelled. But, like Arnold, eBay'll be back - in 2010 at Orlando, Florida.

Can't Wait!!

3. Whatever Next on eBay?

23 year old Kelly Gray and fiance Karl Gau, wanted to keep their wedding budget at or below \$7,000.

Kelly says she just wanted to have a nice wedding and needed to make up for the costs.

Gray and her fiance had planned to keep the wedding budget under \$7,000 by using an iPod, instead of a DJ and baking their own wedding cake.

She also contemplated doing a bake sale. But then her friend at work said: "Why not auction some things on eBay? After all there's Dr. Pepper cans and Cheetos bags for sale."

That's when the idea hit her! The Virginia Beach hairdresser decided to auction off an opportunity to be a bridesmaid in her April 19, 2009 wedding.

They decided that, not only would the winner get the chance to be in Kelly's wedding, they'd also receive a dress and shoes, as well as an invitation, plus one, to the reception. If a man happened to be the winner, they'd supply the tuxedo.

Kelly said, "She didn't think anything would happen out of the auction - nothing."

Little did she know her idea would get so much attention. The idea fired up the media across the country, and Kelly was interviewed by TV networks and newspapers.

When the bidding closed at 7:27 p.m. on Wednesday, the winning bid was \$5,700. The winning user ID was drpeppersnapple.

It turns out that drpeppersnapple is actually the Dr. Pepper Snapple Group. Not only did they win with their \$5,700 bid, they've upped their contribution to \$10,000.

A representative for Dr. Pepper Snapple Group says they'll even provide drinks for the April 19, 2009 wedding. They also plan to launch a Website to find Kelly a bridesmaid, or possibly even provide a surprise guest for the position.

Now Kelly and Karl really can plan for a wedding of their dreams.

Hoorah! Good old eBay!!!

4. UK Facts & Figures

Many of the readers of this newsletter are based in the UK. If you ever wondered if eBay was the right market place into which to sell items and make money, here are some interesting numbers, just for you:

eBay.co.uk hit the 15 million registered users milestone in May 2006

Every other (47%) internet user visits eBay.co.uk at least once a month (Nielsen / Netratings, March 2007)

eBay visitors average two hours on the site and view 266 pages per month (Nielsen / Netratings, March 2007)

eBay accounts for 11% of all the time UK users spend on the internet (Nielsen / Netratings, March 2007)

More than 68,000 people earn their primary or secondary income from trading on eBay.co.uk (ACNielsen International Research, February 2006)

On eBay.co.uk, a car sells every 2 minutes

On eBay.co.uk, a CD sells every 7 seconds

On eBay.co.uk, a teddy bear sells every 2 minutes

On eBay.co.uk, a toy car sells every 25 seconds

On eBay.co.uk, a mobile phone sells every 18 seconds

On eBay.co.uk, a laptop sells every 2 minutes

On eBay.co.uk, an MP3 player sells every minute

On eBay.co.uk, a woman's handbag sells every 32 seconds

On eBay.co.uk, a piece of women's clothing sells every 5 seconds

On eBay.co.uk, a piece of men's clothing sells every 9 seconds

On eBay.co.uk, a football shirt sells every 2 minutes

On eBay.co.uk, a piece of golf equipment sells every 1 minute

Looks good to me...

5. A Gift From Me to You

This time there's nothing for you to download to access my gift.

All you have to do is go to the website, and you can start using a very useful new system.

It's called, rather unromantically, Auction Search Kit. The subtitle is much better, "Putting eBay on the map".

The home page is a little cluttered, but all you do is search any eBay country site by keyword, tell the system your Post Code/Zip Code, and it will produce a list of items matching your keyword, and plot those items on a Google Map relevant to your location.

It's fascinating to watch this in action...

<http://www.auctionsearchkit.co.uk>

6. News & Views

eBay Backtracks

You may recall that eBay Australia announced earlier this year that henceforth it was going to be a PayPal only site. And the concern was that this policy might well be spread about all eBay's country sites.

Well, eBay have been taken to task over their plans by the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC).

Now pending the outcome of the ACCC decision, PayPal only on eBay Australia has been postponed indefinitely by eBay.

eBay apologise to users for the change saying it “regrets any ongoing uncertainty that this further delay may cause” and that “eBay appreciates the feedback received from the Community and will use this input to consider where we can make improvements that benefit both buyers and sellers.”

Now That's What I Call A Coincidence!

A 45-year-old from Bochum, Germany, was preparing for a camping trip when he discovered his tent had been stolen.

He went onto eBay to look for a replacement. He found just the right one, perfect in fact - it matched his needs precisely.

No wonder, it was the very one that was stolen two weeks previously!

Using the information provided by the “seller,” he was able to alert police. Not only did he regain his own property, he retrieved items belonging to similar victims.

We're unsure if the culprit had earned enough from his ill-gotten gains to afford release on bail!

Fancy a buffet with Buffet? Update

You may recall in last month's newsletter, I mentioned an auction for charity. The winner would have the pleasure of dining with Warren Buffet, the billionaire.

The previous year, this auction fetched \$700,000.

Well, the result is in for this year's auction which ended on 27th June.

The winning bid was \$2.11 million! Now, that's what I call an expensive meal.

Well done to the winner, Zhao Danyang, a general manager at Pure Heart China Growth Investment Fund, to Mr Buffet and to eBay. And let's not forget the real winner - the Glide Foundation charity.

Gone in 60 Seconds - If You've The Money

Whilst we're on about the high end of the eBay market, you can bid now (until 4th July) on one of the original 'Eleanor' Mustangs from the movie Gone in 60 Seconds.

The car is one of three running examples of the 1967 Mustang Shelby GT500s created for the movie. There were eight other shell cars – and this is the only one that has been offered sale. The other two were destroyed in the bridge jump and junkyard crusher scenes.

This particular car has 38,614 miles on the clock and is currently stored in Houston, Texas.

If you want to make a bid, go ahead:

<http://cgi.ebay.com/ebaymotors/Shelby-1967-Mustang/>

Keep Your Eyes on Paris Today

A Paris court is to decide on Monday whether to make eBay pay 51 million euros (\$80 million) in damages to Louis Vuitton and other French luxury groups for letting fake copies of their goods be auctioned on its website.

Louis Vuitton say eBay knowingly let people use its site to sell fake bags, lipstick, perfumes and clothes from the famous brand names, and that even when authentic goods were on sale this was in violation of their authorised sales networks.

Earlier this month, eBay was convicted by a French court of selling counterfeit goods and ordered to pay 20,000 euros (30,000 dollars) in damages to French luxury group Hermes.

And last September, the cosmetics giant L'Oreal launched legal action against eBay in five European countries including France, over the sale of bottles of counterfeit perfume.

Watch this space....

Clever, Or Clumsy?

On eBay searches, auctions are returned in the default sequence of Best Match. In effect this is eBay's rating of the seller.

However, it seems eBay doesn't just list the best-rated sellers at the top of the search results. It also lists the newest sellers at the top (because they have perfect ratings). Specifically, it lists sellers who are so new that they don't have any feedback yet.

One angry seller at eBay Live!, after watching his listings disappear from eBay's search results because he didn't have perfect ratings, has taken action. He creates a new user ID, and his listings would appear at the top of the search results. When that ID has less than perfect rating he retires it, and starts again.

How much of a difference does this make? The seller says the products with new (perfectly-rated) IDs sell at a \$10-\$50 profit. The products sold with his old rating, lost \$10-\$20 per sale.

Go figure, eBay...

7. 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:-

[Not sure whether to feel sad or not for this lady. What do you think?](#)

[Can anybody tell me what New York has to do with it?](#)

[I have a feeling this one could get picked up by the media any time now.](#)

[Well, THAT'S a different use of eBay...](#)

[Is this a bit of the blarney, or do they really speak loik dat?](#)

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



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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.