



The eBay Auction Newsletter

Issue 2608 - August 31, 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.

Sorry about the lateness of this August issue of the newsletter. As I mentioned in my recent email, I have been away on holiday, and am only just getting back in the swing.

Talking about getting back to normal, just what is eBay trying to do?

They have made so many changes recently that it's been almost impossible to keep up with them.

The latest I've heard is that they're in the process of re-designing eBay Pulse. (If you're an active seller, you'll probably know what the eBay Pulse is. If not, the fastest way to get to it is to find it on eBay's Site Map.)

Also, from September 25th, in the UK we have the introduction of updated eBay Shop definitions with the introduction too of the new 30 day Buy-It-Now listing.

eBay is moving more and more towards becoming a fixed price selling site, and it is trying to give buyers a better and safer experience.

This seems to me to be more one more step towards the "Amazonification" of eBay. By this I mean that eBay's selling model is moving closer and closer to that which Amazon provides to its sellers.

Amazon enables people to sell items at fixed prices, and provides excellent customer service facilities.

Now, I think I'll get out my copy of ["The eBay Seller's Guide to Amazon.com"](#) and see what I can sell on there! If you've not seen that ebook, you can read about it here: <http://tinyurl.com/5vxqlt>.

Take care, and good luck in your eBay business.

Speak to your soon.



1. Thought for the Day

"How long should you try? Until."

Jim Rohn

2. Best Match - Now the Dust Has Settled

You will know that Best Match is now the default sequence that listings appear in when returned from a search.

In the US, sellers have been trying to second guess how Best Match works, with a view to giving their listings a boost in the search return listings.

The back story is that Raghav Gupta, an eBay developer, published a tool called BayEstimate. This was a very useful tool which would assign a relevancy score to each word in your listing title. This enabled you to omit less relevant words and add in suggested highly relevant keywords. When first released, it used data that was about a year old but was then enabled to use live data from the eBay site.

Sellers began to experiment and found that including a single keyword multiple times could push their listing to the top of Best Match results.

eBay reacted by requesting that the Research Labs take down the BayEstimate tool which they have done. No doubt eBay will now build into Best Match a way of lowering the relevance of repeated keywords.

So, what can sellers do about getting their listings returned higher in searches?

Reading eBay's patent application for Best Match reveals the following tips to maximise exposure for your listings:

1. Make sure your titles are filled with relevant keywords and use all the available characters.
2. If Item Specifics are available for your item use them. Best Match should take these into account even if they're not in your item title.
3. Use eBay Pulse to establish the most searched for words in the category you're listing in.

4. If you have an eBay Shop/Store use Traffic Reports (Finding Methods > Search keywords) to establish the most searched for terms for your own eBay Shop. (This is especially powerful as it reveals the search engine used, whether this be eBay or an external site such as Google)
5. Include pictures in all listings, and use the Gallery listing upgrade.
6. Keep your postage at (or below) average for the category you're listing in.
7. Do a search for your product using Best Match, look at the titles that are at the top and check if they have keywords that your title is missing. Learn from the listings that are already highly ranked.

There are of course other contributing factors to Best Match such as feedback DSRs (Detailed Seller Ratings), the length of time left to run on the listing, geographic proximity to the buyer, the number of bids already made and whether the listing has Buy It Now available.

The final factors taken into account on Best Match is feedback Negative and Neutrals, and any Item Not Received Disputes registered against your account.

Sellers of long tail products will have an advantage simply because there is less competition when a buyer searches eBay. If you're selling common products you have to compete with multiple sellers but selling rare items may result in your listing being the only one, or one of very few, matching a buyers search terms. Even for common products it's often possible to list them using less common keywords. I recommend duplicate listings, one with a standard title and multiple duplicates (possibly even low cost Shop listings) with much more specific keywords in the titles.

Whilst the wizards search for ways to "massage" the treatment of their listings by Best Match, the simplest way to ensure your listings are highly ranked is to concentrate on making your listings highly relevant to buyers.

3. Fancy Running Your Own Auction Site?

Ever thought what you would have if you started your own online auction site and managed to attract 0.001% of eBay's throughput? That's a ten "thousandth" o" eBay's business.

If you made your auction site's fees the same as eBay, you would earn about \$22,000 in fee income.

Not bad, and maybe a whole lot of fun!

Here are some sources of auction site software. The price ranges from zero to several hundred dollars...

<http://www.auction-script.com/index.php?page=products>

<http://www.mewsoft.com/Products/Auctionawy/Features.html>

<http://www.softbizscripts.com/auctions-script-features.php?s=aw>

http://www.radscripsts.com/auctionsoftware/ebay_style/

<http://www.usanetcreations.com/auctionstandard.html>

<http://www.phpauction-gpl-2.51.auctioncode.com/purchase.php>

Can you set up your own auction site? Can it be done?

Well, Darren Bock did it.

He set up his own online auction site a year ago, <http://www.wensy.com/>, and now he has 3,000 registered users and about 30,000 listings currently running.

Having said that, Darren isn't making any money from his auction sites as it's free to list and to buy. You can see in this interview why he has set it up like that:

<http://www.auctionbytes.com/cab/abu/y208/m09/abu0222/s02>

4. Mobile Phone Video on Your eBay Auction?

It's generally accepted that on some types of items, video can really enhance the auction page.

The big advantage of video is that you can show moving pictures; even if the thing you're selling doesn't move itself, an all-round view can show it off better than a dozen pictures.

However, not every seller has a camcorder or other type of video device, or indeed the video expertise, with which to create their video.

Why not make a short video of your item for sale using the in-built facility on most mobile phones? There's no need to spend time and money on anything, just pick up your mobile phone and off you go.

All you need to remember is to try and make it interesting. If you're confident enough you can record yourself talking about your item too. After all, you know your item best of all, and you can also show your prospective buyer that you are a real (normal? genuine? handsome? beautiful?) person!

So, you've made a video of your item with your mobile phone, and you've got the video onto your PC, what next?

Well, the easiest route is probably to get a no cost account with <http://www.vzaar.com>.

Simply upload your mobile phone video to vzaar, and follow their very clear instructions on how to incorporate your video in your auction page.

Try it yourself. You'll find it's easy to do and, hopefully, will produce a higher sales price!

5. A Gift From Me to You

Let's imagine, you've found an item you want to bid on, but how do you know if the seller is genuine?

Well, you could do some research on the seller - but this takes time and you might miss something.

Or you could use Auction Inquisitor.

Auction Inquisitor is an excellent piece of software which goes through a series of verification checks on an auction.

All you do is paste the auction URL into the box on Auction Inquisitor, and it provides you with an instant report covering loads of test it applies to the auction and to the seller.

An excellent product - and such interesting results! Try it with on of your own auctions...

You can download it from here:

http://www.workwinners.com/auction_inquisitor/

6. News & Views

Mutual Withdrawal Withdrawal??

eBay Germany has re-introduced mutual feedback withdrawal in limited circumstances. Sellers can request buyers retract neutral or negative feedback within 30 days of the feedback being left.

There are limits of two requests per month, and sellers can only make one request per transaction. Once a request has been made a buyer has 7 days to respond, if they refuse, fail to respond within 7 days, or simply ignore the request then the feedback will remain on the sellers profile.

This is currently available only on eBay Germany and is running as a pilot so details may be tweaked in the future. Mutual feedback withdrawal should however roll out across all eBay sites in a similar format by October.

I'm sure eBay.com and eBay.co.uk dropped this capability some time ago, so it looks like we might be getting it back!

Another No-Cost Tool

As you will know, misspelling tools can be used effectively to find those bargains on eBay.

Here's the latest such tool on the block. It's worth a dabble...

<http://www.typobuddy.com/>

Understanding eBay

You may recall I sent out a quick email to you last Saturday about some key changes shortly due to take place on UK eBay in relation to Buy it Now and Shops.

ChannelAdvisor are hosting a webinar in conjunction with eBay aimed at helping eBayers understand these changes. The webinar will take place on the 22nd September at 1pm (BST) and will be hosted by Rafael Orta, Head of Seller Experience for eBay UK and Max Leisten, Senior Product Manager at ChannelAdvisor.

As well as detailing the changes, this will be a good opportunity to ask any questions you might have about them.

You can sign up for the webinar here:

<http://www.channeladvisor.co.uk/webinars/701000000000mdp.html>

Great Ormond Street Hospital Has Wings

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children in London is running a charity auction on eBay.co.uk.

They have persuaded a load of celebrities to personalise sets of angel's wings, and these are up for auction now.

Celebrities who've helped include Leona Lewis, James Cracknell, Tess & Vernon Kay, HRH Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie plus the casts of EastEnders, Coronation Street and Holby City.

If you want to check it out, there is a special introductory page here:

<http://www.ebay.co.uk/disneyfairies/>

You'll need to hurry, the auction ends on Thursday, September 18th at 8.00am.

Here's An Infuriating Game

Try this horrible little game. I think you'll like it.

It moves a wee bit quickly for an old man like me, but I got to level 6!

http://www.onemorelevel.com/game/orbox_b

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:-

[Guess who'll be back?](#)

[Do you think it's a coincidence that the seller lives in Limerick?](#)

[If you've a profound question, here's your chance](#)

[And yet another one from Ireland....](#)

[I sincerely hope you can't make use of this!](#)

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.