



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.

One thing that eBay has is a vast array of data which it continually records about its site's traffic.

Used and analysed smartly, it is possible to determine from this data what's hot on UK eBay.

For example, would you like to know what products are selling best on UK eBay?

Or, what searches are the most popular on UK eBay?

Or, which listings are the Most Watched on UK eBay?

Well, I have been quietly working away on a new service for months. And my new service will give you answers to all of these questions.

The good news is that I will be making the core information off this eBay data available to you at no cost.

Watch out for more from me in the near future about what's hot on eBay.

Take care, and good luck in your eBay business.

Speak to your soon.

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

1. Thought for the Day

"You don't get harmony when everybody sings the same note."
Doug Floyd

2. Can an eBay Seller get Negative Feedback Removed?

As you may know, eBay sellers can no longer leave negative feedback against a buyer. Not surprisingly, some sellers feel that this is a little unfair, given that buyers still have the right to leave a negative for the seller!

Their worries are very real. It is now possible for the buyer to effectively "hold the seller to ransom". For example an unscrupulous buyer might ask the seller to agree to a post sale condition "or else"! (But buyers should see point 2 below)

Sellers should be aware that it is possible to have a negative feedback removed under certain circumstances. Naturally it's far better not to get a negative in the first place. And I'm sure that you do your very best to give your buyers' no reason to leave you a negative. However, sometimes it will be unavoidable, particularly if you experience one of those unreasonable buyers!

Here are how you might be able to recover the position:

1) Buyers are not allowed to leave feedback comments that contain abusive or obscene language, racist remarks, profanity, or personal information. If they do, you will be able to get it removed under eBay's Feedback Abuse policy.

<http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/feedback-abuse-withdrawal.html>

2) Buyers cannot threaten the seller with giving them a negative feedback unless they agree to some action which was not part of the offer i.e. the listing. If they do this, the seller has the right to have any subsequent negative removed.

<http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/feedback-extortion.html>

3) If the buyer has left the seller a negative feedback, and the seller and buyer are involved in the Unpaid Item dispute process, the buyer must complete that process fully within the deadlines. If they fail to do so, their feedback may be removed.

<http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/unpaid-items.html>

4) If during the unpaid item process the buyer leaves a feedback comment that discloses they are in breach of contract, their feedback can be removed. Examples include excuses such as "I bought this by accident" or "I changed my mind."

5) If you feel there may be some mileage in appealing to the better nature of the buyer, you can request a feedback revision from the buyer. If your customer left negative feedback, and you can resolve the situation amicably you can ask the customer to revise his feedback for you.

<http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/feedback/revision-request.html>

6) If the buyer becomes suspended by eBay, then their feedback will be automatically removed. If you are a seller and have received a negative from a buyer which is badly impacting your feedback rating, you might feel that you would like to start the ball rolling to getting them suspended. If your unreasonable buyer is also selling, it is possible that they won't be keeping within eBay's listing rules. If that is the case, you are perfectly within your rights to report their policy violations to eBay. This process is entirely anonymous, and the person will never know it is you who has reported them.

<http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/listing-ov.html>

A seller's feedback rating can be highly significant in determining the success of their eBay business. Like most things on eBay, prevention is better than cure. The advice to sellers is to try and avoid attracting negative feedback, or neutrals, if at all possible. In my experience most negatives are down to miss-communication, or lack of communication.

Never let your buyer wonder what is going to happen next. Always be proactive in keeping them in the transaction loop. Try not to get questions from buyers. If you do, answer them swiftly, politely and accurately.

If, despite all that you do, you suffer the negative nasty, hopefully this article might give you some hope.

3. Five Steps To A Professional eBay Business

Guest article by Martyn Boaden

Here's 5 techniques to give you a professional presence on eBay that will instil confidence in your potential customers making them more inclined to do business with you than your less professional competition.

1. Open an eBay Business Account

If you already have a personal eBay account which you use to buy and sell personal stuff, I recommend opening a separate BUSINESS account. Remember potential customers can view your other auctions and can also see what you have bought by clicking on the links in your feedback. If you are buying and selling personal stuff using the same account as you use to run your business, you will look less professional and less credible which may affect potential buyers' confidence in buying from you.

You will appear more professional and credible to your customers if your business account only has business related transactions. There are other advantages to having a business account:

When selling on eBay, "Business Seller" will be displayed in the Seller Information Box of your listing, identifying you as a professional.

As a business seller, you can register with your business name on eBay which enhances your credibility ("AntiqueBookStore" is a much more professional ID than "JohnSmith267")

Your business name will be displayed in all communications with the buyer, such as invoices, which again enhances your professional image and credibility.

As a business seller you can register for VAT and provide eBay with your VAT identification number and receive invoices net of VAT on your eBay fees.

To set up a separate business eBay account in addition to your personal eBay account you will need to choose a separate ID and have a separate email address.

If you don't already have a separate email address that you can use for your eBay business, don't let this hold you up. Get your business started using your personal eBay account but change your ID to your business name.

But I recommend that you sort out a separate business account as soon as possible so you can have separate personal and business eBay accounts. In the meantime you can upgrade your personal eBay account to a business account.

2. How To Choose An eBay User ID

As far as your eBay customers are concerned, your eBay User ID is your business name. You should choose your eBay business User ID carefully to ensure that it appears professional which will give customers more confidence to transact business with you. Your User ID needs to be memorable so customers can easily find you if they want to come back to you to do repeat business with you.

Ideally your eBay business User ID should be linked to your product line. So if you sell ebooks, your User ID could be ebooksgalore or ebookseller, or something like. You can also use your User ID to advertise your offline business if you have one. Obviously eBay doesn't want to encourage anyone to do business with you not through eBay, as they won't earn their fees. So you can't blatantly advertise your non-eBay business by using a URL (such as www.ebooksgalore.com) as your User ID. But you could use ebooksgalore as your User ID and it would be very easy for someone on eBay to find your non-eBay website if they wanted to (by guessing that it is www.ebooksgalore.com).

3. Get A Business Email Address

You should also have a separate business email address because johnsmith@WidgetsRUs.com , or info@WidgetsRUs.com or support@WidgetsRUs.com are much more professional and will instil more confidence in prospective customers than johnsmith@hotmail.com .

Also, you can put your email address in your eBay listing which can drive traffic from your listing to your non eBay website if you have one. If you add "For further information, send me an email at info@WidgetsRUs.com" to your listing, visitors to your listing will realise that you have a website at www.WidgetsRUs.com and might visit your site.

If you already have a commercial website, you probably already have a business email. If you don't, you first need to get a domain name and then use that as your email address. Again, if this seems daunting, don't let it hold you up. Get started using your existing email but I recommend you get a business email address as soon as possible.

4. Get A Business 'Phone Number

Ideally you should have a separate business telephone number rather than using the same number that you use socially. This ensures that your business calls are always answered professionally in the name of your business. This is particularly important if your existing number gets answered by other people that you live with. You can have a separate line to your home but this will incur installation and line rental charges. You can use a separate mobile just for business calls but having a mobile number as your only business number will not instil confidence in your customers who will not see you as a proper business.

Alternatively you can use a call answering service. This will enable you to advertise your business with a proper telephone number that is answered professionally in your business name 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This will enhance your business image.

The way it works is the call answering service provider allocates a 'phone number that is unique to your business. When someone dials your number, the operator's computer knows the caller is trying to contact your business and the computer screen tells the operator what company name they need to answer the call with and how they should answer the call, depending on your instructions. The operator will then explain to the caller that you are unavailable to take the call, take a message and email it to you so that you can respond as and when you like.

If you set up your business properly, you shouldn't get too many 'phone calls so this service can be set up on a pay as you go basis so that you only pay for each call received. If you do receive a large number of calls, you can switch to a monthly tariff that is likely to be cheaper.

Again, I recommend that you have a separate business 'phone number but if you don't want to set this up just yet, do not let this delay the start of your eBay business.

5. Open A Business PayPal Account

Most people want to pay by credit card online. If you don't accept credit card payments, your business will not seem professional and you WILL lose sales. In the past, to accept credit card payments, you had to have a merchant account. These could be costly and difficult to get. PayPal enables you to accept credit card payments without having a merchant account.

PayPal is a service that allows buyers to send payments SECURELY online to sellers WITHOUT having to disclose their bank account or credit card details. The small percentage that you have to pay PayPal per transaction is a business expense that is well worth paying. PayPal is owned by eBay and it is now compulsory for you to have a PayPal account to sell on eBay.

When paying by PayPal, buyers can pay from their PayPal account balance, direct from their bank account or via credit cards - whichever suits them. So a PayPal account enables you to accept credit card payments WITHOUT having to open a merchant account which can be difficult and expensive. PayPal also enables you to get paid INSTANTLY without having to wait for a cheque to arrive and clear.

When buyers pay you by PayPal, their payment goes into your PayPal account. You can leave it there to use when you buy things on the internet via PayPal or transfer the money in your PayPal account into your bank account.

Again, ideally you should have a business PayPal account that is SEPARATE from your personal PayPal account so that business transactions are done in your business name, not your personal name. PayPal allows you to have separate business and personal accounts as long as each account is linked to a different email address, bank account and credit card. Having a PayPal account also entitles you to PayPal's Seller Protection policy.

Setting your eBay business up as described above will give you a professional presence on eBay that will instil confidence in your potential customers making them more inclined to do business with you than your less professional competition.

Martyn Boaden is an author and founder of The Online Auction Resource Centre. His latest book is "The Lazy Way To Wealth On eBay". You can read about it here: <http://tinyurl.com/lazy-ebay>

4. Time for a Listings Makeover

One of the problems that sellers have is deciding how best to use their time. There is often a tendency to find something that sells pretty well on eBay, get it up and running, and then not touch it again. In other words just keep re-listing, or use Good Till Cancelled listings in your eBay Shop.

If you're one of these sellers, I recommend you leave aside a little time to review these listings. Think of it as a kind of "spring cleaning".

If you're like me, you'll know that eBay sellers get so busy listing and product sourcing. Not to mention the hundred and one tasks that operating on eBay seems to throw up. You rarely spend time to notice if your listings look dated, or your terms are less than clever, or that you've overdone the colour on your template background.

It's quite weird how my listings looked great when I set them up originally. But when I look at it later, I'll ask myself, "What was I thinking?"

If you can do it, try and pretend you are a buyer viewing your listing for the first time. Is the general appearance inviting? Do I feel attracted to shopping there? Can I find and/or understand the terms? Am I put off by some words or terminology?

If you find it hard to be objective, ask an understanding friend to critique your listing for you. If they also sell on eBay, maybe you could come to a reciprocal arrangement.

You should review your listing template, your terms of sales, your description for negative words, change or add better images, spruce up your About Me page. (What's that? You don't have an About Me page? Shame on you.)

Have an open mind, and try and find ways to improve your presence on eBay.

For example, if you're an eBay Shop owner you could adjust your store front, change some colours, add some seasonal holiday charm, add or change your Custom Pages. (What's that? You don't have any You know the rest!)

Once you have the results of your review, don't be discouraged if your listings need some work. Set a plan on your calendar and dig in for an eBay selling makeover. If you have too many listings to adjust all at once, make changes to each one before you relist or as you post new listings. As they come up for renewal, adjust what's needed before putting it back into the eBay marketplace.

Just to help you on your way, here are a few suggestions from me:

* Keep listings/templates clean and crisp. Use cheerful, inviting colours and don't distract buyers with unnecessary clutter and flashy animation.

* Keep your terms of sale short and sweet. Don't make your buyers feel like they need a solicitor to be present before they buy or place a bid. If those terms go on and on, chances are they're going to click away from your page, because they will either get bored or even worried there's something hidden in there that will come back to bite them.

* Remove any language that sounds negative. Avoid phrases like: "I will not ship to," "I will not ship then," "I will not," "I do not allow," "Do not do this" or "Do not do that because I will not," "No refunds" and "No returns." You may as well write: "Go away and bid somewhere else!" Find a positive way to convey negative information.

* Keep the tone happy, informal and personal. Use terms like "Welcome to my listing", "Thank you for visiting us today", "I take great pride in my shipping", "Customer care and service is our priority" etc.

I hope you undertake this exercise. I can guarantee it will be worth it. After all, if your listings are pleasing and give a pleasant experience, you might even sell more!

5. A Gift From Me to You

If in addition to eBay you're interested in internet marketing, here are 7 excellent ebooks I've put together as a package which you can have at no cost.

They cover topics such as affiliate marketing, Web 2.0, Joint Ventures and profitable blogging.

Definitely worth considering if you're looking to spread your internet wings.

<http://tinyurl.com/brians-giveaway>

6. News & Views

Why so many "Private Listings"?

Perhaps it has something to do with the Best Offer feature? Did you realise that the Best Offer price appears on the seller's feedback page? So savvy buyers can see what offers you've accepted in the past. Make your listing private however, and they do not get access to this potentially valuable information.

How many searches are made by bidders/buyers on eBay?

It's very rare to find any official information on this issue.

However, I've uncovered some interesting figures....

Of the 13.8 billion searches Americans conducted in September, not surprisingly the vast majority were made via Google - 9 billion of them. The survey information provided by ComScore said that searches on eBay for the month were 621 million, with Amazon accounting for 191 million.

621 million? That's a lot of people looking for things to buy. If you list to the eBay USA market, I hope you're getting your share of the sales.

Does your PC take forever to boot up?

There's a big debate about whether Windows 7 is going to be faster than Vista to boot up.

It doesn't matter what Microsoft does with Windows, it will never boot up faster than this very clever alternative. I use it. See what you think..

<http://tinyurl.com/quickboot>

It's going for how much on eBay?

Have a little fun seeing the biggest auctions in the previous month.

This nicely presented website currently only covers eBay.com. However, it's still an entertaining visit for eBayers everywhere.

<http://whatsellsbest.com>

Coffee Break Game

This game is called Snake Runner. It's very easy to play. You just use the arrow keys. Yes, that's right - no mouse! Marvellous isn't it?

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

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.

[Any takers?](#)

[Tempted? Only joking...](#)

[Making you hungry?](#)

[Nice picture!](#)

[If your name is Mary, this is for you.](#)

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 favourites.