



The eBay Auction Newsletter

Issue 4302 - February 28, 2010

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Proudly published for over 5 years by Brian McGregor

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Or tell them to grab their own copy free from:

<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.

I hope you noticed that a batch of changes are coming to UK eBay from April 2010.

These include lowered PowerSeller criteria, which I touched on in last month's newsletter, but there are to be stricter selling minimum performance requirements.

There is also the removal of a previous policy which required free P&P in certain categories.

And then they have extended the policy that enables sellers to show variations of an item within a single listing.

Another change which has not attracted any headlines concerns Good 'Til Cancelled listings. If you have any such listings, and no sales have been made on them in the previous 16 months, eBay will automatically end them. If you have Good 'Til Cancelled listings, it will pay you to check them out now.

You can get all the details of this announcement here:

<http://www2.ebay.com/aw/uk/201002010928052.html>

I wish you every success in your eBay business.

Speak to you soon.



1. Thought for the Day

"Trust your own instinct. Your mistakes might as well be your own, instead of someone else's."
Billy Wilder

2. How to Improve your DSRs and Become Top Seller Rated

I am now increasingly convinced that achieving Top Seller Rating should be a key objective for every eBay seller.

I mentioned in last month's newsletter that UK sellers who had attained TSR status were reporting their sales were up to 35% higher.

In order to become TSR rated, you need to become a PowerSeller, and also ensure that you meet the Detailed Seller Rating targets.

As you know, there are four elements to DSRs. In these four areas, the buyer rates the seller on a scale from 1 - 5. (There are rumours that eBay is testing a 1 to 10 scale - we'll keep an eye on that)

Here are some thoughts on how you can ensure you get better DSR marks in the four significant areas:

1. Describe your items accurately.

Your objective here is to ensure that the description you use does not build up an expectation that is not met by the delivered item.

You need to include all relevant details about your item. Try to be as accurate as possible and make sure you mention any defects. One tip is to write as if there were no pictures of the item. Try and leave no doubt in the buyer's mind as to what they are going to receive.

Use accurate terms, for example a reconditioned or refurbished item is not "new." The word new means exactly what it says.

When including pictures in your description, try capture your item from different angles. Most importantly, if the item you are listing is used, use a photo of the actual item you are selling. In this instance, never use a stock or catalogue photo of the item when new.

Item specifics are becoming more important on eBay, and you should complete these as fully as possible.

Lastly, layout your description so that it is easy on the eye and not difficult to read. Specifically it is helpful to use short paragraphs, include bullet points and embolden headings.

2. How are your communications?

Communication with your buyer is of key significance - both to the buyer and to your DSRs. You need to let your buyers know that you're there for them, whatever they want or need with regard to your item.

It would be helpful if, in your listings, you indicated the policies within which you operate. You should also confirm in which ways prospective customers can contact you.

You should also set their expectations in terms of how quickly you will respond. If you're working full time, or away from a PC, make sure you don't say you will reply to any email or eBay Message by return. What ever you do, respond to emails as quickly as you can.

It is always helpful to keep your buyer informed as each step of the sales process goes through. This means emails when they win or buy, to remind them to pay if they haven't done so after a reasonable length of time, to thank them for their payment, to tell them when despatch has taken place, to request for feedback if it has been left after a certain length of time after delivery. If you use Selling Manager Pro, or other seller user tools, you can do most of this communication automatically.

One useful ploy is to include your answers to frequently asked questions within your listings. This will help your prospective buyers to get instant answers to common questions and thus alleviate you from having to respond to such questions individually.

Above all, in all communications with your customers always act calmly and rationally, and never become emotional. Most people will respect a courteous approach. Even angry customers can be calmed down if you remain professional yet caring. Remember, your objective in your communications with buyers is to try and make sure they don't leave you a low DSR.

3. How quick are you at dispatching?

The key criteria is to dispatch the item as soon as possible after you have received payment for it.

You should always state your postage policies in your listing. You should cover the postal services you are willing to offer, and state the delivery time for each of the services you offer.

Depending on the value of the item, you may wish to provide a postal service that incorporates a tracking capability. Naturally in your communication with your buyer, when you tell them that despatch has taken place you will provide them with the tracking number and the web address from which they can track.

Also, shipping insurance could be relevant for some items, and you could make this an option for your buyer.

4. How reasonable are your P&P charges?

The fact that prospective buyers can sequence search return lists with or without including the P&P amount indicates to me that eBay buyers are fully aware of the significance of P&P costs.

Buyers are easily able to see and compare P&P from seller to seller. And P&P is undoubtedly one of the factors which will be taken into consideration when deciding which seller to buy from.

Even if you are that chosen seller, and they decide to buy from you, your customer will be asked to mark you for the reasonableness of your P&P charge. It is therefore important that your P&P charges compare relatively favourably with other sellers of similar products.

One way in which you can help - both your buyers and your DSR marks - is to offer discounts on P&P when they order multiple items from you and which you can send them in one package. Customers are happy to make savings and are therefore more likely to leave a good DSR mark.

Note that DSR's do not apply if you sell an item as being local pick-up only.

I believe it is well worth the effort to improve your DSRs. After all, if you can make it to TSR, you can look forward to making more sales every month from the same listing fee investment.

3. A Compelling eBay Scam?

I received an email recently, thought it looked interesting. This is what it said:

-- Start of email --

Subject: Contacting you regarding your eBay item 179257772771

Body of the email:

Dear (my eBay ID),

I saw that you relisted the item 179257772771.

What is the bottom price for it?

Richard Nye

-- End of email --

In the email body above, my own eBay ID followed the Dear salutation. Also, the eBay item number appeared as a live link. (I've changed the listing number for the purposes of this article).

In the email, when you click on the listing number, I was taken to eBay's sign in page.

Of course, this wasn't eBay's official sign in page. This is a clever scam. They were after my eBay ID and password.

This is quite a clever scam for several reasons.

First, it appears to be a plausible request. As it happens this item is one that I relist regularly, so no real alarms there.

Second, the listing number shown is real. I did a search on eBay for the listing number and it took me to my own listing.

Third, the request for a best price appeals subconsciously to greed. Who on eBay doesn't want the opportunity to negotiate a sale of their product?

For the purposes of an experiment, I clicked on the item number link.

My internet security service wouldn't let my browser display the site! I was shown a big red warning screen entitled "Reported Web Forgery!"

Some people won't be so lucky. Their internet security won't prevent their browser from displaying the false eBay sign-in screen, and they may well go ahead and "log in". And so a fraudster will have collected their eBay ID and password with which to do untold damage.

Please beware of any email purporting to be from eBay (or PayPal) where a link is included for you to click on and log in! Neither eBay or PayPal will ever send an email with an embedded link to a log in screen.

Incidentally, I use Kaspersky for my internet security and have found it to be the best of all the services I've tried over the years I've been on the internet. It was this which intercepted my click on the eBay listing number link. Incidentally, Kaspersky was recommended to me by my bank. You can check it out here:

<http://www.workwinners.com/kaspersky/>

4. The Top 5 Books on Amazon about Selling on UK eBay

If you're looking to make extra money by selling on eBay in the UK, you'll find this list helpful. These are the best selling books on UK Amazon about how to sell on eBay. In each of these publications individual eBay experts pass on their knowledge to provide a combined treasure trove of useful information for those wishing to sell successfully on UK eBay.

If you have friends or colleagues who are interested in eBay selling, print off this list and give it to them. They will be really appreciative.

1. Make Serious Money on eBay UK by Dan Wilson

Dan is an internet guru and an expert in selling on UK eBay. Indeed he was Community Manager with UK eBay until 2006. expert. Full of PowerSeller case studies, "Make Serious Money on eBay UK" is applicable to the first time seller and also to those who want to build a true eBay business. In addition, Dan gives tips and techniques to help ramp up sales, maximise listings, achieve PowerSeller status, open an eBay shop and using tools such as TurboLister and Selling Manager Pro. The book has a really useful troubleshooting section in which frequently asked questions from sellers on the eBay discussion boards are answered. Dan then takes the reader beyond eBay, and explains how such a business can be the beginning of a larger selling empire which can include other channels such as Amazon and e-commerce websites.

[More at http://www.workwinners.com/danwilson/](http://www.workwinners.com/danwilson/)

2. The eBay Business Handbook by Robert Pugh

This book is aimed at those who have the desire to own their own business and be their own boss. It attempts to provide you with the confidence and knowledge to make that step using eBay as your business. The book is based upon the personal experience of an established PowerSeller who went from zero to 9,000 feedbacks in just two years. The style of the book has a practical, common sense feel, with hints and tips scattered throughout the chapters. A particularly valuable section is that covering product sourcing. New sellers often find it difficult and to locate product suppliers and find it daunting dealing with them. The eBay Business Handbook explains where to look for suppliers and how to buy from them. The book gives the information needed to develop a robust eBay selling business.

[More at http://www.workwinners.com/robertpugh/](http://www.workwinners.com/robertpugh/)

3. The Independent UK Guide to eBay 2010 by Simon Brew

This is a useful guide for sellers who have sold a few items, but have an ambition to develop their business and perhaps even become a full time eBay seller. All the basics are fully covered in the chapters entitled "Introductory Selling" and "Advanced Selling".

These chapters include useful sections on how to handle things that go wrong in an eBay business, and how to cope with the burgeoning email inbox which is a consequence of growing eBay success. "The Independent UK Guide to eBay 2010" is produced in a magazine format which means there are lots of excellent colour pictures. The book also contains a helpful section entitled "Review Directory" which covers software products that are relevant to eBay sellers. Indeed experienced eBay sellers would find this section worth reviewing. There are also a number of cases studies which showcase sellers who are walking the eBay walk.

[More at http://www.workwinners.com/simonbrew/](http://www.workwinners.com/simonbrew/)

4. eBay.co.uk for Dummies by Marsha Collier, Jane Hoskyn & Steve Hill

This book is great for newcomers to eBay, whether their interest is in buying or selling. Written in the friendly style that is the hallmark of the Dummies series of books, these 400 pages contain the A to Z of buying and selling on UK eBay. Of particular value is the largest chapter, which is devoted to the topic of selling. This takes the seller from listing unwanted items from the home, all the way up to how to organise and operate a full time eBay selling business. There is a very useful section on troubleshooting your listing. In here you can check where and how your listing might not be as effective as it could be. Armed with this knowledge, you can then deploy the suggested strategies to improve the performance of your listing.

[More at http://www.workwinners.com/marshajanesteve/](http://www.workwinners.com/marshajanesteve/)

5. The Beginner's Guide to Buying and Selling on eBay by Clare McCann

If you want to try eBay but have been put off because you think it might be too difficult, this could be the ideal book for you. Whether you're interested in buying or selling, this compact book answers all your questions in a refreshingly jargon-free manner. What you get with The Beginner's Guide to Buying and Selling on eBay is effectively step-by-step instructions to working with eBay, plus you get bite-sized chunks of eBay wisdom. Whether you're thinking of setting up a selling business, or you simply want to know how best to drive a bargain, this is an ideal companion for prospective eBay pros.

[More at http://www.workwinners.com/claremccann/](http://www.workwinners.com/claremccann/)

There are 5 more excellent books about eBay covered on <http://www.BestSellersBooks.info>. If you have ambitions of selling on eBay, check out all ten books and see if any might be helpful to you.

5. A Gift From Me to You

Looking for software on a tight budget?

Here's a site that lists top applications for PC and Mac, and they won't cost you a penny.

Several of my favourites apps are listed here, including Mozilla Firefox, Malwarebytes, Filezilla and Ccleaner.

It's a lovely looking site as well!

<http://www.thebestapplications.com>

6. News & Views

New eBay Selling Forum

A friend of mine here in the UK, Mark Kenny, has re-launched his forum for eBay sellers.

If you want to read about what other sellers are doing, this is a useful place.

And I notice one topic on the forum is red hot as I write. It's called "Becoming a PowerSeller made easy!"

You can catch the discussions here:

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

£10 off Voucher from eBay?

Have you received your £10 off voucher from UK eBay?

These are being issued to people who haven't shopped on eBay for a while, as an inducement for them to come back.

I'm sure ours is in the post!

Nice to know what your eBay fees are paying for:

<http://pages.ebay.co.uk/vouchers/>

Now that's what I call a Competitor!

Stephanie Tilenius made a name for herself at eBay after arriving in 2001, running a number of divisions and holding a variety of executive roles.

Now, she has joined Google as vice president of commerce, a new position.

Maybe she can help develop Google Checkout as a real competitor to eBay's PayPal?

Or, given Google's foray into providing shopping results in search returns, maybe they're interested in taking on eBay and Amazon head-on?

Watch this space.

How to Make 0800 Calls Free from your Mobile

In the UK, 0800 calls are meant to be at zero cost, right? Well, yes, if you're ringing from a landline.

If you ring an 0800 number from a mobile, it's going to cost you between 10p and 20p per minute depending on which mobile provide you use.

Or - you could go here and find out how to eliminate those costs when making 0800 calls from your mobile:

<http://www.0800buster.co.uk/>

An eBay Find

Maurice Park bought a canister of nitrate film on eBay for £3.20. It lay on the shelf for a while. Then a friend, John Dwyer - a former member of the British Board of Film Classification - pointed out to him the star of the film

The star was none other than Charlie Chaplin, the big comedian of the silent era of films.

In fact the film includes a previously unknown Chaplin short entitled Zepped, about Chaplin and Zeppelins. It also contains outtakes of his famous film, The Tramp. The film was made during Chaplin's time at the Essanay Film Company, who he was contracted to work for in 1914.

If you buy on eBay, keep your eyes peeled!

Coffee Time

I'm sure it was easier than this at school!

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

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.

[Do you like Leona Lewis? Why not spend an afternoon with her?](#)

[I guess this bride probably says, "Howdy folks"](#)

[Oh! Sussex in America. Drat!!](#)

[Wow! Now that could do some damage to my cholesterol!](#)

[I don't know about you, but with all this snow, I'm tempted...](#)

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



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Or tell them to grab their own copy free from:

<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 favourites.