



## The eBay Auction Newsletter

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*Proudly published for over 5 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.

It must be that time of the year again. Equinox or something. Or maybe if we combine the four elements with the three quadruplicities!

Anyway, eBay have announced a load of changes which take effect in June. That's really only a month away.

If you haven't looked at how this might impact on your listings, my advice is that you do so now.

Here is a page which gives you the actions you're recommended to undertake in chronological order:

<http://sellerupdate.ebay.co.uk/june2010/seller-checklist.html>

Good luck!

I wish you every success in your eBay business.

Speak to you soon.



## 1. Thought for the Day

"Smile - it increases your face value."  
Author Unknown

## 2. Best Offer Tactics

If your listings are in Fixed Price format, I wonder if you're using the Best Offer feature. If not, perhaps you should consider it.

The current rules for Best Offer are easy to follow. Best Offer is available for listings using the Fixed Price and Classified Ad formats, and in eBay Motors. Best Offer isn't available for auction-style listings. However, Best Offer isn't available in every category. If Best Offer is not shown as an option when you list your item, it isn't available in the selected category. There are no extra fees incurred in using Best Offer.

You should note that there are also feedback and other requirements you need to meet in order to be able to use Best Offer on your listings. You can check out the rules here:

<http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/best-offer.html>

If you're listing on ebay.com, Best Offer requirements are here:

<http://pages.ebay.com/help/sell/best-offer.html>

With Best Offer, you are effectively giving buyers an opportunity to negotiate your selling price with you. Once made, a Best Offer is good for up to 48 hours. From the buyer's perspective, their Best Offer is binding, in the same way as any other bid on eBay.

In the majority of categories, buyers are able to make three offers on a listing. There are some categories where five offers can be made, with ten offers being available on car sale listings.

After you receive a Best Offer, as the seller you have several options.

1. You can accept the Best Offer, sell the item to that buyer and end the listing.
2. Decline the Best Offer, and explain your reasons to the buyer if you wish.
3. Respond to a buyer's Best Offer by making them a counteroffer. If the buyer doesn't respond within the specified amount of time, the counteroffer expires.

4. Ignore the Best Offer, and it will expire after 48 hours or when the listing ends, whichever comes first.

Having said that, you can set up your listing to automatically respond to Best Offers. You can specify upper and lower price limits that you are willing to accept via Best Offers. If you do this, the system will automatically handle accepting offers made within these limits and declining offers that are outside of your price limits.

The upper limit price you set must be lower than the Buy It Now price.

If you get an offer at or above your upper limit, the Best Offer system automatically sends an email to you and the buyer saying that the offer has been accepted. This means the item has sold, and the buyer will be directed to pay you.

If you get an offer below your lower limit, the system automatically sends an email to the buyer declining the offer. The buyer may submit a higher offer, or you can send a counteroffer.

When they see the Make Offer button on your listing, buyers will not know that you have set price limits. You can change your price limits at any time whilst the listing is active.

If you decide to use Best Offer, and you're serious about it, it is recommended that you include a note in your listing description along the lines of "Make me an offer! I'm definitely interested in selling, and I'm sure we can make a deal." This might encourage browsers to make an offer. By using the automated rules mentioned earlier you can let the eBay system handle ridiculously low bids for you.

An alternative approach is to elect to handle all Best Offers yourself, and not use the automated system. In this instance, if you want to decline an offer, you can make a counteroffer and include a note something like this "Thank you for your offer. I'm afraid I just can't sell at that price without incurring a loss. If you're willing to buy it for £xxx, it's yours and it's still an excellent bargain. What do you think?"

If you're reasonable and can communicate with good humour and professionalism, you can do very well with the Best Offer option.

### 3. Etsy - A Different Form of eBay

If you're a spare time (or full time) artist, or a craft enthusiast, or you make clothes, jewellery, toys etc, here is a super, targeted auction site on which to sell your wares. It's called Etsy and you can find it here:

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

Launched in 2005, Etsy requires users to sell unique, individual items. The vision is to build a new economy that bases itself on buying, selling, and living handmade.

It can be compared to eBay, but with a little more vintage flare to it.

Incidentally, if you don't make such things yourself, you could acquire art and craft products to resell. In which case the Etsy market place would be good for you too.

To get an idea of what you might purchase for resale, you can see what handmade art, crafts, clothing, jewellery and toys are currently selling well on UK eBay with this service:

[http://www.auctioninnercircle.com/whats\\_hot\\_on\\_ebay/](http://www.auctioninnercircle.com/whats_hot_on_ebay/)

Lauren Harrell graduated from university in 2001. She worked full-time as a kitchen and bath designer until she decided to take a risk and become a freelance artist. Lauren launched her own Etsy shop in 2009.

"I only sell a few pieces a month on Etsy, but I've never regretted opening my Etsy shop. It was an affordable way for me to have an internet presence before I created a website."

For Stephanie Blair, a third year student studying fabric design, finding time to sell items is no problem for her workload. She designs kooky, vintage eyewear. Stephanie created her own Etsy Shop after hearing about it from a couple of her friends and said, "I was surprised there was a market for my items."

Etsy is not restricted to the USA, if you are UK based you can open a selling account too.

If you sell handmade products, or you would like to, Etsy could well be a useful additional outlet.

#### 4. A Website or an eBay Shop/Store?

If you're considering getting started in e-commerce with your own website, having your own eBay shop is an excellent way to gain experience. It's like having your own website, right up there on eBay. There are considerable advantages to starting online with an eBay shop rather than an independent website:

Launching a website involves time and preparation. You have to secure a domain name, find a host, design your web pages or hire someone to do it for you. With eBay, you can literally have a shop up and running in a matter of hours.

Starting at £14.99 per month, an eBay shop is affordable. Plus, many of the marketing and optimisation tools you would pay for with a stand-alone website are included free with your eBay shop.

An eBay shop can produce sales fast. With an eBay shop you have built-in traffic from the moment your shop goes live. Your fundamental task with eBay is to attract a proportion of eBay's massive traffic to see your listings. And you can do this initially by creating excellent listing titles. The danger with a website is that you will need to spend time and money in driving traffic to it. You can spend months optimising it to be friendly for search engines, and then you might also spend money advertising its presence on the internet. Even then, with little or no traffic you may not see any sales for weeks or even months.

eBay shops can rank well in the major search engines. This is because all eBay's pages are already optimised. You will often find an eBay shop rank higher in search results than independent websites selling similar products. And yet the eBay shop owner has not had to devote any time in optimisation. In my experience of running eBay shops, around 14% of traffic to my shop listing pages come from Google, Yahoo and MSN (Bing) searches. All of this traffic is provided for me courtesy of eBay's own optimisation processes.

An eBay shop is a simple and quick way into the world of ecommerce, regardless of your current position.

If you have a bricks and mortar business an eBay shop presents you with several opportunities. You could sell merchandise in your eBay shop that is not moving in your bricks and mortar store. You could include your best selling products in your eBay shop, and expose these to millions of additional potential buyers.

If you sell services, these can easily be packaged and sold via an eBay shop. You will quickly gain significant extra exposure for your business.

If you already have a standalone website, you could use your eBay shop as a way to help market your website. You could use your eBay shop together with eBay's marketing tools to market your internet business. This represents excellent marketing value which is not available elsewhere on the internet.

In summary, an eBay shop offers easy to implement ecommerce, can complement an existing business and help to expand a growing business.

## 5. A Gift From Me to You

Francis Ochoco is an impressive young man.

He is Canadian and won the Entrepreneur of the Year Award which eBay Canada run annually. He is also an eBay PowerSeller.

Francis has created an excellent set of 28 short videos. You can watch over his shoulder as Francis takes you through every aspect of setting up and operating an eBay selling business.

Here is a list of the videos you get:

- Video 1 - Watch Me Register On eBay (Time: 5:16)
- Video 2 - How To Register For A Paypal Account (Time: 4:02)
- Video 3 - The "My eBay" Page (Time: 4:06)
- Video 4 - Watch Me Link My Paypal Account To My eBay Account (Time: 1:58)
- Video 5 - eBay Listing Fees (Time: 5:12)
- Video 6 - Prohibited Items On eBay (Time: 2:17)
- Video 7 - 3 Ways To Get Free Help In Your eBay Business (Time: 4:49)
- Video 8 - The Importance Of Your eBay Feedback And Reputation (Time: 7:32)
- Video 9 - What Is An Auction Style Listing And When You Should Use It (Time: 2:30)
- Video 10 - What Is A Fixed Price Listing And When You Should Use It (Time: 7:23)
- Video 11 - The Different Types Of Multiple Item Listings (Time: 6:47)
- Video 12 - eBay Classified Ads (Time: 5:26)
- Video 13 - What Is A Reserve Price (Time: 2:58)
- Video 14 - How To Search For Items To Buy On eBay (Time: 6:45)
- Video 15 - Watch Me Buy On eBay And Pay Through Paypal (Time: 4:26)
- Video 16 - Watch Me Leave Feedback For The Seller (Time: 2:34)
- Video 17 - Why You Should Have Multiple eBay Accounts (Time: 1:46)
- Video 18 - What I Do Before I List On eBay (Time: 8:12)
- Video 19 - Watch Me List An Auction On eBay - Part 1 (Time: 4:03)
- Video 20 - Watch Me List An Auction On eBay - Part 2 (Time: 5:34)
- Video 21 - Watch Me List An Auction On eBay - Part 3 (Time: 5:53)
- Video 22 - Watch Me List An Auction On eBay - Part 4 (Time: 4:33)
- Video 23 - Watch Me List An Auction On eBay - Part 5 (Time: 5:03)
- Video 24 - Post Sale Analysis (Time: 4:31)
- Video 25 - Watch Me Send An Invoice To A Customer (Time: 2:37)
- Video 26 - The Shipping Process (Time: 4:57)
- Video 27 - Watch Me Leave Feedback For A Buyer (Time: 3:06)
- Video 28 - Watch Me Notify My Customer Of Product Shipment (Time: 4:24)

To get these eBay videos at no cost, go here:

[http://www.workwinners.com/ebay\\_videos/](http://www.workwinners.com/ebay_videos/)

## 6. News & Views

### eBay India - On the Right Track

eBay India is offering refund or replacement guarantee for all transactions completed on the online marketplace, if customers are not fully satisfied with the purchases.

The guarantee covers the entire transaction amount including the price and shipping charges.

eBay India said the guarantee programme is designed to provide 100 per cent satisfaction for buyers.

Can you imagine if UK eBay, or ebay.com, decided to follow suit? The mind boggles.

### Something Positive About PayPal

Did you know that PayPal have an offers section on their website?

If you're in the UK this is where to go:

<http://www.paypal-offers.co.uk/>

If you're US based, here's your PayPal offers page:

<http://www.paypal-offers.com/>

### Page Turning on Your PC?

Do you produce pdf documents? If so, you might like to see this neat utility. It converts a pdf document into a "living, breathing, page turning book".

Take a look at this example:

<http://www.youblisher.com/p/21096-Power-Plate-my3-User-Manual/>

You can convert any pdf you have into a page turning book here:

<http://www.youblisher.com>

### Shilly Billy!

Paul Barrett,39, is unique. He is the first person in the UK to be prosecuted for shill bidding.

Shill bidding is the activity of bidding on your own goods via another ID with the objective of raising prices on online auctions.

He has fallen foul of new laws governing online trading which were brought in two years ago to bring Britain into line with the EU. Paul now faces a £50,000 fine.

So, don't ever be tempted to shill bid. Trading Standards are watching!!

### **The Biter Bit?**

eBay are introducing (another) round of changes from June 10th, 2010.

One of these concerns negative feedback. As you know, buyers can leave negative feedback, but sellers can't! This has resulted in buyers flexing their feedback muscles and "threatening" sellers with negative feedbacks.

Some new protections are being introduced which will help to prevent such threats. You can read about it here:

<http://sellerupdate.ebay.co.uk/june2010/feedback-abuse.html>

### **Coffee Time**

Nice game if you're a car driver and find parking a bit of a problem!

<http://www.coolmath-games.com/rush/index.html>

## 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.

[I spotted this magnificent Reliant Robin on eBay Motors](#)

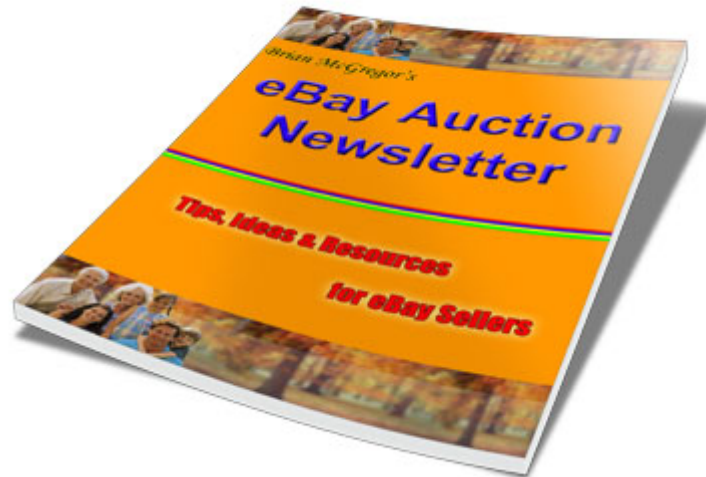
[Hope these are waterproof!](#)

[Marvellous what a university education can do for you](#)

[Only in America - or can you get these in the UK?](#)

[We'll never know!](#)

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.