



## The eBay Auction Newsletter

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*Proudly published for over 6 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.

You're probably aware that eBay offers what they call Daily Deals.

But did you know that one day this month eBay UK made a little error and offered the Daily Deals at 100% discount? That's right, the items were discounted down to zero!

There were £189 swivel chairs and £18 jewellery boxes, all discounted by 100%.

Unfortunately for buyers, eBay realised the problem by 10am on the day in question and corrected it. But for a few hours...

Why not bookmark your eBay Daily Deals page?

UK Daily Deals page - [http://www.workwinners.com/Daily\\_Deals\\_UK](http://www.workwinners.com/Daily_Deals_UK)

USA Daily Deals page - [http://www.workwinners.com/Daily\\_Deals\\_USA](http://www.workwinners.com/Daily_Deals_USA)

You just never know...

I wish you every success in your eBay business.

Speak to you soon.



## 1. Thought for the Day

"If you want to be happy, be."  
Leo Tolstoy

## 2. Your eBay Starter for 100

Do you remember the guy who "sold his life" on eBay in Australia?

There is no textbook way to deal with divorce, but Ian Usher would admit that his coping mechanism was somewhat drastic.

When his wife walked out on him, he vowed to purge himself of everything he owned that reminded him of the happy years they had spent together. It wasn't only material possessions he wanted to get rid of, but less tangible assets of his life that had contributed to their shared identity.

With this in mind he put his house and all its contents, his car, motorbike and jet-ski, even his job and his friends on eBay.

The package - which he named A Life For Sale - made headlines worldwide.

Within hours of going live it had attracted an incredible 1.75million hits.

Bids reached £1.2million and for a while it looked like not only was he going to eliminate every last memento of his marriage, but he was going to become a millionaire in the process.

Unfortunately, by the time Ian's auction closed in June 2008, it had left him feeling as flat as his imminent divorce.

The £1.2million bid turned out to be a hoax and the second highest offer of £230,000 was withdrawn. Six more bidders who had put in six-figure offers backed out.

Ian's plan disintegrated into a highly publicised failure. Then, as quickly as he had become a global phenomenon, he was largely forgotten.

He could have been forgiven for licking his wounds in private and putting any future crazy schemes firmly on the back burner. But the seed of adventure had already been planted.

Ian, a Briton who had moved to Perth in Western Australia with his wife Laura in 2000, decided to sell his belongings individually and use the money to achieve 100 of his lifelong ambitions in as many weeks.

Here are some of those 100 ambitions:-

Raise £30,000 for charity

Work in a soup kitchen in Vancouver

Swim with sharks off the coast of Japan

Run with bulls at the Pamplona Bull Festival in Spain

Secure a part in a Hollywood movie

Ride an ostrich in South Africa

Learn to juggle with fire clubs in Los Angeles.

Snowboard on the world's biggest indoor ski slope in Dubai

Bungee-jump and Paraglide in the South of France

Wing-walk in London

Have a hawk eat out of his hand in Oklahoma

Sleep in a capsule hotel in Japan

See the Seven Wonders of the World

Fly a helicopter in Hawaii

Learn to speak French and Spanish

Gather five Ian Ushers together in one room

Watch the sunset at the Grand Canyon

And so on....

He has slept in hostels and on airport floors. He has learned to live without electricity and running water.

He has suffered from altitude sickness at Everest Base Camp.

His divorce has been finalised and, ironically, his extensive travels have forced him to contemplate trying again for a settled, more conventional existence.

"None of this has been about proving a point or getting back at Laura," he says. "It has been my way of dealing with my heartache and it has certainly given me something to focus on."

"Sometimes I wonder how much of it has been about filling a gap. For all the wonderful things I have done and people I've met, there is a sense of loneliness and I'm still grappling with heartache now."

His adventures have taken him around the world, Disney has bought the film rights to his story and he has now nearly completed his extraordinary list.

In a few weeks Ian will complete his goals. He is thinking of returning to Britain to live in Scarborough, where many of his best friends are based, and hopes to forge a new career for himself as a motivational speaker.

"All I ever wanted was an interesting life; a life that's not ordinary," he says. "It's certainly turned out like that, although perhaps not in the way I expected."

Ian also hopes that soon he will find a new partner, one with whom he could have children.

"I'm proud of what I've done," he says. "I've been struck by the kindness of strangers. The world is filled with wonderful people. But ultimately, it doesn't mean as much without having someone to share it with."

Although eBay gave Ian Usher an incredible publicity boost, you can see how he has grown as a person at his entertaining website:

<http://www.100goals100weeks.com>

### 3. Do You Have An Entrepreneurial Spirit?

The Kauffman Foundation for Entrepreneurship sponsored a fascinating study of 549 entrepreneurs in order to better understand how entrepreneurs came to be entrepreneurs.

They focused on background and motivational issues, and defined an entrepreneur as someone who founded a company or business, or was an early employee with principal responsibilities from the beginning.

How do you measure up? Are you a typical entrepreneur or did you break the mould?

Take a look at the survey results and evaluate yourself against these attributes.

Statistic: Average age of entrepreneurs is 40

Conclusion: People start relatively young

Statistic: Almost all entrepreneurs (97%) had a bachelor's degree; almost half hold a masters degree.

Conclusion: A degree seems to be an important ingredient.

Statistic: 75% were in the top 30% of high school; more than half were in the top 10% in high school.

Conclusion: Entrepreneurs appear to be fairly smart people as a group.

Statistic: Entrepreneurs tend to come from middle class or upper lower class backgrounds, and were better educated and more entrepreneurial than their parents.

Conclusion: Entrepreneurship does not run in the family, and you do not have to start out wealthy to know how to make money.

Statistic: Most entrepreneurs (70%) were married when they got started, and almost half had children.

Conclusion: You do not need to be footloose and fancy free, even though entrepreneurship can be all consuming.

Statistic: Just over half of entrepreneurs were already interested in starting a business when they were in college.

Conclusion: Early interest is often there, but more than a third had no interest at all early on.

Statistic: Over half are serial entrepreneurs, with 2.1 businesses started.

Conclusion: Entrepreneurship seems to agree with these folks and they persevere.

Statistic: About 75% of entrepreneurs indicated a desire to build wealth as an important motivation in becoming an entrepreneur. This factor was even more important to the respondents who grew up in lower upper class families.

Conclusion: Money is a big motivator.

Statistic: Almost 70% of entrepreneurs wanted to pursue a business idea.

Conclusion: Creative thinking seems to play a major role in entrepreneurship.

Statistic: Almost 70% of entrepreneurs wanted to work in a start-up culture.

Conclusion: It is interesting that a creative motivation seems to play such an important role in entrepreneurs.

Statistic: About 65% of entrepreneurs had always wanted to own their own business.

Conclusion: This was a bigger motivator for those from upper lower class backgrounds.

Statistic: About 60% said that working for others did not appeal to them.

Conclusion: This motivator was pretty evenly distributed, from not an important factor to extremely important.

Statistic: 80% of entrepreneurs did not follow this path because they could not find employment.

Conclusion: This finding suggests that, while becoming unemployed may become the motivating factor to kick start a new business venture, it is not the way most entrepreneurs get started.

Statistic: 75% of entrepreneurs had worked as employees in other companies for at least six years before striking out on their own, and many had worked eleven to fifteen years first.

Conclusion: Work experience seems to be important.

How did you rate?

What did you find out about yourself? Are you typical? If not, is that a problem? Maybe not.

Even though there seem to be some very typical characteristics of entrepreneurs, there are few characteristics that are universal (except level of education, but that is becoming a given in the workforce today, so that may not be a big differentiating factor). However, you may want to think about the ways that you differ, and how they may or may not impact your style.

#### 4. Make the 55 Characters in Your Listing Title Add up to Profit

Guest Article by Dennis L. Prince

What's in a word? Well, when it comes to the titles of the items you post for sale or bid, there could be gold in them thar' words-or not. The truth is that your potential to get your item seen-or, better yet, bid on, or purchased-depends upon how well you choose your words.

In listings on eBay, "keywords" are those words and terms that buyers search for, found within your listing title. If you haven't given much thought to this aspect of marketing your goods, or if you wonder whether you're making optimum use of your item titles, consider these keys to choosing keywords, why they're critical to your sales success and why you should literally make every word count.

Understanding searches and indexing

At eBay (as well as within the major online search portals), listings are "indexed" in a search engine that identifies the words within the item title. When a user performs a search using a particular word or term, the search engine uses the index to locate and return a listing of items that match the user's search terms.

Naturally, the search engine indexes most popular search terms for deciding which content will best match a user's search. This is why keywords are so important to your success: When chosen carefully, they'll help ensure your listings will appear in relevant user searches.

Hit me

When it comes to searches, your goal is to get more "hits" more often. Hits implies the number of times the search engine selects your item as a good match for a user's search. When you're offering items for sale-some vintage carnival glass, let's say-you want to ensure your listing is selected (e.g., gets a "hit") whenever a user is searching for carnival glass products. Therefore, your first order of duty is to ensure your items are accurately titled and properly indexed so they're easily found by the search engine.

Remember, you're listing in the vast sea of offerings at eBay (or at any online commerce site), so your challenge is to be seen among the millions of other items up for bid or sale. Because there are so many items available online, few shoppers have patience to scan page-by-page category listings, and elect to use keyword searches instead. Since keywords are your best means of connecting with potential bidders and buyers, you need to ensure you choose each word carefully.

## 55 characters or less

When you list on eBay, your listing title is limited to 55 characters, including spaces. Each word needs to serve a purpose, both as an effective search keyword and also as an accurate descriptor of your item for sale. Yes, you'll want to include a bit of marketing "pull" in your title to help encourage potential buyers to take a closer look, though that tactic is often poorly done or overdone. We'll review that a bit later.

For now, begin crafting your title to include as many pertinent keywords that shoppers are likely to search for. Here, you need to know your commodity well, and know what terms buyers are using to locate these sorts of items. Review other active listings or closed listings to see what words others have used-did those words translate into a sale? Also, look for effective keyword combinations and other details that will help your listing get more hits.

As a guiding principle, you'll want to include as much of the following information within your listing title:

- \* Brand name
- \* Item origin
- \* Year (or period) of production
- \* Manufacturer
- \* Item color, size and other descriptive attributes
- \* Item condition

While that may seem like more than can be communicated within 55 characters, consider this example:

Polar Lights Scooby-Doo Mystery Machine model kit 2000 MISB

In the above example, a model kit of the iconic Mystery Machine van from the Scooby-Doo cartoon is being offered. Note that the title includes manufacturer (Polar Lights), item identification (Scooby-Doo Mystery Machine), item type (model kit), year of production (2000) and item condition (MISB, or Mint In Sealed Box). And, after all of that, there are still four characters of the available 55 left to use.

## Check your spelling

Now, more than anytime else, is when spelling counts. Buyers and sellers continually lament lost sales and missed purchasing opportunities due to misspelled keywords. Be sure to spell correctly, especially when items like yours feature intentional spelling variations or are identified by words that are commonly misspelled (recall "Beanie Babies," often misspelled as "Beeny" and "Beaney" and so forth).

A timely tip for you: If you have the character space, consider including common misspellings associated with your item. Include proper spelling but append a common misspelling at the end of the title to be seen by those buyers who accidentally misspell a search term.

#### Don't get cute

Simply enough, don't waste valuable title space on words that do little to describe your item or properly identify it to buyers. Useless words like "cute," "adorable," "desirable" and the like often do little to help attract, let alone convince, any buyer. Words like "rare," "hard to find" and so on are not only unneeded (especially when buyers are already aware of the scarcity of an item) but they can also expose a seller's misguided (or, at best, misunderstood) attempt to wrangle a higher price. And, visual come-ons like "L@@K" and its sort are nothing short of obnoxious and should be avoided always.

#### Abbreviated angst

Lastly, remember you're working to specify recognizable and understandable terms within your item titles, the sort that search engines have indexed and for which buyers are searching. Therefore, avoid clever abbreviations. They might make sense to you, but they will likely cost you a sale when they fail to be accurately indexed and returned on a search hit list. Unless the abbreviations you use are commonly used by your buyers (such as item condition abbreviations like MISB), it's best to avoid trendy contractions or concatenations whenever possible.

Dennis L Prince is a prolific author about making money selling on eBay.

Check out his books on sale for discounted prices at Amazon:

On UK Amazon - [http://www.workwinners.com/Dennis\\_UK/](http://www.workwinners.com/Dennis_UK/)

On USA Amazon - [http://www.workwinners.com/Dennis\\_USA/](http://www.workwinners.com/Dennis_USA/)

## 5. A Gift From Me to You

Here are some articles on eBay - 650 of them to be precise!

You can download them from here:

[http://www.workwinners.com/650\\_eBay\\_articles](http://www.workwinners.com/650_eBay_articles)

## 6. News & Views

### Retirement of the Local Services Category

As of June 14th ebay.co.uk will no longer be accepting new listings in the Local Services category.

Existing Local Services listings will appear until their expiry date and after that period the Local Services category will be retired.

This is a blow for all those small businesses that were advertising their services on eBay.

However, eBay helpfully say that if you wish to place a local service advertisement in the UK you can use <http://www.gumtree.co.uk>

By the way, eBay own Gumtree!

### Easy Way to Promote Your eBay Listings

Here is a an interesting new and free way to promote your eBay listings.

Just watch the video on the site:

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

### Something New in the eBay World

Just when you thought there's nothing new about selling on eBay, along comes Steve Poke.

Steve is based in Manchester and has discovered a new and easy way of making money on eBay.

He describes the process step-by-step in an ebook he has written.

[http://www.workwinners.com/50\\_a\\_day/](http://www.workwinners.com/50_a_day/)

Incidentally, Steve gives a 60 day money back guarantee, so there's no risk in trying his methods.

## Two Million and Counting

Jack Sheng is one in a million. Well, two million actually.

Jack is known as eforcity on eBay, and he is just about to the 2 million feedback barrier.

No eBay seller in history has generated more feedback ratings than Jack.

He began selling technology gadgets on eBay 10 years ago, starting with \$500 in purchases.

The enduring success of eforcity is evidence that the eBay marketplace continues to create substantial opportunities.

## More Magic from Alibaba

Alibaba.com is a very interesting company based in China which offers millions of products at wholesale prices.

They have just announced that they've acquired Vendio - a US based software and service company which enables merchants to sell on their own website, eBay and Amazon.

The acquisition gives Alibaba some 80,000 small businesses as new customers, and will provide them with a real insight into eBay and Amazon sales.

They'll also be able to mine the data to see exactly what's selling and for what price from those 80,000 Vendio merchants.

I'm not sure who will be least pleased at the acquisition from a data perspective – Vendio customers or eBay, but one thing is certain – it's a good deal for Alibaba.

## Are There Any Smart Burglars Around?

Jackie Shopland-Reed owned a rare antique clock valued at around £4,000 which had been handed down three generations of her family.

Then, one night it was stolen!

Several days later one of Jackie's brothers did an internet search for the make and model of the clock and was stunned to find it listed for sale on eBay.

The police were informed and, after contacting eBay, they tracked down the seller's address to a nearby town.

A 36 year old man and a 47 year old woman have been arrested in connection with the theft.

Clearly a bright couple (not)!!

**Coffee Time**

If you like logic, this will grow on you.

<http://www.onemorelevel.com/game/pictogrid>

## 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.

[Just in case you were looking for a house move...](#)

[Wouldn't mind winning this one myself.](#)

[Silly listing yes, but look at the number of page views.](#)

[Wish I'd thought of this one.](#)

[There must be something of use here!](#)

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.