

# ***101 eBay Seller Secrets Revealed***

**By Tim Campbell**

Copyright © 2000 transpublishing.com

You have permission to sell this, post this, email this, print this or pass it along to anyone you like, or however you like, as long as you make no changes or edits to its contents or digital format.

This version of *101 eBay Power-Seller Secrets* is current until **November 1st 2000**. After that date, Please go to <http://www.auctionebook.com> and get the updated version of this eBook.

+++++

**Just a Few Useful Ways to Use This eBook:**

- 1) You can sell this eBook in any manner you wish. Bundle this eBook together with other reports or sell it. You can charge as little or as much as you'd like.
- 2) You can use it as a bonus or a premium to another product that you have (it really works great when used this way!).
- 3) You can offer it as an incentive product at your Web site to get people to opt-in to your newsletter/ezine.
- 4) You can post at newsgroups and message boards and use your sig-file to offer this as a "free manual" at your site.
- 5) You can use it as "free" content at your site.
- 6) You can email it to a friend (ask first!)-
- 7) And most importantly... use it to explode your auction profits into outer space!

Note: You can offer this eBook to people or customers either via an email that you send to them, autoresponders or a simple download at their site. Or, you can just post it at their site.

+++++

# ***101 eBay Seller Secrets Revealed***

"There are tricks in every trade."

-- 17<sup>th</sup> Century English Proverb

## **EXPLODE YOUR Online Auction PROFITS!**

**Get Your Free AuctionTips Newsletter & Learn Hundreds of *Killer* Secrets-  
You'll also Receive 3 Moneymaking "How To" Manuals Instantly!**

### **Join Today**

**Click the link below** and enter your  
email address in the **FREE OFFER** box...

**<http://www.auctionebook.com>**

Here are **101 of some of the best touchstones** for you to ponder  
and act on as you build and expand your auction empire...

**Enjoy!**

## **AuctionTip #1: Buyers Want Easy Payment Options**

As sellers, we want to offer every pay type. It'll make things easy on our bidders and we'll make more money. Here are two reasons why:

First, difficult pay types create deadbeats. If I offer an option they aren't comfortable with, I may turn a would-be buyer into a non-payer.

Secondly, you'll be able to **snag those easy sales that come outside the auction arena**. This is so important. Bidders will email you wanting to order online. Most will use Paypal, but some will not.

Strive to be flexible here. If you cover all possible pay types you'll be able to make profits that pass others by...

Here are the pay types sellers on eBay offer:

- Paypal
- Personal Check, Cash or Money Order
- Billpoint (eBay service for credit cards)
- Electronic Checks (a new service that eBay offers)
- Credit Cards by email, secure server, phone and fax

Four of those you'll have no problem with. It's the merchant accounts that can be a pain; don't let it- it's easier and cheaper to get them than you think. I'll show you how in just a moment...

## **AuctionTip #2: Over 75% of eBayer's Use Paypal**

Hands down, Paypal is **THE** auction pay type. It's a free service and easy for bidders to use. If you use it, you'll have **no transaction fees** taking away from your hard earned money-

You'll get by starting out with Paypal and Billpoint handling your credit card needs. Not a paypal member? Sign up today and start taking credit card orders instantly- plus you'll get \$5 for opening and account and \$5 for anyone you refer.

<http://www.paypal.com>

## **AuctionTip #3: Getting Set Up With Merchant Accounts**

It's not difficult or as expensive as you may think. Do you plan on doing business online? If so, it's a good idea to have them-

Here are just a few good reasons why:

- You'll be able to process a customer's credit card manually.
- You'll process orders automatically securely on your website.
- You'll be able to take advantage of sales that other sellers miss
- It'll also give you a huge boost in credibility. **People will trust you more.**

I got my merchant accounts in less than a week from **Total Merchant Services**. I didn't have great credit at the time and I was approved instantly- they have a 98% approval rate and are recognized as a leader in Internet merchant services; they are well worth looking into:

<http://www.marketingtips.com/creditcards/index.html>

#### **AuctionTip #4: Use An Email Signature**

One great free way to promote your auction business is by using a signature. Signatures are six to eight line "footers" at the end of your email messages or discussion board posts. All email programs support them. Take advantage of this cheap and effective means of advertising your listings...

You can also use a signature to promote your auctions, website or whatever you feel is necessary. Considering the number of messages you'll be sending and receiving, you won't want to pass this up!

#### **AuctionTip #5: 'Can' Your Email**

You'll receive many of the same questions by email over and over again. Make a good canned message (or template as some call them) to use for responses to typical questions and for questioning others.

This will save you loads of time. Have your responses prepared ahead of time and you'll free up large chunks of every day. Spend your time taking care of business and not drowning in email.

#### **AuctionTip #6: Use Email Shortcuts**

Sometimes 'canning messages' will not cover everything- use a program like Shortkeys to type repetitive phrases and sentences. By smartly using email shortcuts and canned messages you'll cut your time responding to email down by 90%.

You'll also avoid typos of key info like your auctions link or shipping address. You can get a free version of the program at:

<http://www.shortkeys.com>

### **AuctionTip #7: Personalize Email Responses**

When I use canned responses or shortcuts, I try to make them as personable as I can. Try plugging the persons name into the reply. Let's make our message sound as warm as it would if you were talking to them face to face.

### **AuctionTip #8: Filtering Email**

An onslaught of email is coming your way. If you thought you were getting spammed earlier, just wait until you start selling heavily on eBay. You've got to defend yourself- your time is at stake here.

You have many tools at your disposal; but the email filters that come with Eudora Pro are by far the best. With it you'll be able to put the hurt on more hucksters than you can shake a stick at...

What email program are you using? Outlook Express? If yes, you may want to consider using the feature rich Eudora Pro to handle your email.

It retails for about \$40 but you can use the shareware version for 30 days. The Eudora Lite version is less versatile but doesn't expire. You can get a copy from the link below.

<http://www.eudora.com>

### **AuctionTip #9: Automate To The Max**

When it comes to selling on the net, this is the Golden Fleece. With auctions, we want to automate as many things as we can that repeat. This will allow us to get more work done in less time.

Progress here will drastically improve your bottom line. It takes time to learn everything you need to become more efficient, so keep trying. Master services like **Andale** to give your auctions a boost.

Use this service correctly and you'll **explode your auction sales**. With Andale you can save time on just about every aspect of the auction process- look into it... oh yeah, you get \$20 for signing up and \$20 for everyone you refer!

<http://www.andale.com>

### **AuctionTip #10: Honesty Is The Best Policy**

Make one virtue for yourself on eBay- and that's honesty. If I'm a little late getting the package in the mail... I want to tell my customer.

You'll always be forgiven and spared the negative feedback if you fess up. They'll thank you for being straight with them- and reward you with generous feedback.

### **AuctionTip #11: Save Time At The Post Office**

If you don't have much time to spend at the post office, prepare in advance. You can have all of your mailing supplies sent to you by the USPS. Visit <http://www.usps.com> for more details.

### **AuctionTip #12: Don't Hold Personal Checks As A Policy**

Bounced checks are rare. Since your future as a seller depends on the service you provide, being quick and trusting is always going to pay off tenfold in the long run.

So, hold checks only when the item is highly valuable, or when the user has a bad feedback history. Most eBayers are trustworthy- just check their record if you're uncertain. Bounced checks are hardly ever blatant- mostly just carelessness.

Most buyers will acknowledge the mistake and make up for it.

### **AuctionTip #13: Price Straight Auctions Low To Build A Crowd**

Do you have a good item that you KNOW will sell well? Start it off at a penny. This will get you healthy early bidding. You want a large group around the item; some will be competitive bidders- people who will pay extra just for the thrill of winning.

For instance, let's say you started an auction for a silver dollar at a penny. At the end of the auction you may have 35 people that have bid. Handfuls are hawking it trying to win; they've waited all week to duke it out for this coin. If I started the same coin at \$100 then I may only have 3 bids at the end. My chances for irrational bidding have just dropped through the floor.

At the end of the auction the fervor will kick in if you priced low and have a good product. You'll commonly get more for your item than someone who priced theirs higher, because your auction has more bidders watching.

### **AuctionTip #14: The UPS Will Stop By Too**

To make life easier on yourself look into having a mail service come by to pick up your packages. The UPS charges \$6/week for daily pickups. They will also email your customer with the delivery date and provide you with shipping label software and printer. Doing these kinds of things will save you time and money.

### **AuctionTip #15: A Picture Says It All**

Photos make you and your item credible. The better you are with your camera the more bids you're going to get. Take several photos of important aspects of the item, flaws and all. If your teapot has crack in it be sure to take a picture of that as well.

Also remember; by inserting a photograph of the item you are selling you get a 'Pic' graphic next to your item description. Bidders will see the 'Pic' symbol and will be more inclined to visit. If they can see the item, you'll get more bids.

### **AuctionTip #16: Remember To Say Thanks**

Send a thank-you note/receipt email to your customer every time they pay. Include your eBay user name and telephone so they can contact you if they need to. Kindly ask them to leave feedback in your email. Include a convenient link to the feedback forum, and 9 times out of 10 they will drop a good word for you.

### **AuctionTip #17: Make Your Description Complete**

When making your item description make it as complete as possible. Many people find your auction through the search engine, so use as complete and descriptive headline with good keywords too- this will make your listing easy to find for the person looking for your item.

Leave no stone unturned- if I neglect to mention some crucial piece of info bidders will steer clear due to uncertainty. If I'm selling a computer game, forgetting to mention if it's for a PC or Mac will spawn a lot of email. It will attract the wrong bidders and deter the right ones. I may even have bidders who own Mac's buying my PC game...

### **AuctionTip #18: Don't Overcharge On Shipping**

This is one of the more common causes of negative feedback. We only charge what it normally costs you to pack and ship. Buyers are sensitive in this area. If I make a habit of gouging my customers on shipping costs, I'll lose my credibility and any chance for repeat business.

### **AuctionTip #19: Be Cautious**

Be careful about leaving negative feedback for bidders that may deserve it. Go out of your way to clear things up before you decide to do so. It's normal for bidders to strike back with their own negative and unfair comments. Always try to find some other solution. Don't leave negative feedback unless they blatantly defraud you- if they don't pay, either leave neutrals or no comments.

### **AuctionTip #20: Make Your Customer Your Passion**

Treat your customers and potential customers like royalty and they'll reward you. Your repeat business depends upon your customers. They are your main concern. Your customers are more important than your product or any short-term profit you make. Make it your passion to cater specifically to their wants.

### **AuctionTip #21: Use Delivery Confirmation**

Rest easy at night and get delivery confirmation when you ship your valuable items. Some buyers will receive an item and say they didn't get it and demand a refund. You can cover the cost of delivery confirmation in your shipping charge. It only costs an extra .35 cents. You can email the tracking number to the customer so they can track the package.

### **AuctionTip #22: Send Customers The Auction Number**

At the end of the auction include the auction number with the end of auction notice. Place the number in the subject line so you can easily track emails. Your customer may also be bidding on multiple auctions. Doing this will prevent confusion for you both.

### **AuctionTip #23: Your Listing Schedule**

Do you always start and end your auctions at the best times? Always have auctions start and stop when traffic is the heaviest. If you make a listing schedule and stick to it then you'll get much better results on your auctions.

### **AuctionTip #24: Double -Check Your Title**

Check to see that your item title has no spelling errors. Buyers mainly use the search engine to locate their item of interest. Search saves them lot of time and can pick up items placed in the wrong category.

If my spelling is incorrect, the search function will not work. Therefore, I'll have lost all buyers using the search function. This will kill my auction like a doornail.

The good news is, if you catch misspelling before the first bid, you can always go back and revise it.

### **AuctionTip #25: Use A Spell Checker**

With item descriptions, emails, titles and whatever else you write use a spell checker and grammar checker. Poor spelling and bad grammar will turn off some people. Even if it doesn't matter to them, it still upsets the flow of your message and confuses the reader. We want to make a great impression and get our message across. Let's check the things we write.

### **AuctionTip #26: 8 Online Customer Service Rules**

- 1) Your customers are everything. Try running your business without them.
- 2) Your customer is always right. Never tell them they are otherwise.
- 3) Go the extra mile...it is worth more than all the paid advertising you can afford.
- 4) Return emails promptly. If you can't, set up an autoresponder to tell your enquirers you'll get back to them soon.

- 5) Under-promise and over-deliver in everything you do.
- 6) Never criticize your customers directly or indirectly!
- 7) Make the auction process extremely simple for the customer.
- 8) Follow up the day after the sale and one week after. Ask if there's anything more you can do for your buyer.

### **AuctionTip #27: Watching Wording**

Snipers don't have the time to email you about condition or vague info. Some buyers only look at items going off auction that day. Be careful what words you use to describe your item.

Be honest and avoid wording that will inflate your items value. It always backfires on those who make a habit of abusing words-

### **AuctionTip #28: Know Your Product**

If I wrongly describe my item, some buyers will be leery of bidding. Buyers want professional sellers. The more information you have and use, the more credible you'll become in the buyers eyes.

### **AuctionTip #29: Include Shipping Costs In Descriptions**

Some sellers have a tactic where they charge unfair shipping and handling fees. Sometimes they omit critical info in the ad and fill in the blanks at the auction end. EBayer's have been protesting this from day one and these seller don't last long-

Explain everything, costs and all in your item description in such a way that there can be no confusion... If you charge handling- make it known too.

### **AuctionTip #30: Always Insure And Pack Well**

By law, I'm to blame for broken items due to my bad packing. Buyers have no control over how I pack an item. Carriers hardly ever accept liability for broken items. It's my job to see to it that they get their item in one piece and on time- Let's make sure we do everything to see to it that this happens.

### **AuctionTip #31: When The Buyer Lives Out Of The Country**

Be careful when receiving foreign funds. **Always** insist that they pay by credit card or send an **international money order**. Remember to pick up some customs forms from the post office in advance to save yourself some time.

### **AuctionTip #32: Stay In Contact With The Buyer**

When auction ends, quickly email the buyers with the final price, shipping, total cost, and your address. To reassure your customer, email them when you receive their payment. This is important for their peace of mind and they'll thank you later in feedback and repeat business.

You'll also score well with the buyer if you send them an email when you ship their goods. Nothing is more frustrating than not knowing. Even go so far as to follow up a few days later to see if everything is all right... you'll earn very loyal customers by doing this

### **AuctionTip #33: Keep Your Auctions Going**

EBay bidders usually wait until the last minute to bid. I wouldn't let anyone persuade me to end early unless they made me an insane offer. If I do then I'll miss having my auctions go through the "going, going, gone" and "ending today" listings- categories that eBayer's browse heavily.

### **AuctionTip #34: Using The "Category Featured" Option**

You'll want your item listed on the first page of your selected category's listings. Category featured listings are 66% more likely to sell. The cost is \$14.95- if you're running Dutch auctions then it's definitely worth it- the amount of traffic you receive is much greater.

### **AuctionTip #35: Avoid Misunderstanding**

Before email, the only time a written letter was sent or received was when you were writing to a person you know well or a letter to complain. Emotion and character is easily misconstrued with email. Keeping in contact will solve most problems with the transaction.

### **AuctionTip #36: Use The Bold Title Option**

Make your item stand out by listing it in bold. Items highlighted in bold are 50% more likely to sell. For some items it is a cost-effective alternative to featuring your auctions. Test what works for your particular item.

### **AuctionTip #37: Conservative Pricing**

When playing it safe, set the minimum price for your item just slightly lower than what you think it might be worth. This will encourage opening bids on the item. The first bid is always the hardest one to get. Don't start too low, though, because the rules state that you are obligated to sell the item for that amount if the minimum is met.

### **AuctionTip #38: Free Advertising For Your Auction**

You can tell other people on the Internet about your auctions. By actively driving extra traffic to your auctions you'll find that your Dutch auctions will do better.

Use signatures and post to appropriate newsgroups and message boards. Use email (not spam), search engines or whatever works. You can promote individual auctions, your about me page, or a website that sells your products or directs visitors to your auctions.

### **AuctionTip #39: Avoid Using Private And Reserve Auctions**

Buyers are especially cautious of bidding when info is held back from them. Most informed eBayers wouldn't stand reserve auctions unless your item is one of kind. Bidders will always prefer straight auctions to reserve. Private and reserve auctions will limit the number of bidders you'll have for your item.

Reserve prices assure you your item won't sell for below a certain amount. But since the reserve price is not made public, this will turn off bidders. Suppose you set a reserve price of \$50, and a bidder is willing to spend \$49, if he knew your minimum was \$50, he might just bid that extra dollar. Not having a reserve price is a selling point. Announce it loud and clear.

### **AuctionTip #40: Readability Rules For Descriptions (and Email)**

- 1) Use a short opening paragraph.
- 2) Short sentences make firm friends!
- 3) Make your paragraphs less than 5 or 6 lines.
- 4) Underline or boldface important words or phrases.
- 5) Include attention-boosters: questions, news items, promise...
- 6) Ask for the bid at the end of the description.
- 7) Use positive language.

### **AuctionTip #41: Don't Overlook This Free Service!**

Services like Honesty.com offer free counters and image hosting. Keep up with your page hits so you can make adjustments to improve auction performance- <http://www.honesty.com>. It's a critical tool for keeping up with auction results.

### **AuctionTip #42: Know What You're Selling**

Before you put something up for auction, look to see if something similar is already selling. Know the market value of your item. It's always wise to look in on the competition.

If similar items are available, your starting bid should be competitive. If you're not sure of the value of the item you wish to sell, then you should do a little research.

Having two similar items up for auction at the same time will just split the buyers and bring lower bids for both items.

If your Grandmother just passed away and left you a collection of buffalo nickels, find out what they are before selling off your heritage on eBay. You could be sitting on a goldmine or a lump of coal, and ignorance could mean the difference between and a fortune.

### **AuctionTip #43: Use Good Packing Material**

Newspaper makes good packing material, especially if it's shredded. It's cheap, it's handy and it gets the job done. Save packing material from any other shipments you receive. Bubble wrap is lighter but costs you more than newspaper.

### **AuctionTip #44: Revise It**

Auctions that haven't gotten any bids can be revised- did you goof up and spell a keyword in your auction title? Don't worry- simply go to the auction page, click "revise", correct the mistake and make way for the bidders...

Another thing, if your auction has no bids and you still have more than a day before the end, change categories.

This is helpful when you're testing new categories for particular item- if an auction in a new category starts to fail just switch to your bread and butter. By doing this you'll uncover some better places to list.

### **AuctionTip #45: Don't Forget to Go Local Too!**

Whenever you're creating your ad on eBay you'll be given the option of placing your auction in a regional category- do it! While this option was created with for big items in mind, you should make sure you always pick a region regardless of what you're selling. Some people browse the regional listings- get free traffic by posting in a regional category as well...

### **AuctionTip #46: A Shortcut For Item Descriptions**

If you've got an item for sale and you're a little fuzzy on what to say and don't have a whole lot of time in the description do this:

Look for an item similar to yours on eBay's site with the search engine. Find the most complete ad available, then...

Save the ad to your desktop and re-engineer it with your own style and wording.

We don't want to plagiarize the exact item description, of course. Just change it up a little. If you reinvent the wheel it may take several hours.

### **AuctionTip #47: Master HTML in 2 Hours**

Learn html. All auction sites allow you to use HTML in your item description. Use it. Nice html item descriptions make the item more attractive to perspective buyers.

Need a tutor? There's a real good interactive HTML tutorial at <http://www.davesite.com>. Sooner or later you're going to want to get good at it- do it now! It'll take you about an hour or so to get familiar.

Also, the html editor I've used since day one is Homesite. I love it. So will you. Play around with Homesite while you're going through the tutorial at Dave's Site and you'll have html nailed quick.

Would you like a copy of Homesite? Go here and look it up in the search engine:

<http://www.hotfiles.com>

### **AuctionTip #48: I Promise To Do Better Next Time...**

So my auction flopped, big time. No bids, nothing. I can still relist but I need to answer the question...

What happened? Was the auction over-priced? Was it in the wrong category? Do I need a better headline? Description? Or was it that no one wanted to buy my old sneakers in the first place...

When we relist, we need to change things up a little. We'll get our prime indicator of what went wrong by using an auction hit-counter like Honesty. If people weren't getting into your auctions, we'll change anything including the headline and before (like category placement).

A high starting price can also deter people from looking.

If we had traffic we need to change things up after the headline (like description).

### **AuctionTip #49: Be Prepared to Sell for Less than Desired**

Most normal items rarely sell for more than actual market value. And just because a similar item sold for \$20 doesn't mean yours will. Just don't sell for a loss. Set your minimum bid to your actual cost.

### **AuctionTip #50: Dutch Auctions Will Make You Rich!**

Every seller knows: in order to make a lot of money on eBay, you have to run Dutch auctions...

Any auction selling multiple similar items is Dutch.

You want to position yourself with products that lend themselves over to the Dutch auction format. In a moment I'll tell what some of those items are...

### **AuctionTip #51: End Your Auction at Peak Times**

People bid on items from their computers at work or in the evening. So if I ended my auction at 2am I'll see poor end of auction action. Bidders also enter into bidding wars in the last minutes. When the eBay bid warriors are asleep when my auction closes... :(

So make a habit of beginning and ending auctions during primetime.

### **AuctionTip #52: Create Your My eBay Page**

Your 'My eBay' page is very important! Don't overlook the significance of it- you can use these to give buyer important information and much more;

Have a nice 'My eBay' page set up with a picture of you. Include your contact info and a well thought out sales message persuading the reader to scroll down the page (where they will see your feedback and current auctions). You'll receive a jump in credibility- something you can never have too much of.

It's also a good idea to use your finely tuned "My eBay" page as the rallying point for all your auction marketing (i.e. signatures).

P.S.- You may also want to have your signatures pointing towards your eBay seller page;

### **AuctionTip #53: I'd Rather Have a Money Order**

Money orders are cash in hand. Checks can take up to a week to clear so you don't know if it's a bad check or not. We don't want to send valuable merchandise until a week after receiving a personal check.

Make it known if you intend to hold personal checks for a week. Tell bidders in the description and in the end of auction notice too.

If you are uncomfortable with checks and wish to only accept money orders, state this in the item description as well. I only recommend this with items over \$30. Be wary with your valuable items.

### **AuctionTip #54: Remember, All Prices Are in U.S. Dollars**

\$20 on eBay is not \$20 Canadian Dollars or \$20 Australian Dollars. Keep your eyes open for this when dealing with foreign orders.

### **AuctionTip #55: Place Where Cool Power-Sellers Hang Out**

If you're new to auctions and you ever have any questions about anything, check the AuctionWatch message boards. If you don't find the answer to your question there then all you'll need to do is ask...

AuctionWatch will provide you with many other great seller resources, services and great auction related info-

Hint: The AuctionWatch message boards are a great place to try out those signatures I was talking about earlier...

<http://www.auctionwatch.com/mesg/>

### **AuctionTip #56: That's About All I Can Take...**

We should always be polite and courteous out bidders. We'll lose valuable repeat business if we're too curt with difficult customers. We don't want to provoke a negative feedback either...

While I probably don't have to tell you this, there are plenty of rude buyers who will test your patience to the max. There's a never-ending supply of them. Never let them get the best of you; and the Golden Rule is:

**Don't ever write an email in anger**- even if you'd like to throttle them... answer it after you've had a chance to settle.

### **AuctionTip #57: Keep Notes**

With so much to do, it's easy to get overwhelmed. The most important thing you can do to keep your priorities in a row is to keep an idea notepad near by...

Also, buy a digital voice recorder to capture those fleeting creative thoughts before they fly away into oblivion.

If you're proficient in this area then you can get a lot of constructive things done.

### **AuctionTip #58: Reserve Auctions Benefits**

Check the help pages on eBay to learn the specifics about reserve price auctions.

There are two benefits to reserve price auctions:

- 1) They allow you to list a low starting bid amount to get people started on bidding for your item.
- 2) They let you reserve the right **not** to sell your item unless someone bids at least an amount that you want for an item.

Some sellers naturally need to use them because of the items they sell, make sure you don't fall into that category. Sell products that fit with auctions like hand and glove.

### **AuctionTip #59: List on Weekend Mornings**

Of all the times for you to submit your ad, Saturday and Sunday mornings between 6:00 am and 9:00 am PST is the best. More people review eBay on weekend mornings than at any other time.

### **AuctionTip #60: How to Use Autoresponders With Auctions**

One of the great things about online auctions is that the tools of Internet marketing apply to them. Autoresponders are programs that send someone a document by email when they request it.

You could instantly send them document with sales info, ordering details, FAQ's and so on. Some autoresponders will actually allow you to follow-up with your customers... see the power in that?

The autoresponders I use are the one's at **Getresponse**. You can use them for free and upgrade them, as you need more features- here's the link:

<http://www.getresponse.com>

### **AuctionTip #61: 3-Day Auctions?**

All featured and featured category auctions should be listed the full ten days.

It is sometime more advantageous to use a 3 day auction if you didn't buy any listing enhancements. This is due to the way that people naturally browse eBay's site.

### **AuctionTip #62: Use Uppercase Letters**

As with item titles, you want to catch the potential bidder's attention. If you don't end up using templates or HTML code to spice up your text (which you should), then use uppercase letters to highlight the special features of your item. This is especially beneficial when the description text for your item is lengthy. Even if they don't read the entire description, their eyes will notice anything in uppercase or even surrounded by asterisks. The bottom line here is to get stuff to stand out and get noticed.

As you may notice above, another thing done in the title was to use capital letters. Most people enter their titles in upper and lowercase letters. Anything you can do to get your item to stand out will get more people to notice your item.

### **AuctionTip #63: Where Did You Get Those Spinning...**

Don't be afraid to weave some image and graphics into your auctions- on eBay, a **sprinkling** of clipart and animated gifs does wonders for html ads. If you ever need anything to up your description go to:

<http://www.clipart.com> - for clipart and animated pics.

### **AuctionTip #64: Find Out Fast the Items That Sell**

In order to be really successful, you need to sell something really \*HOT\* - while this sounds difficult it's just a matter of research.

Here's one quick way to find out...

Go to eBay and look through the featured category items. Look for a little torch beside the item listing- this means that it's hot item and it has over 30 bids.

You can also check the individual categories for items that are hot.

### **AuctionTip #65: A Few More Tips On Email**

#1- Keep alert! Potential buyers will come to you all the time and at all hours of the day. They'll ask questions and request info to buy your products. If you're on top of things you'll convert some inquiries to sales. **Try to answer mail at least 3 times a day-** I answer mine at 9am, 2pm, 7pm and right before bed.

#2- I used to catch myself hovering over my email checking it every 5 minutes... I broke myself of that bad habit; **you don't want to wear yourself out on email**, there are more important things to do... like growing your business.

#3- **Don't delete anything**. If you throw an email away it may come back to haunt you. Spam is ok to throw away; it's going to haunt you regardless. Every now and then back your email up and clean your folders out to stay organized.

### **AuctionTip #66: I'll Get To It This Weekend...**

Time sappers abound on the Internet. Make a mental note to yourself to post feedback for buyers once a week- leaving posts as payments arrive will quickly drain the life out of your day. What if you post 25 auctions a day? The feedback forum, just like the post office, is not where you want to spend too much time.

Some people like to feedback immediately- buyers get antsy and hassle them and they give in.

Let's make a rule to leave it once a week. When buyers send us emails requesting feedback, we'll have an email text shortcut ready to use explaining our policy for leaving feedback.

### **AuctionTip #67: Save Money and Time on Relisting**

If your item doesn't sell the first time you list it, you'll be able to relist it at no additional charge if it's a straight auction- this doesn't apply to Dutch auctions.

Once the unsuccessful auction is over, eBay will send you an email with a link. Click the link and follow the instructions.

Even that takes time. If you don't want to change anything to improve your chance of success, use Andale's automatic relist feature.

### **AuctionTip #68: Use Asterisks in Your Item Titles**

There are a lot of items up for auction on eBay, and it's easy for your item(s) to get lost in the thousands of others. Therefore, you must get your item to stand out and catch the eye of someone browsing an item listing. How? Use asterisks in the title.

Here's an example: \*\*\*\*\* ANCIENT\_COINS! \*\*\*\*\*

See how this catches the eye? This is so simple to do and yet so powerful.

### **AuctionTip #69: Help! EBay Is Bugging Out!**

If I had a dime for every time I heard that! Apart from the occasional downtime, eBay is notorious for its computer glitches. Some buyers have headaches trying to list their auctions using Internet Explorer.

If you have ever tried to post and get the "Page Can't Be Displayed Error"- then you'll know what I'm talking about.

Here are a few workarounds that WILL work for you if this happens:

- Post auctions using Netscape.
- Post auctions using Mister Lister.
- Make sure the html isn't buggy.

One way seller mess up is by including <html>, <head>, and <body> tags in their ads. This has been known to cause the problem, so don't include them. But enemy number one with html ads on eBay is bad table design.

If you're new to html steer away from using tables in your ads... just dress things up with plain and simple html.

### **AuctionTip #70: Use Bold Text Option in Your Titles**

Another very powerful way to get your items noticed is to select the bold title option when setting up your item's auction. Use of this option must be specifically selected and eBay will charge you an extra \$2.00 for using bold, but your item will stand out. Use this for items over \$10.00 or it's not really worth it. Now, to really make your items stand out, use asterisks use uppercase letters, AND a bold title.

### **AuctionTip #71: Use Underscore/Tilde to Get Longer Titles**

By using underscore "\_" or tilde "~" between words in your title, you'll get to enter a longer title than if you just used spaces between your words. I don't know why, it just works. Try it and see.

### **AuctionTip #72: Use Key Words in Titles**

Since there are so many items on eBay, one of the most effective ways people find things is to SEARCH using the search engine in eBay. If you want people to find your item, then place key words, or "obvious" words in your titles. For example, if you're selling a collectible model car, don't just put the word CAR in your title, put the make and model, too. Put in as many keywords possible in the title, so the greatest number of searches will locate it someone could think of who are looking for items like yours.

### **AuctionTip #73: Be Ahead**

Ask your high bidders to email their shipping info ahead of time, that way you can have everything packaged and ready to go. Doing this isn't always feasible but when it is do it- it's a good habit to attack your auctions this way instead of waiting to the last second.

### **AuctionTip #74: Digital Shoebox.**

Create a purely digital filing system- save some trees and save you a headache! Use email receipts to keep records income. Get a scanner and scan important documents into the computer like business expense receipts that come in the mail.

Throw your recent opened customer snail mails in a box, put account statements in a folder- and throw everything else unimportant away. A mess of paper is the last thing you want on your mind- file it and forget it.

### **AuctionTip #75: Crunch Your Graphics**

Buyers won't wait forever for huge graphic files to load. There are several really great programs for shrinking graphics. Smartsaver Pro is my program of choice. Go to Hot files and do a search for it:

<http://www.hotfiles.com>

### **AuctionTip #76: Don't Get Thrown Off**

If you want your item to show up during primetime, remember there is 2-3 hour posting delay, so post 2-3 hours early. For instance, if you want your auction to end at 10PM EST, then start your auction at 7PM.

### **AuctionTip #77: Be Neat**

When I first started selling I had a problem with getting everything in its proper place. This came back to haunt me. Get an organized and stay that way!

If you throw everything into a big pile, as you've been tempted to do, you'll suffer an eventual clutter avalanche. Don't let procrastination get the upper hand- a clean disk indicates a happy mind.

### **AuctionTip #78: Proofread Your Ads and Email**

Always make sure to proofread your listing before you post an ad for the first time, or have some else do so for you. You'll be amazed at what fresh pair of eyes will uncover...

It's very frustrating to catch a mistake after the auction has began and people have started bidding. Make sure you check over your ad and email for errors.

### **AuctionTip #79: Find Your Niche**

Selling on eBay is just like the Internet or any other real world business. In order to be successful you need to pick a niche and stick with. When you're starting out selling it's ok to sell a little bit of everything- but when you get serious, sit down and decide where you're corner of the market is.

### **AuctionTip #80: Offer A Free Newsletter**

A great way of staying in touch with customers and potential buyers is to offer a newsletter dealing with their interests- such as something dealing with the niche you chose. You can use this to build trust, give out free information, and to plug your auctions.

### **AuctionTip #81: Don't Start Auctions Too High**

Whatever you do, don't start your auctions out too high. EBay is not a good place to do this since bidder want a deal. It's always better to start low and set nice reserve if you absolutely must cover yourself.

Starting too high **kills the spirit** of the auction process. People come to the auctions to compete for a bargain.

If I price highly I won't get the frequent early bids and won't get the same following that I could when I price low. When you have many bidders on an auction, then irrational bidding isn't far behind. This is something you want! Pricing highly undermines this.

You will also incur higher listing fees if you price high.

You only pay the minimum in listing fees if you start anything below \$9.99- which on eBay is 25 cents.

Do good research and get a good idea of your items market value- generally similar items tend to sell within a fixed price range; your goal is to hit the upper limits of that range. The people that drive prices up are either "irrational bidders" or they don't know the market value of a product they want, and exceed it in their bids without really knowing that they overpaid.

### **AuctionTip #82: Beware Of Reserve Auctions**

Reserve auctions are taboo on eBay- most bidders steer clear because they aren't "true" auctions and are somewhat deceptive. Use reserve auction only when necessary, and as a means of protection only when you are uncertain of value and demand. You can also use them if you absolutely refuse to take less than a certain amount for your item. Be prepared for mediocre results if you use them. If your auction fails to meet the amount you set eBay will tack on a \$2 fee.

### **AuctionTip #83: Backup, Backup, Backup!**

Losing your data is like losing your brain- it's crucial that you begin backing up your data today! Murphy's Law is always waiting for you to slip.

Get a good surge protector and CD burner to make cheap backups and you'll be able avoid most disasters.

### **AuctionTip #84: The BEST Types of Products to Sell**

If you have been thinking about what you should sell once your attic is empty, believe me you're not alone. Without a doubt, there are a few types of products you'll need to sell in order to make really good money on eBay...

Consumable products could possibly be the best way to go on eBay. That's an item someone would buy from you, run out of and buy again. Preferably, the sooner the item is exhausted the better. Fat burners, love potion and etc.- you get the idea.

Consumables products make repeat business a breeze! It has its drawbacks, but is very doable-

Here are the key ingredients to success:

- Finding out which items are the hottest consumables
- Locating the source where you can buy
- Buying & building your initial inventory

The first two are easy... the third hurdle is a little higher.

### **AuctionTip #85: Your Database**

Your customer database is a gold mine of information- you want to have a simple program that will record and keep track of customer info. Info such as name, email address, auction number and so on.

While there are hundreds of ways of keeping track of all your auction information, there is one program in particular that I use called A.I.D. -

<http://www.epigroove.com>

You can use a program like MS Access, Excel or some other simple type of spreadsheet program as well.

If you plan on being organized and profitable as possible, keep an excellent and complete customer database!

## **AuctionTip #86: The Taxman Cometh**

Did you know that auction income is taxable? It certainly is. Keep good records and you'll be rewarded at tax time. Don't keep good records and you'll be penalized- the tax advantages to having a small business are many-

Consult a CPA or the SBA for advice on tax liabilities and credits. Rules differ from location to location.

Your tax filing records should allow you to identify your sources of income and keep track of business expenses. It's that simple.

As a small business owner or sole proprietor uses what is called a **cash basis** bookkeeping system.

This simply means income is recorded when it is received, and expenses are reported when they are actually paid. Many sole proprietors and businesses with no inventory use the cash method.

From a tax standpoint, it is advantageous for a new business to use the cash method of accounting. That way, recording income can be put off until the next tax year, while expenses are counted right away.

Also remember licensing issues. The laws and regulations vary from location to location. Some states require licenses to sell some do not. Check with the Small Business Administration for more detail!

<http://www.sba.gov>

## **AuctionTip #87: Using A Website With Your Auctions**

One great way to boost your profits is to use a website with your auctions. Use a little subtlety promoting your website using your auctions. The rule is: You can't provide a link to your website where you are selling the product for the same price or less. Be sure you don't break any rules to avoid having your auction pulled.

A website can serve many purposes. Use it well and it will catapult your auction efforts ahead of everyone else.

I once sold a particular item on eBay and had a link to my website where the person could order directly from me by secure server. I easily picked up an extra \$150 a week by just including a link on my auction page to my website.

Be careful here- you can too be very creative, but if you get too cute eBay will warn you and eventually pull your auction due to fee avoidance.

### **AuctionTip #88: Promoting Your Auctions Outside eBay**

Few people try to drive traffic to their auctions. Find a good way to do this and you'll get tons of free hits. Find appropriate message boards to promote on. Use free classifieds, newsgroups and whatever method will work for your particular type of auctions. You can use email just make certain its highly targeted- don't spam.

### **AuctionTip #89: Study Up!**

*You are what you read...* I spend a good bit of time reading and trying to keep up with the newest trends in Internet marketing. There's a lot of good information available to you for free, but to get the really good stuff it's sometimes worth investing a little bit of money.

By far the two most mind-blowing books that have had the most impact on me, as well as a lot of other people are:

**"The Insider Secrets to Marketing Your Business on the Internet" Home Study Course- by Cory Rudl**

<http://www.marketingtips.com/tipsltr.html>

And then of course there is the Bible of selling online...

## MYSS! (Make Your Site Sell) - By Ken Envoy

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

MYSS! is an absolute steal, being **given away at an insane price**- Cory's course is steep for some but easily **10 Times** worth the investment.

These two courses are the best of their breed by far... get them and succeed online!

### AuctionTip #90: Using Other Auction Sites

You may find that your area of the eBay market is a bit too stuffy. If the competition is really tough for what you're selling check out a few of the other auction sites such Amazon and Yahoo.

Try to limit yourself to these two extras- once you start selling on some of the other auction sites you begin get smaller and smaller returns- plus the buyers are going to be less reliable. A negative feedback on Lycos auctions means nothing- on eBay it does... people just don't take smaller venues very seriously.

I have never had a bounced check off of eBay- I have had three outside of eBay.

On Yahoo you can list for free- but don't let that fool you; your ad will never be seen. On the other hand- Yahoo allows you to bid on your ad exposure. You may have a product that fits into a category with no competition- you can buy a day's worth of the sites best advertising for a quarter. I once netted over \$300 on a Yahoo Dutch auction with a small \$2 in advertising...

### **AuctionTip #91: Information Products: The Other Way To Go**

Selling information by CD is the way I went on eBay. The competition can be fierce but your inventory costs are laughably low and your markups are high. Simply find the hottest selling information products and change them a little, give them a name and make them yours. Go with the proven winners- check the featured auctions to find out what the hot items are...

### **AuctionTip #92: Skyrocket Your Auction Profits by 40%**

Up-sell products are items you offer the winning bidder at the end of the auction for a few dollars more that complements the product they bid on. All you have to do is make sure they'll want it, show them the benefit of having it, and simply ask them to buy.

It's just like when you go to McDonalds and order just a burger and the cashier asks if you'd like fries and a coke. You thought you just wanted a burger but you end up with the fries and drink because you really wanted that too-

You won't always be in the position to offer up-sell product starting, but as you get more experienced you will see some obvious opportunities; if you're selling information it will be **easy** to create good complementary products that your customer will want.

Realize the importance of up-sell products.

### **AuctionTip #93: The Real Way to Boost Your Profits**

The other way to boost your sales is by offering your customers products called back-ends. This is where you can make major money if you prepare.

Once you have built the trust of your customer they're likely to buy from you again and again- take advantage of this by offering them things they will want and are interested in...

Think of a professional stamp seller who uses eBay to add to his customer base. Let's say he has a customer database of a 10,000 avid eBay stamp collectors; If this stamp seller does his homework then he will know what types of stamps his customers are crazy about. He will find the right source for these stamps and Voila! He will make money-

One day he sends them an email explaining to those 10,000 people that he has 5,000 rare civil war stamps. Within a couple of days he sells them all and nets a \$50 profit per stamp. He just made \$25,000!

You'll want to approach your auctions the same way- that is why you'll want to find a corner of the market to work from. That way you'll be in a better position to resell to your customers over and over again... not only will you know what your buyer wants in general, but you'll have a huge base of people who have similar interests. If you don't have a niche you can't do this.

### **AuctionTip #94: Marginal Net Worth?**

Marginal what? This term simply refers to the long-term value of your customer. Develop a long-term relationship with your bidders and offer them similar products they will want (by email). Look past the initial sale-

Now you know why selecting a niche is so crucial. Pick a niche market and you're in a superior position to know your customer and to anticipate what they will want.

Stamp collectors are interested in stamp stuff; Video game players are crazy about video games.

Consider the lifetime worth of your customer and leave everyone that doesn't in the dust.

### **AuctionTip #95: Mister Lister, Who's That?**

EBay offers the program called Mister Lister that will save you hours of listing time every day- it's real helpful if you have lots of the same items. Make one good ad for them and list it over and over for years. It's easy to use and it gets you one step closer to auction automation.

Normally you'll have to post each auction manually- this can take a very big chunk of your day if you want to have a lot of auctions. Use programs like Mister Lister to get around this:

<http://pages.ebay.com/help/sellerguide/mr-lister-faq.html>

Andale has a similar program in beta. Most novices find Andale intimidating and hard to use. Don't rely on it until you fully understand how it works.

### **AuctionTip #96: Must Have Programs**

Here are the several programs I use daily that you can download for free at <http://www.hotfiles.com>:

- A.I.D.- Auction information database program
- Eudora Lite- fully featured email client
- Homesite- an excellent must have html editor
- Paint Shop Pro- graphics software
- CuteFTP- FTP program for uploading files to the Internet
- SmartSaver Pro- Crunches pics so pages can load faster
- ShortKeys Lite- Email shortcut program.

### **AuctionTip #97: Verza and CCNow Will Offer You A Solution**

Earlier I touched on merchant accounts. If you have a website or are selling one product at a fixed price then you need short-term solution for taking orders via secure server. Two services I recommend for this are CCNow and Verza:

<http://www.ccnow.com>

<http://www.verza.com>

### **AuctionTip #98: Don't Go to the Post Office!**

Save loads of time and take care of all your postage needs from the comfort of your own home. In order to do this:

- Buy an inexpensive scale
- Print postage from your PC with E-Stamp (<http://www.estamp.com>)
- Look up shipping rates with I-Ship (<http://www.iship.com>)

Remember the USPS.com and UPS Internet services- be sure to take advantage of these things- your goal is to not spend one second of your life in the post office. If you don't prepare and you start an auction business you will spend your life there when things pick up; I know this first hand. Postal clerks dreaded me stopping by!

### **AuctionTip #99: Use a Good Sales Policy to Avoid Trouble**

Post terms and conditions on every listing you create. Things like shipping terms or any other rules that you'll use. Make a separate text file containing your sales policy that you can edit, copy and paste into your listings quickly. Sit down and come with a good one in order to avoid any bumps in the road- do you insure packages? Be sure to state these types of things in your policy.

## **AuctionTip #100: The Importance of Good Feedback**

Building up a good feedback record on eBay is your #1 priority starting out. The credibility factor will weigh on you at the beginning but this can be overcome...

Remember:

- Treat your winning bidders like royalty
- Sell them a quality product
- Actively pursue positive feedback from winning bidders

On average, only 35% of bidders leave feedback if you don't prompt them at all. Let them know that you NEED feedback. Make it easy for them to get to the forum and consistently follow-up... You can get that up to about 90%.

Once you have a good record people will be much more likely to do business with you. Make it your goal to **never** get a negative comment. This is hard to do but very impressive with the buyers. If get 'negged', correct the mistake and move on, it's not the end of the world.

Kindly reply to the response with a rational explanation for the problem and your buyers will overlook it when they glance your profile.

For an example of an excellent feedback record and what positive feedback will do for you... check out eBay's all time greatest seller:

<http://members.ebay.com/aboutme/parrothead88/>

This fellow has over 16,000 positive feedbacks. I wonder if he's made any money on eBay?

## **AuctionTip #101: Last but not Least!**

Throughout this eBook I have spoke about the importance of automating repetitive tasks in your business...

While it's not the easiest thing, there's one tool on the market that I use everyday and would have a hard time getting by without it...

It's going to be very helpful if you plan to do marketing with your website and auctions by **target direct email**...

The name of this revolutionary program that will set your profits on fire is Mailloop- you can find out more about the benefits of this awesome software and what it can do for you at:

<http://www.marketingtips.com/mailloop/mailloop.html>

@@

Here's hoping all goes well for you!

Warmly,  
Tim