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finishinsidemeplease - February 4, 2013, 2:48 pm

Ebay Selling Tips:

Here are my ten quick selling tips for new eBay sellers, that will help you make some spare case with a minimum of fuss. This is one of a series of no-nonsense, advert-free, "coffee break" guides I have written for UK based buyers and sellers. They're not too short, not too long, and I promise not to try to sell you anything. You can see my other guides by following the links at the bottom of this page but please let me know what you think, by voting for each one you read. Many thanks.

STORAGE

I've mentioned storage first because it really is critical. If you end up with stuff all over the place it may affect business reputation, possibly your marriage, probably your sanity, and your home just won't look like a home any more. Even selling small items, such as books like I do, will cause you headaches if you don't keep your stock neat and tidy. If space is at a premium then you're obviously not going to be selling antique furniture, but even the smallest of items will use up all your available space eventually. This is my tip if space is at a premium. Use a four drawer second hand filing cabinet with maybe six or seven tomato boxes on top; floor to ceiling storage that gives you maximum cubic capacity for minimum square area, and much safer than one huge unstable pile of cardboard boxes. Naturally, your storage space needs to be free from cigarette smoke, pets, kitchen smells and damp.

RESEARCH, RESEARCH & YET MORE RESEARCH

Spend time on research, and lots of it. If you know exactly what you want to sell then that's great, but check out your potential competitors, your potential suppliers, your potential customers and even your own soul. Being a successful seller on ebay can be immensely rewarding, but requires work. Some new sellers spend many months researching before going "live". Change your eBay search settings in the following way, so that your searches are faster and more productive. First of all, bring up a search screen full of listings. Near the top you will see that there is a "customise display" link. Click that and the customising screen will appear, with two boxes containing text headings for your columns on your search page. Using the ">>" and "<<" buttons, move things around until you have country/region, distance, type of seller, and item number in the left hand box, and everything else in the right hand box. Just below these two boxes are the "column settings". Make sure that the box for "display feedback information" is ticked and also select "200 items per page". Note that there are various choices in the "sort by" box, but most of us just leave it set to "items ending first". These settings will remain set until you change them again, even if you log out of Ebay. Click to save and then go back to your main search screen. Changing to these settings will allow you to view more information on the main search pages, when you are checking out your competitors.

PHOTOGRAPHY

One single, and poorly shot, photo on each of your listings is not going to help you become a powerseller. There are many guides to photography on Ebay, which can explain things better than I can, but here's a quick (and cheap) tip: Get a single sheet of tissue paper (purple is a good one), and scrunch it up several times, so that when you lay it flat it has thousands of random creases all over it. Tape it to a large piece of card (maybe the bottom cut out of a tomato box) and you have an instant backdrop for small items that looks great in photos.

PROSE

How many sellers do you see, who cut their own throats by using phrases like "re-advertised due to time waster" or "negative feedback will be left after 7 days"? How many sellers do you see, who can't be bothered to provide a half decent description of the item they're trying to sell? Creating a description that either invokes bidders to get into a bidding war with another bidder, or creates the desire to make an instant purchase using "Buy it Now", is essential to lift your listing above the rest. My tip is to remember that there are many very successful sellers on eBay who do not use any fancy graphics at all, but just concentrate on providing an honest and detailed description of the item.

SMALL PRINT

Including phrases in your small print, such as "I will not be responsible for items lost in the post" is the kiss of death for buyers, so make sure you come across as reasonable and honest. Don't create extra work for yourself (how many times do you use the phrase, "overseas buyers should email for post rates"). Set out your policies clearly and firmly, but in a friendly manner. Make sure your postage rates are not hidden in your listings, and don't overcharge for P&P. Here is my tip: Royal Mail offer free insurance up to £30 with both standard first class and second class mail. Promote the fact that your parcels are insured at no extra cost. Hardly any sellers bother to do this.

PAYMENT METHODS

If you're serious about selling, you have to offer Paypal as a payment method. There's no getting away from it, and it's essential for receiving payments from buyers overseas. The protection and convenience it offers buyers means you really need to offer it as your main form of payment. Just accept Paypal, cheques and postal orders, to fulfil most buyers' expectations. Here's my tip: Periodically double check your Paypal account, just in case a payment is sitting there but your eBay screen shows your payment as not received. It does happen occasionally.

COMMUNICATION

Customers expect to be kept informed, every step of the way, and that means a sale confirmation email, a payment received email, and a despatch confirmation email. If you are forgetful, or you plan to sell a lot of items then it is best to automate this procedure from the very start. My tip: Subscribe to eBay's "Selling Manager Pro" rather than a third party product. It's very reliable, generally, and if anything goes wrong your customers will be more likely to empathise if the error lies with eBay.

PACKING

New sellers have an incredible advantage, when it comes to packing, over larger sellers. You have

the opportunity to show, through attention to detail, a level of service that simply cannot be matched by your bigger competitors. Here is my tip: Describe how you pack your items, in detail, to show your customers what a great service they can expect from you. I deliberately avoid plugging my eBay shop, in any of my guides, but if you do pay my shop a visit then you will see how I employ this method (in the left hand column) to show customers how much I care about packing their purchase.

POSTING

Don't fall down at the last hurdle. Make sure you get everything right and try to foresee problems before they happen, such as address errors, damage, over or undercharging, Post Office scale errors, forgetting the customs label, and so on. One of my guides is all about posting tips, so follow the link at the bottom of this page.

FEEDBACK

We all have to start somewhere, when it comes to building feedback. Feedback is one of the reasons behind the success of eBay and buyers value it as a means by which they can judge sellers before parting with their cash, so much so that there are many programs available on the internet which allow buyers to scrutinise individual's feedback. I cannot stress this enough - if you cheat the system, by buying a load of 1p e-books, for example, it will come back to haunt you later on. Be patient and build up your feedBAck by buying your postal supplies, and other things you may need, from other eBay sellers. The ball will start rolling, and you won't have that nagging feeling that your dubiously gained feedback is all too visible to switched-on buyers. I have a guide on feedback scams if you would like to know more about this subject. Here is my tip: If you do receive a negative feedback then you will be judged by the way you respond, and the comments you leave. So be polite and stick to the point. If you behave in a courteous and professional manner, a few negatives will not harm your reputation.

SOME EXTRA BONUS TIPS

If you have the facility to make your PC "ping" when you have a new email then use it. Potential customers will not be expecting you to answer immediately, so the "wow factor" can clinch a sale or earn you some great feedback.

Depending on the value of your product, consider the idea of including a "freebie" in their parcel.

Always include a flyer with items you despatch. This is a tremendous opportunity to promote your business, and even more so if you have a website.

Engage the services of your children, by getting them to create a thank you card or flyer for each customer. One company who started on eBay got national press coverage for employing this novel method.

If you do receive some negative feedback, remember that you will be judged by how you respond. Some sellers have seen a boost in sales if they respond well to the negative feedback.

- Another amazing eBay guide from "consumerangels", thought I'd share it with the hackforums community.

Very nice tips <3 Aww Kitty i Enjoyed reading it.

Reverse Engineer. - *February 4, 2013, 2:55 pm*

I learned some new things from this.

Thanks for sharing OP