

Title:

Profiting from the Weird and Wacky

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Summary:

eBay Selling: How To Sell On eBay & eBay Auction Seller. From dot Com sites: MyAuctionAcademy & SendMyFreeGift

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Article Body:

eBay has become infamous for weird and wacky auctions. In this article, we will look at some of the zaniest and then discuss the practical lesson we can take away. First, let's stimulate some ideas and look at some crazy listings:

In late 2004, Mary Anderson used eBay to sell her father's ghost. Her father had recently died and Mary's young son Colin was afraid that his grandfather's ghost was haunting their house. When it got to the point that Colin could no longer sleep at night and to allay her son's fears, Mary decided to auction the ghost off on eBay. As eBay requires you to sell something physical, the high bidder would receive her father's old cane as well as the 'ghost'. She stipulated in the listing that the winning bidder would have to write her son and reassure him that his grandfather's ghost was safe and well. There were 132 bids in the auction and the winning bidder paid a final price of \$65'000 (Goldenpalace.com was the high bidder they are an online casino that has achieved notoriety for their wacky eBay purchases). Mary has said that she will put the money in a college fund for Colin, who is presumably much happier now that the 'ghost' has moved house.

In June 2005, the wife of Tim Shaw, a well-known British radio DJ, sold her husband's \$50'000 Lotus Esprit sports car on eBay with a Buy It Now price of 50 pence (\$1) while Shaw was still in the studio. Mrs Shaw heard him flirting with model Jodie Marsh on air, when he said he would leave his wife and two children for the model. Shaw's wife said it was the 'final straw' and immediately listed the sports car (which he had been daft enough to buy in her name) on eBay for 50 pence, with the only stipulation being that the buyer would have to collect the car within 'the next two to three hours before my husband gets home to find it gone and all his belongings in the street.' The car sold within 5 minutes and

was collected the same day.

A 19-year old man from England sold a single cornflake on eBay for one pound and twenty pence (approx \$2.50). He listed the cornflake on the site as 'an experiment'. At first there were no bids, but within a couple of days someone had offered a penny and the bids increased until he finally sold it for one pound twenty. Apparently he received some very interesting enquiries about the cornflake: one bidder asked if it would mate safely with a Sugar Puff, while another asked if it would be sociable if it was dropped in a fish tank.

A man from Arizona sold an air guitar (an imaginary guitar) on eBay for \$5.50!

In February 2007, after Britney Spears shaved off all her hair, the salon she visited put the hair up for auction on eBay, as well as  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a can of Red Bull she had drunk from and a blue Bic lighter she had used. The listing reached \$1 million before it was removed by eBay amidst some controversy.

Water that was said to have been left in a cup Elvis Presley drank from during a 1977 concert was sold for \$455.

A man from Brisbane, Australia attempted to sell neighboring New Zealand at a starting price of \$0.01 AUD. Amazingly, the price had risen to \$3'000 before eBay removed the listing.

In 2004, a scorned Seattle man listed his ex-wife's wedding dress on eBay. The site attracted a boatload of viewers and bidders as the man himself modeled the dress for the photos. The dress had a starting price of \$1 and finally sold for \$3'850.

In 2000, a very enterprising seller tried to sell his soul on eBay. Unfortunately, as eBay requires a physical product to be delivered to the buyer and souls are a bit tricky to pack and ship, the listing was removed.

One of the most famous weird listings ever to grace eBay was the sale of the virgin Mary on a toasted cheese sandwich. Ten years prior to listing the sandwich, Diana Duyser of Miami apparently made the toasted sandwich for herself, only to see a vaguely familiar face staring up at her. She kept the cheese sandwich in her bedside cabinet for ten years before deciding to sell it on eBay. Despite the length of time, at the time of its sale the sandwich had yet to show a single spore of mold (allegedly!)

What do all these weird and wacky listings have in common? They ALL attracted a LOT of attention. And in a market where everyone is competing for attention,

that's a big deal. Your listing might have the perfect title, a flawless description, and a beautiful photograph, but as soon as you add that extra 'something' that creates a stir, you instantly make it (and your business) stand out from the crowd. And the bids start rolling in.

So how can you attract more attention to your listings on an everyday level? As a general rule, whatever everyone else is doing, do the opposite. There's nothing to be gained from making your listings carbon copies of everyone else's. Look for a hook, something that makes you unique and a bit different to everyone else, something that will grab the interest of the buyer. You don't even have to do this with every listing create just one listing that is weird or wacky, and then cross-promote your store and other relevant products within that listing. Just attracting attention to one listing can be enough to get the ball rolling. Of course, it's preferable if your 'wacky' listing has something in common with the other products or services you sell.

Suppose that the salon that sold Britney Spears' hair had cross-promoted a range of hair products. People love to have a story behind something they buy, and if something they buy from you comes with a ready made story they can share with friends, they are that much more likely to make the purchase. Be alert to look for a hook in your listings - something that shouts out as being different and then make sure you cross-promote your related products and eBay store to attract as many buyers as possible. Try it, it works!