Automated Ebay Sales

Second Edition

By Stephan Miller

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Forward

Who would have known that a book I wrote two years ago would still be floating around the internet. The little e-book about EBay that I compiled into an EXE e-book over a weekend.

Each day I still get three or four emails from new readers who like the book. And then there are the truthful emails that ask if I ever proofread the e-book. If I had known that the book was going to be this popular, I would have done a better job.

That book was basically about a method you could use to automate the sales of electronic products that you sold on EBay. And this one takes it a step further with a much better automation method. I will also go into finding and creating products to sell on EBay a little deeper.

What it isn't is a full manual about selling on EBay, which is why I put a resource chapter in the back.

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Part I

Getting Started

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Is it for you?

This is good question to ask yourself before you get started. If you are the type of person who tests a new scheme for a month, gets hardly any results, and then quits because you just don't see it going anywhere, then stop now.

For everything new you try, there is a learning curve. You can read every book on the subject, take every course, even spend four or more years of college studying, but the real test comes when you starting actually doing what you are learning about.

In other words, the only get rich quick scheme is to buy a gun and rob a bank. If you expect to throw up a few auctions and walk away with a million dollars a year while working only ten hours a week, this is the wrong book for you.

And books that do promise that are mainly for dreamers after all. The authors know who they are selling to, the armchair entrepreneurs who dream of working on the beach with their laptops. Don't knock these people though.

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Everyone needs to escape. For some, their escape is video games; for others, its reading books on getting rich and dreaming about it.

If you want to be successful selling products on EBay, there is a little work involved, but if others have done it, so can you. But it is going to take motivation, time, and work. So lets go over some of the reasons to start either a full or part-time EBay business.

- You are your own boss. There is no one to stand over your shoulder and tell you how to do it, except maybe your spouse.
- You can start right away. Signing up for EBay is simple and takes only a few minutes.
- It is your chance to do something you love if you pick the right products. If your 9 to 5 isn't great, this is a chance to make a little money while having fun. Believe me, it can be a reality.
- You will have instant access to millions of customers. If you opened a store in a mall, you may thousands of people walk by each day. EBay gets over 80 million item searches a day. Now that's customers.
- You can set your hours. Of course, you have to be there when the auction ends, but there is a lot of leeway. If you are considering using EBay as your second source of income, this is a great reason to start.

Just a note: there are a lot of resources related to each of the chapters in this book. They are located in the Appendix.

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Signing Up

The First Step

If you already have an EBay account, you may want to skip to the next section.

Start out by by going to http://www.eBay.com. You will need the following information to get started.

- **Your full name -**This one should be easy enough, I hope.
- **Your mailing address** - use the address where your customers will send payments and where you will ship items from.

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- **Your phone numbers** - if an eBay member needs to get in touch with you and can't, he or she can request your phone number from eBay
- **Your e-mail address -** I *highly recommend* that you create a new e-mail address ONLY FOR EBAY USE. The automation techniques that I will be teaching in the future chapters will require an email account specifically for your EBay business.
- **Your eBay user ID -** If you plan to specialize in a particular niche, use your eBay ID to advertise this. For example, if your name is Tom and you're selling ebooks, try *tomslibrary*. If you have yet to pick a niche, wait until you read the chapters on picking your products to signup for your account. Picking your user ID can be a very important thing, especially until you get a lot of feedback or become a powerseller. If you have a website, you can make your ID your site's name. For example, if I was just starting to sell on EBay, I would make mine *profit-ware.com*. Of course, EBay has changed it's policy, again. I would have to make it ***profit-ware.com*** or maybe *profit-waredotcom* because EBay no longer allows domain names as user names.
- **Your Password –** It is a good thing to pick a password that means nothing to you. By that I mean to pick one that has nothing to do with your address, your birthdate, or anything else that a hacker could figure out. In fact, it's good to change it every now and then just in case.
- **Secret Question –** Now you get to pick the question that you will answer in order to receive your password if you have forgotten it.

After you fill everything out and submit it, EBay will send you an email that you must confirm before your account becomes active.

A Seller's Account

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Now go to http://sell.eBay.com/sell to set up your seller's account. Here you will have to provide a credit card to get your account verified.

If you do not have a credit card, you can become ID verified instead. There is a $5.00 charge for this. Visit http://pages.eBay.com/services/buyandsell/idverify-login.html to get verified.

Sign Up for Paypal

This is a very important step. Taking payments online was once a more expensive process. Then Paypal came along and gave the little guys a chance at making money.

Go to https://www.paypal.com to sign up. You will be charged a fee for each payment you receive, but you then have instant access to your cash.

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Part II

Products

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Introduction

I started selling on EBay back in 2002. For the first month, my profit could probably buy a few meals from McDonald's, but not much more. I kept at it though. If other people could do it, I knew I could. I might not want to do it full-time, but it beat getting a second job.

For that month though, I was raiding my closets and learning. I put everything I knew I would never use in a pile in the corner of my room and started listing them on EBay. I suggest you do the same if you are unfamiliar with online auctions.

You will not be trusted as a professional until you get some feedback and you might as well start with the useless stuff

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you have sitting around your house while you learn the ropes.

Who knows? You may find out that you aren't cut out for this business. It's better to find out before you buy a pallet of liquidated merchandise or can't handle answering lots of emails.

Plus, if you want to be able to list under fixed price format, you must have a feedback rating of at least 10. Or if you want list multiple quantity items, you must have a feedback rating of at least 30. So you might as well get started early.

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Hard Products

Like I said in the chapter before this one, it is best to start selling things that you have around the house and no longer need. You may not make that much money while you do this, but you will get used to the process of selling on EBay.

But once you are done learning or your house is empty, you will have to find a source of products other than your closets.

I think it was Hemingway that said you must either do something that no one else has done before or do the same

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thing as everyone else but do it better if you want to be considered great.

It is a good principle to remember when you are looking for products to sell on EBay. You must either sell something that no one else is selling or sell the same things but for less. But I have sold the same products as others and have sold them for more, so read on.

Whichever route you choose, you have your work cut out for you, because if these products were easy to find, then everyone would be selling them.

Niche

This is one of the most popular buzzwords on the internet today. What it basically means is that instead of trying to sell to everyone online, you narrow your focus down to a pinpoint and choose only a few products that cater to a few people.

It is something I brought up in the first edition of this book, but didn't know the word for it yet. I said that if your interest was building statues out of pinecones than there had to be other people in this world that have the same interest, so you might as well make some money off of your strange interest.

This logic would not work in a traditional retail store unless you lived in New York City or Los Angeles or another large city. But on the internet, this is perfect.

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If you build pinecone statues or collect old Sears catalogs, you are looking for products related to your interests and you hope that if you go online or go to the EBay website, you will find people like you with something to sell.

Coming Up With Ideas

What are you interests? What do you like doing in your free time? What kind of things do you collect? And when you answer these questions, the weirder your answer, the better. Just because everyone around you says you are crazy for having a strange hobby doesn't mean you can't make money on it.

In fact, it may mean you can make a fortune, because there is bound to be people out there just like you just waiting for the products you are going to create.

It took me a while to learn this lesson. When I did though, it was with information products. But at least I had an eye for weird things or things I thought would be useful but had not seen anywhere before.

The first product I sold on EBay in mass was a phone shaped like a Volkswagon Bus. It was baby blue and had colored flowers painted all over it. The thing was clumsy to use at the phone. But there was something I knew about it.

I have owned three Volkswagon Bugs and one Volkswagon Bus in my lifetime. There is something about Volkswagon owners, at least those that own the old air-cooled ones. They are freaks. And I mean that in the best way. They will go out of their way to buy items related to their vehicle and they will buy clumsy phones shaped like a Bus.

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I found the phones after searching the internet using such terms as “liquidation”, “closeout”, and “wholesale”. A little company in Kansas City sold them along with old Atari games and other random items. They struck my eye. I knew I could sell them.

I had 50 of them shipped to me for $250 and priced them at $20 each. It took me two months to sell them, but the people who bought them were never happier. Some said that they had been searching for these phones forever. If only I had known more promotional techniques then, I could have sold a lot more.

The second product I started selling I found through a mailing list that I received daily. They were gamepads for Palm Pilots. I had never owned a Palm Pilot, but they looked like something I would need if you I had one and liked playing video games. And they were only $1.50 a piece.

I ended up getting shipment after shipment of these items, a hundred at a time. I sold them for $7.50 a piece and got rid of at least ten a week.

So another way to find products to sell is just to browse for them until something pops out at you. Then do a search on EBay to see if anyone else is selling the same thing yet. If not, you may have a winner.

You may even have a winner if the product is already being sold on EBay, if you think you can sell the product better by:

- Creating a better ad for the product. Check out the other auctions selling your dream product. If you think you can write a better listing, do it.
- Can you get a better price? In other words, can you sell yours for less and still make a profit. Remember you have to factor in EBay fees, Paypal fees, and shipping.

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- Can you add something to the product as a bonus to give it more value?

Another way to come up with product ideas is browsing through EBay's category listings. There are a lot. So spend a while looking around. It is good practice not only to find product ideas, but also to get an idea where you will want to list your products on EBay.

Create Your Own Product

Are you good at crafts? Can you sew? Can you build things? Do you have an idea for a great new invention that only you have faith in and that will cost only a little time to produce? Then go with it.

There are so many people doing this on EBay now. In fact there is a whole group of Self Representing Artists whose gallery is EBay and many of these painters make a good living on EBay.

Product Sources

I will list a few sources of products in the appendix of this book but considering the fact that this book will probably read by hundreds, if not thousands of people, it is better to just show you how to find sources of products instead of just pointing you to sources that everyone else will know about.

First a few points:

- Before you buy, make sure you can make a profit. Remember that the buyers on EBay are looking for

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discount products. If they weren't, they would just go to Walmart to buy the things they were looking for instead of bidding and then waiting a week to get their purchase. Try to buy products for 25% of what you can sell them for or better.

- The more you know, the more money you will make. If you want to sell collectibles, you better know a little bit about them. You've got to be able to recognize deals when you see them and jump on them before anyone else does.
- If it was easy to find the source, then you are probably not going to make much money. In other words, if it only took you a few minutes to find it, then someone else will find it also
- Most wholesale source e-books and manuals are rip-offs. So many e-books speak of "secret EBay sources." Why are they secret? Don't these people want to make money? If so, why are they being so secretive? And if they are, the secret is out, because everyone seems to be buying these information products.
- Don't just spend all of your time online looking for sources. You will find a few things, but a lot of the products you can sell are located in the city you live in. If you do look for online sources, search for yourself before using someone else's links, using keywords such as "liquidation" and "closeout". Combine them with the desired products such as "computer liquidation." This may take some time, but it will payoff in the long run. In fact you can go to http://www.google.com/alerts to get an email from Google whenever these search terms show up in Google news and be one of the first to find out. I just did it to test the process and found a company that was going out of business and liquidating the contents of 172 stores including one right here in Phoenix.

Thrift Stores – I have done this. In fact there is about 15 thrift stores within 20 miles of my house. The items at most

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thrift stores are donated and the employees don't take the time to ascertain the real value of each and every item. You can pick up some good deals here. In fact you may get addicted to going and picking up the deals. Finding stuff to sell on EBay may become a second reason to hit the thrift stores.

Garage Sales – I grew up on stuff from these. My parents worked hard to get by and we sometimes didn't have enough money to go around. So we would go to yard and garage sales on the weekends. In fact, my parents still do this each and every weekend. The profit from these will be even more than that from thrift stores.

Offline Auctions – There is a big difference between a hundred people bidding on an item in your town and a thousand bidding on your item on EBay. It is a possible to make a profit with this difference.

Flea Markets – About the same profit potential as garage sales. Just remember that before you buy something, you must make a profit.

Pawn Shops – It may be possible to make a profit from things you buy from a pawn shop, but it will be few and far between.

Drop Shipping – You can find hundreds of ebooks online for sale on making profits from drop shipping. But remember that people shopping on EBay are looking for a deal and you have to make some money too. Finding drop shipping sources that will give leave you with a profit may be hard to do. But this is a good way to get started selling on EBay.

Online Auctions – Yes, you can buy things from an auction online and turn around and sell them on EBay. Auction sites like Yahoo and Amazon get much less traffic than EBay. If you find something undervalued at one of these sites, buy it

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and resell it on EBay. I even have an auction site listed in the appendix where you can purchase pallet sized lots online.

You can even do this on EBay itself. Go to http//pages.eBay.com/catindex/catwholesale.html. Here you can buy lots of products on EBay itself which you can then split up and resell.

I did this on accident once. I found a lot of laptops for sale. There were twenty of them. They were each missing various parts and were random brands. The price was pretty good. Or so I thought because I thought I could buy them, fix them up and resell them. After all, I have been putting desktop computers together for years.

Wrong. I received the box of laptops and tore into them. I could hardly recognize the parts in the cases, let alone put one back together and the pieces that were missing on the laptops sold for almost as much as the resale value of the completed laptops.

So I thought, what the hell, I'll go back to EBay and sell the lot over again and I did. But I broke the lot up into three separate lots by brand name, so that there was a Dell lot, a Compaq lot, and a generic lot.

I ended up make a good profit, selling each lot for almost the same price that I bought all of the laptops for. Lesson learned. By sell brand specific lots I increased the value of the laptops.

The Dump – One person's trash is another person's treasure.

The Classifieds – Online or in your local newspaper. Remember that having knowledge pays and if you find

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something listed in your local paper that you know can be sold for a lot more, jump on it.

Antique Malls

Factory Outlets and Outlet Malls

Government Auctions

Police Auctions

Government Surplus Retail Stores

Unclaimed Freight

Closeout Stores

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Digital Products

This is where the automation methods in Automated EBay Sales will help you. There is no packing. No running to the post office to mail forty different boxes. No complaints about missing packages.

Once I discovered this secret about digital products, I was done selling hard products on eBay. All you have to do it run your auction, receive your payment and send your customers a download link to your product.

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These are information products like e-books and reports or software. Although, along the way, I taught myself to program, I will mainly cover e-books in this book. You find a link in the resource appendix on software.

The Weird Catch-22

After you sell on eBay after a while you will learn to hate the company as much as you love the money you make by using it. One of the reasons is that they have more laws about listing items than a fish has scales. Another reason is that most of these laws contradict each other.

For example, they have a downloadable media policy, which you can read here: http://pages.eBay.com/help/policies/downloadable.html. Of course, after you read that, you come back here and think my e-book is now useless. Not so quick though.

Do a search for download in the title. Now in the title and listing. Check out a few of these auctions. See what I mean. There is the clause in the policy that states: “If you are the copyright owner of the downloadable material that you are listing on eBay, make sure you say so in your listing!”

So when you sell software and information products on EBay, make sure you state this clearly and boldly in your listing with a phrase similar to “You're buying from the Author and/or Copyright Owner of all items in this download!”

eBay is only covering their butt with this policy. By stating this in your listing, you are assuming the responsibility for your actions and telling eBay to leave you alone.

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You may run into an argument with products you have reprint rights to. But the creator of a product is free to transfer or sell his copyright to someone else. This is how magazine articles are published. Therefore there can be multiple copyright holders to a product and you do not have to be the creator to hold the copyright. When you have the reprint rights to a product, make sure you have proof. Don't just randomly sell anything you find on the internet. A reprint license is actually different terminology. Make sure you have the "rights." This is covering your butt.

As far as hiring ghostwriters goes, make sure you specify in your agreement with the ghostwriter that you will retain all rights to the finished products.

Resale Rights

This is one way to get information products to sell. Buy resale rights. The only problem may be that if you bought the rights then everyone else can too.

Before you buy the rights to a product, make sure that it is something that people will buy. Do a search on EBay and look for similar items. Are there a lot of people bidding on it? Stop by http://www.nichebot.com/ or http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/ and do a few searches for the keywords that you think your customers may use to find your new product. If enough people are searching the internet or bidding on EBay, you might have something you can sell.

Next do a search for the products name itself, both on the internet and on EBay. Does anyone else sell the same thing in their auctions? This doesn't mean that you don't have a

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chance to make some money. Check out their ads. Can you write better ones? If so, go with it.

Now search the internet. Can you find the resale rights for free somewhere? Yes, if you search hard enough, you may be able to find them and save yourself some money.

For more information:
http://www.profit-ware.com/products/ressecrets.php

Public Domain

This is one phrase you are going to love. Do you know why your neighborhood bookstore is always full of books by Mark Twain and Edgar Allan Poe and other classic writers? It seems that every book publisher has their own version of each novel by each of these writers. The answer is "public domain."

These works no longer have a copyright. That's right. If you owned a publishing company and wanted to publish a book by Mark Twain you could do so today and not have to pay anyone for the rights to do so. That leaves you much more room for profit.

Well, if you have e-book software then you do have a publishing company that you can run right on EBay.

Who else has made a profit with works in the public domain? Matthew Lesko. He has taken government publications and rewritten them. He then sells millions of copies. And why isn't the FBI or some similar agency after him. Government publications are also in public domain. They are notoriously dry and boring though, so it may take a bit of rewriting before you can sell them as your own.

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Recipes are also in the public domain. A procedure, discovery, or system cannot be copyrighted. So you can compile a book of recipes and sell them on EBay.

A few people have made a lot of money finding the works of past marketing masters after their copyrights expired and selling them. There is definite money to be made with public domain works.

For more info visit:
http://www.profit-ware.com/products/ultimateau.php

Hire a Ghostwriter

Yes, I know. I am pretty sure you're not a celebrity and you don't have tens of thousands of dollars to pay someone to write a book for you. But it really doesn't cost that much.

In fact you could probably find a ghostwriter to write your e-book for less than the price you could sell a couple of copies for. No, I am not kidding.

Writing is what I like to do, so I wouldn't consider doing this. But if you have a fear of a blank piece of paper or just don't have the time to write you own book, it's something you might consider.

Both of the sites listed below have no membership fees, unlike Elance. It's simple to sign up for a membership and easy to post your project. And you don't pay unless you decide to hire a programmer.
For an example of how much it can cost you to get a book written for you, I checked http://scriptlance.profit-ware.com/. There is someone actually bidding $40 on a 15,000 word e-book. Now that is cheap.

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If you decide to jump into software, you can use this site or http://www.rentacoder.com/RentACoder/SmallBiz.asp?txtFromURL=AId_578183 to find reliable writers and programmers who will get your project done for you. Both sites have a feedback system to insure you get what you pay for.

To learn about getting software written for you, check out http://www.profit-ware.com/products/bflbfl.php.

Write Your Own

Information sells and it sells very well and the internet has given the common person a chance to create and sell their own information products.

Before the internet, a person would have to go through traditional channels to get a book published. He would have to take it to a publisher and convince the publisher that it would sell enough copies to be worthwhile to print. The publisher would then have editors cut the work apart so that it no longer resembled the original book.

Well, those days are no longer. Anyone with a computer can publish his or her own books without the need of a traditional publisher. In fact for many, this may be the most profitable option. When Stephen King released one of his novels in e-book format and sold it himself, he made a killing.

This is the true revenge of the idea person. In the past, the people with the ideas hardly made any money, because they would have to bring their ideas to someone with enough capital to produce those ideas. Technology gives the keys to the person with the knowledge.

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You Can Write

And you are one of these people. Everyone has specialized knowledge that other people would pay money for. Take a look at the contents of your hard drive. How much would you pay to have your hard drive back if it went up in smoke in the next minute?

I know I change my hard drive out each year just to prevent this from happening. I have e-books, software, and bookmarks on there that I would give anything to have back if I lost them.

The contents of your Internet Explorer favorites file can be a good place to start if you are looking for something to write about. One of the most popular articles I ever wrote was about selling your bookmarks for profit, but let me tell you the story behind the article.

Shortly after I started selling hard products on EBay, I bought a 1976 Honda CB750 motorcycle. At the time it was built, it was one of the fastest motorcycles around. While Harley slept, the Japanese came along and built a killer bike. It was fast, it ran forever, it hardly ever broke down, and it didn't cost a mint.

I fell in love with the bike. I bought it for about $1200 and wanted to put more money into it. I discovered that there was a whole cult built around the bike, almost like the Volkswagon cult, maybe worse.

There were warehouses around the United States full of brand new vintage parts that had been produced during the bikes heyday. Everything from chrome parts to rigid chopper frames. There were even engine kits around that would make the bike faster than it already was. And where there

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weren't parts, there were forums and websites where you could learn to do anything to the bike.

Pretty soon, I had a good collection of bookmarks on the motorcycle. If I had any question or was looking for any part, I could go to the file and find what I needed. "Damn, this is so useful." I thought, "I could sell it."

So I started compiling an e-book of the bookmarks. eBay doesn't allow you to sell just a list of websites, so I wrote personalized descriptions of each site, along with my ratings. I also added personal stories related to finding things for and working on the bike itself.

Then the test came. I put it up for auction. I shortly discovered that people had been looking for information like this for a long time. It didn't make me rich, but selling the book for only $5 a copy over the period of 2 years, I averaged 8 sales a week.

I made $4000 off of this in two years and with the automation techniques I discovered, I hardly had to lift a finger. Thinking back, I could have easily doubled or tripled the price.

The point is that the bookmarks were already there. They were something I used every day. Compiling the e-book took less than a day. Produce 10 of these products and you could have a good second income coming in.

It also brings us back to our favorite buzzword.

Niche Revisited

Write a book on marketing, sell it on eBay, make a profit and three days later 40 people will have stolen the contents of your ad, written a knock off e-book, and started making

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money for themselves. If you don't believe me, try it. There are ways to stand out in the crowd though:

- Write a better ad and put a copyright on it warning that you will take action if copycats use it.
- Let your feedback stand for itself and make sure to emphasize this in your listing.

Or you can write a niche product like the CB750 resource book. I never had a competitor for two years. My sales were never through the roof but they were steady and always there.

Remember that if you write about something that interests you, you will eventually find other people who are interested also. Here are some signs that you should start writing an niche product related to your interest:

- You spend an hour searching on Google for information regarding your interest, but never find it.
- You have a folder in your bookmarks file devoted to it and guard these links with your life.
- The one paperback book you have on the subject is dog-eared and written in.

It seems that this had to be repeated over and over to me until I got it. Finally when I experienced the results myself, it stuck with me. "Write what you know."

But don't stop with what you know. Write what people always ask you about. Things that you may be expert in, but never really thought about. Things that are easy for you but seem hard for others. Maybe you have found a new process that nobody else has ever thought of.

Trend Surfing

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This is another way to find hot topics and make money quickly. The only problem is that the money usually stops coming in as quickly as it started.

What is trend surfing? Creating products quickly to sell to a hungry group of people into the newest trend. But let me elaborate.

This is the story of the first week I made $400 on EBay on one $10 product. This was after I had just started trying to make some real money on EBay.

“The Fast and the Furious” had just come out and it started a huge trend. The most obvious way to profit from this would be to sell products related to the movie. Less obvious would be to sell to the people who had watched the movie and now wanted cars just like the movie.

At that time I managed an auto parts store and I started compiling a list of wholesale suppliers that could beat any price you could find at a brick and mortar store. So I started selling it on eBay. I made a lot of cash selling this product for about three weeks or so.

Then the copycats caught on and the money flow went away as soon as it came. So if you decide to sell something like this, be prepared to give it up when all of the parasites start selling knockoffs.

Report or Encyclopedia?

The answer to this question was a very interesting one to me, but first you have to know the whole question. Do you sell one of those “Massive Mega CD’s” with hacking secrets, wholesale lists, celebrity emails and more or a simple five page report.

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There is a package of 650 reports with reprint rights floating around the internet. Before that, it was probably sold through mail order and before that, it was carved in stone and sold by cavemen.

This package and the mega cd's can be had for about ten bucks apiece. Each report in the package or on the cd could be expanded a little, converted to PDF, and sold for the same price or more. And you don't have to ship the PDF.

There comes a point when adding bonuses to a package takes away more than it adds, especially when the bonuses have nothing to do with the main feature of the package.

Remember when I bought the laptops. By breaking the lot up by brands, I made a profit. I think the same concept applies here. An information product that is focused will bring much more of a profit than a bunch of random items thrown together.

But You Can Find the Info for Free

So why write an e-book about it and try to sell it. It's just going to be a waste of time, isn't it? Wrong. Some people are just lazy. Well, I guess that's not the word for it. But some people are information junkies and some just aren't.

While people like me don't mind searching the internet for hours to find information, just knowing that all of the dead ends and wrong turns will eventually be useful to me, others would rather have the information delivered to them on a platter.

They don't want to jump from site to site, gathering information. They would rather you provide them with an e-book that lists all of the steps of a process from step one to

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step ten. So sometimes, it's not so much the information as how you arrange it.

So just because information is readily available to you on the internet doesn't mean you can't write a report on it and make some cash.

After all, the first edition of this book was given away free from my website, resale rights included. As I check EBay today, no less than 150 auctions are selling this e-book either alone or in combination with other books.

There Are Only a Few Big Topics

When it comes down to it, the best selling nonfiction books always cover a few general topics.

Before there were e-books, there were $5 reports in the back of magazines and in newspaper classifieds. Look through a few of these old magazines and you will find reports on the same subjects that e-books are written on today.

- Money – More books are probably written on this subject than on anything else. Whether your readers see money as success, freedom, respect or anything else, a well written book on how to make or save money will always sell.
- Time – Probably the second greatest commodity that people have. And people will trade their money for it. If you can show someone how create more time, they will buy your book
- Forbidden Secrets – UFO's, the occult, magick, witchcraft, hacking, spy tools, etc. People will always want to know what they are no supposed to.
- Sex – How to attract the opposite sex, dating tips. This subject has always sold since time began.

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- Health – Everyone wants to live longer and have a better quality of life. From diet tips to meditation techniques, this is a subject that has always been in the top ten.
- How to – Break down a complex process into a few easy steps and you could have a best seller. People are afraid of everything from their car to their computer. If you are the hands-on type of person, you can explain to them how easy it is to install a hard drive or change their oil.
- Travel – People want to see new places and experience new things, so books on "Seeing Europe for Pennies a Day" and discount airline tickets are popular topics.
- Popularity – You might just say that adult life is "high school" the sequel.
- Hobbies and Crafts – Activities that your customers will use to escape from their normal, everyday lives. Everyone is creative in one way or another and like to express their creativity.
- Recipes – An easy one. You can't copyright recipes. I sold an e-book I received for free on EBay for months. They were low-carb recipes before everything became low-carb.
- Self-help – Get organized, overcome shyness, quit smoking and the list goes on.

Of course, you have to be a reader in order to be a writer and if you are, you can double or triple the size of this list.

SCAMPER

- Substitute
- Combine
- Adapt
- Modify
- Put to another use
- Eliminate

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- Reverse

Add to this list
- Bring back
- Magnify
- Minimize

What is this list? These are ways to create new products from old concepts.

List Everything

Start a notebook where you write down ideas. Start now! List everything you have ever been interested in since you were a kid. List your hobbies. List things that you have learned at all of the jobs you've worked at.

And when you are creating this list, don't stop writing. Don't erase anything in the list. Just write.

Also list the things that you have always wanted to learn. The perfect time to teach someone else to learn a new process is while you are learning or shortly afterwards.

If you are learning Photoshop, maybe you can write a short report on how to create e-book covers and save others the time it takes to read a 300 page how-to book. This way you give your customers just the information they need to know.

Eventually as you add to your list over time and read books and information related to making money and writing, you will start to find ideas everywhere. You will wonder why you ever waited for ideas before and your notebook will be filled with enough notes for a dozen people to write in a lifetime.

Writing the E-book

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This book is just supposed to be an overview of selling information products on EBay with a main focus on how to automate the sales of these products so you have more time to do other things, so this section on writing will be short and sweet.

Start writing. Just start putting your thoughts down on paper. Write everything down that you want to cover in your e-book and when you think you have everything, write some more.

Write as quickly as you can. This is not going to be your finished product. In fact, if it helps you to write faster, just tell yourself that you are going to throw what you've written away as soon as you are done.

Let anything and everything in. You might want to add:

- Lists
- Questions
- Stories
- Steps
- Quotes

After you are done writing all of your thoughts down on the subject you are going to write about, look them over. Do they suggest an organized structure for your book. If not, put your writing down and come back to it a little later.

The list of ideas I wrote down for this e-book broke down into:

- Signing Up
- Products
- Running the Auction
- Organizing and Automating

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And the products section broke down into

- Hard Products
- Electronic Products

And Electronic Products broke down into
- Resale Rights
- Public Domain
- Hiring Out
- Writing Your Own

Once you have a basic outline written, you can now add to it. The way I did this is write every major point down on index cards and then put them in the order I wanted. This way allowed me to rearrange the book without writing a whole new outline or erasing a lot.

The writing basically comes down to illustrating your list (or stack) of points. If one of your points is that you can sell public domain books, then you must explain what “public domain” means. Then you might illustrate when you or someone else has done this. You might also add examples of works that are public domain.

Another good thing to do is get your reader involved in your book. Tell them places that they can go to find public domain works. Have them make lists. You want active readers.

Your first time through, write quickly, write the way you speak and don’t edit yourself. Now that you have provided yourself with a direction, just start typing. Maybe pretend that you are writing an email to your best friend explaining your ideas. If you must, open up Outlook and write your first draft as an actual email.

When you are done, read through your book. Cut out anything that doesn’t sound like you. Remove anything that

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is just fluff. Of course, check spelling and grammar. And when you think the book is perfect, let someone else read it for you. You could read your own book 5 times and still miss things.

For more information on writing the e-book and formatting it, check the resource section.

Part III

The Auction

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When and Where

As far as when to start your auction and how long, you will have to test a little. In my experience, it seemed that all theories I tested seemed to work to one extent or another. So I will list some of the ones you may have heard.

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How Long

- Pick the seven-day auction because your auction will get the most exposure. After all it costs the same as a three-day auction and it is more than twice as long and the ten-day auction costs extra. Plus a seven-day listing works with the “best day of the week” theory, allowing your auction to begin and end on your favorite day of the week.
- Pick the three-day auction because the most bids come at the beginning and at the end of the auction, making the seven-day auction’s extra four days just a waste of time.
- Now there is a one-day auction that gives you the advantage of being able to start your auction one day and finish it the next. This is good if your want to sell your product quickly, are selling close to a holiday, or if you want to sell a lot of identical items during a week. With this format, you can list 70 auctions selling the same items in one week, since eBay limits the amount of identical auctions you can run at once to 10.

What Day

- Start and end your auction on Sunday evening. People will be at home, get bored and browse EBay. Maybe, maybe not.
- Start and end your auction on Wednesday. Don’t know why. For some reason this worked for me.

What Time

It actually makes sense to make sure that your auction begins and ends when people are near a computer, because when you sort searches in the EBay search engine, you can choose to either do this by date or by price. When the auctions are sorted by date you see either new auctions or those just about to end first.

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So now what? That really helped. It comes down to testing. What kind of product are you selling? What kind of people would buy it? When will they be home? Do they need to be home to bid or would they have a computer at work?

Where or What Category?

Search for the product you are going to be selling on EBay and do some research. Which of the auctions are getting the most bids? Which are getting the highest bids?

Browse through the categories. There are lots of them and many of them seem to overlap. The point is to go where your customers are looking. Most people will find your listing through the search engine, but it doesn't hurt to catch a few browsers. Since I am focusing on electronic products in this e-book, here are a few links to categories where these sell:

- Books/Other
- Business & Industrial/Businesses For Sale/Other
- Business & Industrial/Businesses For Sale/Websites
- Computers & Office Products/Software/PC/Other
- Computers & Office Products/TechnologyBooks
- Computers & Office Products/Services/Informational
- Everything Else/Services/Information Services
- Everything Else/EBay User Tools

For a more detailed way to check out your competition and see what's selling check out the marketing section in the resource links at the end of this book.

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Swipe File

For a copywriter, this is a file of clippings. All of the advertising that he'd wished he had written. For you, it is going to be a way to gain and advantage over your competition.

As you survey eBay, looking for the competition and checking out the categories and listings, you will need to save some listings to your hard drive to look at later. That's

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right. Just save the whole page to a folder on your computer.

Save the ads that jump out at you or the ones that seem to have and overabundance of bids or really high bids. And when you have time, study the ads, tear them apart, and see what makes them tick.

On eBay, the time from writing an ad to testing it can be a week. Anywhere else, a person would have to spend more and wait longer to see if there was going to be any results.

This practice of keeping a swipe file will help you learn to write better ads. For it's better to learn from example than from a book like this.

Another reason to save the pages of other auction seller's is if you want to research the product further or maybe create a competing one.

For example, I noticed that a lot of sellers on eBay were selling magazine subscriptions. I couldn't figure out how for a while. So I saved the ad until I could. Check out http://bestdealmagazines.com.

When you can subscribe to some of these great magazines for $5, you can easily make a profit by selling the same subscription on EBay for $10.

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Keywords

The title is the most important part of your auction. You only have 80 characters to get a potential customer to click through to your auction ad. After all, the default search on EBay only searches the titles.

If you are selling a camcorder, you obviously want to start with the manufacturer's name, product name, and model

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number. Also make sure to include what the item is, a camcorder, because a lot of people won't be searching for a specific model.

After you have the basics, you may want to add variations of the words you already have. For example, when I was selling my CB750 package, I would include both "CB750" and "CB 750", just in case. With the low-carb recipe book, I included "low-carb", "diet", and "Atkins."

After all of the basic words are there, the words that people will actually be typing into EBay's search engine, you can add words that will make people click on your title first. I don't mean words like "WOW" and "LOOK." These words and others like them are overused and practically useless.

Never abbreviate words in your listing unless you are 100% sure that people will use the same terms to find your product. Be careful of misspellings. Do not push words together to save space. Do not spam the search engine in the title by using phrases such as "Hitachi not Panasonic." And don't use asterisks and symbols to decorate your listing if there are other words you can still add to your title to help people find your auction.

In the description, you have almost unlimited space to advertise your wares. You can fill it up with words that will bring you more hits from the EBay search engine, but gone are the days when you could just print a whole list of name in your description and get away with it. For example, if you're selling a list of wholesale electronics suppliers, you just list every brand name and component in your description you can think of. Not any more. This is spamming.

But if you can write a description of your product that includes every possible word that a person interested in your

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product would search for and still manage to create natural sounding paragraphs, then you have a winner.

Copywriting

This is definitely one area that is worth studying. You may pick out the best keywords, take great pictures, and have the best product, but if you can't write a great listing, you are not going to sell.

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But if you do learn to write good copy, you sell the same product that everyone else is selling, but sell your version for a higher price. You will probably even sell more copies.

I picked an e-book online that came with resell rights so I decided to give it a shot on EBay. I noticed others were selling the same book already, but most of them were using text ads, no images and just a rudimentary description of the product.

So I went to work on a cover image for the e-book. It didn't come with one, so I opened Photoshop and spent 30 minutes creating one. Check the resource section of this book for free image editors and cover creators.

I used html instead of text to create a more professional looking page. I whipped out an ad that described why a person would want to buy the cookbook, instead of just explaining what it was.

I ended up selling more than my competitors and at a higher price and the feedback I received was awesome. So it is possible to sell the same thing as everyone else, sell it for a higher price, and still sell more products.

Too many sellers on EBay try to compete on price alone. The result of this is that the price drops lower and lower until it is not even worth listing your auctions. If you can compete by selling a better product or writing better copy, you will be in a league of your own.

Why People Buy

The old "benefits vs. features" model used to be enough. Don't get me wrong. It still works, but since most decisions to purchase are made on a subconscious level, it is much better to know how to push these hidden buttons and which

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ones to push instead of randomly throwing benefits out at your costumers.

The best book you can get on this subject is Joel Sugarman's "Triggers." The book goes through 30 triggers that cause people to get their credit card out. These triggers include:

- Authority
- Consistency
- Credibility
- Desire to Belong
- Storytelling

I suggest getting the book, but you don't have to in order to use the principles presented there. Just look at your own purchases. When you watch TV, try to figure out why advertisers spend millions of dollars on them. When you come across a website that has you grabbing for your wallet, save it as a file to your hard drive. Study it. Read it slowly and try to discover just which buttons it pushed in you.

Why did my customers purchase my motorcycle product and information listing? Of course, the simple reason is because it would save them money. It would also help them find products they had been looking for. But in the end, they were in a special group of CB750 owners. They were loyal to the bike and appreciated other people that loved it.

When I was selling installation instructions for a nitrous kit that a friend of mine wrote for me, I created an image of the customer sitting at a stoplight in his $3000 car with a nitrous kit. A Dodge Viper pulls up next to him. A cocky rich guy in the driver seat. A blonde in the passenger seat. It worked.

What was I playing on? I added a lot of class jealousy in there. Beating the rich guy with his beautiful date paints a

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pretty good picture for a person who has never owned a new car. It pushes a really big button.

The Ad

This is the formula that I used to create some of my auction ads for electronic and information products.

Major Benefit – This is where you state the main benefit of what you are selling. It is your first entry into your customer's mind. Make sure you have have a trigger in mind,something you are going to use to cause the buyer to purchase. You are gearing this to your customers. Write it like you are speaking to them.

Feedback – If you have sold this product before, this is where you put the feedback from your customers. Since it comes right after your promise section, browsers will now have a reason to believe that you will keep this promise. If you haven't had any feedback on your product yet because it is brand new, go to a few forums and look for people that might be interested in what you have to offer. Then offer free copies if they will read and review your product.

Describe the Problem – This is the section where you describe the problem that your product is supposed to solve. You let your customers know that you understand the situation that they are in and without describing the product yet, you let them know that you have discovered a solution.

Product Introduction – This is the part of the ad where you introduce your product. This is where you need a graphic of your product. I have included the link to Scott's Box Shot Creator in the resource section. This is freeware to create book covers and software boxes.

You also present your product here as a solution to the problem you have already presented aiming your words

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directly at the trigger you have chosen in your customer's psyche.

Benefits – Here you go into all the benefits that your product will provide for your customer. This is the last part of the ad where you get to provide reasons for the readers to buy your product, so add everything you can. Make this product something your potential customers cannot live without.

Call to Action – Here is where you throw in your freebies, the bonuses you are giving away with you product if any. Also, go over the main benefit of buying your product again.

Guarantee – This is where you put in your guarantee, if you plan on having one.

Summary – State the main benefit of purchasing your product and ask for the sale. Ask your readers to bid on your auction.

This is one format you can use, and I could give you an example of an ad written with this outline, but the best way to find examples is to go to EBay and find them yourself. Or go to http://www.profit-ware.com and browse sold of the products listed there. Most of the ads on this site bring in lots of sales. You can do much worse than use these as examples.

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Appearance

Html

Gone are days when you can beat your competition with a simple text ad. You will need to use html to make your ad look professional. Sometimes the appearance of your ad may turn browsers into buyers.

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I will not be covering html in this book other than telling you that it is something you should be using in your auction ads. A tutorial is available at http://www.davesite.com/webstation/html/.

Or you could check out one of the free WYSIWYG html editors in the resource section of this ebook and not have to worry about the coding. These editors will allow you to change the appearance of your ad page simply and easily. The choice is yours.

EBay has listing designs, templates, available for use. These cost you an extra $ 0.10 for each listing. The only problem is that although there are over a hundred to choose from, many of you customers will have seen them before and may see you as a copycat. It is must better to find your own free templates online. You can even adapt ones meant for websites to auction ads

Photos and graphics

EBay allows you to upload one photo for your listing for free. This is the photo that will be included in the gallery if you choose that option. But if you choose to host photos on your own site or find free photo hosting (there are links in the resource section), you can add as many photos to your description as you want.

But there is a little more to preparing your photos than taking a few snapshots and uploading them. If you are selling hard products, the photos should represent your product well. They should help sell it and they should prevent annoying, useless questions about condition, color, etc.

I recommend Gimp in the resource section for editing your photos if you are looking for something you can download for free.

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Visit http://www.pcworld.com/howto/article/0,aid,112658,00.asp for an article on preparing your photos for EBay. Photography is not something I am great at, so instead I found a great article.

If you are creating a software box or a book cover for your electronic products, you can't go wrong with Scott's Box Shot creator listed in the resource section.

Secrets

These are bits of code you can add to your auction ads to spice them up a little, help your costumers out, and maybe help you make a little more cash.

Put a seller search in your auction

Copy and paste the following code to put a search box in your auction ad. Instead of inviting auction goers to view your other auctions, they can search them. This is especially effective if you are running many auctions. If not, just a link to your other auctions will do. Replace "my_user_id" with your EBay id.

```
<form action="http://cgi6.eBay.com/aw-cgi/eBayisapi.dll" method=post>
<input type=hidden name="MfcISAPICommand" value="SearchBySellerReDirect">
<input type=hidden name="include" value="1">
<input type=hidden name="sellerList" value="my_user_id">

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src="http://pics.eBaystatic.com/aw/pics/s.gif" width="1"></td>
    <td height="1" bgcolor="#FFCC00" valign="top" width="100%"><img
src="http://pics.eBaystatic.com/aw/pics/s.gif" height="1"></td>
    <td bgcolor="#FFCC00" rowspan="2" width="1"><img
src="http://pics.eBaystatic.com/aw/pics/s.gif" width="1"></td></tr>
```

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```
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border="0">
   <tr><td><font size="2" face="Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif"><b>Search This
Seller</b></font></td></tr>
  </table></td></tr>
</table>
<table cellpadding="0" cellspacing="0" border="0" width="100%"
bgcolor="#FFFFCC"><tr>
  <td bgcolor="#FFCC00" width="1"><img
src="http://pics.eBaystatic.com/aw/pics/s.gif" width="1"></td>
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width="100%"><tr>
   <td><img src="http://pics.eBaystatic.com/aw/pics/s.gif" width="3"></td>
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width="1"></td></tr>
     <tr><td colspan="2"><input maxlength=300 name="searchTitle" size=17
value=""></td></tr>
     <tr><td valign="top"><input type=checkbox name="descriptionSearch"></td>
     <td width="95%"><font size="1" face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-
serif">in titles &amp; descriptions</font></td></tr>
     <tr><td colspan="2"><table width="100%" border="0" cellpadding="2"
cellspacing="0">
       <tr><td><input type="submit" value="Search"></td>
       <td align="left"></td></tr>
     </table></td></tr>
   </table>
   </td></tr></table>
  </td></tr></table>
  </td><td bgcolor="#FFCC00" width="1"><img
src="http://pics.eBaystatic.com/aw/pics/s.gif" width="1"></td></tr>
  <tr><td bgcolor="#FFCC00" colspan="4" height="1" width="1%"><img
src="http://pics.eBaystatic.com/aw/pics/s.gif" height="1"></td></tr>
</table>

</form>
```

Listing other auctions in your ad

If you are selling similar items, it may be a good idea to get your customers to check out your other auctions. You make more sales that way. Using the following code is simple.

```
<a href = “link-to-other-auction”> Description of other auction </a>
```

Just browse to the other auction that you wish to list and copy the address from the address box in your browser. Replace link-to-other-auction with this address, but make

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sure to keep the quotation marks. Then just replace “Description of other auction” with the text you would like your customers to see.

“Free Peak” links

Why put mailto: links inside of your auction? Many reasons. To give your customers a more personalized experience. To test how many people are interested in your auctions. To give your customers a sneak peak at your product. Maybe to create a mailing list. These links are effective tools that hardly anyone uses.

You can give your customers a more personalized experience. They can always click on the "ask seller a question" link in eBay. But the buyer will never know if you are answering because you feel you have to or because you want to. But if you have a link inside the body of your auction, your customer knows that you are ready and eager to help them out with whatever questions they may have. You can create a link that will trigger Outlook to reply with a FAQ sheet and the customer will believe there is a human on the other side. The computer is a inanimate object. Make someone a little more comfortable buying from you and that may be all you need to make a sale.

You can use it as a marketing test. You may have many more people interested in your product than just those that bid on it. You can check your hits counter but this only tells you that your title was effective. If you get a lot of responses form your email link but few sales, maybe your price is too high, your ad copy ineffective, or maybe you need to sweeten the deal with a free bonus.

You can use the link as a teaser. If you are selling an ebook, maybe you can allow browsers to click on the email link to get a free chapter, or better pictures of the product. Get the customer involved and they will be more interested. If they

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wanted everything spoon-fed to them, they'd be watching TV.

When I sold Hotbid on EBay before I made it shareware, I would send people a list of the hot auctions in their favorite category or with their favorite search words. That way they could see what the program could do for them. It definitely helped with the sales because people knew what they were buying. Hotbid is no longer being developed.

What will this link look like?

mailto:naphets66@hotmail.com?subject=FreePeak

or

<A HREF="mailto:naphets66@hotmail.com?subject=FreePeak">Click Here for a Free Peak at Chapter 1 of our ebook</A>

Then you set up your message rules to mail out the chapter of the book when it finds "FreePeak" in the subject line of the email address. You might also explain how to send the email manually to your customers. I've run into many customers who haven't set up their email program and therefore the link above will not work for them.

Example: Send a blank email to naphets66@hotmail.com with "FreePeak" in the subject line to check out the first chapter for free.

When you get to the automation chapter, you will see how to automatically respond to these requests.

Using inline frames

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An inline frame will allow you to change information if your auction while the auction is running. It is a frame that loads information from another page into it.

Just check out the tutorial on iframes at this link: http://www.cs.tut.fi/~jkorpela/html/iframe.html or do a search for inline frames on Google.

One thing to note is that the contents of your iframe will not be indexed by the EBay search engine. You can change the contents of the iframe even after the auction has ended to notify people searching for your product of news.

Disable right-click

Use this code to disable the right mouse button when people view your auction ad. This will prevent most browsers from stealing your auction images or ad copy. Of course, if they want it bad enough, they will steal it. Just include the following code somewhere in your auction description.

```
<script language="JavaScript1.1"><!--

function lockout() {
  for (var i=0; i < document.images.length; i++) {
    document.images[i].onmousedown = norightclick;
    document.images[i].oncontextmenu = nocontextmenu;
  }
}

function norightclick(mousebutton) {
  if (navigator.appName == 'Netscape' &&
              (mousebutton.which == 3 || mousebutton.which == 2)) {
    alert("Please don't steal my pix.");
    return false;
  }
}

function nocontextmenu() {
  event.cancelBubble = true;
  event.returnValue = false;
  return false;
}

if (document.layers) {
```

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```
  window.captureevents(event.mousedown);
  window.onmousedown=norightclick;
}

// --></script>
<body onLoad="lockout();">
```

More sales from your ad

This is a method that I have heard about through the online forums though I never used it myself. Lets say you are selling an extra TV you have. It's a Sony and you want to make sure the customer knows what they are purchasing, so you link to the description on the Sony website from your auction.

But say you sign up for an affiliate program where you get 20% commission for sending customers to a site that sells TV's online. Instead of sending customers to the Sony site, you could now send them to the site you are an affiliate of and make commission on sales from people who would rather buy the product new.

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Listing Features

Okay, when it comes to choosing an upgrade for your listing, there are many options to choose from. So many that it may hard for you to decide when to use them, especially when each one of them will cost you money and although ten cents may not seem like much, if you plan on running a lot of auctions this extra expense can add up quickly.

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It is best to do a completed item search on a product similar to yours in order to determine if adding features actually helped a sale. You should also search current items similar to yours to see if you need to add a feature.

For example, if every product like yours already has the bold feature, than opting out of bold may actually increase your chances of a sale.

A better option is to check out the advanced research features available at http://www.andale.com. There you will find out exactly how many auctions used certain features.

10 day listings – The question is whether adding 3 days to an auction will actually get you more worthwhile bids, not the ten cents you have to pay.

List in Two Categories – This option doubles the price of listing your item and since most buyers will find your product by searching and not by browsing, this upgrade is usually not worth it.

Listing Designer – Ten cents for a template to use with your auction. In my opinion, EBay should offer this for free, considering you could design your own, which no one will be using, for free.

Buy It Now – I actually like this option a lot. If you know what price you want an item to go for, why wait until the end of the auction. Just use Buy It Now and get your money.

Extra Photo Fee – Just design your own page and use a hosting service an use as many pictures as you want. Opt out on this one if you can.

Highlight – This and bold are just not worth it most of the time because everyone uses them to the point that not using them may get you more notice.

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Featured in Category – Changes your ranking in category listings only. Not worth much.

Featured Plus – This affects both the search and category listings. It is worthwhile if you think you need it to help sell your product.

Featured in Gallery – You have no need to use this much except perhaps with products that have a visual appeal wher people shop by looks, like clothes.

Featured on Home Page – This is basically a waste of money most of the time. Enough said.

Subtitle – A relatively new feature that doesn't make much sense to me considering that the contents of this line only show up in a description search not in the standard title search. So what good is it? And at $0.50, the price is a little high.

EBay Keywords – EBay is trying there own version of Google's "Adwords" out on their site. This is a relatively new feature and may be worth some testing, just don't bid on more than you can afford. This type of thing can become addictive.

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Your “About Me” Page

Consider this as a free page on one of the top websites on the internet.

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This is the only place left on EBay where you can advertise yourself for free. People will buy from people they know and trust more easily, so make sure you put up your page.

Your “About Me” page should tell your customers why they should buy from you instead of hundreds of other people selling the same products. You should focus on your auction business here, not on personal details.

If you really want a distinctive looking page, I suggest choosing “Edit using HTML” and cutting and pasting a page that you have already created in an HTML editor.

EBay has special tags that you can use to insert EBay specific data into your page. You can ad such information as a list of your feedback or a list of your current items. This data will update automatically. Make sure to check this out here: http://pages.eBay.com/help/account/html-tags.html

And remember, customers who buy from you may want to check out your “About Me” page. Putting a link to your website may bring you future customers who buy not only from your eBay auctions but your website itself.

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Part IV
Organizing
and

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Automating

Organizing

Organizing your auction business basically has to do with putting all of your ducks in a row. You do not want to have everything you need spread out all over your hard drive.

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If you are selling information products, this includes creating a folder on your hard drive or in your “My Documents” file that includes the following:

- Resale Rights – For products whose rights you own
- Drafts – For products you are in the process of creating
- Ideas – For the ideas you haven’t had time to start researching yet
- Emails – This is the file where you save the templates of your emails:
    - Feedback requests
    - Info regarding running auctions
    - Paypal auto responding emails
    - Payment info

Another part of your computer you want to organize is your browser’s favorite file. Create a folder there just for auctions and break it up into more folders including the following or more:

- EBay – Important links on EBay itself
- Marketing – Links to sites and pages for research
- Products – If you are going to sell hard products, put your links here

You will also want to break up your start menu into folders, one just for auctions. This is where you will keep

- Turbo Lister
- Shooting Star
- Any type of marketing software you use for auctions

Another place you will want to organize is your email program. Most will allow you to break up your inbox into folder. An example of folders you would break your inbox into is below:

- Auctions finished

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- Buying Sources – For wholesale newsletters
- Expenses – For EBay fees
- Sales – For Paypal emails

You never know when you will have to reference these emails again, so it is a good practice to keep them.

Having your computer organized before you start running a lot of auctions is a good idea and once you have hundreds of customers asking about one thing or another you will also learn the importance of templates.

Templates

After you have listed a few auctions, you will notice that there will be a few details that you will use over and over again in your auctions. You should create generic copies of each of these and save them as text files in a folder set aside for all of your auction templates.

Payment details – This is usually a paragraph at the end of your auction listings. It will include how soon you require payment, what payment options are available, and how the product will be delivered.

> "Payment will be accepted through our website or by mail with a check or money order. We expect payment within 3 days. There is no charge for shipping and handling because your e-book will be delivered by direct download. You will receive your digital product within 24 hours after your payment is received. A download link will be sent to you via email, so please make sure your email address is correct."

You can create, name, and have eBay store for future use, five insertable text or HTML entries that you can use in your item descriptions. Each Insert can be up to 1000 characters. Save your generic payment details as an insert.

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Auction ads – For many of your auctions, you can use the same html templates over and over again. You will just cut and paste your ad copy in for each product.

Emails – You will be sending a lot of emails once you start your auction business: emails during the auction answering questions, emails after the auction requesting payment, and emails requesting feedback.

You may wish to keep drafts of these in your email folder so that you can just cut and paste the details of each separate auction in.

The most important emails are those responding to Paypal emails if you plan to use automation technique #1 below. You will write a separate email for each product you are selling directing your customers to a place to download their electronic products.

Feedback – Leaving feedback can be a tedious process if you have 20 or more sales on the same day. Your customers expect and deserve feedback when they have paid promptly. It is the feedback system that allows future buyers and sellers rate the people they are dealing with.

A good solution to spending all day writing feedback reports if to save a list of generic feedback sentences in a text file. All you will need is about ten or so. Then when it is time for you to leave feedback, just go down the line. Open this text file and cut and paste a different feedback for each customer who has paid.

Creating Ads

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EBay provides one of the best products for creating and uploading your auction ads. It is called Turbo Lister and is available at http://pages.eBay.com/turbo_lister/.

It ships with a WYSIWYG html editor which means you can create a great auction ad without worrying about all of the coding.

It also comes with templates, although I would suggest creating your own or finding some free templates on the internet instead of using these generic ones to prevent your auction ads from looking like everyone else's.

A great feature is that is stores you past auctions, so if you sell the same ten information products every week, just open up Turbo Lister and with a few clicks, you can have all of your auctions up and running.

And the best feature of all is that it is free.

Tracking

Here is what I did. Go to http://www.foodogsoftware.com/ and download Shooting Star. This is the ultimate software for running an auction business.

Shooting Star will put all of the steps for automating your auction in order so that all you have to do is click a few buttons to track all of your current auctions.

- It will retrieve all of the info on your running auctions so you can view them in a spreadsheet type grid.
- It will create emails and send them for you to request payment or feedback.
- It will post feedback for you
- It will track auctions that are running, over, require payment, and require feedback separately so that you know what is going on with one simple interface.

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- It is free to use for thirty days. And I guarantee that once you start using it and making money on EBay, the price tag of $49.95 is well worth it considering that it is a one-time charge.

Automated Product Delivery

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When I first wrote this e-book, I only knew of one way to automate the delivery of your electronic products. That was to set up rules in your email program to automatically respond to Paypal emails. I still didn't have my own domain.

Now I own about ten domains and all the quirks I discovered dealing with the original automation technique can be cleared up through using the second and ultimate automation technique.

Using Your Email Program

I choose Outlook Express as an example in this chapter because it ships with Windows and I have gotten use to using it. Two other good free email programs that will work are Pegasus and Eudora. Pegasus is completely free and the free version of Eudora is adware. The process of setting either one up as an autoresponder is similar to Outlook.

Outlook Express

I will go into the full process with Outlook Express, because other software has similar options and it is probably the most used Email software.

Did you know you could set it up as an auto responder for your POP3 accounts? You can. This will not work for a Hotmail account, only for POP3 accounts, like the ones you get through your Internet Service Provider. There are also a few free POP3 account providers out there. A couple I have used is www.runbox.com and www.softhome.com. Or you can use a Yahoo address and get a program like YahooPops to make it act like a pop3 account. Just do a search for "free pop3 e-mail." If you have to break down and pay for a good POP3 provider, do so. They are really cheap and worth every

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penny when you find out what you can so with them and you will later.

It is good to have your auction files in order before you start. I have all my auction files in the My Documents folder of Windows and here is how the file structure looks

- My Documents
- Ad Copy--for finished auction ads
- Infopacks--packages I'm actively selling
- Ideas--works in progress
- Emails
- In Ad
- Paypal Respond
- Others

So you have your POP3 account now. How do you set up Outlook as an autoresponder? To set it up on autorespond, begin as if you were going to write a new message but leave the "to" field blank. As an example there is the text of my email below.

> Thank you for purchasing Automated EBay Sales. The file is attached to this email. You will have to unzip it with winzip. Don't forget to leave me feedback if you like the product.
>
> Thanks Stephan

Then I attached the zipped file to the email, select File-Save As and save the message as an .eml file and close the message.

Update – Due to the many viruses being attached to emails these days and the filters that automatically remove such attachments, a much better process would be to store your products on your website and then send a download link in

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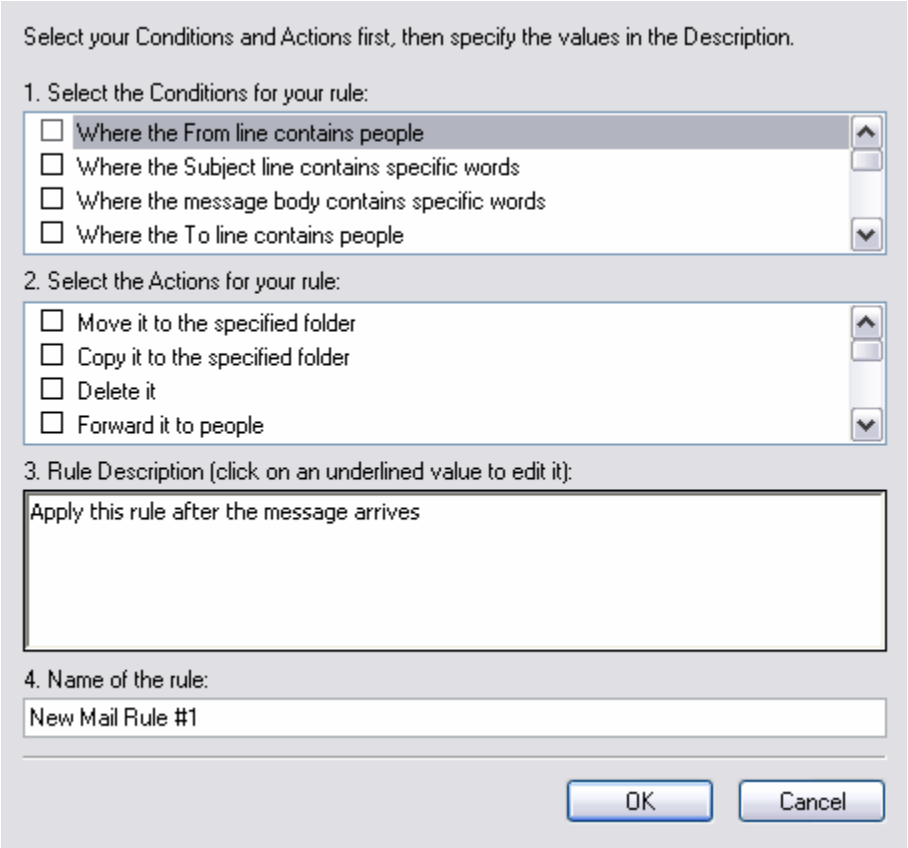
the email you save. Give your file a unique name that no one would guess by accident to prevent theft from internet surfers.

Then select Tools-Message Rules-Mail. When the menu pops up, there four steps. 1.Select Conditions for the rule. 2.Select the Action for the rule. 3. Rule description. 4.Name of the rule. We will go through each step one at a time.



Lets say we have customers send us an email with the Subject line "More Info", after which we want to copy the file to the "Info" folder, and Reply with the email "Information for Free".

1.Select the Conditions for the rule

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Here you choose what will trigger an action that you will choose later. So we check the box " Where the Subject line contains specific words"

2.Select the Action for the rule

Here we choose what Outlook will do with the message after it downloads it.
So we check both "Copy to the specified folder" and "Reply with message."

3.Rule Description

Here we set the specifics for the rule. You will notice that as you checked the boxes above, the rule description box filled with info. In this example it should look something like this.

Apply this rule after the message arrives
Where the subject line CONTAINS SPECIFIC WORDS
Copy it to the SPECIFIED folder
and Reply with MESSAGE.

First click on "contains specified words" and a new menu pops up. Type "More Info" in the box, click Add, and then click Ok.

Then click on "specified folder ". Choose "info" for the folder you want to save the message to, click Add and then click Ok.

Last click on "message". Now you will choose which saved email you want to respond to the message with. Pick the "Information for Free." email.

4.Name of rule

Last you get to save the rule under a name you will remember such as "Free Info Responder." And you are done.

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Now when Outlook downloads the messages from your inbox, it will automatically save the message for you and reply to it.

You will notice, as you were doing all of this, that there were many options to choose from. Try then out. Play around a little. You will discover that Outlook is a pretty powerful tool.

Eudora

I had a chance to play around with Eudora and the features it has are great. You can set really specific rules for your autoresponder.

Open Source Software

The new method I discovered is great and with it you can not only automate the delivery of your electronic products, you can also be on your way to starting your own online business.

Over the last few months, I have experimented with many open-source content management systems. I have tested many different e-commerce sites. Of all the ones I have tried, Zen Cart has to be the best and it is free.

Paypal is only one of the payments providers that you can use with Zen Cart. Here is some of the features Zen Cart comes with:

- A customizable template system – You can change the way your site looks from your site.
- Sales and coupons for customers.
- Downloadable products that allow your customers to download them only after they have paid.

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- Customers must sign up for an account to pay for their item and they can choose to receive your email.

Setting Up

In order to use Zen-cart you must:

- Have a website with php enabled
- Have access to a mySql database
- Choose "Other – See Payment Instructions" in your auction ad and then direct your customers to your website to pay for their items

I advise you to find a hosting service like http://www.hostica.com. I use them for all of my sites. I have ten right now. You can get hosting for as little a $6.95 a month that includes PHP and mySql.

But if you choose not to, I have listed some sites that offer free hosting with PHP and a site that gives away free mySql databases in the back of this ebook.

Now I know what you are saying. "I am not a techie." I can't do this stuff. Believe me it is simple. You just follow the instructions included with the download.

Installing

Go to http://www.zen-cart.com/modules/mydownloads/ and download the most recent version of Zen Cart. This will be a ZIP file that you will have to unzip.

Once you have the file unzipped, using an ftp program, upload all of the files to your website's main directory. This will cause your sites main page, the index page, to be the shopping cart site. I have listed some free ftp software in the appendix.

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On the server locate the file: **/includes/**dist-configure.php. Rename this file to configure.php and change the permissions to 777 *(read-write-execute for all).* Next, on the server locate the file: **/admin/**includes/dist-configure.php. Rename this file to configure.php and change the permissions to 777 *(read-write-execute for all).*

If you don't know how to change the permissions for a file, read the help file that came with your ftp program. It usually involves right-clicking on the file and choosing either "File Properties" or "File Attributes."

Now, change the permissions on the following directories to 777 (read/write/execute).
/cache
/images
/languages/english/html_includes
/media
/pub
/admin/backups
/admin/images/graphs

Note: open the catalog/images directory and change **all** of the subdirectories and their subdirectories to 777 as well.

Then you run the install script. You can do this simply by going to the homepage of your website. This will redirect you to the install script.

It will now examine your system to check that everything is set up correctly. If an error says that your host is running in safe-mode, you can still use Zen Cart. It is hard to find a hosting provider who doesn't use PHP safe-mode.

You will be asked if you want to enable SSL. Do not choose this option unless you have enabled this on your server. If you don't know what this means, it is not. Just choose no. You can always change this later.

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You will be asked if you want to include connectivity to phpBB. This is open source forum software that you will have to install separately. Just choose no for now.

Next the installation program willl ask for database details. This includes:

- The address of your MySql server
- The database name
- The username for the database
- The password for the database

You will have to have this database created before you continue. In fact, you can open a new browser page and create the database with your hosting provider or database provider right now. Then, go back and input your details in the Zen Cart installation.

After you get past this section, you will be asked if you want to install demo data. This may be a good idea. It will give you time to play around with the site before you actually put it to work.

You will then be asked for a username and password that you will use to administer the website. You are almost done.

Before you are done, you will need to change the permissions on the configure.php file back to chmod 644. These are the two files whose permissions you changed in the beginning:
/includes/configure.php
/admin/includes/configure.php

You will also delete the following directory:

/zc_install

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For any further questions, go to http://www.zen-cart.com/ and visit the FAQ section and the support forum.

Another Option

If you are having trouble following these instructions, you can get someone to install this software for you. Go to http://scriptlance.profit-ware.com/ and hire someone to install the software for you. If you are having trouble, it will save you a lot of stress and probably cost you less than $20.

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Bonus Articles

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Unique Selling Proposition On EBay

By Greg Hayes

If you have dabbled at all in the world of Internet marketing, you may have heard the term "unique selling proposition" or USP. USP is a technique that Internet marketers use to set themselves apart from the competition. Internet marketing is highly competitive and highly saturated. In order to be successful, it is vital that the Internet marketer present himself as being unique and different from his competitors especially when many of them are selling the same products.

It is also just as vital to have a unique selling proposition on EBay. I am amazed at the number of EBay sellers that are either unaware or just don't care about the importance of

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having a unique selling position. A case in point: A while back, I was researching some products on EBay from a wholesale company called B&F System. B&F System is a wholesale only company that carries a variety of brand name products. One of the brands they carry is called Maxam. I came across several Maxam leather jackets on EBay while searching ended auctions. Now here's the kicker. About a dozen or so of these leather jacket auctions were exactly the same. They all used the same image of a guy modeling the jacket that was captured from the B&F website. They even used the exact ad copy used by B&F!

What was the result? Only one of the sellers was able sell any jackets. The top bid was only $26. And since he purchased the jackets from B&F for $20, he made about $5.00 profit after EBay fees. That's a slim profit for an item that normally retails for $95.

Always keep in mind that the amount of effort you put fourth on you auctions will be in direct proportion to the amount of return you get from your auctions. The sellers who put up the jacket auctions put fourth little effort by using stock photos and ad copy from the B&F website, and therefore received little or no sales from their auctions. The sellers in this case might think that using stock photos makes their auctions look more professional. It's just the opposite. These auctions look very amateurish. Using a picture of someone modeling a garment will not entice people to bid on your auction. Using three or four high quality pictures of the actual item along with a detailed description will entice people to bid. Remember that buying apparel off the internet is not like buying music CD's or software. You don't need to worry if a CD will fit. You don't need to see multiple pictures of a box of software to know what you'll be getting. However, when selling apparel, good quality pictures and a detailed description are vital. You should use a good quality digital camera to take pictures of the item from different angles. If you're selling jackets or

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coats, include a picture of the lining as well. In your description, don't just say it's a large size. Give measurements of the garment including overall length, sleeve length and chest size. If you're going to specialize in apparel, it would be a good idea to purchase a form or clothing dummy to model your apparel. Doing these things will go a long way in setting you apart from the competition and establishing a "unique selling proposition."

What ever you're thinking about selling, always look at your competition and think about how to set yourself apart. Remember that unless you're selling antiques on EBay, there's always someone else who's trying to sell the same thing you're selling. Establishing your USP will put you on the road to EBay success.

About the author:
Greg Hayes is editor of www.mammothprofits.com/AuctionWealth. Mammothprofits is the website devoted to helping others filter out the scams and become successful in an Internet home business

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How To Find A Whole Lotta Product!

By Neil Bartlett

Whether you are a beginning auction seller or advanced, you are always faced with the age old auction question:

"What Do I Sell Now?"

I want to cover an area on eBay that most sellers tend to overlook or they don't even know exists. These categories can provide you with a great source of products to sell, they are called the Wholesale Lots categories.

Most major category groups contain a section labled Wholesale Lots, this is usually listed at the bottom of the group list.

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If you go to eBay's main category listing page and drill down into a major category you will be able to see if that category has a Wholesale Lots sub-category. It is usually the last sub-category listed.

eBay Category Listing Page:
http://listings.eBay.com/pool1/listings/list/overview.html

Take Jewelry & Watches for example, their Wholesale Lots group is category 40131.

What does this have to do with product sources?

A lot of the sellers in these categories are people that have collections or large lots that they are to lazy to break up, or they want to just get rid of the whole lot at once, however, if you look at the pieces in the lot and calculate out what they could be valued at individually you can see the true worth compared to what they are being offered for.

So next time you are searching through a specific category, see if there is a related Wholesale Lots section and spend the time looking, you never know, you just might find a truck load of goods that will keep you in merchandise for a long time.

About the author:
Neil Bartlett is the author of How To Find The Perfect Money Making Auction Product. He developed the Perfect Product eBook to help both beginning and advanced auction sellers answer the age old question "What Do I Sell Now"?

How To Find The Perfect Money-Making Auction Product is located at:
http://www.auctionhotlist.com/perfectproduct.htm

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Build eBay Profits with a Powerful Category Strategy

By Paul Talbot

Sometimes it's tough to tell where your buyers are. You're not sure which category is the best place to list your item.

Not everyone has the benefit of an item to auction with a perfect eBay category waiting such as "Barbie Contemporary."

Here's a simple research process you can use to increase your chances of success. Search for similar items and see what categories they're in. If they're scattered across a few

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different categories, look for the categories where bids are being made. Bids matter, listings don't. Just keep in mind that the bids could be the result of other factors such as price, desirability and condition. Also, look at the performance of the seller. If she's a power seller she probably has an understanding of which categories work best for her auctions.

But what if your item doesn't seem to fit anywhere? What if nobody else is auctioning something similar? Get to know eBay's "Everything Else" category. Is there a fit for your item in "Gifts and Occasions" or one of the three subcategories in "Weird Stuff?"

These areas get high levels of traffic. Specifically there are a lot of browsers and your item may catch some attention here.

The "Slightly Unusual" category typically delivers more traffic than the other two. Study this area of eBay and you'll find everything from Weather Balloons to Tarot Cards.

Run tests of different categories. Run auctions with "Second Categories." Use the free Andale tools to keep track of page views.

Why should you test a second category? You may discover that bidders are where you least expect them. And if this happens, don't feel sheepish. Professional marketers armed with years of discipline and piles of research are trying to learn the exact same thing.

When Kimberly Clark first put Kleenex on the market the product wasn't designed for people with runny noses. Kleenex was advertised as a cold cream remover. Sales were terrible until the firm discovered their product was being used as a disposable handkerchief.

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Once Kleenex wound up in the right category it flourished. It's the exact same scenario on eBay. Even with eBay search, getting your item in front of a prospective bidder is essential. Keep in mind that search will cover up a lot of listing shortcomings. But if you rely solely on search for your prospective bidders, you're losing a sea of browsers, impulse bidders who are a crucial segment of your market.

So if your auctions need a jolt, don't assume that the problem is price. Pay attention to your category. Even a great description in the less than ideal category can't turn browsers into bidders.

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About the author: Paul Talbot is the author of "Confessions of an eBay Power Seller." Learn more about successful selling on eBay at http://www.onlineauctioninformation.com

Will Your Products Sell? Testing For HOT Online Demand

By Jeff Smith

To be successful with your online business, you need to find ways to discover what people want so badly, they will pay almost any price.

The goal is to create a swarm of interest, activity, exposure and demand for your product - but how do you tell in advance if your idea or product will create such a frenzy?

You may be surprised by the number of tools available to you, at no charge, to tap into pockets of demand online.

KEYWORD POPULARITY

To start with, you can tap into keyword popularity indexes - here are some of the best:

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1. Overture Keyword Search Tool: http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/

2 Google Search Engine Trends: http://www.google.com/press/zeitgeist.html

3. Yahoo Top Searches: http://buzz.yahoo.com/

4. Lycos Top 50: http://50.lycos.com/

CONSUMER DEMAND

Next - you can tap into the ultimate online consumer sites - EBay and Amazon:

1. EBay Auction Big Ticket Items: http://pages.eBay.com/buy/bigticket/index.html

2. AMazon Movers and Shakers: http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/new-for-you/movers-and-shakers/-/books/002-5835206-2525607

3. Amazon Best Sellers List: http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/new-for-you/bestsellers/-/books/

4. Amazon Software Best Sellers List: http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/new-for-you/bestsellers/-/software/002-5835206-2525607

5. Amazon Video Games Best Sellers List: http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/new-for-you/bestsellers/-/video-games/002-5835206-2525607

ADVANCED KEYWORD ANALYSIS TOOLS

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If you are really serious about online business and marketing, then these two resources will help give you the edge:

1. WordTracker:
http://www.highertrustmarketing.com/part/wordtracker

2. AdwordAnalyzer:
http://www.infoproductcreator.com/part/adwanalyze

ONLINE EAVESDROPPING

There's no better way to figure out what people want than by "listening" in on their conversations.

In the offline world, you do that by listening to your customers, attending conferences, clubs, societies and networking institutions like the Chamber of Commerce or other trade associations.

The online equivalent are forums, discussion groups, chat groups, business clubs, mentoring organizations, membership sites, etc...

When I want to test a new market, product idea or concept - I type in my area of interest plus the words "discussion forum" into Google and find a few active, high quality groups to "listen" in on for a few days.

Look for patterns, signs of frustration and desire - you will no doubt find these very quickly.

You can even ask for opinions of information or services people desire and would pay for - if you are subtle.

COMPETITIVE REVIEW

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Believe it or not, you do WANT to find competition. If you are considering a product in an area that seems to have NO competition, then be concerned.

To limit your risk and truly believe there is demand for your idea, you need proof that a market exists AND that they will spend money on your area of interest.

The best proof of all is a past history of spending money, you can find that by looking - even networking with your competitors.

Once you get a read on the top 5-10 competitors in your field, purchase their products and services - find out what they are offering and most important - how you can improve on their offer to help your customers to achieve their desires faster, less expensive, more complete or better way.

BUILD A LIST FIRST

A terrific way to tap into specific ideas for your own products and services is to go ahead and setup a website aimed at your target market, then offer related affiliate products - but most important...

Focus on building a list from the traffic you attract.

Once you have a few hundred people on your list, you can survey them, start a forum, an interactive blog or use any other method to get their feedback on ideas, products and services you could offer them.

My recommendation is to NEVER just leap ahead into developing products that take months to develop BEFORE using the techniques outlined above.

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Finally, there is a service that can take the mystery out of finding niche markets and product ideas that has been just launched!

In fact, they even go so far as to offer you pre-packaged books that you can immediately sell, or use the content as you wish in several niche markets.

This can cut your time down by months to getting your own income-generating, niche products to market - it's an incredible service, well worth investigating...

http://www.highertrustmarketing.com/part/nicheology

Being smart about idea generation and testing is what separates the TOP GUNS from everyone else online. If you want to be an elite online business owner, use the techniques above to leap ahead of your competition.

About the author:
Discover how to create your own best-selling eBooks, Special reports or books to sell online ...AND keep 100% of the profits. Limited time complimentary access to 7-Part Minicourse will get you started quickly and easily. Visit: http://www.highertrustmarketing.com/

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Do You Pine For Your Own Tattoo Kit? Story of an EBay Winner

By John Lundgren

Recently I went hunting for odds and ends that I could re-sell at a garage sale or on E-bay. Not being that knowledgeable on collectibles, I go by intuition and luck in making my choices. Most of the items I buy for re-sale cost me less than $10.00. If you are familiar with the term "economies of scale," you can see why I will never get rich with this approach. Anyway, how does a tattoo kit enter this scenario?

As I pawed through one antique shop, an attractive wooden box with with a tiny brass latch caught my eye. Maybe it was the words on the top of the box that caught my attention. They stated, "Cow Tattoo Kit." It was priced $25.00. Now I knew that cows kept up with the latest trends and fashions, but a cow tattoo kit? I was mesmerized. I opened the box and there was the neatest ear tattoo kit a cow ever saw. No, I didn't know that cows had their ears tattooed for identification purposes but years ago it was the

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thing to do. The complete contents of the box included a bottle of ink, two small containers filled with letters and numbers, and a pliers- like hand tool for tattooing the cows ear.

So here I was infatuated with a $25.00 dollar item which was considerably over the budget of a junk buyer like me. With trepidation, I made an offer of $20.00 for the kit which was promptly accepted, and I took my trophy home. As I drove by the area dairy farms on my way, I gazed at the barns and envisioned a cow tattoo expert at work. Infinite designs danced through my head: EAT MORE PORK was one I imagined a a cow might request. My kit, however, was not to be used in any tattoo parlor; it was destined for E- bay.

So many times you think you have a winner for EBay, but this time I was convinced that I had one with this attractive box and unusual contents. I opened the bidding at $20.00 but before long, bids from around the country drove the price over the century mark. The winning bidder paid $113.00 for the kit. A few days after I mailed the kit to the winning bidder, I received a beautiful letter praising me for the fine item I had sold them. These people owned a large farm and collected farm memorabilia. The nice thing about selling items to collectors like the farm family who bought the tattoo kit is that they are usually thrilled to acquire your offering. Everyone ends up a winner, and how can you beat that?

About the author:
John Lundgren is a garage sale enthusiast and author of, "How To Turn Your Garage Sale Into a Money Machine." Visit http://www.garagesalebonanza.com for free tips and the free ebook, The Garage Sale Addict's Handbook.

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How To Make Money Selling Domain Names

By Wayne Ford

Domain name speculation has to be one of the very best ways to make money on the Internet. It's easy, fun, takes a very low investment and has a huge profit potential. Businesses and webmasters are always looking for high quality, marketable domain names and will pay you big bucks if you have the name they want. Many people are making a good living buying and selling domain names. And you can too.

Below I will tell you everything you need to know, including where to find good domain names that are still available for registration (for as low as $14.) This used to be one of the hardest and most frustrating parts of domain investing. In the past to find good domain names you would have to search, one by one, until one came up that was available. But now there are research tools and compiled lists that do this for you! You can also get lists of domains that have expired, due to non- payment, and have been put back into

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the available pool. More on this below, but first lets discuss what makes a good domain name.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD DOMAIN NAME:

The suffix is the most important factor. .COM, .NET, and .ORG are by far the most popular. Other alternative domains like .WS, .TV, .FM, are becoming more and more popular because they are wide open. For example where you couldn't get DW.com you can still get DW.ws (well maybe not anymore). For now, I would stick with .COM because they will be the easiest to sell.

Would a webmaster or business want it? Ask yourself that question and if you can't instantly say "Yes!" than don't buy it. Also the more generic the domain name the better. And remember it is illegal to register a business name or trademark that you do not own. This is called "cyber-squatting" and tough laws are now in place to protect against this.

The shorter the name the better. These are the most memorable and easiest to market. At the time of writing this, there are only about a thousand three character domain names left. To find out how to get a list of these and four-character domain names see below.

What names are selling? Do some research on EBay.com or Afternic.com (popular domain auctions) and see what names are selling and for how much. Below are what some domains recently auctioned for or have current bids at Afternic.com:

Internetbank.com $92,800 E-Privacy.com $35,080 eloans.net $6,060 Ez- HomeLoans.com $4,725 venture-capital.net $14,510 officetravel.com $2,625 qalaxycafe.com $1,890 a1restaurants.com $730 stormnews.com $765 SkinCleanse.com $2,885 LADoctor.com $15,000 MrAirline.com $15,000 Engineering.org $198,895.00

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HOW TO FIND HIGH QUALITY DOMAIN NAMES:

There is a myth circulating cyberspace that all the good domains are taken already. And although it is true that thousands of new domain names are registered everyday, there are still good names to found. The best way to find great domains is to subscribe to expired domain lists. These are compiled lists of the thousands of repossessed domain names that have been put back into the domain pool every day. They are available again for anyone to register and contain some really great names; recently race.com appeared in one and was snatched up by a lucky subscriber. As a subscriber you will get first pick at registering these names. There are two such lists that I know of:

Unclaimed Domains - http://join.at/unclaimed

DNSIndex Expired Domains - http://join.at/DNSIndex

These lists are literally worth thousands of dollars. To get the lists all you have to do is subscribe, which is easy and cheap. Then each week you will receive a fresh list of expired domains in your email inbox.

You may also purchase a custom keyword search in the recently expired domain name pool from DNS research - http://buy.at/DNSResearch .

Other tools to help you find great domain names:

DNS Research - http://buy.at/DNSResearch sells lists of all available Dictionary Word .COM, .NET, and .ORG domain names. They also offer lists of remaining three character domain names.

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DNS Index - http://join.at/DNSIndex - sells lists of available three character and four character domain names as well as custom searches of the expired domain pool.

FREE tools to help you find great domain names:

DomainsWeekly.com offers a free weekly e-zine that includes a list of over 200 high quality expired and available domain names. The website also has tons of domain related links, resources, services, news and more.

NameBoy.com has a great search engine that recommends available domain names based on a keyword you enter.

NameU.com has a search engine that does pretty much the same thing except you have to click on each name individually to see if it is available.

DOMAIN REGISTRATION:

After you find some good domain names, you will need to register them. Not too long ago the cost to register a domain name was $70 for two years. But with new regulations and the distribution of registering privileges the cost of registration has become more affordable. Meaning more profit for you! You can now register a domain name for as little as $14 for a year. One place to do this is at DomainsWeekly.com

SELLING YOUR DOMAIN:

The most effective place on the Internet to sell your domain names is on auction sites. List them first on EBay.com, Afternic.com, and Ezdomainauction.com. There are also domain name brokers that will list your site for free, a fee when sold, a fee to list, or both a fee to list and when sold. GreatDomains.com is a great high traffic site to list on and you only pay them only a small percentage when you sell

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your domain. If you have a good domain name, and your price is right it won't be long before a buyer bids or contacts you.

Many new domain sellers make the mistake of trying to sell every domain name for thousands of dollars. When, in fact, you will do much better selling more domains for a few hundred dollars. This way you will have a much higher turn around rate. Remember you are registering the names for $14 and if you sell one for even $200 that is still a huge 2600% profit!

CONCLUSION:

As you can see, domain name buying and selling is a good way to make a great deal of money. It's very easy and you can do it in your spare time. Get started today by subscribing free to DomainsWeekly.com, subscribing to DNSIndex - http://join.at/DNSIndex (instant access to expired domains) and any of the other available and expired domain lists listed above. Register with EBay.com and Afternic.com and begin selling! Good Luck!

About the author: This publication was written by Wayne Ford, http://www.DomainsWeekly.com "And you thought all the good domains were taken!"

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Negating Negative Feedback on eBay

by J. Stephen Pope

Taking some pride in my one hundred percent positive feedback score on eBay, I was horrified to see a negative feedback appear against me. What had I done wrong? Had I overlooked an auction win and failed to deliver product as promised? Had I given poor, slow service? Was I rude to the auction winner?

Certainly, if I had been guilty of any of these things, the negative feedback may have been deserved. But, wait a second! The auction had just ended! Within minutes (perhaps seconds) of the auction's end, I was being awarded negative feedback. Not only did I not receive any chance to fulfill the order or to right any wrong that I may have committed, I also received an e-mail from the perpetrator threatening to have me suspended from eBay if I didn't meet certain demands.

This wasn't fair! Obviously, I had been victimized by an online bully. (You would honestly think that people had more

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productive things to do with their time.) What could I do about it? I e-mailed eBay and told them my story. I mentioned how libel was a cause for civil action. I forwarded to them the e-mail extorting me. Extortion is a criminal offense.

Happily, eBay took action. The negative feedback that appeared on my member profile was almost immediately removed. eBay also took disciplinary action against the suspected abuser. Yes, it took extra time and effort to deal with the problem, but isn't your reputation worth it?

J. Stephen Pope, President of Pope Consulting Inc., http://www.popeconsultinginc.com/ has been helping clients to earn maximum business profits for over twenty years. For valuable Work at Home Small Business Ideas, visit: http://www.yenommarketinginc.com/

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Resources

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General Ebay

http://mynas.sitesell.com/
Make Your Net Auction Sell – This book used to be a top seller for marketing guru Ken Evoy. Now you can get it for free.

On EBay

http://product-index.eBay.com/best_selling_1.html
Popular products on EBay
http://pages.eBay.com/sellercentral/hotitems.pdf
Find out which categories and products are hot--and where demand is outpacing supply! Check back often as this PDF file is updated frequently.

http://pages.eBay.com/sellercentral/sellbycategory.html
Click on "In Demand" under each category listed here in order to find top buyer searches in each category. You can also go to the discussion board for each category from here.

http://pages.eBay.com/sellercentral/calendar.html
Get advance notice of upcoming seasonal promotions and learn about which items will be spotlighted on the eBay home page.

Closeout, Liquidation, and Wholesale

http://www.boletin.net/
I have found many products to sell on Ebay through the newsletter.

http://www.spintradeexchange.com/
Specializing in liquidated computer parts.

http://www.liquidation.com/

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Bid on lots of closeout and liquidated products.

http://www.wholesalecentral.com/
Huge online list of wholesale products. Make sure to get your free subscription to Cover magazine.

http://www.closeoutcentral.com/
Huge list of closeout sites.

Public Domain

http://www.profit-ware.com/products/ultimateau.php
An entire world of new opportunities are about to be opened... there are thousands of new, important and profitable works coming into the public domain each month and you can start profiting from them right now!

Selling Software

http://www.profit-ware.com/products/bflbfl.php
Software Secrets Exposed – Find out how to build your own software empire without writing a line of code.

Ghostwriting

http://www.profit-ware.com/products/ggmine.php
Many marketers out there will allow you to believe that's it's ok just being an affiliate and selling other peoples products. But when you get down to it, the real money is in your own products. Now, with *GhostwritingGoldmine*, you can learn how to quickly and easily create your own information products with little investment and minimal effort.

Freelance Sites

http://scriptlance.profit-ware.com/

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Scriptlance

http://www.rentacoder.com/RentACoder/SmallBiz.asp?txtFromURL=AId_578183
RentaCoder

Writing Links

http://www.eristoddle.com
You can't go wrong here. This is one of my sites. My friends and I gathered together over 3500 writing links.

http://www.profit-ware.com/products/7dayebook.php
How to Write and Publish Your E-book in as little as 7 days

http://www.profit-ware.com/products/ebksecrets.php
E-book Secrets Exposed

http://www.profit-ware.com/products/cbsellers.php
How to Create Best Sellers Online

What's Hot

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/new-for-you/top-sellers/-/books/53/ref=pd_ts_h/104-4405558-2957563
The best selling nonfiction books on Amazon.

http://www.nytimes.com/pages/books/bestseller/
The New York Times bestseller list.

Marketing

http://www.homescoop.com/searchtrack/default.asp
Keyword tracking tool for eBay. List of keyword search counts each day for popular keywords. Also lists keyword averages by categories. This site also includes a simple eBay auction creation form with counters. 100% free service.

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http://vivisimo.com/eBay

Their eBay Search Tool helps you easily navigate eBay's extensive inventory to quickly find what you want. Search in a highly intuitive and personalized manner by clustering your results by:

- Auction titles and descriptions
- Price ranges (e.g under $5.00, under $10.00, under $20.00, $20-$40.00)
- Time Left (e.g. under 1 minute, under 5 minutes, under 10 minutes)
- Number of Bids on item

http://www.andale.com/index.html
A lot of EBay marketing research tools here, some available for a small monthly fee.

Listing

http://www.photojerk.com/
PhotoJerk.com is a free image hosting site. It has photo albums, image editing, hot linking allowed and most of all it's free.

http://www.2and2.net/
This site offers free image hosting. Specifically used by webmasters and auction (eBay) sellers as a place to host images for free.

http://www.freeauctionscripts.com/crosspromotion/
Easy to use cross promotion tool for EBay. Just enter your auction/store item numbers, choose your display options and your cross promoted items' html source is ready to copy and paste into your auction listings. Create more Cross Promotions to promote more auctions/store items. EBay

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Sellers increase their sales around 40% by using Cross Promotion Tool. This Cross Promotion tool creates clickable thumbnails of your other auction/store items and let your customers buy more from your EBay items. You will also have many display options such as Custom Title, Footer, EBay Store Link, border, border size, font, color etc. Stick around to read the auction success stories.

http://www.barelyfitz.com/projects/slideshow/auction/
Add an image slideshow to your HTML page or your eBay auction page. Easy to use and versatile, for each slide you can set a link, window target, window attributes, html annotation, and image transitions (fade in, dissolve, etc). Set it to auto-run, or add manual controls for changing the image. Lots of other options. If you are not a JavaScript expert you can use the web wizard to configure your slideshow.

http://web.thenetter.com/free_templates_and_graphics.html Free auction templates available here. You can also adapt regular website templates, just do a search on Google.

Software

http://www.nonags.com/nonags/index.html
A great site dedicated to freeware. My favorite

http://www.oldveterans.com/adwizard/adwizard.html
Free software for creating auction ads

http://www.tucows.com/preview/284258.html
Scott's Box Shot Maker – Free software to create software box's and e-book covers.

http://www.openoffice.org/
OpenOffice.org is both an Open Source product and a project. The product is a multi-platform office productivity

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suite. It includes the key desktop applications, such as a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation manager, and drawing program, with a user interface and feature set similar to other office suites. Sophisticated and flexible, OpenOffice.org also works transparently with a variety of file formats, including those of Microsoft Office.

http://www.acrosoftware.com/Products/CutePDF/writer.asp
Free PDF creator. You will also have to download and install ghostscript to use this software, as described on the site.

http://www.oakworth.demon.co.uk/gymnast.htm
Another freeware PDF creator.

http://www.nonags.com/nonags/htmledit.html
A list of great free html editors.

http://www.gimp.org/
One of the best image editors you can find and its free.

http://filezilla.sourceforge.net/
A free ftp program.

Hosting and Websites

http://www.freesql.org/
If you absolutely must use free hosting, here is a source for free mySQL databases, which is a must if you plan to run shopping cart software like ZenCart.

http://www.oinko.net/freephp/
A list of free hosting providers that come with PHP and mySQL databases.

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