



## eBay - Part III.

### **eBay, online auctions, the selling and completion process.**

After listing your item, you can sit down and wait for the bidding to start. Although there are a number of jobs you will have to do before completion.

You will usually get a number of questions emailed to you from bidders asking anything from the postage costs to detailed item information. This is why I stressed the importance of getting the listing right in the first place. You may also find people asking for the auction to be ended early offering a fixed price for an item. This is against eBay policy and I strongly recommend that you let the item run for the auction period.

A useful tip is to add the answers to bidder's emails as additions to the item listing as well as replying by personal email. That way you will hopefully not have to answer the same question twice.

It is useful to write a form email message to send on completion of the item to inform the bidder they have successfully won the auction. This email can also be used to outline the different accepted payment methods and to give contact details.

When the auction finally completes after 3, 5, 7 or 10 days you have three working days to contact the winning bidder to agree payment methods. You may find if you have detailed online payment methods such as Pay Pal and Bill Point in the auction listing then the winning bidder may have already paid.

Once you have received payment from the winning bidder try and send the item as soon as possible, swift delivery keeps the buyers happy. You are perfectly within your rights to wait for cheque payments to clear, although you might only want to do this for items over a certain amount, £10 and over for example. I have not had any problems with bounced cheques and once a bidder has bought one item, I dispatch any further items as soon as I receive the

cheque thereafter.

It will be useful to track the items you have posted and those you are still waiting for payment. This can be achieved in two different ways, either a spreadsheet or via the eBay feedback process. I leave feedback for the winning bidder once I have posted the item. That way the status of shipping is known to both the buyer and yourself the seller.

When sending the item at the Post Office it is recommended that you gain a 'Proof of Purchase' certificate as you will then have a receipt that you sent the item if the winning bidder claims the item has not been received. It is also wise to write a return address on the back of the envelope in the case of mis-delivery.

Hopefully if everything goes to plan the winning bidder will contact you to let you know the item has been received okay and will leave positive feedback. You're now ready to list some more items on eBay.

If you do need to obtain the contact details of the winning bidder you can apply via eBay to have these emailed to yourself.

If you start to list more and more items you may want to take advantage of the eBay watching facilities. eBay allows you to monitor 30 items, you can monitor the auctions to see what items similar to yours are being sold for and ensure you do not list a similar item at the same time when the auction price is low. However if the auction price is high and there are a number of bidders competing for an item you have to list, you can take advantage of the interest in the other item and list your item before the other auction completes.

My final words are simple, you will encounter all sorts of people trading and bidding on eBay, it mirrors the real world. It pays to be polite and calm at all times even if you get silly or impatient email messages. It will be better in the long run to have 100% positive feedback having bitten ones tongue a couple of times than to have winning bidders leaving negative feedback over petty issues.

**Matt Cook**