

TEXT BY *Jennifer Davis*



A Piece of the Auction

5 things to consider before starting your eBay business

Selling on eBay can be profitable and worthwhile; there are countless success stories of regular Joes supplementing, and perhaps doubling, their incomes by peddling their wares on what's become the world's largest online auction site. Setting up a seller account is simple and quick, and eBay has been established long enough to boast proven legitimacy.

But it's hard to start a business without a plan. Before you begin reconfiguring your budget to account for the dollar signs in your eyes, there are a few questions you should first ask yourself. When you can answer these, you are well on your way to operating your own eBay business.

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A Piece of the Auction *(cont'd)*

What will I sell?

No, seriously... what will you sell? Are you more interested in de-cluttering the garage or in maintaining a regular inventory of items to auction? eBay has many, MANY categories of possibilities, from clothing to auto to books to "other." Where do you fit in?

How will I acquire inventory?

Once again, is it about going through your own belongings? Maybe you or a friend make beautiful jewelry or have a talent with a paintbrush. Many people utilize nearby outlet stores and stock designer clothing or goods sold below retail. Others stake out "going out of business" sales and take advantage of the steep discounts.

Will I work alone or with a partner(s)?

Depending on the scope of the

business and your own lifestyle, it may be beneficial to take on a partner. It cuts overhead in half, allows for shared shipping and inventory stocking duties, and can make keeping up with email inquiries from potential bidders more manageable. However, this also means that profit is divided in two, and if clear guidelines and division of responsibilities are not outlined early on, conflict can arise. If you choose to work with others, be sure that you have a grasp on what a partnership will mean to your existing relationship.

How big do I want this to be?

Are you interested in making a little extra pocket money, or do you see this as more of a career path? It's a decision that has room to evolve, of course—you can always start out small and see where it goes. The important thing is to go in with realistic expectations and a plausible plan.

Do I (or we) have the time and resources to take this on?

If keeping promised shipping deadlines or responding to buyer emails is going to present a problem for you, then eBay may not be a wise option. Building and maintaining a reputation of reliability and integrity are crucial to a successful business. Your feedback score will be viewed and evaluated by potential buyers, and you do not want them to walk away because you didn't stack up. 🏠



So what do you think? Send us your feedback here. Don't make us beg...