

"101 Auction Secrets Revealed"

Your Inside Guide To Unlimited Auction Profits

By Tim Campbell

<http://www.101auctionsecrets.com>



For more great auction related how-to info please visit:

<http://www.auctionebook.com>

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Happy New Year!

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Introduction

Welcome...

How would you like to earn a couple a hundred extra dollars a week on top of what you already make? Or possibly more...

You may be like me and want to break away from the hassle of 9-5 routine.

Selling on eBay is a wonderful way for beginners to make money online, the best for most. Not to mention the learning opportunity of a lifetime. I'm going to give you some tips you need to know to excel at earning an income with auctions.

In no time, if you keep at it with some help, you'll have this mastered.

The main ingredients you need to become a good seller are...

DURATION & PERSERVERANCE

(And some good advice of course.)

Once you start, keep plugging away because it's not a walk in the park. Time and experience will tilt everything in your favor.

A Better Life

My career selling began on a cool autumn day on eBay over 3 years ago. Back then I mostly sold whatever I could get my hands on...

Now I do a lot of selling through my own websites, but still like to run a few auctions from time to time.

I had no experiences at business starting out, no college degree, no worldly recognition, none of the green stuff- just curiosity and a desire to make the green stuff-

And most importantly: a desire for something better. Which is what all this to-do is about.

During a 3-year period I earned substantial profits several different ways:

- **Selling everything of value of my own...**
- Buying items locally and online to resell-
- **Selling by consignment; or Other Peoples Property**
- Creating and selling my own info-products.
- **Using auctions to gather leads and promote my Website...**
- Helping pawnshops sell their goods-

And any other creative way of using online auctions I could think of...

In **101 Auction Secrets Revealed**, we want to touch on them all- but I want to bring your attention to creating your own product. It has the most potential by far.

I've made \$1000's month in and month out in the past just selling simple information items I've made...

Online auctions are a great stepping stone to success; once you learn to sell using them, you can come back them time and again.

And, you can easily expand this type of business to the web-

Why You Should Sell On eBay

Do you wonder if this business is the right one for you?

It's the perfect part-time no-pressure moneymaking hobby...

Boredom is one thing you won't have to worry about. Consider some key benefits of running this type of business:

- **You can work from the comfort of your own home...** no driving back and forth to earn a paycheck- no irritating coworkers and no overbearing boss. You are your the boss.
- **No lazy employees-** this is one of those rare businesses that is best done solo, thus saving you a lot of money.
- **You can work the hours you want...** sleep until 7 P.M. or go to bed at 7 A.M. - it really doesn't matter as long as you get the job done.
- **Your overhead and startup cost is extremely low-** It costs next to nothing to get the ball rolling and it costs relatively little to keep it rolling.

The list goes on and on...

Auction Apprenticeship

But, like any other profession you have to start at the beginning, and that's the time when it's roughest- there's a lot to learn if you want to get good.

Prepare to serve your apprenticeship... this is a time when every blunder and drop of fortune is instructive-

And you don't have to worry about losing your shirt.

Avoiding Online Auction Failure

So, becoming insanely rich from the solace of your home office sounds wonderful, doesn't it?

Truth is **most people fail to make any substantial profits when running an online business.**

Many people try, hit some turbulence and give up.

Others don't try or treat it as little more than a hobby...

In order to be successful you need to arm yourself with a **positive mindset** to turn mistakes to your advantage.

You have to work hard at finding what works and expect some rough spots until you get things ironed out.

Then you can cruise-

More than anything, this is not a get-rich quick scheme... it is a viable moneymaking opportunity for any person regardless of their station in life to take advantage of.

A Timeless and Stable Business Opportunity

As long as the Internet exists (it's going to be around until the sun evaporates the earth), and as long as people buy things---

You can bet your bottom dollar that online auctions will be an income opportunity.

Someone is always going to capitalize on them, might as well be you.

Even if eBay makes the trend towards accommodating larger business- someone is going to step in the vacuum that only small sellers can fill.

Questions to Ask Yourself as You Begin

Here are some good questions to ask your self as you begin to put together your strategy for success:

- **What are my strengths, interests, or other assets?**
- Where is my niche market can I serve on eBay?
- **Who are my ideal customers?**
- What other revenue streams can I find to complement this one?
- **What type of product do I want to sell?**
- Where am I going to get my product?
- **What do I want from online auctions?**

Granted, these aren't the easiest questions in the world to answer- especially if you're new to all this.

They will come up eventually - and recur frequently.

AuctionSecret \$1: First Principle to Making Money With Auctions

Pivotal principle of making money with auctions:

Don't purchase any inventory unless **you know** that you can get your money back selling it.

It sounds like commonsense... it is, but there's no limits to how good you can get at it; and the better you are, the more money you make.

Refine your expertise of buying low and selling high to the 'nth degree- develop a reflex and 6th sense for finding the deal that turns a profit.

Become a master at steering clear of the bad deal...

AuctionSecret \$2: Best Products Around

Nothing is more integral to your success with auctions than good research...

Your goal is to uncover a source that few know about.

Find the best items to sell and start tracking them down.

Some items are consistently "Hot", designated by a flaming torch on eBay and various other symbols elsewhere.

Wouldn't it be great if you could see some of these items firsthand?

You can, visit this link:

<http://listings.ebay.com/aw/listings/list/featured/index.html>

And scan around. Look for a text link called, "**going, going, gone...**"

Some of the absolute best items on the Internet are revealed right before your eyes- view the listings and find out what people want.

This also gives you a quick glance into any current consumer trends. Use this info to help you determine the kind of products you'd like to sell...

Remember look for the flaming torch. 30 or more is a good; very few make it this high. When you find a Dutch auction with this many bids, pay special attention.

People really want this item. And you should really want to sell it.

AuctionSecret \$3: Goal of Owning Your Own Product

Your goal should be: **to own your own unique and successful product.**

Something you have complete control over, something you spin out of your own creativity. This isn't easy, but it's well worth your efforts.

Unfortunately, this is far from being the case starting out. You sell something others own. Meaning your profit is always much less than what it could be.

When you cut out the middlemen, profit comes much easier.

AuctionSecret \$4: Best Kinds of Product to Sell

The less cumbersome the fulfillment process the better.

Anything that you can have drop-shipped is a good candidate.

Information products, i.e. CD's, software, books and ebooks have the best potential online- but you need to be the maker.

Profit margins are high since they are easily reproducible.

Second, fulfillment costs are nil.

I must warn you: competition is fierce selling information products on eBay- you can make money doing it, but their virtue is that it's a stepping stone away from auctions.

I strictly sold information CD's for over a year.

As I learned about Internet publishing I began to slowly break away from online auctions. Internet auctions are a great way for you to learn the ropes of marketing and business-

AuctionSecret \$5: Short-Term Goals For New Sellers

If you're new on eBay, then concentrate on these **4 EASY short-term goals:**

Get experience selling some items from around your house. It's a confidence builder and crucial experience.

Acquire some other items for resell from different sources such as family, friends, flea markets, online venues and so on. This helps you develop research skill in locating auctionable products.

Obtain 50 positive feedbacks to get a gold star. People start to trust you and bid more. This gives you Dutch auction access. Strive to keep your feedback slate clean...

And find a niche you have a passion for. Take some time to think this one over. It's important to make certain it's the direction you want to go in advance...

AuctionSecret \$6: Getting Started Accepting Payments

High percentages of auction goes pay immediately. Convenient payment methods exist for you to exploit.

Let's focus with selling on eBay- it's the only one that matters to most folks...

Here's what you'll need to have:

- **Checking/Savings Account**

- Paypal Account
- **Driver's License (for i.d. verify if you choose to do it)**
- eBay Account

If you have this, then you can accept these essential pay types that hook right up to your bank account:

- PayPal
- **eBay BillPoint**
- eBay Electronic Checks

If you have a feedback less than 10 you may want to get i.d. verified for \$5. This allows you to accept popular "*Buy Now*" payments.

Almost ALL payments are paid with these methods- funds go right to your account.

You can actually have money streaming in just a few short days of your first auction, depending on auction duration.

AuctionSecret \$7: Merchant Accounts, Do You Need Them?

If you plan on doing business a good deal of business via a website, then the answer is yes.

Otherwise, you can get by without them.

Remember, auctions are just a really great form of getting customers, **a popular venue amongst many others.**

If you plan on expanding and becoming successful, you must have them, here's why:

- **You can process a customer's credit card manually.**
- You can take orders over the phone. The person can call in their information.
- **You get a huge boost in credibility. People trust you more- this results in more post auction sales.**
- You can process orders automatically and securely on your Website. This is the biggest reason long-term.
- **You can take advantage of sales that other sellers miss. That means more money for you, but...**

Don't rush out and commit to them until you see clearly that they are going to benefit you.

The more business that comes directly off of the eBay site the less you need them. The eBay auction marketplace is supersaturated with competitive payment services...

If you want to do business outside of eBay in the future then you should look into it.

AuctionSecret \$8: Profitable Pain & Painless Profits

Be mindful of what you sell in terms of the amount of sheer physical effort you have to do, unless you're a industrious Hercules or something.

You are the embodiment of every department- executive, advertising, fulfillment, accounting, and customer support...

As a human being, if you aren't careful, you quickly approach your limits with this if you get semi-successful with it.

Selling bulky and obtuse odds and ends for meager amounts alongside continual searching for inventory, product fulfillment, customer concerns, paperwork, etc... quickly leads to eBay burnout.

I know burnout.

Leave yourself enough space in your business to improve your process and acquire better and better things to sell.

And...

Pay close attention to the amount of profit per sale for certain items.

Profit margins need to be healthy enough to justify time being spent doing the work.

If you're selling material goods with low profit margins then prepare to work your tail off to get anywhere.

Only if you're able to generate decent return can you expect to make a good living at selling.

AuctionSecret \$9: Sell Everything Approach

Do you have unbounded enthusiasm and little patience? If so, auctions will suit you as they did me- when I started selling my approach was: buy everything that I could sell for a profit.

My eyes were continually peeled for a bargain.

You want to develop a good sense for finding one-

I mellowed out later on and refocused my efforts in one direction, but it's the perfect way for novice sellers to learn the ins-and-outs of the process.

AuctionSecret \$10: Focused Selling Approach

Reckoning day came- laziness set in after my initiation. Either I make things simpler or face disappointing career options.

Now, that I know what works, I can simplify things infinitely to the point where mundane business activities fade ever more into the background... and concentrate on not working.

I lean in favor of simplicity and ease of vocation for less money, than complexity and hard work for more... it used to be visa versa - and it's a matter of taste and what's important to you.

Focused selling means- selling a few related types of items in volume and selling them well and taking advantage of your customer base.

This is an advanced approach to making money with auctions- few sellers get to this point because they remain on the level of hobbyists.

But those who become focused do quite well for themselves.

AuctionSecret \$11: What Not To Sell

It's mortal sin to sell some things online- especially eBay.

Remember, some items are cut out for the web - others aren't. Here's the situation you don't need to get in:

Selling expensive, weighty items, with low profit margins.

Example: don't sell 800 lb. cast iron squat racks on eBay- TV's, heavy books and you get the idea... unless someone else does the fulfillment.

Your aim: Cheap, popular, light items with high profit margins- preferably a product of your own.

You're safe selling books, CD's, software, collectibles, ebooks, information, services and the like... I've sold just about everything, and know- you're approach to what you sell makes life much easier.

AuctionSecret \$12: Strength of eBay

When purchasing inventory, steer away from everyday items with low profit margins.

Exploit eBay's main strength:

It's a unique venue that brings products to the market that people want but cannot acquire elsewhere...

The other advantage is that:

It brings products to the market that people can buy more cheaply than locally...

But unless you can find a product source to that will produce the results, then you need to let the first strength be a guiding principle.

AuctionSecret \$13: How Much Can I Get Out Of This?

"I wonder how much this is worth... on eBay?"

Such might be the question you'll hear going through your head in the future.

So how much can you expect to get for your item? All items have a semi-predictable "**eBay value**" that fluctuates within a certain price range.

Simply put, all items have a predictable cash potential. The less commonplace and valuable your item is, the more elasticity in this range...

Sentimental items like collectibles have a tremendous range... a particular item in a collectible auction might sell anywhere from \$30-\$300.

If you're a good auctioneer, make fine ads, use photos and follow all the guidelines for maximizing your auction results- then you can expect to hit the upper range of your items "eBay value".

An extra \$1.50 profit per auction is what makes you or breaks you.

As a rule: EBay value for common everyday items is below what you would find in retail. Try to leave those items to larger merchants.

Some items have a dismal eBay value. Like computer monitors.

As you become more knowledgeable, you acquire a feel for an items "eBay value". This ability comes with practice and patience and it certainly pays off when it comes...

AuctionSecret \$14: How To Price Your Items

When it comes to pricing your items, you must walk a "fine line"...

One mistake to avoid is starting your auction too high. High price does indicate value- but it also discourages healthy bidding.

Of course this largely depends on what you sell, competition and how accustomed you are to the "**eBay value**" of your item.

One method is to price your item slightly below what you paid for it...

In general eBay is not a good place to start high since bidder wants a deal. It's always better to start low and set nice reserve if you absolutely must cover yourself.

Starting too high kills the spirit of the auction process. People come to the auctions to compete for a bargain.

You will also incur higher listing fees if you price high.

It's a matter of confidence- when you have experience selling certain items, you can know almost for certain the amount of profit it brings...

AuctionSecret \$15: Set Your Auctions On Fire

Have you ever been on eBay and happened upon an auction that was doing incredible well?

Like a Dutch auction with over a 30 bids?

Here's my approach for getting over 100 bids selling simple CD's. You can adjust it according to what you sell.

I've done this no less than 10 times...

The first day of the auction is critical. You want the majority of your bids on the first day. Your goal is to get 30 bids as quickly as possible.

When your auction breaks the 30-bid barrier your eBay exposure shoots through the roof for free.

After 30 bids you're apart of the current auction elites- prepare to make a lot of money if you get there within the first couple of days of your auction.

Listing at any old time isn't going to help your chances when doing this. Don't list in the evening, since this is an approach tailored for end of auction success.

We want bids NOW.

The best time to list when attempting this is early Saturday morning around about 7 a.m. EST.

As far as advertising exposure I normally opt the \$120 approach. eBay is adding all sorts of exposure options. You can spend as much as \$180 for an ad... the works.

Yeah, it's a lot of money. But if you test everything it's a surefire investment and far from gambling.

Drive bidders to your auctions try to add fuel to the fire.

Normally I would contact my mailing list and tell them I'm having a clear out of my inventory and offer a special like free shipping for bidding.

I even contacted a list of likely bidders. I simply compiled a list of about 200 people who are likely interested from the eBay site and sent them a nice email.

In the auction itself- try to make them an offer they can't refuse; be sure to make a point out of your no-risk guarantee;

Throw in some easy piece of information that the bidder will be interested in that costs you nothing to provide.

Get rock moving down the hill as early as possible.

If you get that auction up over 30 bids by Sunday night... that gives you over 8 days of sizzling hot exposure.

AuctionSecret \$16: Pick a Populous Region for Free Exposure

Go local in populated areas for extra traffic.

Whenever you're creating your ad on eBay you're given the option of placing your auction in a regional category-

Try listing it in a heavily populated region... it certainly can't hurt.

You may not live there but it really doesn't matter. Are there any rules against it?

Just don't try and sell a refrigerator in Miami's regional category if you live in Alaska. Not unless you want to pay for shipping.

Some people scan the regional listings- don't pass up the chance for extra free traffic.

AuctionSecret \$17: Most Important Aspect of a Killer Descriptions

One of the most powerful advantages you have on your side is your salesletter. It's an art form few master, and those who do go on to retire early-

I'm still scratching my head as to how the pros really do it...

To become this unseemly artist you must know your customers' minutest psychological intricacies and you must load your copy full of benefits...

And POWER WORDS, but not too many lest you blow them away.

One thing you must remember: every word, every phrase, every picture and every breath you take needs to be telling the buyer in the most potent way... **what is in it for them...**

If you can communicate the emotional payoff will they get out of bidding on your item then you stand a better chance of snagging the bid.

AuctionSecret \$18: Make Your Description Complete

Sometimes we get slack when making descriptions.

I'll be the last to jump on your case about it...

But if you want your item to do well, make your description as complete as possible.

A thorough description drives every doubt and question out of your potential bidders mind.

They are concerned about a myriad of issues- shipping policy, your integrity, condition of goods and so on. Your job is to blast these issues with descriptive dynamite...

It's the unanswered questions that kill the sale.

Also, many people find your auction through the search engine, so use as complete and descriptive headline with good keywords- this makes your listing easy to find for the person looking for your item.

Leave no stone unturned.

Neglect to mention some crucial piece of info and bidders tend to make an exodus via the back button en masse.

Are you selling a computer game? Forgetting to mention if it's for a PC or Mac will spawn a lot of email.

AuctionSecret \$19: Did You Just Gouge Me?

Some sellers have a tactic where they charge unfair shipping and handling fees.

If you're contemplating employing this technique... don't.

My favorite version of this is when the seller offers a CD for a penny and charges \$9.99 for shipping. They must have some thick skin.

Assume the buyer is just as much of USPS rate expert as you.

Sometimes they omit critical info in the ad and fill in the blanks at the auction end. If you're the buyer, don't bid if they can't be bothered with adding details- it's not worth the headache.

If your shipping costs are a bit weighty... explain everything, and all in your item description in such a way that there can be no confusion...

If you charge handling, insurance or anything else- make it known too.

AuctionSecret \$20: Use Key Words in Titles To Increase Traffic

Potential buyers are likely to use certain predictable keywords to find items just like the one you offer. Saturate your titles with these words and watch your traffic and bids soar...

The perfect title is a careful balance between item description, persuasiveness and keyword saturation.

The descriptive and persuasive element of the title is to attract the eBayers who are browsing...

Keywords are for the search engine hoppers.

Because there are so many items on eBay, people usually find things using the search engine.

If you want people to find your item, then place as many obvious keywords in your title as you can without making the title look weird.

Note: Beware of keyword spamming! Once again find the "fine line".

AuctionSecret \$21: Avoid This Costly Mistake...

Check to see that your item title has no spelling errors.

Buyers mainly use the search engine to locate their item of interest.

Search saves them lot of time and can pick up items placed in the wrong category. If spelling is incorrect, the search function fails miserably.

Are you auctioning that rare **Pokemon** card that you staked your life savings on? Did you mistakenly spell *Pokemon* as *Pokeman*?

Oh no...

Kills your auction like a doornail.

And some roving wiseguy out there will anticipate a spelling error like this and walk away with the bargain of the century by doing a search on such a likely spelling error.

With item descriptions, emails, titles and whatever else you write use a spell checker and grammar checker. Poor spelling and bad grammar will turn off some people.

Misspelling and bad grammar doesn't faze me, but I shouldn't assume this holds for everyone.

If the errors are too gross, it upsets the flow of your message and confuses the reader. They leave with a bad impression of the author.

We want to make a great impression and get our message across.

Check the things you write. And if you find spelling and grammar in this ebook- please don't email me any nasty letters.

AuctionSecret \$22: What's In a Name?

When selecting a user i.d. come up with something memorable while at the same time descriptive of your type of business.

It's important.

But don't let it lock your brain up; you can always change it later if you see something else more suitable.

One little trick I use is to name my i.d. after my website URL:

www.auctionebook.com

Whenever auction email goes out I would get a free clickable link.

Free advertising- but good things must end as they say. Of course, eBay banned this- other sites don't mind.

If you have a site and you feel like taking a risk put parenthesis around it or obscure the name in some way that will foul up the pesky name filters while still letting buyers know your URL.

AuctionSecret \$23: Readability Rules

Someone else's writing shouldn't be a chore, including mine. Here are some principles to live by:

Use a short opening paragraph. Fire your big guns as tersely as possible- don't allow the readers attention to wander this early on

Short sentences make firm friends. Force something to be read by keeping it brief.

Make your paragraphs less than 5 or 6 lines. What's worse than an intimidating block of descriptive prose that goes on and on?

Underline or boldface important words or phrases. Some parts of a sentence are more important than others. Add pizzazz to these parts.

Include attention-boosters: questions, news items, etc... I have a short attention span and little if any tolerance for bland writing. It's your job to keep the reader awake and alert.

Ask for the bid at the end of the description. I had to slip this in, though it is somewhat out of place- it's important to ask for the bid!

Use positive language. The auction ad is not a good place to start conveying gloom and doom- keep things blithely optimistic regardless.

AuctionSecret \$24: 9 Customer Service Rules

When it comes to your auction customer, here are 9 timeless rules to live by - these will work for any type of business you may run...

Your customers are everything. Try running your business without them. Or should I say, don't even think about trying.

Your customer is always right. Never tell them they are anything but. Referral business works both ways. And bad news travels 100 times faster than good.

Go the extra mile. it is worth more than all the paid advertising you can afford. Good customer service means healthy word of mouth advertising is coming your way.

Return emails fast. If you can't, set up an auto-responder to tell your enquirers you'll get back to them soon.

Under-promise and over-deliver. in everything you do. Do you want to have satisfied customer every time? Tuck this rule under your belt. It's so common for that rule to be reversed online- you can help change that.

Never criticize your customers directly or indirectly. It's too easy to pop-off in irritation with an email. If they somehow incense you, Simmer down and count to a million- never, never, take a swipe at a customer.

Make the auction process extremely simple for the customer.

When you take that extra step to make the experience as smooth and as seamless as possible, you're thinking about the customer. This will **always** pay off in the long and short-term.

Follow up the day after the sale and one week after. Ask if there's anything more you can do for your buyer. This lets the bidder know that your primary interest is in their well-being...

Make your customer feel extra special. Do whatever it takes to let your buyer know that you appreciate their business- this makes the transaction a positive experience for both buyer and seller.

If you can stick with these 9 simple rules, then you've all but secured yourself a good name online...

That's worth more than gold.

AuctionSecret \$25: Always Answer a Customer Email

Whether the customer is praising your product or complaining, recommend or questioning, he or she deserves a direct and friendly answer or response.

I've bought a lot of stuff on eBay. The sellers who ignore one email tend to ignore a whole lot more. The ones who answer mail are consistent...

Guess who's the better seller (as in wealthier)?

The first person saves time sure- and he probably saves himself a lot of extra business too.

On eBay, where feedback really counts- If you fail to answer emails, you **will** receive such comments as "unresponsive seller" or "bad communication" and so on...

You will also earn yourself a poor reputation and lose respect in the online trading community.

Keep your answers short, courteous, and to the point.

Provide all relevant information and be friendly, but don't get bogged down in long email conversations back and forth.

AuctionSecret \$26: Spit-Fire Email Templates

You can anticipate many questions that people ask over and over...

Get ready to answer questions like:

- **Sir, has my item been shipped yet?**
- **Madame, when did you receive payment?**
- **Hey, how long does shipping take?**

...And so on

Create an email template and have it waiting- it's not that these humdrum emails don't matter...

It's just that you shouldn't have to improvise a message every time you receive one that you've seen a million times.

So...

Whenever you get a question from someone- sit down and answer it in full with vigor and liveliness, and all the necessary answers to all questions...

Send this email and make yourself a copy as well...

Chunk your copy of it on the **boilerplate**. Use this as a template for that question in the future. You should never type that answer out again.

Saves loads of time and the email will sound very personal- not robotic, like Stephen Hawking.

I even suggest plugging the individuals name in if you know it. What a sweet and hypnotic word it is.

Download the freeware program called, '**shortkeys light**' - pop open your boilerplate document and start assigning keyboard shortcuts to questions are asked...

AuctionSecret \$27: Using Other Auction Sites

EBay is the place to be, but I recommend trying the others- mainly Amazon and Yahoo.

EBay's only competition is Yahoo, and when you use them remember that they generally fall short in returns...

...But not all the time-

One thing you'll notice is page views are high at Yahoo- and sales are low.

As an auctioneer, it's in your best interests to see Yahoo rival eBay in the auction format-

AuctionSecret \$28: Notorious Buyer Archetypes

We should always be polite and courteous to our bidders, unless...

While I probably don't have to tell you this, there are plenty of rude buyers who will push your patience to the max.

Though they deserve to perish (metaphorically, of course), never let them get the best of you;

The Golden Rule is: **Don't Ever Write An Email in Anger.**

Before you launch that atomic warhead, have a cup of coffee- know that you're in it for the long haul... clear your mind, reflect on more sane hours- then and only then can you respond.

Here are some of the personality types that will test your neurological fiber:

The Impatient Buyer- people are impatient and want their goods NOW. These people are the extreme embodiment of the time honored sales principle that people don't like to wait.

The Post-Auction Heckler- Post auction hecklers think that the haggling begins when the auction ends. Some people are like this.

The Unhappy Buyer- Some folks will be disappointed with your product or service regardless of how good it is. Best thing you can do to avoid the fallout is to offer a money-back guarantee.

The Deadbeat- The most irritating bidder in the world is the one who tells you, "The check is in the mail"- of course it never comes.

You've been forewarned...

AuctionSecret \$29: Final Value Fee Refund

If a deadbeat strikes you, don't forget to apply your final value fee refunds.

This process is not as cumbersome as in the past...

I recommend doing this for all defunct auctions once a month to save time.

And get these characters booted off eBay, you can report them when they back out of the agreement- some are repeat offenders, worthy of total annihilation, metaphorically speaking.

AuctionSecret \$30: What Customers Want After an Auction

Your customer wants 3 things after the auction in order to be completely satisfied with your service:

Speedy contact after the auction. They want all the necessary information in straightforward terms.

Everything intact. They want their goods shipped quickly and in one piece when they arrive.

A1 support. If they have a problem or a question they want a quick answer from you.

If you do these three things consistently then building a great reputation is no problem.

There's something else they would appreciate as well...

At the end of the auction include the auction number with the end of auction notice.

Place the number in the subject line so you and your customer can easily track emails.

Your customer may also be bidding on multiple auctions. Or your customer may have bid a week ago and forgot about the whole thing. Doing this will prevent confusion for you both.

This also includes any correspondence in the future.

AuctionSecret \$31: Quick-Selling Hot Items

Right after I started with auctions I caught the infamous "selling bug". I sold everything I owned.

Then a crisis hit where I needed something to sell, anything. I started wiggling out so I began comparison-shopping online using shopping bots.

I stumbled on something that worked. I would visit video gaming sites and stores and note the popular games. Then I would check EBay for final bids and My Simon for the cheapest retail prices of the game.

If I liked what I saw, I would post an auction for the game and when the auction was over have the retailer send the game to the buyer...

AuctionSecret \$32: Thomas Register

What if you could contact the manufacturer of some product to buy in bulk instead of buying from a retailer or middleman?

You can contact them... easily.

As to what happens afterwards- Normally, minimal order requirements are high for the individual, but not always. And there are a few procedures of doing business.

The Thomas Register has a list of 173,000 U.S. and Canadian manufacturers-

<http://www.thomasregister.com>

Check it out.

AuctionSecret \$33: Products To Sell at No Cost

The risks you take with an online auction business are low. You can start without a penny...

I think I literally started at zero or somewhere below that, and did well for myself.

We all have a natural inventory in our closet waiting for a happy home.

Soon though, our natural resources run dry-

Later on, if you don't want to invest huge amounts of money in inventory, simply pick a direction for your business that doesn't require it.

One excellent way to acquire product to sell is **by consignment** - or selling other peoples goods for a percentage of the profits.

The other is to sell your own products...

These are two main ways to solve your product supply problem, which will always be a challenge to you in your auction business.

But don't write off buying low and selling high until you can.

AuctionSecret \$34: Create Your Own CD or DVD

I've sold lots of CD's. They cost almost nothing to make, which means your profit margins are going to be huge.

Making a CD is the **easiest** way for you to create a product of your own... DVD's are a little more expensive to pull off- but people rarely sell them so there is a great potential...

A good burner might cost you from \$150-\$200 but you can make your money back lightening fast.

Buy a few of the more popular titles off of eBay and start reworking the CD content... try adding an autostart menu for polish-

The only disadvantage is the competition, but that can be negated...

Do you want to know more about how to make your own product that has astronomical profit margins and is near cost-free?

I've put a short bonus "how-to" manual together on CD making with all the important details at:

This is how I made a lot of money on eBay.

AuctionSecret \$35: An Easy Money-Maker On eBay

A stack of CDR's, a CD duplicator, some CD products, a predilection for running featured Dutch auctions and making money is all you need.

You can do it too- the only reason I don't anymore: it's a lot of work. Check out some of the sellers who do this.

They sell popular compilations and if they are good- make a killing.

I think everyone who has browsed online auctions have wondered about those curious sellers who sell these info CD's.

I was one.

Selling a genuinely good self-made product well is a blast.

AuctionSecret \$36: Build a Post Auction Email CD - Catalogue

One of your goals should be to build up a list of quality products that you offer the buyer in the end of the auction email regardless of what you sell...

This is especially easy if you give the CD route a try. Hardly any of your competition offers more than 2 or 3 extra CD's at the end of the auction...

I used to sell several CD's that I put together with the original product they bid on... it really works.

Think along this line- it drastically increases the business you do and it will make the competition pretty much a non-factor.

AuctionSecret \$37: Create Your Own eBooks

If you like the idea of creating your own info-product, think about creating an eBook.

The Internet is wide open for digital publishing- if you know something of value then someone else is willing to pay for it.

You can sell it on eBay or your website-

Just think, no shipping, no material costs... just pure profit.

AuctionSecret \$38: Putting a Photo Into Your Ad...

No doubt about it, good photos for your auction ads do wonders for your final bids. It's not hard to do it. I've boiled it down to 6 simple steps that I will comment on in the next few tips...

1. Get a digital camera. If you don't have one, auctions are a great place to begin your search for a great bargain.
2. Take the picture. Use a nice white background...
3. Transfer picture into the computer.
4. Edit the picture. You may have some software that comes along with the camera to do this with...
5. Upload the picture via a browser or FTP Program.

6. Insert Html into auction ad.

There are tons of little twists and turns to taking the pictures, editing them and getting them online...

AuctionSecret \$39: Searching for a Good Used Camera

Unless you have money to spare, there is no sense in going out and buying a new camera. You can get a good one rather cheap...

To get the basics of what you need in a good camera check out this handy article:

<http://www.auctionwatch.com/awdaily/tipsandtactics/sel-photos.html>

Once you know what you're looking for head on over to eBay or,

<http://www.pricewatch.com>

You can usually find the best deals online- try local newspaper ads as well...

<http://www.auctionwatch.com/awdaily/tipsandtactics/sel-photos.html>

AuctionSecret \$40: Editing Your Pictures

Once you take the picture you need to edit it.

The basic thing is to reduce the dimensions of the pic- this will also reduce the file size in KB, making for a quicker load time.

You can also do some other neat things to the image- I leave that to you to experiment with...

The software I use is **Paint Shop Pro.**

Paint Shop is the poor mans Photoshop. You can get them both at one of the software sites I mentioned earlier.

AuctionSecret \$41: Crunching Your Graphics

Sometimes image files can be huge, especially fresh digital camera pics.

eBayer's don't wait around for huge pictures to load.

You need a way to squish the image without affecting the quality too much. My favorite program to do this is '**SmartSaver Pro**'

Download the trial version free at:

<http://www.jasc.com>

You can also go to Hotfiles and Download.com to check for other such programs. Use the search engine keyword "**image crunchers**".

AuctionSecret \$42: Free Web-Hosts

Free web hosts give you some hard drive space on the Internet... usually in exchange for a banner ad.

You can use this space to put your images or build your Website.

It's a good idea to go ahead and start experimenting with this. Later you're going to want to complement a Website with your online auctions.

Free web-hosts are a dime a dozen. Two good ones are Hypermart and Xoom:

<http://www.hypermart.com>

<http://www.xoom.com>

AuctionSecret \$43: Ftp Programs

FTP stands for “**File Transport Protocol**”.

It's the simplest and quickest way to get that file on your computer to a remote computer on the Internet.

Though you won't need an FTP if you use a service like Honesty to host your pics...

It's a good idea to get the hang of FTP programs because later you're going to use them to send files to your website;

The best and easiest to use free FTP program is CuteFTP. You can get it here:

<http://www.cuteftp.com>

AuctionSecret \$44: Free Image Hosts

Image hosts are online services devoted to keeping your images for you...

Only one is significant:

<http://www.honesty.com>

All necessary info for uploading the pick is available at the site- **it is super easy.**

eBay also hosts pictures, but there is a small charge per image so you may want to skip it...

AuctionSecret \$45: HTML You Need To Know

Once you have your image online you need to place some HTML into your ad to make it show up. Here it is:

```

```

Note: for more info on image hosts, visit Honesty.com - when you upload your image they give you the URL to plug in.

Now, let me explain...

- 'Img' is the HTML tag name for image. All simple HTML pages are made of 'tags' and 'attributes'... this tag tells the browser you're going to use a picture.
- 'Src' is the HTML 'attribute' for source. It's the URL of the image. Notice the '=' sign. Place your URL after it.
- 'Width' is the HTML attribute for width. Use this 'attribute' to specify how wide you want an image...
- 'Height' is the HTML attribute for width. Use this 'attribute' to specify how tall you want an image...

Note: the height and width attributes aren't necessary.

AuctionSecret \$46: Master Basic HTML In 1 Hour

If you're going to be a great seller, you need to learn basic html.

Every web page is written with it. It's not effective to have someone else do this for you.

Bare bones minimum is all you need-

The payoff: professional looking ads translates into more sales.

Need a tutor? There's a real good interactive HTML tutorial at:

<http://www.davesite.com>

Also, the html editor I've used since day one is **Homesite**. This is my program of choice though there are many other free ones out- the shareware version is fully functional for 30 days.

<http://www.hotfiles.com>

I have 2 other top-notch HTML editors I like to use...

- CoffeeCup
- HotDog

My favorite, and the one I use often is Homesite... everything I know about HTML I learned from that program.

You can get the fully functional shareware versions all online from the sites I mentioned earlier...

AuctionSecret \$47: How To Put an Attractive Background in Your Ad

Have you ever visited an auction and noticed a peculiar and catchy background?

Believe it or not, if it's not gaudy it helps your sales.

Here's how to do it...

First, go background texture hunting at this site:

<http://www.grsites.com/textures/>

Once you find one- upload it to a free image host like:

<http://www.honesty.com>

Now, for the moment you've been waiting for...

This requires HTML so don't faint on me. Make sure this is the first thing that appears in your ad HTML:

<BODY background="http://www.yourhost.com/yourimage.gif">

That's the code you need. Most body tags require a </body> close tag at the end of an HTML page. On eBay, don't include it- it goofs the ad up.

AuctionSecret \$48: Play it Again Sam, Play that Funky Beat

Ok, ok, maybe this is a superfluous secret designed to drive your customers away-

If you want music in your ad (your intentions must not be malevolent) here's how to do it...

<embed src="http://www.yourhost.com/your-midi-file.mid" hidden="true" autostart="true" loop="1"></embed>

Put that HTML anywhere in the ad, preferably at the end.

Notice the **.mid** file - that's the type of music file you use. Here's a link to the midi file emporium:

<http://www.midi.com/>

When loop=1 the song plays to infinity, set it to 0 if you want to play it once.

Try not to get carried away... some subtle music can enhance the ad- just don't play Britney on loop = 1.

AuctionSecret \$49: How To Use eBay Auctions As Traffic Generators

Did you know that you could use online auctions to drive extra traffic to your Website?

Well, you can, if you're subtle enough- I can't stress how **GREY** some zones of seller activity are; eBay nevertheless tries to impose form on the chaos.

Whatever you do, don't link back to your site undercutting the prices of your posted auctions. Big time No-No. Bad, bad sellers do that.

Auction venues like Yahoo and Amazon don't mind if you link back to your site... as long as you're not avoiding fees in any way.

Let me throw in normally, this is a touchy area.

Use discretion.

Link directly to your site with a free offer from the auction, from there try to get the email address- if you get about 10 to 15 regular auctions running you can see upwards of 50-75 unique hits a day from this.

This translates into a lot of good, targeted prospects in a short amount of time. It's one heck of a way to build up your mailing list quick and cheap.

Of course, make sure you're selling an item that can cover listing costs at least... these strategies work especially well for information products.

AuctionSecret \$50: Another Traffic Generating Tip

You could create some kind of ebook or manual that is of use to your potential customers even if you sell a material product- an ebook that they can download for free from the auction site that has links back to

your site.

This needs to be something that's freely distributable- these types of publications are called 'viral ebooks', and they will give your Website a much needed traffic boost.

You can only take advantage of this if you have a niche...

AuctionSecret \$51: Buyers Want Professional Sellers

Credibility is a big factor to online success- buyers want to know that you're a serious seller... someone who doesn't take transactions lightly.

Build good feedback, answer emails promptly, avoid excessive typos, be thorough in your descriptions, have a sound sales policy and *know your product like the back of your hand*.

If auctions are your hobby, treat them like a serious business and not like a hobby-. Maintain a professional image...

If you do, someday you will be a *pro*.

AuctionSecret \$52: Local Pawn Shops

Recently, when browsing through the newspaper, I saw this ad:

"Local Pawn Shop In Need of eBay Associate..."

One possibility open to you is to accumulate experience and offer your service to a local pawnshop or other business.

I've done this on the side from time to time.

They need help in all aspects of the auction process- making ads, listing, setting up customer databases and so on.

Prepare a resume in advance and highlighting your selling skill and contact local businesses that you might be able to assist... if you keep at it like this you will build contacts, experience, reputation- the sky is the limit.

AuctionSecret \$53: Select a Niche That is Right for You

Ground zero for your success strategy is right here. Find your niche.

If you define the market (a group of people) you sell to, then you've done something few sellers do.

Give this some thought. It's not easy to double-back in another direction once you've started.

It needs to be something you're passionate about- something you can throw your effort into easily...

If you can know the type of person you're going to be selling to and the types of product you want to sell...

You're auction sales letters will be a hundred times more persuasive.

Along with that, you'll be in a superior position to take advantage of repeat business; the benefits of specializing are endless-

Being specialized is a kind of lever that allows you exert much more force than you would be able to if you were **'just selling anything'**.

Don't be content with **'just selling anything'**.

AuctionSecret \$54: Shoulder Every Ounce of Risk in the Transaction

Word to the wise: this only works if you're certain of your products quality...

Otherwise it backfires!

Risk reversal is one of the strongest free sales tools you have at your disposal.

When you offer your bidders a satisfaction guarantee, you are telling them that you are confident that your product can deliver.

If not, you are willing shoulder the risk for them by giving them their money back...

And that will put your prospect at ease.

Very rarely do they ask for one unless your product is poor.

I'm with a lot of others- if you give someone a good value, they will very rarely take advantage of you; the few that will aren't worth worrying about.

They're so few and far between that it's hard to lose sleep over them.

This is one of the easiest and most effective ways to increase sales; if you have a good product to begin with, don't neglect this technique.

I see many sellers who don't offer one when they could.

It's a must to offer one with your Dutch auctions. A strong risk-reversing offer will clinch sales that pass others by.

AuctionSecret \$55: Vision- The Backbone of Your Business

Know where you want to go with your business and why.

Every business that thrives has a soul and a purpose. Consider what you want long term- and what you want short term.

Look for a ways to create meaning and value for you customer. It's so important. If you don't have a compelling reason to believe in what you're doing...

Then find one- if what you're doing isn't of the utmost importance your potential withers on the vine...

AuctionSecret \$56: Order in Your Business

When I first started selling I had a problem with getting everything in its proper place. This came back to haunt me.

If you throw everything into a big pile, as I do, be prepared for a bureaucratic mechanism somewhere to hunt you down.

Mostly I'm referring to bookkeeping and tax-related issues... it's O.K. to let a gentle sensation of dread creep over you, it's natural.

Seriously, order is the foundation of every good thing in business...

The bedrock of success is organization and security. Strive for order in every aspect of what you do. If you're lacking here, your whole business is going to be threatened.

This includes things like keeping income tax and business expenditures records amongst other things...

Order is business health.

AuctionSecret \$57: Serve Your Customer With a Passion

In business your customer is the only thing. Your customer is far more important than any product you sell. They are even more important than the service you give them.

Strive to **give them quality at every level** of the transaction.

With online auctions most sellers have a hard time looking past the initial sell.

Some believe after the initial bid the relationship is over.

That's a tough way to do business and it doesn't work for many. Look far beyond the first sell. It is only the beginning of a long mutually beneficial relationship.

AuctionSecret \$58: Become An Expert In Your Field

Become an authority in what you do, wherever you choose to go with your online auction business. If you sell CD media supplies, you want to be thought of before anyone else.

It's your goal to become **the** supplier of whatever good or service you provide.

This isn't easy and it usually takes a lot of concerted effort to get to that point, but...

When you become an authority in your field, a whole new universe of business and opportunity is opened up to you.

You'll begin to gain access to special resources that wouldn't otherwise be available to you. Others in your field will network with you.

You become like a meteorologist, except you'll be able to anticipate trends in your corner of the market and act with them.

I buy certain types of things on eBay from the same sellers over and over. I wouldn't dare do business with anyone else, not when they have proven themselves and their product.

You want to earn that same type of position in the minds of buyers within your niche.

AuctionSecret \$59: Credibility, Key Factor in Selling

Become trustworthy.

Remove every doubt about your credibility any chance you get.

You can do this through presenting yourself positively in every way... Through your feedback... by being passionately devoted to your business...

By being an expert...

By making great complete ads and answering emails quickly-

The credibility factor is a critical ingredient for online sales success. You have to use every means available to you to build your prospective customers trust...

AuctionSecret \$60: Harness the Power of Technology

Use you existing software and services on the Internet to handle repetitive tasks.

Services like Andale and Honesty, programs like Mister Lister and others- they abound; master them...

Also, keep on the lookout- new ones pop up every day.

This will free you up to grow your business to the next level...

Leveraging means **getting everything you can, out of the amount of effort you put in.** Cost-effective tools abound for helping you do that easily.

When you use existing tools and methods for freeing yourself from repetitive tasks, you compress time.

That means you get more work done with less energy... and as a result you make more money.

AuctionSecret \$61: Maximize Gains, Minimize Waste

“There are only two qualities in the world, efficiency and inefficiency, and only two sorts of people: the efficient and the inefficient.”

I believe some guy named Shaw said that...

Maximize results while minimizing your expenditures.

Test ads to get more for your advertising dollar.

Look for better ways to do business. So much can be do to get better and better returns.

Try different things; if an ad works test to see if you can do better.

AuctionSecret \$62: Your Automated Online Salesman

Your sales letter is your online salesperson.

This is the person who talks to every bidder that stops by your auction...

Do they make a good impression?

Do they offer the visitor what they want?

On the net, how you're potential buyer perceives you and your product is everything.

Copywriting is the art of presenting you, and what you sell to your buyer in the best possible light.

It's one of the most important things you have going for you. A well-crafted sales letter can increase your results exponentially without having to spend an extra penny.

It's worth taking the time to master the art of e-persuasion...

Think of one listing that gets 1 out of 30 people to bid compared to the one that convinces 1 out of 10...

That last ad listing may make you rich; the first one may leave you scraping to get by...

AuctionSecret \$63: Increase Your Products Value With Bonuses

Everyone who browses eBay wants a bargain.

Take advantage of this mindset. Best way to make a person feel as though they have gotten more than their money's worth is to give them extras that are beneficial...

This special something needs to be something that you can offer immediately at no extra cost.

Include helpful information of interest to them. See to it that they get more than their money's worth - this makes the transaction a win-win situation.

You get higher bids while they get extra value.

AuctionSecret \$64: Perseverance Will See You Through Anything

Perseverance is your greatest moral asset of all.

If you have **determination to succeed** then you have an advantage that money can't buy.

Nothing (to me anyway) is more fulfilling than meeting challenge head on and winning out.

Anytime you run into trouble or resistance in your business- accept it as a growth opportunity that you need in order to get to higher levels or success.

Push through the resistance.

AuctionSecret \$65: Online Auctions- An Engine For Success

If you're like me, then you like the idea of **becoming rich beyond your wildest dreams.**

Do you have a burning desire to be successful? Online auctions can be an excellent means for realizing your goal, **because we know they work.**

But first, you need a plan... a business plan- define how much you want to make. Then define your means-

I must warn you; **rare is the silver bullet** that makes you wealthy.

You need multiple streams of revenue.

When you combine auctions with other online profit sources your income potential explodes... because of automation, cross promotion opportunities and the cost efficiency of reaching new customers on the net.

AuctionSecret \$66: Make Your Listing Standout

It's the widest character, frequently abused, much maligned “_” - or underscore.

Underscores have only one function: to make your titles longer than your competitions... those masses of one-liners in the category listings.

Consider the following unlikely scenario:

Vintage 1984 Van Camp's Pork and Bean Cans

Or...

Vintage_1984_Van_Camp's_Pork_and_Bean_Cans

A small difference you say. Main point being the eye is attracted to the longer titles...

Since most of your competition now does this, it's best that you do so- and try to come up with creative strategies S-T-R-E-T-C-H your title out.

If you're you willing to cough up a few extra dollars couple this technique with the bold option

This will drastically increase the visibility of your auction listing without costing you too much.

AuctionSecret \$67: Using an Email Signature

One great free way to promote your auction business is by using a signature. Signatures are six to eight line “footers” at the end of your email messages.

Example:

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=====  
Auction Secrets Revealed...  
http://www.auctionebook.com  
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All email programs support them. Take advantage of this cheap and effective means of advertising your listings...

Just have the URL point to your “My eBay” page or your seller URL.

You can use a signature to promote your auctions, Website or whatever you feel is necessary. Considering the number of messages you send and receive, you don’t want to pass this up.

When I’m listing on eBay I always have this link pointing toward my “**My eBay**” page where I can persuade them further to browse my listings.

Once there you could encourage them to browse the listings and get them to sign up for my free newsletter AuctionSecrets Newsletter.

This is FREE advertising. Every chance you get, tell people about your auctions that are likely to be interested.

Actively drive traffic to your auctions and make more money. This is especially true on Dutch auctions.

Also, use signatures and post to appropriate newsgroups and message boards. Point them towards your “**About Me**” page or your Website if you have one.

AuctionSecret \$68: Dutch Auctions

One of the big keys to earning a fortune on eBay is by running Dutch auctions.

This is when you list an item in lots.

I used to sell palm accessories, software and CD's I made like this... and made a killing.

You always want to keep your eyes peeled for opportunities to acquire and sell products that lend themselves to the Dutch auction format.

What makes Dutch auctions powerful is your ability to crunch time.

AuctionSecret \$69: Spammer Jammers

We are winning the war on Spam, slowly-

Nevertheless, an onslaught of email is coming your way. If you thought you were getting spammed earlier, just wait until you start selling heavily on eBay.

You've got to defend yourself- your time is at stake here.

Spam Buster is a free program that can put some serious hurt on spammers...

<http://www.contactplus.com/products/spam/index.htm>

Email filters are another good strategy;

All email programs come with them-

Eudora Lite has some good filters...you can get a copy from the link below.

<http://www.eudora.com>

Simply filter mails with predictable and annoying words such as “mo money, mo money, mo money”, “\$\$\$\$ cha-ching! \$\$\$\$” or “sex, sex, sex!”

AuctionSecret \$70: Avoiding Bounced Checks

Bounced checks are rare. But the fear of them is commonplace.

Now that eBay offers the e-Check service it should never happen.

If you want, insist that the buyer pay by electronic checks or money order if they must mail it...

If you accept snail mail checks hold checks only when the item is highly valuable, or when the user has a bad feedback history.

Most eBayers are trustworthy- just check their record if you're uncertain...

AuctionSecret \$71: Quickest Way To Get Negative Feedback

Be careful about leaving negative feedback for bidders that deserve swift retribution.

Go out of your way to clear things up before you decide to do so.

It's normal for bidders to strike back with their own negative and vicious comments.

Always try to find some other solution.

Don't leave negative feedback unless they blatantly defraud you- if they don't pay, either leave neutrals or no comments.

In fact, if they defraud you, the best way to get them back is via safe harbor.

It's more effective than leaving negatives which most will take as insults no matter what you say and retaliate.

How you respond here is totally up to you. If you're selling on eBay, you depend on your credibility.

The deadbeat bidder could care less.

From personal experience... the two times I've negged someone for not paying, they've fired back with one of their own- both were nasty and unfair.

eBay doesn't remove them either... **ever**... no matter how much you beg them.

AuctionSecret \$72: Buyer Lives Out Of The Country

Be careful when receiving foreign funds. Always insist that they pay by credit card, Paypal or send an international money order.

Most people from Canada send Canadian postal orders... for some reason some banks reject them.

Personal checks are disregarded outright.

Also, pick up some customs forms from the post office in advance to save yourself some time.

AuctionSecret \$73: How Much To Charge For Shipping?

This is one of the more common causes of **negative feedback**. Only charge what it normally costs you to pack and ship.

Buyers are sensitive in this area.

Chances are, **they know when you gouge them.**

I've seen sellers charge \$7 on an item that ships at \$3.20 - that's a \$3.80 cushion, I hope they had a good reason for it.

If not, someone is going to be tweaked.

If you make a habit of gouging your customers on shipping costs, it ruins your credibility and any chance for repeat business.

In your sales policy, try to briefly justify whatever your costs may be...

This is a gray area, so be cautious.

AuctionSecret \$74: Insurance Tips

Always insure when the item is of value (over \$35) and pack well...

By law, the seller is to blame for broken items due to bad packing.

Buyers have no control over how a seller packs an item. Rest assured, carriers hardly ever accept liability for broken items.

It's your job to see to it that they get their item in one piece and on time-

Make sure you do everything to see to it that this happens.

AuctionSecret \$75: Packing Tips

Packing is straightforward. We could get into its intricacies...

But I don't want to put you to sleep.

While it looks nice to pack things as professionally as possible, it costs time and money too...

In order to get the item to point B in one piece:

Make certain the box is securely closed and nothing is rattling around.

Whether you want to insure depends on the value of what you sell. The same applies with delivery confirmation. Just remember when you add these little extras you also have to spend time at the post office.

It depends primarily on what you're selling. If your products are very valuable then insure it. Most sellers don't insure.

For instance, I've sold a good number of CD's- none of which were insured.

So many went out that it would take all day to do the paper work. Some were lost, not many. But since product costs were nil, I could send over without it hurting my bank account.

On the other hand I've sold high-end products that I could not afford to eat the costs on. Those were insured. You'll know where you fall.
As far as materials for shipping...

Newspaper makes fine packing material of course. It's cheap, it's handy and it gets the job done. Save packing material from any other shipments you receive.

And boxes. Because of logistics, I always try to sell small, light items. So the USPS boxes work fine. If your items fit, then you have an infinite number of handy boxes at the local post office.

And you can, of course, have them delivered.

If you need anything bigger, ask a local business- they throw them away all the time.

Pack well. A good dependable box and some newspaper is all you need normally.

AuctionSecret \$76: My eBay Page

Don't overlook the significance of creating a 'My eBay' page.

You can use the page to give buyers important information about your business, products and much more...

In your business on the web your 'My eBay' page can be a nexus of sorts... use it along your website as the center for your promotional activities.

Include your contact info and a well thought out sales message that encourages them to visit your auctions or wherever your product is being offered.

Persuade the reader to scroll down the page (where they will see your feedback and current auctions). You'll receive a boost in credibility something you can never have too much of.

You also get a little icon beside your user I.D. that bidders will see when they visit your auction. People click these things to find out about YOU.

Your "My eBay" page is an important sales letter. Perhaps the most important one you can make in your auction business.

Your auctions come and go- it doesn't make much sense to promote a link that disappears after 7 days.

AuctionSecret \$77: Using a Newsletter Boost

A great way of staying in touch with customers and potential buyers is to offer a newsletter dealing with their interests... say every Friday or once a month.

The topic of the letter needs to be something dealing with the niche you choose.

With a good newsletter you build trust, give out information that is helpful to the reader, and promote your auctions.

You can create an avalanche of traffic when your newsletter goes out promoting your auctions.

AuctionSecret \$78: Collecting Email Addresses

You're going to want to build a list of prospects at some point in the future... such as a newsletter mailing list-

(When you become focused in your online auction marketing efforts)

One way to do this is to offer some free information related to your field on your 'My eBay' page in exchange for the prospects first name and email address.

Simply add a form to the end of that page... if you want to get daring put it on the very auction page itself- I have, with no problems whatsoever.

AuctionSecret \$79: Where to Get Forms to Collect Email Addresses

In order to add forms to your pages and build your list, you need an easy to use tool- they abound, look around...

I use one of two solutions:

Free CGI scripts like **Formmail** can do it, but you need a program like **Mailloop** to extract the data from the emails:

<http://www.worldwidemart.com/scripts/formmail.shtml>

<http://www.mailloop.com>

This is difficult for beginners... but really not that tough.

Currently I use **Getresponse** to do this - the service is free, and recommend it if you're new to building a list:

<http://www.getresponse.com>

AuctionSecret \$80: Getting Leverage By Testing Ads

In marketing there is a concept known as leveraging.

It simply means getting the most out of your time.

Or...

Getting the most from your advertising dollar.

The easiest way to get better returns is to test your auction ads- this is especially critical if you use an ad over and over for a particular product- (this is irrelevant if you sell lots of different items)

Services like Honesty offer **free counters** and image hosting will give you an easy free way to do this.

Keep up with your page hits and bids you receive on Dutch auctions.

Test different ads against one another and keep track of the results.

You'll be amazed that something as simple as a more persuasive headline can explode your bottom line.

Remember this term: **Conversion Ratio**

This is the number of bids per number of visitors.

Tweak and test your ads until you get a high conversion ratio.

If you're getting an average 1 bid per 20 visitors, or a 5% C.R.- change something in your ad to try to improve this.

AuctionSecret \$81: Harness the Power of Search Engines

Using search engines with auctions could be a potent combo.

I say 'could be' because I haven't tried it extensively. You also need to be specialized otherwise you cannot effectively target anyone.

The whole point of eBay is that they bring you the traffic; you simply pay them for it. If you have a good bid pulling sales letter you make money.

Using search engines adds to the amount of traffic you normally get... without you doing a thing!

This is where the '**My eBay**' page comes into play. You need to submit your URL to the various indexes, directories and so on...

A good number will accept your page, but a few require you to have your own domain name. I recommend using the free submission tool 'tooter':

<http://www.selfpromotion.com>

If you're targeted in your niche, this should work nicely for you...

AuctionSecret \$82: Backup Your Data

It's crucial that you begin backing up your data today!

Murphy's Law is always waiting for you to slip.

I have a zip drive and a CD drive to take care of my backups. I make full back ups to CD about every two weeks. I use the zip drive to make small frequent backups of important files.

Get a good surge protector and CD burner to make cheap backups and you'll be able avoid most disasters.

If you have the money, you can buy a good UPS, or uninterrupted power supply for about \$250. It will also keep your system up and running for at least 20 minutes while you wait for the power to come back on, or while you save your files and shut-down.

AuctionSecret \$83: Tax Tips

Keep good records because auction income is taxable... because just like the Iceman, the Taxman cometh.

Consult a CPA or the SBA for advice on tax liabilities and credits. Rules differ from location to location.

Your tax filing records should allow you to identify your sources of income and keep track of business expenses. It's that simple.

As a small business owner or sole proprietor most likely would use a cash basis bookkeeping system.

This simply means income is recorded when it is received, and expenses are reported when they are actually paid.

Also, some states require licenses to sell some do not. Check with the following sites for more info:

<http://www.sba.gov>

<http://www.irs.gov>

<http://www.entrepreneur.com>

AuctionSecret \$84: Save Time At The Post Office

If you don't have much time to spend at the post office, prepare in advance.

You can take care of all your postage needs from the comfort of your own home. To do this:

- **Buy an inexpensive scale**
- **Print postage from your PC**

Also, look into having a mail service come by to pick up your packages. The UPS charges \$6/week for daily pickups.

The USPS charges about \$7 per pickup.

AuctionSecret \$85: When To Ship Your Item

Customer satisfaction is your number one aim. So, you need to ship promptly...

I used to ship 4-5 days a week. This eventually shrank to one day, Friday.

People who win on Saturday and Sunday never expect the shipment until the next week, and I never end auctions on Friday...

Every Friday, back when I sold material goods 7am and get everything ready to go. It normally took me about an hour or two to prepare things for the mailman to pickup.

Pick one or two prime days per week to do your shipping business. Stick to it, it gives everything order.

AuctionSecret \$86: Auction Database

When making a customer database create a system and stick with it.

You only need to keep track of a minimal amount of info such as:

Email, name, address, bid amount and so on... it's up to you to decide what info to include.

I recommend using a simple spreadsheet program to keep track- **Excel** is perfect for this. Search eBay for some older and cheaper versions- you can also try find it at **Buy.com**, my personal preference for my business needs:

<http://www.buy.com>

AuctionSecret \$87: Narrow Yourself

Opportunities are everywhere online and it won't be long before you see them...

But you need to resist the temptation to go chasing off after them.

Stick with what works best, polish and perfect it. Focus your efforts in one direction and reap the rewards...

Once you have one good income stream that works for you consistently- refine it even more.

AuctionSecret \$88: Stopping Auctions Gone Bad

If for some reason you need to stop an auction you can- it needs to be an emergency.

Reconsider doing this with auction you have paid advertising for, as refunds are not available.

Under what circumstances is this permissible?

I don't know exactly, the Gestapo are always moiling and toiling around with the rules. Check eBay for detail.

How do you do it?

Simply cancel all bids place on the auction, leave an explanation, then end the auction itself.

AuctionSecret \$89: Taming Information Overload

If you want to get anything done- prepare to beat back the flux of information coming your way.

Focus, that's what it's all about- and there are a 1,001 distractions online and off.

One way to stay on course is with a business planner- keep track of important tasks you need to do to make your business grow and to make money...

And PRIORITIZE tasks-

You have two levels of task priorities:

- Things that must be done now to stay existent (taxes, etc.)
- Things that bring the most profit...

Everything else is a low-level concern.

Keep notes as they come to you, consider a digital voice recorder to dictate ideas...

AuctionSecret \$90: Selling and Buying By Consignment

An interesting income model you may want to try out is called consignment.

When you sell or buy items on behalf of someone else for a commission or fee that is consignment.

What are the main advantages of this method of selling?

No up front costs and excellent profits- when you consider the number of people in your area who have goods to sell but can't due to a lack of expertise with online auctions, then you can step in...

I did this early on, on a small level with family and friends.

It's easy to scale up- you could contact midsize business offering your services...

I've seen ads for this type of service in the papers, so it's viable- and an interesting approach to auctions. Perhaps lucrative as well?

AuctionSecret \$91: The Importance of Good Feedback

Building up a good feedback record on eBay is a #1 priority.

It's all about consistency and endurance- you won't create a phenomenal record overnight.

Just remember to:

- **Treat your winning bidders like royalty.**

- **Sell them a good product; get it to them in a timely manner.**
- **Actively pursue positive feedback from winning bidders.**

Roughly 40% of bidders leave feedback if you don't prompt them at all. Let them know that you want feedback. Make it easy for them to get to the forum and consistently follow-up...

You can get that up to about 90%. This is a must at the start- you don't have to hound people anymore after your record builds.

If you have a good history, people will be much more likely to do business with you.

Make it your goal to **never** get a negative comment. This is hard to do but very impressive with the buyers.

If get '**negged**', correct the mistake and move on, it's not the end of the world. It happens sometimes like a freak of nature, don't overreact to it.

Kindly reply to the response with a rational explanation for the problem and your buyers will overlook it when they glance your profile.

AuctionSecret \$92: Leaving Feedback

Did your transactions go well?

Don't waste your time leaving comments here and there one at a time as deals settle.

Instead, just do bulk feedback sessions once or twice a month- fashion a spectacular comment and use it over and over.

AuctionSecret \$93: Learn From the Best

If you want to know how to succeed with auctions: emulate the best.

Keep an eye out for sellers with astronomical ratings or those who are selling large volumes of items and paying lots for advertising.

Your clues as to how to make money will come from those who already know.

For an example of an excellent feedback record... check out eBay's all time greatest seller- or at least most prolific:

<http://members.ebay.com/aboutme/parrothead88/>

Whenever I want to inspire feedback envy in someone, I just refer them to this URL.

This fellow has over 24,000 positive feedbacks. Someday, around the year 2525, I hope to have 24,000 as well.

It's good to study up on how the veterans do it. Parrothead88 seems to have a predilection for all types of bubble mailers only.

Notice that it's a consumable product. That means people come back to him to purchase more, usually outside of eBay...

AuctionSecret \$94: Not All Negatives Created Equal

Almost ALL veteran buyers will view your feedback before buying your product.

They specifically ignore the praise-

They look for give away negative comments such as:

- "Product not delivered..."
- "I work for the USPS pal, a classic serial gouger!"
- "Received 6 weeks after the auction ended!!"
- "This guy is a fraud, he pedals crap."

- “Terrible seller, thanks for the junk.”

If you get caught with these kinds of blemishes then they will never purchase your merchandise.

A handful of those kinds of comments can spell the end of anyone’s auction career.

Other negative comments are specious- browsers can usually tell these because of their vagueness. They generally tend to ignore comments that are more emotional than descriptive of the problems.

AuctionSecret \$95: Boost Your Profits By 35% Per Sale...

How would you like to skyrocket your auction profits on each sale by 30-40%?

Upselling is a technique that works like magic with online auctions...

This is something extra you offer to the customer in the end of auction email.

In short, it works... if they want what you offer.

Here are some guidelines to help you benefit from offering upsells:

- **It must complement the product they bid on.** This ensures that it’s something they would probably want.
- **Keep the item around 30-40% of the original products price.** Too cheap, you give it away. Too expensive, no one buys.
- **Show them the benefit of buying.**

Hopefully, this product costs you little if anything to offer. Otherwise it’s going to be impossible to make it worth your time.

Information and consumable products are good types, especially info...

Offering an ebook that's relevant to them, and immediately accessible is the paradigm upsell. Costs you nothing to make or deliver.

AuctionSecret \$96: Real Way to Boost Your Profits

One way to boost your sales is by offering your customers products called back-ends. Major money if you prepare.

Once you have built the trust of your customer they're likely to buy from you again and again- offer them things they will want or are interested in...

Think of a professional stamp seller who uses eBay to add to his customer base.

Let's say he has a customer database of a 10,000 avid eBay stamp collectors; if this stamp seller does his homework then he will know what types of stamps his customers buy.

Potential profits are huge. Especially since most of these collectors will always be collectors.

You want to approach your auctions the same way- that is why you need to find a corner of the market to work. If you haphazardly sell everything you cut your legs from beneath you long run.

AuctionSecret \$97: A Shortcut For Item Descriptions

If you've got an item for sale and you're a little fuzzy on what to say and don't have a whole lot of time in the description do this:

Look for an item similar to yours on eBay's site with the search engine.

Find the most complete ad available, then...

Save the ad to your desktop and re-engineer it with your own style and wording in your html editor of choice.

Scroll down to where the ad begins and copy and paste the description to a text pad. You want to separate eBay's html from what you're going to work with.

Now take the html you just saved to the text pad and start re-working it. Change words, descriptions, html properties and so on.

Let their ad give you a starting point for your own.

Don't plagiarize the exact item description, of course. Just change it up a little. If you reinvent the wheel it may take several hours.

AuctionSecret \$98: Price Auctions Low To Build A Crowd...

Do you have good items that you KNOW will sell?

Start 'em off at a penny.

This will get you healthy early bidding. You want a large group around the item; some are competitive bidders.

(Folks who pay extra just for the thrill of winning...)

If you start an auction for a silver dollar at a penny, at the end of the auction you may have 20 people that have bid.

If you start the same coin at \$125 then you may only have 3 bids at the end.

At the end of the auction the bidding fervor will kick in if you priced low - whereas the fervor won't if you start high. You want irrational bidders.

A lot of buyers who simply outbid one another to build feedback or to avoid wasting their time following an auction that ends with them not getting what they want.

AuctionSecret \$99: Mister Lister

EBay offers the program called Mister Lister that will save you hours of listing time every day.

It's helpful only if you sell lots of the same items.

Make one good ad for them and list it over and over for years.

Normally, without it, you have to post each auction manually- this can be a tremendous burden on your day...

Use programs like Mister Lister to get around this:

<http://pages.ebay.com/help/sellerguide/mr-lister-faq.html>

Andale has a similar program that work with other sites. Take note - Mister Lister integrates with eBay better than Andale.

AuctionSecret \$100: EBay Is Bugging Out!

Auctions are weird sometimes... it's as if chaos theory applied to them more than it ought.

Have patience; the Internet is still clumsy-

Apart from the occasional downtime, eBay is notorious for its computer glitches. Some sellers get headaches trying to list their auctions using Internet Explorer.

If you have ever tried to post and get the “**Page Can’t Be Displayed Error**”- don’t panic. This can be very, very annoying...

Here are a few workarounds that will work for you if this happens:

- **Post auctions using Netscape**
- **Post auctions using Mister Lister**
- **Make sure the html isn’t buggy**

One way sellers mess up is by including <html>, <head>, and <body> tags in their ads. This causes problems so don’t include them.

You can include the body tag in the ad just as long as there is no close to it. The only reason you would want to do this is if you had some background image to use or some other attribute...

AuctionSecret \$101: Auction Ad’s Arch-Nemesis

So you’re getting a handle on HTML, you’re getting bold-

Wait a moment before you post your courageous ad...

Enemy number one with html ads on eBay is bad table design. Bad table design has cost me hundreds of dollars last year.

How?

Well, bad table design might result in your ad being seen in one browser and not the other.

Or no browser at all- or loading slow, and so on-

Steer away from using tables in your ads if it's featured unless you're certain... until you've thoroughly tested it. Until then, just dress things up with plain and simple html.

Email Support and Newsletter

If you have any questions, suggestions or comments, I want to hear from you!

It helps me bring you more useful information-

Send to: tim@auctionebook.com

You can also join my **AD-FREE** auction oriented newsletter...

<http://www.auctionebook.com/subscribe.shtml>

Lifetime Free Upgrades

With this manual, you're entitled to FREE upgrades as long as I'm in business.

It's hard for me to imagine upgrading this manual 50 years from now but who knows!

(I may become a mystical "auction-guru")

Frequent updates are forthcoming, and if I don't email you, you can always go to this destination to pick it up:

<http://www.auctionebook.com/update.shtml>

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There are two versions of this eBook: **this is the non-distributable version of 101 Auction Secrets Revealed**. Reprint rights for it aren't currently available

I do have another version you can sell or give away-

It's the same manual except it's in .exe format- you can earn money with it in three ways- you can sell it directly or by branding it with your own unique affiliate i.d. and letting it spread in the wild driving traffic to two of my sites and generating commissions for a long time.

You can't sell this manual unless you've purchased the reprint rights from someone who owns them. Or from me, or **Auction Secrets Revealed**-

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If you received this book by itself, go to:

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And download the full package- because in the package you'll find ready made ads, graphics and info on how-to make money by simply giving **101 Auction Secrets Revealed** away!

If you have the full package, then refer to the file "readme.htm" or view this file online at:

<http://www.auctionebook.com/readme.htm>



If you enjoyed **101 Auction Secrets Revealed**, pick up my more comprehensive *Auction Secrets Revealed*, of which this is only book is only a sampling.

If and when you order **Auction Secrets Revealed** you also receive a great free 81 page “how-to” manual by Scot Dantzer called:

Dimes-2-Dollars: 8 Steps To Online Auction Success.

It’s a wonderful complement to **Auction Secrets Revealed** and if you’re a new to intermediate seller you’ll find the info very helpful to your eBay endeavors...

And to top it all off...

I’ve included **eBook** - a 400+ page manual that will teach you everything about Internet publishing, which is in my opinion, the ultimate opportunity online.

Also, If you’re concerned about controlling your own product- this is probably the best solution for you... it’s the route I took in the end and has paid off nicely.

With the new epublishing revolution just underway, a lot of money stands to made and lost in the changeover from paper to electronic books.

You can find out more by visiting:

<http://www.auctionebook.com>