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How To Attract Bidders – The Group Method

By Neil Bartlett

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Thanks,

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How To Attract Bidders – The Group Method

"I need to get more people to view my auctions!"

Next to getting a bidder to bid, this is probably the most frustrating issue for sellers.

What a lot of sellers don't realize is timing is everything. I have heard from sellers that when they have an auction that didn't get any bids and they re-list the same auction at the same price just a week later they get lots of bidders, some even make more profit than they expected. So what's the deal?

The `deal' is that you never know when the people likely to bid on your auction are going to be looking at your auction.

So, here we are back at the beginning, how do we attract bidders? Well, one method that I have used to create traffic to both my website and my auctions is to participate in or create your own discussion group.

What are discussion groups you ask? Well, as the description for Yahoo Groups puts it, discussion groups "offer a convenient way to connect with others who share the same interests and ideas."

There are three key ways to use groups to increase your auction traffic. The first two are 1) Join groups that let you post links to your auctions, or 2) Start your own group and invite others to post links to their auctions while you do the same.

The two methods above are a quick and easy way to get started on driving traffic to your auctions, however, the third and best way to utilize groups is to create a specialized group based around a theme, for example, collectors of die cast cars. This way people that are interested in your theme will be more interested in joining that kind of a group rather than a group that just lists various auction links. You can then set the rules so that members may post related auctions.

This last method focuses you audience and gets your auctions what is referred to as `targeted traffic', which is the best kind of traffic.

How do you get started? Glad you asked, shows you're paying attention.

Discussion groups are free and both easy to join and easy to start. All you have to do to get started is go to one of the main discussion sites below and signup.

<http://groups.yahoo.com>

<http://www.topica.com>

With Yahoo, if you already have a free account with them then you can just go to to Groups link from the main Yahoo page

and start searching for groups to join. To start a new group, just click on the `Start A New Group' link at the top of the Groups page.

Topica is just as easy to get started, just go to the main page and click on the `Sign Up Now' link. The searching and signup are pretty much the same as Yahoo Groups.

Now that you have signed up, you can search for groups that may interest you, however, you need to beware that when you join a group that you read their rules, some groups only allow you to post relevant information and then some like the Yahoo group Auction_List allow you to post direct auction links. So, take note of the rules before you post.

Here are some of the auction related groups that already exist that you can join:

Auction_List
Auctions_Plus
Bargains_Galore
cyber-auction
Ebay_Listed
ebaypowersellersecrets
Hot_Buys

There are also plenty of collector specific groups. After a quick search for `coin' related groups I netted over 400 like Ancient_Chinese_Coins, old_us_coins, southasia-coins, and stamps_coins_postcards.

Once you have gotten used to working with groups, you might decide to take the plunge and create your own. After you have done this, an easy way to grow your group is to add a link in your auction description, you can invite people to join your group; this doesn't violate ebay's link rules because you are not selling anything.

One last thing, discussion groups are not only an auction traffic builder, but they are also a knowledge builder. Seek out and join various auction groups, participate in them and you can come away with a lot of new information on how to build your auction business.

Enjoy!

Neil Bartlett is the publisher of The Auction Hot List Newsletter and Companion Auction Site. He has been involved in the online auction scene for over 5 years and in the computer industry for more than 20 years. He developed the Auction Hot List Newsletter and Companion Auction Site to help both beginning and advanced auction sellers increase their skills and profits.

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The Auction Hot List Newsletter and Companion Site are located at: <http://www.auctionhotlist.com>

How To Stop Ebay Auction Sniping.

By Kirsten Hawkins

Every day, hapless bidders get beaten to the punch by auction snipers who jump in at the last minute. I know how annoying it can be, as I once had it happen to me three times in a row on the same item! The thing is that the only people who can help the poor bidders are us, the sellers.

The Problem.

Bidders will bid on an item and then wait for days until it finishes, only to have someone else outbid them at the last minute. In a traditional auction at a real auction house, this isn't a problem at all, as the auction keeps going until everyone has bid as much as they want to, and the auctioneer double-checks with the classic phrase "going, going, gone".

The problem on eBay is caused by the fixed length of time that eBay's auctions last, and the fact that they aren't extended significantly if someone places a new bid in the last few seconds of the auction. Imagine if a real auction house worked that way, letting people shout "50 cents more!" at the last second and win an item. It would simply be unfair, and many buyers think it's unfair on eBay too.

The Solutions.

Until eBay decide to fix the problem (and by now it's looking unlikely that they ever will), you're the only one who can do anything for your buyers.

First off, you can encourage your buyers to use eBay's proxy bidding system the way it was intended. The idea of the system is that they enter the maximum they're willing to pay for an item and eBay places bids for them automatically up to that maximum. They're not supposed to come back and bid an extra dollar every time they get outbid.

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If your bidders are bidding high enough, then no sniper will even come along and beat them - because they will have set the maximum snipe level in their sniping software to less than the normal bidder's maximum. Changing the way people use eBay is hard, though.

One alternative is to keep an eye on who's bidding on your auction, and cancel bids from known snipers - but this requires you to be around right at the end of the auction to cancel their bids. You might also want to set your auction to end sometime when bidders will be around so that they can outbid snipers themselves. This is good business sense anyway - most of the bidding always takes place in the last few hours of an auction.

An easier way to thwart bid snipers is to offer 'Second Chance' sales to bidders who get outbid by a sniper at the last minute. This is good for you, and for them - they still get to buy the item they wanted, and you've just made two sales: one to the sniper and one to them.

Once you've sold your items, though, you might be upset to find that one of them gets returned for a refund. Our next email will show you how to turn these returns into profits!

Kirsten Hawkins is an Ebay and internet auction enthusiast from Nashville, TN. Visit

for more great tips on how to make the most from Ebay and other

online auctions.



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