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INTERVIEW SERIES

**Ebay 101:
Everything You Need To Know
To Get Started Today**

Michael Senoff Interviews eBay Expert

 Michael Senoff's
HardToFind Seminars.com

Dear Student,

I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of HardToFindSeminars.com.

For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

Now, my challenge is to build the world's largest free resource for online, downloadable audio business interviews.

I knew that I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions, and inside information to help you operate more efficiently

I've learned a lot in the last five years, and today I'm going to show you the skills that you need to survive.

It is my mission, to assist those that are very busy with their careers

And to really make my site different from every other audio content site on the web, I have decided to give you access to this information in a downloadable format.

Now, let's get going.

Michael Senoff

Michael Senoff

Founder & CEO: www.hardtofindseminars.com

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Published by:

Michael Senoff
JS&M Sales & Marketing Inc.
4735 Claremont Sq. #361
San Diego, CA 92117
858-234-7851 Office
858-274-2579 Fax
Michael@michaelsenoff.com
<http://www.hardtfindseminars.com>

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Ebay 101: Everything You Need To Know To Get Started Today

Greg is an eBay expert who makes a nice living listing auctions on the site, but when he first started out he was only selling unwanted stuff from his garage. He says his family and friends used to laugh at him... until they found out how much he was making. Now they bring over their unwanted stuff for Greg to sell online as well.

Greg is what's known as a PowerSeller, which means he consistently sells more than \$1,000 in merchandise on eBay a month. And the most amazing part is that he does it from a small town in the middle of nowhere. So you know if he can do it, you can do it too. And in this two-part interview, he shares everything you need to know to get started today.

Part One: The Basics

According to Greg, if eBay were at all hard, millions of people wouldn't be buying and selling stuff on the site every day. In fact, he says the hardest part about selling on eBay is taking pictures of your items. And in Part One, you'll hear all the basic steps including...

- Exactly how eBay works and the best ways to get your feet wet
- All about Paypal – why people use it and how
- How to edit and crop your pictures for eBay
- Easy ways to know what category to list your items in
- How to write attention-grabbing titles for your auctions – and what to leave out of them as well
- How to make sure your auctions end at a good time – and why you'll probably want to cater to the eastern time zones
- Why Greg recommends you wait until the auction ends to wrap items up for shipping
- Greg's golden idea that just about guarantees his items will go for top dollar

Part Two: Shipping Is Not As Hard As It Seems

If you're like most people, you may feel intimidated to sell on eBay because you think shipping is going to be a hassle. Maybe you wonder what will happen if someone claims they didn't receive a package or, worse, if an item breaks in the mail. According to Greg, shipping is easier than you think, but you will want to make sure you go the extra

mile to protect yourself against lost or broken items. And in Part Two, you'll hear how to do that along with some quick and easy ways to simplify the whole shipping process including...

- An easy cheat-sheet for knowing the best ways to ship any item
- How to ship glassware and other fragile items – and get them there in one piece
- Where and how to get the cheapest shipping supplies around
- When to use USPS for the cheapest rates and when you may want to look elsewhere
- Why you should always get delivery confirmation – and what can happen if you don't
- How to know what to charge for shipping
- How Paypal protects you against fraud – so long as you do this when you mail out your items

Ebay may seem intimidating at first, but Greg says not to worry – if you can send and receive emails and look at webpages, you can succeed at eBay. And in this interview, you'll hear exactly how easy it is.

Michael: Hi it is Michael Senoff with Michael Senoff's [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com). Get ready because I have another exclusive interview with my go-to guy on Ebay. His name is Greg Perry. Greg Perry has been teaching advanced Ebay tactics for years. Greg is known as the world's most prolific computer book author, having written more books about computers published worldwide in every major language than anyone else on earth. After the 80th title he stopped counting. In addition to writing about computers, he has written a best-selling book about owning and managing rental houses successfully and has even written a book on government intrusion called Disabling America. He has been featured on the Showtime special and his seminars have appeared multiple times on C-Span. In spite of all of that, his primary passion is Ebay. He writes a syndicated newspaper column about Ebay and has written several advance publications about Ebay selling techniques. Unlike many writers and e-book authors, Greg Perry practices what he teaches. Having worked Ebay for more than 9 years and has been at the Power Seller status for most of that time. He and his wife run an Ebay consignment and to show just how crazy he is about Ebay, his wife Janie Perry recently wrote her first book entitled I married an Ebay Maniac; officially crowing Gregg as an Ebay maniac. His passion for Ebay certainly shows and I want to welcome Greg to this call. I too am an Ebay maniac. It is how I cut my teeth and got my start with my whole

entire HardToFindSeminars.com web site selling pre-owned marketing seminars on Ebay. So if you don't have much experience on Ebay, and it seems all too overwhelming to you, this interview is for you. It is the perfect interview for people just wanting to get started on Ebay. Let's get going.

Michael : Let me ask you this, do you ever record on your end?

Greg: I use to until I got Vista. It makes it difficult.

Michael: Oh really?

Greg: Well I need a separate digital recorder. Again, you would think me, with all that I do, but I don't.

Michael: Well you need to go on Ebay and get yourself a cheap digital recorder.

Greg: Yeah. I agree. I want to listen to our interview and learn how to do that when we are done.

Michael: I have to tell you. I just love Ebay. I mean I really do. I know that you love Ebay, but I love it too.

Greg: Your auctions are doing well too.

Michael: They are doing all right. I mean I have some stuff ending right now. It's up and down. You just don't know what is going to happen. I have stuff ending in 3 or 4 minutes. I just had stuff end. It is like going to Las Vegas, you just never know who is looking at your stuff. You never know who is bidding on it. You have an idea. Sometimes you are extremely surprised and sometimes you are a little bit disappointed, but that is the game.

Greg: That's right.

Michael: It really is like going to Las Vegas. It is a lot of fun.

Greg: We use to price more often on the upside than the downside. So that's nice.

Michael: I was giving it some thought. It is an extremely powerful web site and marketplace because and I am going to give you a little story.

For marketers who want to look for markets that they have no idea about, as I started going through my shelves and selling all of this stuff,

there was an item I had it was a product by a company called Fingerworks. It was an alternative to a keyboard. It allowed a better way to navigate your screen without a mouse through the use of touching your fingers and sliding them across this pad. They were on the forefront of technology years ago. I bought one of these things. I never persisted to learn how to use it. I safely put it in a padded envelope and it was sitting in my drawer probably for the last 3 or 4 years.

When I started doing all of my auctions, I put it in and I put the company name on there and man when I looked at the counter on Ebay at how many people had looked at this item. It was up to 2,000. I was like what is going on here. Why are so many people looking at this item? I typed in this old web site and I went to the web site, the web site Fingerworks.com. They were closed down. No longer doing business. I did a little more research and found that the guy who had developed the technology had patents on it. The word is that Apple bought him out. Then basically shut him down. There are customers who have bought these items and a lot of customers are looking for these items and they are very rare. That is where the demand was. You couldn't get them anymore. They were extremely good products and so there was a huge demand. Now I would of never known about that marketplace until I listed my auction because there were people all over the world who probably had a saved search for Fingerworks. Maybe who had been looking for these pads? They go on Ebay and they type in – if anyone puts up an auction by Fingerworks, I am going to be notified about it. That is really incredible. So you can be a marketer and have any idea, any product out there and there are collectors and people who are looking for specific items that you have no idea who they are, they are all over the world and they are waiting for your item to be listed on Ebay to compete and snatch it up.

Greg: When you do, Ebay will send them an email to say here is one.

Michael: Ebay will instantly direct mail every person looking for your item and that type of product.

Greg: Right. You know in our direct marketing call on Ebay, we talked a little bit about direct marketers don't seem to understand that about ebay. They don't seem to know how to work Ebay. It is such a different monster to them that they don't understand that it is very targeted traffic that ever gets to an upsell.

Michael: Absolutely. So fans of Dan Kennedy or Gary Halbert or Jay Abraham, you post an item up on Ebay that you want to resell and for every

diehard fan who knows about Ebay all over the world will get a direct mail. Ebay will send them an email letting them know that, "Hey, your little item is for sale on Ebay." That is powerful. You don't have to own any software, Ebay will do it all for you for a very small fee.

Greg: Yes, exactly.

Michael: These are my roots. This is where HardToFindSeminars.com started. Even before I had a web site, I started selling on Ebay before I had my web site selling hard to find seminars. It was only later that I got my web site after I had Ebay. That is where the name started. HardToFindSeminars.com, that was originally from me selling hard to find seminars on Ebay.

Greg: I suspect I bought one or two from you because I bought a lot of Abraham things when I first got started. I was thinking that that could help me with Ebay. It ultimately did, but in a very roundabout way. I bought a lot of packages and then resold them after I listened to them all. I bet I bought some with you. It is funny that you also sold those pen that writes with blue lights ink.

Michael: Right, the invisible ink pens, yeah.

Greg: I had no idea that you had done that. On our direct marketing call I said, "Hey I have a great tip for you Michael."

Michael: Yeah, that is right. I remember that.

Greg: We had just come up with that because we were selling some old comic books from the 40's. These were \$500, \$600 comic books. There just is no way that I could of afforded for someone to say, "Hey this comic has 5 pages inside missing. The cover is torn and da-da-da." Then ship it back to me. I could tell that it was a different comic. I had no other way to prove that they were lying.

Michael: Yeah, that is true. It is a good deterrent for merchandise fraud. That's right.

Greg: Sure is.

Michael: Let's get going. I am really glad to have you on again. We want to really stress how powerful Ebay is. Only someone who has had experience and experienced making money from it and really has spent some time learning about the site.

You know I have my sister-in-law and she has a 13-year-old kid and he has his surfboard that he wants to sell. The guy wants to make money. He has his old snowboard boots, surfboard and so many things around the house. He goes, "Michael can you help me set up an account on Ebay?" I go, "Well, you need to talk to your Mom." She is just so afraid of doing it. I am like, "Kailey it is so simple. You could be selling this stuff instead of donating it." Then my nephew, he would love to just take the photographs and put them up and make some money for him, but they are afraid. They think it is so hard and so complicated. Hopefully, we can talk to the Kaileys of the world today and explain to the listeners the beginnings. Ebay 101. How easy is it to use Ebay and profit from it and use all of the wonderful features it has. It may surprise some to hear that Ebay isn't known or understood by every person on earth, but to bring newcomers up-to-date, Greg, what exactly is Ebay all about?

Greg: Well Ebay, located on the Internet at Ebay.com, it is really little more than the world's largest garage sale or yard sale. Really if you look at it that way Michael, you have a long way towards being very comfortable with what Ebay is all about because millions of people buy and sell on Ebay every single week. Those millions of buyers, they are not all Internet savvy. They are not Internet programmers. The millions of sellers, they are not all in big business, most of them are not even in small businesses. Many, if not a vast majority of people buying and selling on Ebay, are just buying and selling from a computer in their house just as you and I would do. As a matter of fact, Ebay is responsible for a lot of people who otherwise would not have touched a computer to go online and learn more about computers, even for the very first time. Just think the lure of buying at possible deep discounts that is something that you would otherwise pay a lot more for or selling something to make more room in your house and making some money. That is enough to spur people into action and get them on the computer. Ebay is mostly known as an auction web site on the Internet.

Once something is listed for sale on Ebay, the world has 7 days to bid on that item; anyone with Internet access can bid on your item. Anyone can bid as long as they first register with Ebay, which takes only a few seconds. Ebay isn't just for auctions. Any seller can decide to sell his or her item at a fixed price and not as an auction. This is called a buy-it-now or a fixed-price listing. Sometimes incorrectly it is called a fixed-priced auction or a buy-it-now auction. Even so, the way a buy-it-now listing works is just like most Internet sites, like Amazon works. If something is listed for \$25, you can buy it right now for \$25 on Ebay. If you want to sell something and you want the exactly \$25

for it, you can sell it for \$25 and the first person that comes along and is willing to buy it for \$25 is your buyer. Not everything is sold in an auction format, but that is going to be really what we focus on because most items are sold as an auction on Ebay. Let's look at maybe another example to show both sides better for Ebay newcomers on the call. I am so glad you prefaced that question with your sister-in-law and telling about how people are actually afraid to use Ebay because if we do nothing else Michael today, I want to convince people who are a little bit fearful of maybe using Ebay. Is it safe? How can I trust the buyer or seller? I want us to convince them that it is a very safe marketplace and it really can make a lot of money for people.

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Michael: Let me ask you this. I know we may cover this later, but do I need a credit card to buy or sell on Ebay?

Greg: In general, it is best. You can get around that requirement with a checking account. Ebay will accept a checking account. If something is different from the traditional sign-up like if you don't have a credit card or you don't want to use one or if you want to use a checking account, Ebay is doing more calling for newcomers that just now signed up. They will say, "What phone number can we reach you and what is a good time of day." We just want to make sure you are who you say you are. The sign-up process might take a little bit longer to get verified if you don't have a credit card because they can't check immediately. So as long as you don't mind a tad extra wait, or it may be a phone call just to make sure that you are who you said you are. Then you can sign up on Ebay without a credit card. If I didn't have a credit card, I would love the fact that Ebay wants to make sure that I am the owner of that checking account. I see that as being in our best interest. I don't see that as a hassle.

Michael: Is that just for selling? What about buying? If I want to buy on Ebay, do I need either of those?

Greg: Ebay will let you buy without a credit card.

Michael: So if someone is selling an item, and let's say it is a pick up item locally. I can sign up, get registered, bid it and go pick it up and pay cash or a money order?

Greg: Absolutely.

Michael: Okay, so I don't need a credit card or checking account or anything to buy on Ebay, but to sell I do?

Greg: Yeah.

Michael: Okay, I was just curious about that.

Greg: Let's use another example to show both sides are better for us for the brand new Ebayers on our call because I really want people to know that it is extremely simple, even if you are not computer savvy to deal with Ebay. Ebay works really the way you expect it to work. If you are looking for say an old map, desktop, or a lamp to match something that you already have and you are willing to pay as much as, let's say, \$53 for it. If you find someone selling that lamp on Ebay in an auction, then you place your bid on the auction. You just type how much you are willing to pay for that lamp. At the end of that auction 7-day cycle, and most auctions last about 7 days; if you are the high bidder then you win the auction. You pay the money, you pay the seller and the seller ships the lamp to you. Even if you only bid say \$35, but you are willing to pay \$53, you might get the lamp for \$35. I mean, maybe no one will bid against you. Let's say that there is a fixed price on the auction as well, selling the very same lamp. You will find these types of comparisons all of the time. You don't have to read books, take college courses. This is just something that beginning Ebayers will get a feel for very quickly. Let's say that there is someone else selling that same lamp for \$53 in a fixed price listing. Well that is what you are willing to buy the lamp for. You could click and buy that lamp for \$53 right now, but hey it is still only \$20 in the auction that someone else has. Maybe if you bid \$21 or \$35 or \$40 then maybe you will win that lamp for a lot less than \$53. You have to decide is the risk worth it to you because once the auction is over if you are not the high bidder, the \$53 fixed price auction may not still be there. Someone may have bought it from you. You will find all of these should I or shouldn't I decisions are constant for the Ebay buyer just as they would be whenever you are in a mall and you see the lamp at two different places at two different prices and maybe the one that is higher priced has a better guarantee. You have to make these kinds of decision all of the time. So with Ebay it doesn't take a mathematical mind. Hey, even I can do it. It is very simple. You will start developing these strategies on your own.

Let's look at it very quickly just from the sellers perspective. I mean as a seller, let's say that you really want to sell that lamp for \$53 or you can list it at a fixed price listing for \$53, but maybe people will bid more than \$53. You don't know the future; nobody does. You might want to

start the lamp out at \$50 as an opening bid and hoping that it goes much higher than \$53. Maybe you want to get more attention to your auction, so you will start it out at \$9.95 or maybe even 99 cents if you are a risk taker because when you start an auction at a very low opening bid, a lot of people that are looking for that lamp will look at your 99 cents and say, "Huh. I might be able to get that for a really good deal." Maybe what we call a bidding war will start where lots of people are bidding for your lamp and it will bid up very high. If that happens, a lot of times early in the auction period, the 7-day period, a lot of times the item will sell for far more than you expect if you can get a lot of bidders fighting for it early.

That actually opens up an interesting question. I will often recommend to someone that they should start their auction at a very low bid, even 99 cents. If the item is worth a lot of money and if it is valuable and if it is in good shape, I think the lower you start the better for those types of items. A recent Ebay study proves that that works very well because the study shows that auctions, and I am quoting right now, "Auctions with a bid are 500% more likely to get one or more further bids than auctions without bids." Now let me explain that. If an auction has one or more bids it is 500% more likely to keep getting bids than an auction that doesn't yet have any bids. The reason that is true is people will look through a listing. Say you want to buy a table saw on Ebay and you are a woodworker. You look for the table saw that you want and the search comes up and you type table saw model number 5AEX and you click enter. You search Ebay and it comes up with 9 table saws, but only two of them have bids. Your eyes are drawn to those two with bids because you are thinking, "Huh. Someone likes these two. Maybe they don't like the other 7. I am going to take a look at these two and see why they are so special." Auctions with bids get a lot more attention than auctions without bids. That is human nature. You want to go where the action is.

When I was a kid in high school, I worked at Radio Shack on the weekends. We would not have anyone in the store in this very, very busy mall until all of the sudden someone happens to stumble in and then someone else might come in. All of a sudden we would have like 50 people in that store, all at once. It is like the crowd drew more crowds. That is human nature with Ebay as well. Your eyes are drawn to a list of auctions that have bids. So if you start a bid at a low price, say 99 cents, you are more likely to get bids early therefore you are more likely to get more bids. There is kind of a strategy here that even newcomers need to be taught. That is don't start everything at 99 cents. You will regret that. You only want to start things very low if they have a very high value and a lot of people are looking for it. It is

an item in demand or it is an antique that several are on Ebay for several hundred dollars or something like that or it is a new DVD that just came out and everyone wants it. Then you are not going to get rid of it for 99 cents. They are going to bid that up.

If you have say an old 33-RPM record album and it is not worth a lot of money. It was made in the late 80's and there are million of them out there. Hardly anyone plays records anymore or collects them. If you start that at 99 cents, you may not even get one bid because it may not even be worth that. If you do get a bid, it will probably go for 99 cents. You want something with value and in demand. Those do best when you start them low, but that is about the only strategy that I want to get into.

The thing for newcomers, I really want to stress all of the auction bookkeeping, the high bid, the collecting of bids, the display of a listing for 7 days, ending the auction at the end of 7 days all of that is done for you by Ebay if you sell something. It is all so very simple that even a caveman can do it. Although I don't want to risk offending any cavemen on this call, but you get so many advantages on Ebay. That's why it is so huge. I mean instead of going to a bookstore to find a book that someone told you about, you just look for it on Ebay. You don't even have to get dressed to buy something. Instead of having a yard sale or taking your things to a consignment shop. Such a sale would have limited exposure. Only your neighbors, only the people in your town would see that sort of thing. Instead you can put your item up on Ebay and the entire world sees your item. The entire world is available to bid on your item. You don't even have to get dressed to sell something on Ebay. By the way for our listeners, I want to make it very clear that I am dressed.

It is extremely simple. Ebay would not have millions of transactions transpired every single week. Trillions of dollars would not exchange hands on Ebay if it were not a safe and easy environment to use.

Michael: I agree. Can an absolute newcomer still get in on the action and make money selling on Ebay? The reason I ask, Greg is Ebay has been around what now 11 years? They have changed, they have grown, and they have matured so much that it is almost a verb; I should Ebay that.

Greg: Well I will give Ebay classes and seminars and speak at libraries. I have heard people say the same thing that I said 9 years ago. That is as far as Ebay; it has already passed me by. It is too late to get in on the action, it is an old technology, or it is now for people who know

what they are doing. If anything, all of the changes that Ebay has made and they have changed a lot over the years in the way that they handle things, makes it even more possible for beginners to get up to speed very quickly and sell on Ebay.

Let me tell you about a lady who lives in the town next to ours. She called me because she heard that I write a newspaper column about Ebay. She is a grandmother with a bunch of kids. Well she had 5 children of her own and she said 3 are now grown and they home school their kids. If you know anything about home schooling families they have lots of children. Anyway this grandmother told me that she was going to sell some of those things on Ebay. She thought it was just too far fetched for her. She, as we do, lives out in the middle of nowhere. She has DSL and she uses the phone service as we do, the same Internet service. So she has the potential to do whatever she wants that is technically there. The only excuse was herself. She thought that she was too old to learn new tricks. I might bring her up again in our recording as a prime example of someone who is convinced that they couldn't do something until they did it. Any way she is now actively buying on Ebay. She is not selling yet, but buying is a great first step. We will talk about more of that later, but she is ready to begin selling now. She told me a few days ago that she has her feet wet. She gets it. She has some feedback. She has bought some things. I will also add that this grandmother bought herself on Ebay, one of those Sony Wii Video Games. Have you heard of those?

Michael: Oh yeah. The Wii?

Greg: The Wii. Daily she bowls using that game and she plays the brain challenge games that Wii has. If she can come such a long way of being a techno novice, then anybody listening here can. So keep in mind that if Ebay were difficult to sign up or use or run safe then millions of people wouldn't be doing it. I thought the same thing, even 9 years ago when we talked. Ebay, that would have been great if we had gotten into it two years ago when it first started, but it is not good anymore probably. Fortunately, we did not follow our own advice and we started on Ebay. The same is true today. You can still get in on the action. There is actually far more action than there was many years ago.

I want to talk about living in the middle of nowhere. You can still buy and sell on Ebay. I am proof. Our little township where we live, and I am not exaggerating. Other than the people's houses, the residences homes around here in our neighborhood, our little town has one building and that building only has one room it doesn't even have a

bathroom. Our downtown is one building. The building is used for town business about once a month when the mayor and some of our town gets together to discuss things, otherwise you have to drive for miles to get to a gas station, a place to eat, or anything. You even have to drive a mile on a dirt road to get to our house. Before moving here several years ago, I didn't even know that there were dirt roads still. We love living in the country and on acreage. I want to make it clear that we did not start buying and selling on Ebay until we moved here. If we can easily do it from here then you can. We don't even have to drive for miles to get to a post office. Our post office carrier picks up all of our boxes everyday that we sell.

You can sell. If you are handicapped you can sell on Ebay. Due to some physical, lets just say annoyances that I have; some may recognize my name from a book called *Disabling America* that I wrote recently. It is about the handicapped in America and how they do so much better when they don't take government assistance and all of that. Sure enough there is a disabled Ebay users group that has grown almost geometrically each year since it's inception. Sellers with all sorts of what others would perceive as problems, they are huge successes on Ebay. You read about them all the time whenever you scan the forums on Ebay.

So the most important thing for a newcomer to know is Ebay is made for people just like you. I mean you don't really have an excuse not to buy and sell there. The only real skills you need is two things. You need to know how to spend and receive emails. You need to know how to look at web pages. That is about it. Even in today's world not everybody is a computer expert. Not everyone feels comfortable, but most people can send and receive emails and get around on the web or they can learn those tasks pretty easily, otherwise Ebay requires no technical skills, no web skills. If you don't know how to create web pages, that is okay. The more you know, the more you can do. I mean if you know a little bit about web pages, HTML, that weird stuff that a lot of people don't know about, but they have heard. You will have more flexibility as an Ebay seller, but you won't necessarily be more successful than you would be if you had an extremely limited skill set. You have a little bit more flexibility is all.

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Michael: Do you have a high-speed Internet connection there?

Greg: We do. We have DSL through the phone line.

Michael: So even though you are in a small town, small towns are getting wired up to the Internet?

Greg: Yes. Even if you don't have any other way to get on the Internet at high-speed, the huge network satellite dish actually works very well. We had that before we had DSL. It is very fast. Even if you don't have wired, if you don't have cable, if you don't have DSL, you can have high-speed satellite service and you will be just fine.

Michael: What is the very first thing someone should do who wants to buy or sell on Ebay? Let's take for example, my sister-in-law Kailey. She is all scared. What would you tell her that she should do first?

Greg: Okay. First you must open an Ebay account. If you haven't signed up with Ebay, you really can't do very much on Ebay if you haven't signed up for an account. Open an account. Even searching for things on Ebay is limited. They actually want you to sign-in before they allow you to do many searches on Ebay. So Ebay wants to get everybody who hasn't signed up, of which there are millions. They want to give them the first shot at things and that makes sense. People like Kailey and others who have never used Ebay before, the first thing to do is to register with an account. Again, it is very simple. You don't have to have a credit card unless you are going to sell something. Even then you can sell with a checking account, but here is the way that Ebay gets money.

Ebay makes money from the things that you sell. As a seller, when you sell something for say \$100, about \$5 to \$6 of that goes to Ebay in general. As a buyer, when you buy something for \$100, you just pay \$100. You don't have to pay Ebay anything for the privilege of buying from them. Only sellers pay a fee. Now, obviously the buyer is indirectly paying those fees, but Ebay makes its fees every time something gets sold. Ebay also makes a little bit of money every time something is listed even if it doesn't sell, kind of like a classified ad. We sell a lot of used and rare books. If I put a book up there on Ebay for a starting bid of \$2.99, we usually pay about a quarter to list that book and if it doesn't sell, we still have to pay the quarter. If it sells, we have to pay 5% or 6% of its final selling fee as well to Ebay. Ebay takes that automatically and that is why Ebay needs a credit card, checking account, or savings account when you sign up as a seller. They want to make sure that they have the ability to get paid if you sell something. That is fair. So Kaylie and all of the others would-be Ebayers who haven't done so, should sign up with a credit card, checking account, or savings account to your Ebay ID, to your Ebay

account, and there is no way that Ebay would be successful if it was unsafe and we will talk about that later.

I created a web page just for the listeners of our call, Michael. On that page I put a link to a video that Ebay has created. It shows the absolute beginner how to register on Ebay. I will tell you more about our Interviews web page later, but it is just a bunch of resources that I put together. I will tell you the link now and we will repeat it later. It is at bidmentor.com/Senoff. On Ebay when you register one other thing that you have to do is come up with your own Ebay ID. It is kind of like the old CB handles that they use to have with the CB radios. My Ebay ID is bidmentor because I teach people how to place bids and how to buy and sell. That is why I put this web page for this call; bidmentor.com/Senoff. That is B-I-D-M-E-N-T-O-R dot com, forward slash Senoff, capital S-E-N-O-F-F, just the S is capitalized. So it's bidmentor dot com forward slash Senoff. There I put a link to the video that shows the brand new, can't even sell Ebay person what it is going to take to register a new account on Ebay. It is real nice. It is a real nice, short little video that Ebay did. It takes the fear and pain out of the process.

Michael: Okay, so let's say that Kailey registers. Is she ready to start selling immediately?

Greg: You are technically ready to sell immediately, as soon as you open an account. The best advice that I can give someone who wants to sell something on Ebay is be a buyer first. Buy a few things. Learn the ropes. See how an auction works from the buyer's perspective. We buy almost everything that we use on Ebay. We like coffee. We are coffee fanatics at our house. My wife and I, we like a special Italian roast. This is really going to make it seem like we are high volutin or we think we are but we are not. We like a special coffee called Labaska. It is straight from Italy, roasted in Italy. We just love it. We buy all of our coffee on Ebay. We buy just about everything that we use. We buy staple items on ebay. We probably wouldn't buy Kleenex and tissue on Ebay, but my wife buys a lot of her cosmetics, lotion, or whatever my wife buys in that area, the make-up stuff. We buy blank CDs all the time, blank DVDs and just whatever we need. We al always check Ebay first. It is not like you have to go out of your way to buy something on Ebay. Whatever you need to buy at Walmart, it is probably on Ebay and it might even after shipping, be less money. Even if it is kind of a wash and by the time that you pay sales tax and gas it's about the same as shipping, go ahead as a brand new Ebayer and buy a few things. Because you learn what Ebay is all about when you do that. You never really know what it is all about until you have

bought some things. You will get a better idea of how the auction process works. I don't really think that any seller can sell anything well until they know what the buying experience for that item is. It is the same way on Ebay.

We will also talk later about Ebays feedback system. It is really important for buyers to help ensure that they get a good deal, but as a buyer you are going to learn how to look at seller's history, called their feedback, and learn is this seller possibly not that trusting because they are brand new? They are new as I am. Maybe I shouldn't buy from someone as new as I am yet, maybe I should buy from someone who has been on Ebay a couple of years. As a buyer, you get familiar with all of that and it really helps to get feedback.

Even after you have registered, you can start selling immediately but probably you should buy. I would say that you should buy about 20 to 25 items before you start selling. Then you are ready to sell.

Michael: All right, let's do this. Let's walk Kailey, my sister-in-law, through all of the steps to buy something on Ebay.

Greg: Okay. This is why Kailey and anyone who has just registered. They have their Ebay ID that they came up with. They have an Ebay account, but they have done nothing with it. They are ready to buy some things. Here is what you do first.

We need to interrupt ourselves and discuss something called Paypal. Paypal is another very easy to learn about. It is very easy as Ebay is and it is linked to Ebay so closely that you can't teach Ebay without learning something about Paypal and this is why you need to know about it. Paypal.com, P-A-Y-P-A-L dot com, when someone buys something on Ebay the buyer can send a check, money order, or cash to pay for the item. Obviously sending cash isn't the wisest thing that you can do. A lot of sellers certainly never refuse it. There is another way to pay for auctions and that is to pay electronically. The way most Ebay auctions are paid for, and by most more than 90% of all Ebay auctions. More than 90% of all Ebay auctions are paid for with Paypal, someone using a Paypal account. Paypal is an electronic payment system. Let's make it real simple. You go to paypal.com and you do just what you did on Ebay. You register for a new account. You also have to link to a checking account, savings account, or credit card to get this Paypal account. That is all you do.

Let's put aside security concerns for a moment. I will deal with that, but the concept of Paypal is really nothing more than a way for you to

pay for things over the Internet. When you use Paypal, Paypal deducts the sale amount from your checking, savings, or credit card and gives it to the buyer when an auction ends if you approve the transaction. Ebay owns Paypal and Ebay owns paypal, you must know that. If Paypal were not secure or not easy, it would not be in Ebay's best interest. Ebay makes Paypal very easy. You can sign up for a Paypal account even faster than you can an Ebay account. You will have to make sure that if you don't use a credit card that you give Paypal enough time to verify your checking or savings account. Once you do that, you are ready to pay for whatever you buy with your Paypal account.

Here is how insecure Paypal is. If you give your Paypal account and password to someone else, you have just given away the bank. That is like giving the key to your safe deposit box. If you never do that, electronically Paypal is as secure as any web site and any banking site on earth. So don't have any fears with signing up with Paypal. Maybe you think, well I want to learn about Ebay, but I don't want to learn about Paypal. You really have to. You have to know about Paypal, because that is the way most sellers like to be paid. Some sellers require that you use Paypal; not all of us require that. I don't think that a seller should require that. It is too limiting. I want to get money however someone wants to send it to me. Any way, immediately after buying something, you pay for it with your Paypal account the sellers has the funds in about one second. Your seller can ship it to you right now if they wrap it in time before the mail goes out. They can wrap it the same day. Paypal is beautiful for being an instant money transfer for Ebay and for a lot of other things.

Back to your original question of walking through the steps to buy something, once you have registered now you open up a Paypal account. You will never have to do that again. Almost all purchase are done the following way. Let's say that you want to buy a Yamaha keyboard. You will go to Ebay.com and you will type in Ebay's search box under the home page, Yamaha keyboard. If you have a specific model in mind, you should type that model number as well. Ebay will display a lot of results and auctions for the keyboard and also some fixed priced listings. You look through a few and you find the one that you want to buy or maybe the one that you want to place a bid on. Let's stick with auctions for now. You look through the lists of auctions and you see that there are four Yamaha keyboards being sold from buyers whose feedback shows they have been around a while. One thing that you might want to do is to compare shipping costs to make sure that you don't win one and then they overcharge you because with Ebay, sellers, good sellers tell you exactly what it is going to cost

to ship the item to you. Let's say that you find one that you like that is currently bid at \$14. You can place your bid, if you found a seller that you want to deal with, for a little bit more than the high-bid. Let's say \$15. So you type \$15. If the current high-bidder did not bid higher than you, you will now be the high bidder at \$15. If nobody else bids by the time the auctions ends, then you will win the keyboard.

When you first bid though, if instead of \$15 you had bid \$30 because you're thinking well I will pay as much as \$30. If no one else bids against you, you will still be the highest bidder at only \$15. In other words you can go ahead and place the highest bid that you are willing to pay. Ebay only raises the winning bid high as needed. It is called proxy bidding, but really the term proxy bidding is the actual process. Ebay never makes you pay more than you have to, to win an item, even if you were willing to bid more. You might very well bid \$30 and win an item for much less than \$30. It depends on the other people bidding against you. Let's say that you bid the \$30 and you are currently the high-bidder at \$15 and that is the winning bid. If before the auction ends, someone bids against you say \$16. Ebay makes you the high bidder still at \$17. In other words you told Ebay I will pay you \$30 for this, Ebay will keep inching up you as the high bidder as others bid against you until that \$30 limit is hit. Ebay won't ever make you pay more than you said you were willing to bid. So if someone comes along and bids \$35 for that, then they will be the high bidder. You no longer will be.

Now throughout the week, you monitor your auction. You see if you are the high bidder. If you are no longer the high bidder then you have to make a decision. Do I place a higher bid on this than I was originally was willing to pay or do I look at other options and start over again. The answer is it all depends on how much you want the item, how many more are being sold, and so on. Eventually when you win a Yamaha keyboard at that time you send payment. Most often all you do is click pay now on the winning screen and Ebay will send you to your Paypal account safely and securely. You approve the payment and Ebay will immediately send your money to the seller. The seller will instantly know that he or she has been paid and that they can safely ship the keyboard to you.

To illustrate this, my wife Janie, the very first time that she bought on Ebay. I can tell you about this real quickly. It was about five years ago. She told me that she wanted a music CD and I of course said, "Buy it on Ebay", as I usually say. It was probably when she first called me an Ebay maniac because until then I never told her how to spend money or that she should. Ebay was the last thing that she wanted to

do because she didn't know anything about it. She knew that I did it, but she was fairly new to computers. She sent some emails and that was about it. She begrudgingly went to Ebay and she searched for her CD. About 100 of them came up. They were real popular. She used my Ebay account to place her first bid. I was looking over her shoulder but I let her do most of the work. I suggested that she bid whatever her maximum bid was, the highest that she wanted to pay. She said, "I would like to pay about half of what I can buy it in the store with shipping costs. Okay, well let's give it a shot. She placed her bid. Let's say she bid \$9. She followed that auction. She was the high-bidder at about \$4 or \$5 or so. She followed that auction for the next 5 or 6 days until it ended. There were other bidders, but hers was consistently the highest. She won a CD for about \$7. She won it for less than she would of paid anywhere else. She didn't pay sales tax. She did pay a reasonable shipping charge. She really wanted that CD. A few minutes after she won it, she told me that she had put a check in the mail that day. I said, "No. I already paid for it." She said, "How did you do that?" I said, "I clicked pay now and I used the Paypal account to give the buyer our money." She was hesitant to accept Paypal at first also, but she was thrilled about her CD. The seller didn't have to wait for a check and she didn't have to get a stamp. Within an hour of my paying through Paypal, I showed her an email that we got from the seller. He said that he had already wrapped and shipped her CD that day. That was to convince her that Ebay is a wonderful experience indeed.

I think our listeners who are new to Ebay, I think in general almost all have a similar experience the first time that they bid on something.

Michael: I agree it is such an incredible time saver. The last thing that I want to do is be driving around town, especially with the price of gas, shopping being in stores shopping price. I can do it all while sitting in front of my computer. I totally agree. Again, I just am in love with Ebay.

We walked Kailey through and my listeners had a guy on Ebay, now here is what is really close to my heart; making money. Let's talk and walk me through some steps on how to sell something on Ebay.

Greg: Let's reiterate. Most sellers are not business and many of them are not small businesses, most of them are people just like you and I, Kailey, and our listeners. Sitting at home in front of their computer just trying to get rid of some clutter in their house. That is why Ebay works because it is the individual describing what they are selling and selling their things. You can sell on Ebay.

The first thing you do is make sure that you have a Paypal account because more than 90% of auctions are now paid for with Paypal as we said. A lot of buyers they don't like to send checks or money orders anymore. It is literally a hassle to have to get up, go to the store, to buy a money order to send it when Paypal only requires you to click to approve the item and you pay for it. There are many Ebay buyers who only will buy or bid on auctions that accept Paypal. If you don't, you are losing money and you are losing bids. As long as you have a Paypal account open then you are ready to start selling. It would be good if you bought a few things and had feedback so let's take our last example.

Let's say you want to sell that Yamaha keyboard that you bought only a few months earlier. The first thing you do is the hardest and it has nothing to do with Ebay. The first thing you do is you take a picture of your keyboard. That is really the hardest part of Ebay is getting your picture. If you fear Ebay, but you take digital photos and pictures and look at them on your computer, you have already mastered the hardest part of Ebay. You have to believe me that is the hardest part. If you have never done that, well you have to learn how to do it. You have to buy a digital camera and you have to take a picture. Most cameras these days are digital cameras and they save their picture on a disc, a little tiny memory stick, and you stick that in the computer and your computer can look at the picture. We are not going to spend any more time on this call talking about how to get a picture from a digital camera into your computer, but you have to do it. Most people can do it. With most digital cameras these days, they come with a program and they come with a manual. They show you exactly what I am telling you how to do. We might walk through the steps otherwise, but with every digital camera and every memory stick and every device, it is done a different way so we really can't look at all the options.

The next thing that you have to do with that picture that you have taken of your item is to edit the picture. This is still part of the hardest part of Ebay. You don't want to have a huge picture on your auctions because most pictures take a lot of computer memory. If someone is looking at your auctions they don't want to wait a long time to look at a picture. Not everyone has high speed Internet yet. A lot of people do but not everybody does. Still about 40% or more of America is still on dial-up or what we would call a slow Internet connection. They simply don't have time to look at large pictures, so you need to make your picture lean and mean, but still good enough so it shows what you are selling. Your picture is so important because nobody wants to buy something sight unseen. They want to buy what they can see, so you want to take one or more pictures. It is best if you only have to take

one picture, but if you can't show enough of the item or enough detail, then you should take more than one picture and get those edited down so that they are not huge.

Now how do you edit the pictures down? Again it is different for everyone who does it, but all digital cameras come with a disc, CD-ROM program that does all of this. It will let you edit your picture; crop it so that you don't have a lot of extra space all around the item. It will let you save that picture in a smaller format so that it doesn't take a huge amount of disc space and then you are ready to go back to Ebay and do the work.

Michael: Can I interject? Almost all of the digital cameras now have right on the camera a setting where you can take a picture at a lower size, so without even the software opening up a program, you can make that setting right on the digital camera. You won't have to do any kind of editing at all. It is done all through the camera but.

Greg: That is great. That by itself is worth it; the whole price of paying to listen to us today.

Michael: You are right.

Greg: Mine doesn't have that feature yet. Also with the camera it explains how to get to that setting. It is just so easy. I do recommend that with that setting make sure that you frame your item so that it takes as much of that camera lens as possible so that you don't even have to crop out the picture. Your picture is just ready to go up on Ebay as is. Once you take that setting and say take this picture at a lower setting, you are ready to go. If you do, as we do sell a lot of books and flat items, a scanner is nice to have also. If you are just getting started don't go out and buy a digital camera and a scanner if you don't have either, but for flat items a scanner actually takes better pictures than a digital camera, but I don't know that scanners have a low red option on them. You may have to work the pictures and edit the pictures in order to use the scanner.

Michael: Thank you. Scanners work the same way. When you scan your item, you can choose exactly what resolution or DPI that you want the scan to come out in. Absolutely.

Greg: Now once you have done that, you have the hardest part of Ebay out of the way. Taking a digital picture and getting it ready for Ebay that is a lot harder than registering on Ebay and Paypal. That is a lot harder than buying something. That is a lot harder than the rest of the selling

process. So for everyone that is afraid of Ebay, that is the hardest part. As long as you don't do that, you are in great shape.

Now you go to Ebay.com because we want to walk you through from the beginning. You go to Ebay.com. You login and just type your user name and your password. Then you click the sell button an Ebay first asks what category do you want to sell your item in. All items immediately fall into mini categories. An electronic keyboard would fall into the musical instrument category. Then you can dig even deeper and go into the keyboard and electronic keyboard category. There might even be a sub-type category for a Yamaha and if there is you choose that. Anyway you pick the category and you let Ebay help you find that category through the sell screen. You choose the category to sell the keyboard in. Whatever category fits your item the best. If you are not sure, make a good guess, although here is a better test. Go on Ebay and search for what you are selling to find out what category most sellers list your item in. Then that is the one that you want to list yours in too. Then you upload your picture that you took of the item or pictures by clicking Ebay's upload picture button. You will have several options here. The first time or two just take all of the default options, just click upload your picture and don't worry about all of the extras that are possible.

Next Ebay wants you to write a title. Ebay gives you only 55 characters to write a title. This is what most people search for. In other words, whenever you do a search for Yamaha keyboards, Ebay most often searches just titles of options. You only have 55 characters to get people's attention. You definitely want the words Yamaha. You want the word keyboard there. You want the model number. If you are selling accessories with your electronic keyboard like dust cover or a stand and you have room, then you want to list the stand, dust cover. You want to list all of the words that someone might search for to find your keyboard. You want to resist the temptation to put words like wow, great, and cool in the title because people don't use those words to search for anything. You don't even worry about grammar. Just put nouns in the title. Just put Yamaha, keyboard, model number, dust cover, stand. Just fill that up with words that people might search for. Don't worry about that you didn't use a verb or anything else. It is not for that. It is only to get found in search results. That is what the 55-character title is.

Once you have a title you then scroll down on sell my item screen that Ebay has put you on and now you can write the description of your item. Here you can be as wordy as you want. You describe your keyboard. You say how long you have owned it. You just say that it is

in great condition, you won't find a speck of dust on this. You say what the color is, even though there is a picture that tells the color. Tell how long you have had it. Whether it works, if there is a key that is bad or not, if it all works perfectly. You want to describe your item. Here is a little tip. Describe it as you would tell your best friend. If you are selling a keyboard to your best friend and there is a key that doesn't work, you are going to tell your best friend about that. You need to do that on Ebay. You need to describe your item exactly. There are people that won't care. There are people that want that keyboard for different things. There are people that fix keyboards. There are people that fix and resell them in resell stores. You don't know why a buyer wants anything. You do know that you want to accurately describe this because they are taking a risk buying over the Internet. They don't know you. You are fairly new to Ebay and the better that you describe something, the more honest you sound. If you point out, maybe there is not a bad key; maybe there is a little scratch on the back. If you take a picture of that little scratch and you describe it in your options, your buyers are going to think, if they took the time to describe that one little scratch that really doesn't matter then probably there is nothing else wrong with this keyboard. That lends an air of honesty and so the more you tell the more you sell, just like we have always been taught in advertising. That is really true with Ebay. You want to say as much as you can about the item because someone is not there looking at it with you. They are not able to touch it. You want to let them touch it through the words that you write. So you describe that item in every detail. You can have as long as you want. You can make it as fancy as you want. Here we were talking earlier, if you know a lot about programming and HTML and all of those fancy programming, computer, techie terms, you can make your auction really fancy and put colors and flashing lights. You can do all sorts of things, but your option if you do all of that is that it is going to look really cheesy. It is going to be less likely that people will trust you. Keep your options description clean looking. Use just the default black text on a white screen. You might go with a larger font for a headline and you might italicize important words, but you want to be courteous and complete when you are describing your item. Don't use huge paragraphs. Make short paragraphs; two or three sentences each. Don't be wordy, but tell everything. Tell everything that you can, be honest. Also, look for typos. You don't have to be a master at writing, but you don't want any obvious typos to be in there because it makes you look a little bit less professional. Now, you are not a professional. You are just someone trying to sell a keyboard out of your home. That is okay, everyone understands that, but you will appear more believable if you are careful in your spelling and use fairly good grammar. You don't have to be a master at spelling though. I know a

lot of people Michael, who enjoy your web site HardToFindSeminars.com. They are very good at selling, so they can really make their skills shine here. You don't have to be a great speller to sell things; especially on Ebay. All people want, if they are looking for a Yamaha keyboard they don't need to be sold. They just need to find one that is in the same condition or better that they want and that they can get at a price that they want. They already know that they want the item, so extra spelling isn't going to help or hurt anything there.

Then, you choose duration. Almost all auctions run for 7 days that is the default. When you first start selling, I said earlier, take all of the defaults. That is a good time frame; however, it is literally 7 times 24 hours from the moment you sell your item. Let's say that right this second we were to list our item, click list and send to Ebay. We are done. We put it up on Ebay right now. In exactly 7 days from that second, our auction will end. You have to keep that in mind. If you are selling school supplies, office supplies, and things like that you probably don't want your auction to end in the middle of the night because people who go to school or who work in offices, they are not up in the middle of the night, generally. You want to keep that in mind. People make a big deal about the best time to end an auction. You will hear the wives' tail that Sunday nights are the best time to end an auction, which is not at all true universally. The only thing that I would say is there are definitely two bad times to end an auction and those are Friday nights and Saturday nights. Those are very bad times to end auctions because people are out doing stuff. If they worked all week, they want to go out and enjoy dinner or something on Friday and Saturday night; however, if you happen to be home and you are looking to buy something, those are great times to buy something. If someone made the mistake of listing something that ends on a Friday or Saturday night and you are looking for it, there will be fewer people bidding against you during those times. So all of those kind of works to our advantage and disadvantage depending on which side of the coin we are on. Keep in mind when your auction will end. Exactly 7 days from when you list it.

Now even as a beginning seller, you want to keep things simple and for the most part check the default options. There is an option that you might want to consider. That is for a small fee, I think it is only a dime, Ebay will allow you to say don't start this listing right now. I want you to start this listing tomorrow night at 7 p.m. or in 3 days at 8 a.m. or 12 p.m. Ebay will give you a chance right before you list an item to designate when you want to start that item selling. That means the item will end that time period exactly 7 days later. If you happen to be

up in the middle of the night at 3 a.m., writing up an auction for office supplies, although it costs you an extra dime or so, you can go ahead and list that item right then and be done with it. Then the next day at 3 p.m., your auction will start. Ebay will take care of all of the details. You also, however, want to keep in mind time zones because what 3 p.m. on the east coast is not 3 p.m. on the west coast. Depending on when you think an item should sell, you might want to kind of take, maybe central time and kind of split the difference and decide when will most people be available. There is another little key that you should know about though. For some reason the majority of Ebayers, it is not a vast majority, but something like 55% of all purchases on Ebay are bought by people east of the midpoint in the United States, from the east coast to the mid-west. More than half of Ebayers are in the east time zone. You probably should be more concerned about pleasing them than pleasing the west coast. I don't want to offend west coast people, but you get the idea there is only 3 hours difference. If you list something to end 10:10 at night and you are in California, you are really hurting yourself because that means it is ending at 1 a.m. on the east coast where most of your buyers will be. So you just want to keep the time zones in mind as you are listing. It is not a huge deal, but keep it in mind.

After that, when you click the send button, when you list your item, you will officially be listed on Ebay. As long as you have designated a different start and end time, your item will appear on Ebay's search results in just a few minutes.

You are listening to an Interview on Michael Senoff's HardToFindSeminars.com.

Michael: So what happens between the time that you hit the send button or your auction goes live, whenever you program it to go live, and you have it up there for sale and between that the auction ends 7 days later?

Greg: That is the fun part. It is almost as fun as collecting your money and getting paid. The fun part is watching what happens from the moment your auction goes live until it ends.

You first of all should be responsible. You should be fairly available. Don't go out of town where you don't have Internet access for 7 days because buyers are going to possibly have questions. Maybe you forgot to say something about that item that is really important. If a buyer asks me a question about something that I forgot to put in the listing, I am very appreciative of that because I needed to put that into the listing and I forgot to. That happens all of the time. As long as no one has bid on your item yet, you can change an auction listing. You

can change it. You can add that information into your auction. If your auction does have a bid, you cannot change any of the description, but you can add to the description. Many times the buyer has written us a question and said, "Hey, you didn't say whether this comes with an A/C adapter or not." I will go, "Oh. That is really important for this item." It already has a bid. I go ahead and I add it to the auction. I am able to do that in a little form that Ebay says revise your auction, add to the description. I will just add that to the description and then no one else has to ask me that question. You want to be available. If someone has questions throughout the week, you want to answer those people promptly. Let me tell you some of the questions that you are going to get though. You are going to say yes we ship Internationally and someone is going to write you a question and say, "Do you ship internationally?" Every time it seems that there is always someone that does that. Even things that are obvious. They will ask what color is it when you have already told them and you have shown 9 pictures that this thing is red. That takes some patience and some decorum because sometimes you get tired of those kinds of questions. I am exaggerating. You don't get these all of the time, but you do get them.

Michael: I get them all of the time.

Greg: Yeah. They sometimes come at bad moments and you want to give them a smart reply. I go ahead and I reply like this. I say, "As the auction states" and then I will quote the auction. I will quote the sentences in the auction that answer the question. Then I put at the end, "Thank you so much for your interest." I kind of told them, "Hey knucklehead, it is in the auction." I hope I have done so in a polite manner where they don't get offended. I have helped teach them and the Ebay community, that I better check to see if it is there before I fire off a question. I think overall if people would do that more that would help.

Michael: Can I ask you this? Do the questions that you answer from people, isn't that published on the actual auction in some cases?

Greg: If someone were to ask you a question about an item and you answer it, you have the choice as to whether or not, you want that question and answer to appear at the end of your listing. That is nice. Let's say someone says, "You didn't say whether this includes an A/C adapter or not." I will go, "Ah. I should of said that. I am sorry. It definitely includes a brand new A/C adapter. It works great." Then I will add this to the bottom of the auction. Instead of having to go change the auction, that way the information will appear at the end of the auction description and I don't have to do anything more.

Michael: That is a great feature. It lets the other people looking at the auction that you are attentive, you are honest, and then they can get their questions answered from the work you have already done saving you time.

Greg: That's right. It teaches you next time; this is something that I need to make sure that I remember to put in this type of an auction. It really helps the whole community to take this seriously. Answering possible bitter questions throughout the week is a very important task and it is one that you cannot ignore. It is one that you can't go 7 days out of town and come back and expects your item to be bid up very high because that is just not the way it works. People want their questions answered.

Throughout the week, I suggest you list more things if you have more items to sell. That way you don't have all of your auctions ending on the same day. You don't have to have a huge mailing day. Huge mailing days are time consuming. For us, we mail throughout the week because we list almost everyday. We list new auctions. We prefer doing that versus listing 100 items over a weekend because that Monday morning really 100 items in and then 100 people pay with Paypal. Now that is not always true, sometimes we will list a batch depending on our schedule.

I have a tip about people listing a bunch of items on Ebay. Don't wrap anything to mail before it sells. You will regret doing this often. We will have some books. I know that people do this a lot. They will sell a book or something and they will go ahead and wrap it and get it ready for mailing. The problem with that is that you may not get any bids, but even if you wait until you get a bid, a lot of people go ahead and start wrapping early so that they don't have huge mailing days that I just told you about. The problem is if you forgot to say something about your item and you don't really know the answer. You are selling it for a friend or something. If you don't remember the answer you are going to have to open that box to look at it. That is a big hassle. Also what if someone wins two items and they want a discount on shipping because they say that you can mail two books in the same box, I don't have to pay for two separate shipping charges. Just mail them both in the same box and save me money. How much are you going to charge me to ship these two books? That is a reasonable question. It is better for you. It is better for them. You don't have to wrap two books and two boxes and they don't have to pay a higher times two shipping fee. It behooves you not to wrap anything until the auction actually ends. You will regret doing that.

Let me tell you a case study. It is a man that I trained once. He only shipped on weekends because he has a regular 8 to 5 job during the week, a really good job and he loves Ebay. He will stay up all night sometimes listing things. I don't know how he does a job during the day. He lists maybe 50 items throughout the week. He is just really active, maybe more than that. It is a whole lot of items, but he only mails on weekends. If he only wraps on weekends it is even worse. He will wrap everything starting Saturday and sometimes Sunday and then he will take them all to the Post Office on Monday and he will mail them. The problem with that is the people that won an auction the previous Monday, they had to wait seven days before he even mailed the item. That is not great. I mean sometimes it happens. If you only mail once or twice a week, you need to state that in your item. If that is just the way that your schedule works and there is just no other way, then that is fine, but be sure and make it very clear that you only mail on Monday mornings or you only ship on Tuesdays and Fridays. That way your buyer has a chance to decide, do I want to wait or not? Also, your buyer cannot later say that this person only ships on Tuesday and Friday and then gives you bad feedback. Well, you have already said that up front and it helps generate more trust. In his case, he refuses to say this and he refuses to put that in his auction. I think that hurts him. He has low feedback when it comes to his shipping schedule; how fast does seller ship. I think that he would make a lot more money if he would just tell people what he does.

Michael: You have to share this golden idea for Ebay sellers. You taught it to me privately. I think we talked about it in our last interview. What is it that an Ebay seller can say at the very top of his auctions if he is able to do the shipping fairly quickly that will really help win the bid when compared to someone else selling the same item?

Greg: Okay, but we are giving away the store here Michael.

Michael: I have to do it.

Greg: If you are able to wrap and mail your items promptly like within 24 to 48 hours after the buyer buys and pays no matter what, then this guarantees that if you put it at the top of your auction it will really hurt your competitors selling the same thing. Who cares if you hurt your competitors because that makes you a lot more money? Michael, I noticed that you do this with some of your auctions.

Michael: I have it on every one of them.

Greg: Every one of them? Right now I have it on about a third of our auctions because you have to be very careful. If your schedule does not allow you to fill the following promise, you will be harmed as an Ebay seller. It will hurt you badly because people are going to tell other people and they are going to put it in your feedback. This is a big deal and it is a powerful selling technique and here is what it is. You put the following statement at the top of your auction. "If we do not mail this item to you within 24 hours of receiving your payment", now you can change that to 48, you can change that to 72, but the further out it is the less effective it is. I would stick with 48 or under. I am going to start over. "If we do not mail this time to you within 24 hours of receiving your payment, we will refund all of your money and we will mail this to you absolutely free." That is the most powerful statement ever seen in an Ebay auction because you are going to really work hard to mail that item within 24 or 48 hours aren't you?

Michael: Absolutely.

Greg: Also your buyer thinks there is no way I am going to get this free. They would never say that for this outdoor grill that is worth \$400, but I might get it free. I might.

Michael: So that is like a little lottery ticket?

Greg: Almost like a little lottery ticket. It is a free bonus that you have just given your buyers a great promise. By fulfilling that promise you also get great feedback because they will say, "This seller ships really fast. I got this within 2 days." We will sometimes have auctions ending late at night or even early in the morning and we are able to get it in the mail, priority mail that same day. They will get it the next day if they are in a state close to us. Well that just floors the buyers. Within 24 hours, not only did we mail it, but they actually received it. That just floors them. We get outstanding feedback when that happens. So with this promise, no other seller is going to make it. Number one, they are not going to be savvy, like [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com) people are. I mean people aren't going to understand the power of a guarantee like this. Your sellers are not going to have a clue as to why you outsell them when you are selling exactly what they are selling, but this statement by itself will help do that.

Michael: Now, I will share an experience. I did mess up. I did have that on all my auctions. I had a lot of auctions ending at one time. I will go into my paypal account and see where the payments are and I had missed one of the payments that came in. The guy emailed me and said, where is my book. Sure enough, I went back into my Paypal and there

it was and I never shipped it out. So I had to make good on a \$46 book, which I did. That is just part of doing business. If you mess up you have to be ready to pay the price. I shipped the book to them free and I refunded his money. You know you have to live up to it. I am sure that the \$46 or \$43 that I lost was easily made up for all of the extra high bids that I got because of having it on, on all of my other auctions.

Greg: That buyer, will he know in the future? If I happen to buy from this guy is he trust worthy? In other words, will that same buyer never trust you again or will that same buyer always trust you again. He will always trust you. If you mess up, you are going to make it right and he is going to get the item free. You didn't make that buyer angry, you made that buyer happy because they got that item free, but you also added trust if that person never buys from you again. Those things happen. Paypal will send emails. We sometimes miss a payment. Paypal will always send an email to you whenever someone pays for an item and that is how we know that we should ship that item. The problem is that 1 out of 100 Paypal emails don't come through for some reason and we didn't get it. Just like you, I should be going to my Paypal account and looking and verifying every time someone pays. I am sloppy. I don't do that always. I, most of the time, just wait for an email that says that they paid and then we immediately wrap and ship the item. One out of 100 or maybe 200 items that happens and then the buyer a week later will say, "I paid for this. Where is it?"

Even without that guarantee here is what I do. I don't put that guarantee on every one of my items because I have a lot of speaking schedules and I am out of town. You only want that powerful guarantee if you can fulfill it. It doesn't mean you always will because of what you just said, mistakes happen, but if you are going to be available physically to fulfill it, that guarantee is powerful. If not, you don't want to use it. Even without that guarantee if I find that it is true that I didn't ship something that someone paid for, a lot of times I will refund all of their shipping costs and just mail it to them just for the high bid. I will explain to them why I am doing that. Most of the time I will actually call them up. I will actually call them on the phone and say, "I am so sorry. I don't know why that email didn't come through, most of the time it does. Look at our feedback. I would never lie to you. I want you to know that this really concerns me. What I want to do and what I insist on doing is refunding all of your shipping and I am going to mail this to you by Priority mail," even if I said that I was going to mail it the other way. I actually upgrade their shipping if I can. If it is already priority, I don't upgrade it to anything else, but I try to go an extra mile just as you did, whether that gurantee is there or not. Now if that

guarantee is there, you have to give them all of their money back. It is good that you do that. You have probably made more from other bids because of it. You want to treat people the way that you want to be treated. Again, Ebay is just individual-to-individual in most cases. I have had those same buyers write me a nasty email, not you said you want to ship this, I often don't do that guarantee. I would say about a third of our auctions have it. I will get a nasty email saying, "We paid you and we don't have our item. We don't know what is wrong. What is wrong with you? Where is it? Should I start reporting you to Paypal now or wait till later". You know things like that. I will call them immediately and I will be apologetic and friendly. I will say, "This is going immediately. This is what happened. This is the money that I am sending you back. Will you please forgive me." 100% of the time, Michael, they have completely turned around and said, "I am sorry that that email was a little bit rude, but you never know who you are dealing with." I say, "Don't worry about it. I totally understand. I am the one who was wrong, not you. Don't worry about it." I totally make friends out of enemies.

Michael: Let's do something fun. What is the most weirdest, craziest, unusual item that you ever sold, Greg, on Ebay?

Greg: The hardest item I ever sold was a cast-iron stove. That thing weighed 2,000 pounds. That is a long story as to how we got that, but a year later we sold another. That is like 10 years ago I would of said, "I will never have a cast-iron wood stove ever in my life. Here I had two within one year that I sold on Ebay.

Michael: Do you remember how much it sold for?

Greg: Yeah. It sold for about \$400 a piece. That is about what they were worth. The problem is how do you get it to the buyer? Both times, and we were very fortunate, this won't always happen. Both times, I said in the auction, "I am not even going to put a shipping charge because I don't know how to get this thing to you." Fortunately I do live out in the country, as I said, and even though 10 years ago I couldn't sell a tractor, I actually have one now. I can lift things into my truck. I have a forklift attachment on it. I can get things in and out of a van or truck or something, but I wouldn't of known how to unload this thing if I were to drive it to the buyer. I didn't know what was going to happen. Here is what we said. Janie and I, my wife, we said, "We are not even going to put a shipping charge on this. You really have to come and get it. We just don't know any other way, but if you are willing for us to hire a freight company to come and get it and to put it on a pallet and take it to you, that is fine. We don't have a problem with that, but you have to

handle that from your end.” Now as a seller, Michael, I don’t like my buyers to have to do anything that they don’t have to do. That is kind of a hassle, you know. If I am buying something, why should I have to figure out the best way to ship it and get a freight company to this guy’s house to pick it up? This was a really special and unique type of thing. This thing is 2,000 pounds. They really did have a quandary and I wasn’t going to make it my problem. At the risk of getting no bids or maybe not selling it for much, but at least it would be out of our way somehow. Both times, both buyers lived 2, 3, or 4 states away. We were in Oklahoma. One was from Chicago and the other I think was in Boston. They drove here in a truck and picked both of them up. Both buyers. Fortunately they said the problem is how are we going to get it in our truck. We can strap it down. I said, “Hey, I can solve that. I have a forklift. So it just worked out that the thing that we were most afraid of selling on Ebay went without a hitch.

Michael: When someone wants something, they will figure it out. They want it and they will figure out how to get it.

Greg: That’s great. I have often thought lately though at gas \$4 or more a gallon would they had done that same thing? I don’t know. Maybe the item would of gone for \$100 less each time. I don’t know.

You just tell people. If you have a problem, just say it in your auction. Just say, “Help me work this out. If you want this, I really want to get it to you somehow. So let’s work this out.” For people who think that Ebay is for selling things cross state or cross country and about 15% to 20% of buyers now live out of the United States, especially with the weak dollar right now. A lot of buyers are from foreign countries. Every time that you sell something on Ebay, you have the option of checking pick-up only. People who live close to you are able to come and pick that item up.

Now we did not with those cast iron stoves. We just left everything blank. We said, “If you want this stove contact us and we will try to figure something out once you win the item.” If you have an item like a stove or something heavy; whatever, you can select the option local pick-up only. A lot of people as well as you as a buyer can search Ebay for items within your area. You may only want a Yamaha keyboard that you can drive and pick up from across town at the longest. You can search by zip code. You can search from people in your state. You can do a local pick up as a seller or look for things that are available locally. The buyer and seller meet together and the buyer picks it up and pays the seller and that is it.

What we do since we live in the middle of the country for sellers on our call who don't really want people to come to their house, that's okay as long as it is not something like a huge stove or something. We have often sold books to people that live in Tulsa, which is our nearest big town about 20 miles away. We will drive to Tulsa and go to a Walmart parking lot or a convenience store. A convenience store, a little 7-Eleven or something, those are the best because they will say I am in a red truck and you will say I am in a blue car. It is real easy to see the other person. We will meet at some convenience place like that, very public, which is especially good for ladies or women with children who are a little bit likely so cautious about meeting somebody. Meet in some very public convenience store parking lot. We have handed them the book and they have handed us the money. We said, "Thanks a lot."

Anytime that we do local pick up only or any time that a buyer will write us during the auction and say, "Is it possible to meet? We live in Tulsa. We see that you basically do too. Can we just meet somewhere and pick this up?" I always write back and say, "I will be glad to do that. We make it to Tulsa maybe twice a week on these two days. If you do that there will be no shipping charges whatsoever." I just as a bonus don't even charge anything for that because hopefully I am there already. There have been a few rare times that I have actually driven just for that and I don't make a big deal about it. I don't even tell the buyer that that is the only reason I am there just because it is a local buyer and they may want to buy from me again. I just charge no shipping charges, of course because there is no shipping. We just make the deal face to face.

One tip, I do like to take cash in that situation. I am not sure why I don't prefer a check in that situation, but if they mailed me a check then I would probably ship their items tomorrow. I guess it is the fact that if they mail a check, they don't really know what I am going to do with it. I might want to make sure it's good at their bank. I may want to wait for the check to clear before I mail the item. I feel like I am in more control if they mail me a check to pay for something. Even though usually we just go ahead and mail their items right away without waiting for anything. When someone meets me in person, I do say, "I really don't want a check. I would like cash. If you pay me with Paypal that would be fine, but I would prefer cash." They have always had no problem with that. A few of them are use to paying with Paypal immediately and they will go ahead and pay with Paypal before I have a chance to contact them. Of course, that is fine.

Paypal makes their money by taking a little bit of the profits from the seller. In other words if someone pays you \$100, Ebay takes \$5 or \$6 of that and Paypal takes \$1 or \$2 of that depending on the circumstances. If I can get a local pick up buyer to pay me in cash, then I don't get hit with the paypal fee also, but of course if they want to pay with Paypal, I have it in my account and I have the money. Having money in your hands is always better than not having it. So I , of course, don't gripe too much about that.

PART 2

Michael: All right Greg; let's talk about shipping items. What can Ebay sellers do to simplify the shipping process?

Greg: For one thing, shipping has to be in your mind and important because you want items to arrive in the same condition that you send it. If the item arrives broken, it really is your responsibility to do something about it. You either have to pay to have the buyer send it back to you, refund the buyer money, refer the buyer some of the money. You have to do something to take care of that problem because you don't want that in your feedback that you shipped items that are broken and then do nothing about it. You want to use good boxing, good packing tape, bubble wrap, packing peanuts, and whatever it takes to make sure that whatever you sell arrives in good condition. This differs for everything that you sell. We happen to sell a lot of different things. We don't ship the same thing over and over and over, although we probably ship five books for every one of something else that we send.

When it comes to our books, we send so many books out each week that we do have boxing that is made just for books. What I did years ago was I looked at how Amazon wraps books. What they will most often do is they use a cardboard foldover mailer. It is just a piece of cardboard that has folds and it is cut into the shape of a cross. Just a cross with each end of the cross being the same length. You put the book in the center and you just go fold, fold, fold, and fold until it is four flaps that comprise the cross. Then you put wrapping paper around that and it is ready to go. That looked pretty easy to me. I figured if Amazon does it, they did all of the research that I don't have to do. Amazon sells more books than I do. I went and looked at Uline, U-L-I-N-E dot com and they sell those book mailers. They call them foldover mailers and we bought a bunch of those at 45 cents or something like that a piece. That is how we ship our books.

Obviously not everyone on this call is going to be selling books, but I am giving you the process that I went through on how we found the

best way to ship the items we sell the most of. You can go through a similar process. Use your imagination. Look at how others do it that are successful. I do suggest that you buy most of your packing supplies from Uline.com or even from Ebay. You can find some good deals on Ebay. Depending on what you sell, if you sell glassware that is hard to ship unbroken. The safest way to mail an item of glass is to wrap it in bubble wrap and put it in a box and then put that box inside another box that you have lined with packing peanuts. That box in a box, dramatically improves the odds that something made of glass is going to get to the buyer intact. That gets expensive when you are using two boxes.

You may not want to start off using new boxes. I suggest that you eventually buy boxes in bulk if you are going to sell a bunch of items. It is sort of like going to the hardware store and buying nuts and bolts. If you go to the hardware store and only want to buy one bolt, it is like \$2, but if you want to buy 100 bolts you can buy a pack of those for like \$6. Boxes are very similar. If you go to your office supply store and buy 5 boxes, it is fairly costly. They are \$2 or \$3 apiece, sometimes more, but if you buy 100 boxes it is more like \$1.10 a piece. Of course, you don't want to start off and we are talking about what does a newcomer to Ebay do in order to get up to speed as quickly as possible? Don't buy boxes in bulk quantity. Don't go to Uline and buy them. Do what I just said not to for your first few sales. Go to office depot and find the wrapping supplies that you are going to need for whatever you are selling and buy those. You are kind of in a test mode right now. You are getting your feet wet. You are not right now looking to eek out every single penny. You are looking to learn so that the 11th item that you sell, you can start eeking out every single penny out of it once you learn with the first 10. So go to Office Depot and buy boxes, bubble wrap, packing peanuts or whatever you need; they sell all of it. All of those big office supply stores sell those. You can also go to gift stores. We find that gift stores that sell little trinkets and glassware, they have a lot of good, clean, sturdy boxes and packing peanuts and all of that stuff that you can pick up. A lot of times they are just happy that you can take it off their hands. So they don't have to throw it away.

Here is another tip, speaking of office supply stores. They do inventory and replace their stock throughout the week, but they have two key days, at least where I live, where their big trucks come in. They have their stockers stock their store. They do this about 2 in the afternoon on certain days of the week. If you are there then, they have wonderful boxes because for some reason office depot and those office supply stores, they know what they are doing when it comes to wrapping.

They often do boxes in boxes in boxes. They will sell a box of staples and inside that box is another box. You can use all of that stuff. They just push it down and throw it away. They are thrilled when you are there next to them putting it on the counters or on the shelf. If he has an empty box, he just hands it to you. You might want to find what days they do that and be there with your U-haul or something. Now don't forget Ebay, as long as you watch shipping charges when you are buying mailing supplies like boxes or peanuts or packing foam. You can find great deals on Ebay for all of that. It is all new packing supplies. Also for new sturdy packing supplies, if you mail items via the Post Office, this isn't UPS or Fed-Ex. If you go to the Post Office and mail a lot of your items, which for items under \$5 or so I suggest that you always use the Post Office unless you make a deal with one of the other companies. The Post Office is a good place to start. They will give you priority boxes of all shapes and sizes. Now, they don't have huge priority boxes, but they have large priority boxes that can hold say a pair of shoes and lots of books. They have flat rate boxes. They have variable priced boxes depending on the weight; that is what you pay. The Post Office can give you some great boxes or you can go to the Postal web site at USPS.gov, which is also USPS.com now and you can order free boxes from the post office.

Now keep the following in mind. Don't ever use one of their free priority boxes for UPS or Fed-Ex and don't try to use one of the Priority boxes for media rate or parcel post. They will get very angry with that. But as long as you ship things via Priority mail, which is a nice, fast way to ship a lot of items, they will give you the boxes. If you are real nice to your postmaster when you go to your post office, they don't make this very well known, they will give you Priority tape so that you can wrap your priority boxes with Priority tape. The tape is no longer available on their web site and they don't advertise the fact that they give it away, but they still do if you ask them nicely.

When you mail something via the Post Office method with a Priority, media or however you do it, always use delivery confirmation. That adds about 45 cents depending on the class that you are mailing to your item if you are shipping by Priority it doesn't always add as much as if you are shipping a book via media rate. Always get delivery confirmation. It has never failed us. The way that works is you can go online and find out exactly the time and date that any package that you mailed was shipped as long as you paid for delivery confirmation notice. Now, they will not mail you anything, but you can go online and check. Here is how you use this.

When a buyer says weeks after you mailed something that they never received the package, you can go on the Postal web site and find out if the package was actually received at that address. This has happened to Janie and I three times. All three times the Post Offices delivery confirmation said the item was delivered at that address. All three times we politely let them know that. We told them the date and the time. All three times, they found their package. Now I don't think that they were dishonest at all. I truly believe that they were telling me the truth. They didn't think that the package had arrived. Some relative had put it somewhere or somehow it got misplaced. It did work out nicely. You should always use delivery confirmation for that. If you have to add a few cents into your shipping charge to pay for delivery confirmation and a new box or something that is perfectly reasonable just don't add more than that. Don't try to make a lot of profit off of shipping. Your buyers are becoming savvier at that and they are going to nail you when they give you feedback. They are going to say he or she overcharges for shipping. They are pretty good at knowing that because you have millions of other people selling on Ebay also and you can check each others mailing costs pretty easily and buyers are becoming more savvy. Don't try to make a lot of profit from shipping, but make sure you cover all of your costs.

Michael: Okay, very good. Greg what kind of problems is an Ebay buyer or seller going to face on Ebay? What are some of the things that are just somewhat pains in the neck and there have to be a few?

Greg: There are a few. If it were problem free then everyone would already know everything on this call because everyone would be doing Ebay. As a buyer of course, there is always reciprocal can I trust this seller? Will this seller actually mail what I pay for? Unlike brick and mortar stores, unlike stores that you drive to and buy something, Ebay has its feedback system. We will talk a little bit more about that. That shows buyers very nicely how effective the seller is.

When you buy something from a buyer and that buyer either comes through with a promise or doesn't deliver or whatever happens in that transaction, Ebay lets you post a message about that seller. You can rate that seller on several items. You have from one to five stars, whether their shipping is quick or not, whether their postage fees are extremely high or fair, whether they do what they say, whether they describe their item well. There are five ways that a buyer can rate a seller as well as for the message. You can put whatever you want to put. As long as you are truthful Ebay will keep it as long as it's accurate. You don't have to get into the gutter with a seller, even if you don't like what the seller did. You can say, "This seller lied about A, B,

C.” If it were true, I would put that because it warns other buyers that that seller should be looked at cautiously if at all. Unlike Walmart or your next-door coffee shop, there is no feedback system there. You don’t really know what a buyer yesterday, what his or her experience was in that store. With Ebay, you have the entire selling history feedback. You can, as a buyer, go back nine years ago and look at our very first feedback and see what they have said about that sale. That is wonderful as a buyer because if you are not sure if a seller is trustworthy, if that seller has 500 feedback and they are all very, very good. If the buyer said things like, “This person shipped very quickly. I can’t believe how well this was wrapped.” Then you have a good history to base that seller on. You can say that probably this person is very trustworthy. If the seller has no feedback or very few feedbacks as you do, you may not want to buy from that seller yet. You may want to buy from someone else. However, if you do buy from that seller, you probably will get the item for a little bit less money than if you bought from someone with a lot of feedback because other Ebay buyers are going to be suspicious of that seller. You have some room there to make some decisions that are best for you.

Of the 8,000 auctions that we have done, almost 8,000 auctions, we have received one bad check and we have had three fraudulent Paypal payments. As a seller, there are problems like bad checks, but we have had one bad check and three fraudulent Paypal payments. On those three Paypal payments, Paypal covered all three. In other words, what Paypal does and this sounds bad at first. The first thing Paypal does when they see there is a problem with a buyer that didn’t really have a correct credit card and they couldn’t get their money, Paypal will take that money back from you that they put into your account. That sting, \$67 if that is what you sold the item for, Paypal will immediately deduct your Paypal account for that \$67. They will take it back. They will immediately tell you why this buyer has some suspicion. They paid with a fraudulent credit card. They don’t go into a lot of detail, but they say there is a problem with the buyer. Paypal will research that buyer and they will also ask you questions. If you have fulfilled your end of the bargain, and if you can prove that you actually mailed the item, even if the buyer was a fraud, Paypal will put the money back into your account. They are very good and quick at doing that in spite of all of the negative things that some people say about Paypal, the majority of us know that Paypal is very quick and honest about that sort of thing. So what Paypal wants as a seller, is they want proof of delivery. That delivery confirmation we talked about earlier, is all of the proof that you need. If you can show a delivery confirmation receipt and Paypal can go online and check to see that you mailed it to that address, they will instantly put that \$67 or

whatever it is, back into your account. That is all they ask. You as a seller are almost always protected.

There might be some people who are listening to us today who have heard that a buyer must have a confirmed Paypal mailing address before Paypal will protect the seller. That is no longer true. Paypal has gone to great strides to protect the seller. Now the bad check we received, we couldn't do anything about it. It was bad and I put it in for collection, which means I sent the check to that bank. I said, "Please send us the money whenever the funds do come in." You can just ask any bank, your local bank how to do a collection item. They will tell you how to do it. It never happened. We never were paid for that check. So it was just a crooked buyer. Out of 8,000 auctions, I don't think that is a bad record to have one bad check. No business on any block in America has that good of a record.

Now, you as a seller, hey your very first sale you might get hit with a bad check or something or a fraudulent Paypal. For whatever reason you get taken for that money. Paypal didn't like the way you did something. You are going to have a bad taste in your mouth if that happens. If that one, for the very first one of the 8,000 auctions that we sold, then we wouldn't of liked it either. I want everyone to keep this into perspective.

A lady got really excited when she was reading my newspaper column. I write several newspaper columns about Ebay. She sent me an email asking me if I would look at her first auction. She was selling something for the very first time like many listening to us here now. It was an auction of a potato chip. I am not making this up. I am not exaggerating. In her email she said, it had a face that looked like either Jesus or Muhammad. When I got over the shock of hearing those two names used in the same sentence, I looked at her auction and it was just horrible. Her picture was bad, she had bad grammar and she had a lot of things that she could fix. Also she had never bought anything. Her feedback was zero. She didn't sell that potato chip. She told me that she wanted to put a reserve on it. We haven't talked about reserves because they are almost always bad things.

A reserve is a secret hidden price that you can tell Ebay when you sell something that you have to have this amount of money or else you are not going to sell the item. There is a better way to do that and that is to start with a high minimum bid. She thought she could get more than \$200 for this potato chip. She put a reserve of \$200 on this potato chip. She did not get one bid. She certainly didn't get any interest in this auction. It was full of mistakes. I told her all of this at the very

beginning. I said get rid of the reserve. I would take down this auction and buy several things and get a feedback record. Get 10 or 12 feedbacks before you sell anything on Ebay, let alone something like this. Even though your feedback will show that you were buyer only for the first 10 auctions, at least it shows a history. It shows that you understand Ebay. It shows that you have done a little bit and you have worked with Ebay. You are not some fly by night person that is trying to necessarily take someone's money. Her auction looked very risky due to the bad picture and the bad description and the fact that she had no feedback and it went nowhere and she had no bids. She was unhappy. I would like to stress that that is not really a problem. It was her problem. She did not understand what everyone listening today understands about Ebay. Don't jump the gun and start filling things out right away. Try to get the feel for things. Listen to this call maybe a couple of times. I think you are going to do great. I think you are not going to have your first experience be a bad one. I bet the odds are great that your first 100 experiences as a seller are wonderful.

Michael: What is a power seller?

Greg: A power seller is a special designation that Ebay has given to some sellers. They are sellers that sell more items than – oh I started to say than normal, but what is normal on Ebay? In order to get the title of power seller on Ebay, you have to sell an average of \$1,000 monthly for at least three months. Let's say that you sell \$2,000 this month, \$1,000 next month, and nothing the third month. You will really be a power seller once you have averaged out \$1,000 a month for three months. What Ebay will do is give you that designation and you have the option of telling them in your options that you are a power seller. The advantage to that is number one, buyer perception. Whenever you have the title power seller, and by the way there are different levels. If you sell \$50,000 a month, then I need to take lessons from you first of all. If you sell \$50,000 a month, you become a titanium power sell or something like that. Maybe it is even \$100,000. I don't know because it is so far away from us. I don't know, but it is some huge number. Then they have five levels of power sellers all the way from titanium down to bronze. It doesn't really matter. It doesn't show which level you are at; it just has a little symbol that says you are a power seller in all of your options. Buyers will see that and go, "Huh. This person is a power seller. He or she has been around for a while. They obviously do well." Ebay also requires a certain feedback percentage to be so high before they will give you that title and it helps generate buyer trust. Buyer trust helps get you more bids and more bids means more money. That is a financial incentive, but there is another financial incentive that is new now.

A power seller now gets rebates from Ebay depending on how well you did that month. If you have very high feedback, Ebay will give a power seller a rebate at the end of the month for as much as 15% or 20% of your listing fee. If your feedback is a little bit lower, they will give you down to 5% of your Ebay fees rebated back to you. So there is another financial incentive to make your buyers as happy as you can be and to become a power seller in order to get that discount of Ebay fees every month. Also Ebay gives good phone support and toll free numbers for power sellers to call when they have questions. If you are not a power seller, I don't think you will be able to even find Ebay's phone number, good luck. It is pretty tough to find.

Michael: Greg, how can a begging Ebayer become a power seller as soon as possible? Is there any advantage other than the advantages you just listed in doing so?

Greg: I would say, don't make becoming a power seller a goal in and of itself. I have proof that that can be dangerous. A power seller has an advantage as we said; some financial advantages, some trust advantages, but don't worry about being a power seller for a long time. That is not your goal. Your goal is to number one learn Ebay. Number two; learn as much as you can. The power seller will come naturally. It will just surprise you someday in your email. Ebay will say, "Hey, you are a power seller. Congratulations."

I had someone that I was mentoring for a little while on Ebay. This was about four years ago. He thought he would get rich quick on Ebay. I knew that he wouldn't get rich quick, but if he worked it well, he could get rich slowly if he knew what he was doing. I told him basically what we said on the call. I worked with him a little bit. I showed him how to take pictures and get digital pictures on his computer. He was very computer non-savvy. Anyway, he started selling gift cards. I don't know where he was getting them, but I think he was buying them at a discount and selling them on Ebay for more, in general. He was selling them in fixed-price listings and not in auctions. I asked him one time why he was selling them fixed price. he said, "Because I want to know how much I am going to get per gift card because I plan on being a power seller in three months." I said, "Why is that?" He said, "Because you told me how good it is." I said, "I said it had its advantages, but what you need to know is it is not a goal. It is not something that you should be shooting for by it self. It should just come." If you please your customers, the power seller rating will appear. He said, "No, I want to do this right. I want to go full-time." He is an electrical contractor and he wanted to quit that and become a

full-time Ebayer. He thought that if he became a power seller first, then he can sit back on easy street and buyers will come to him. I found out about the third month, he was actually losing money on these gift cards and he didn't care. He was in effect, buying the power seller status. I said, "You really are not doing this right. You have a problem with this. I need you to know that you have to stop going for power seller rating. It is not something that should be a goal in and of itself." He said, "Yeah. I am totally convinced power sellers do better than non-power sellers." He became a power seller and he quit selling for a few weeks. He thought, "Great I am finally a power seller."

Michael: Do you know how many transactions he did to get that power seller status?

Greg: It was about 300. He did a whole lot. He was really working that. He was really losing some money. If what he told me that second month was true. Any ways, that is a problem. The way that I described it, it might even sound like it was almost a sickness. To be honest with you, it kind of was. I kind of got that feeling that it was just a problem that he had.

Michael: Then what happened?

Greg: He stopped selling for a while. He started back up again with stuff out of their house. Now that he was a power seller and he did get a power seller rating, and one week after he started back selling again, he lost his rating. He didn't understand that he had to keep selling an average of \$1,000 a month in order to keep it. You are a power seller for 30 days and no longer unless you continue to keep up that average.

Michael: I see. So you have to do the \$1,000 a month?

Greg: You have to do the average of \$1,000 a month to keep it. After 30 days it goes away. They will send you a little warning message and a week later they will take it from you. He got it taken from him. He lost all of his fire. I don't think he sold one thing on Ebay since.

Michael: To qualify again, would he have to do three months of \$1,000 average or just one additional month?

Greg: It is a rolling 3-month average. You are only as good as the last three months when it comes to being a power seller. So those listeners on our call, I hope all of you become power sellers. I really do. That means you are working Ebay very nicely, but it is not that important.

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[HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com).

Michael: What if I don't have anything to sell? Can I find other items that people own and sell them and make as much money as if I was selling my own items by selling other people's items on Ebay?

Greg: We do that all the time. You can make as much money or more because your friends and family and others have more stuff than you do. Once you have finished selling all of the extra stuff out of your house, and that is a good place to start to learn about Ebay. Then you start looking around for other things to sell. We run what we call a consignment business. That is what it is called when you sell things for other people on Ebay. The way it works is they bring us their things to sell and we list them on Ebay, and for whatever it sells for we keep 20% of the selling price and give them the rest less fees. So we have no risk other than the time invested in listing their items. They pay all Ebay fees. Let's say that they bring me a book to sell, usually it is something other than a book, but let's say a book. If that book does not sell, it usually costs a quarter to list that book on Ebay at the time of this recording. That consignment client of mine has to pay me the quarter and we are even. They don't mind doing that because usually they bring me a box of books and what happens is at the end of the month, some sold, some didn't. I will deduct the fees from those that sold, deduct our 20% and give them a check. Fortunately, I don't know if it is because I have been listing the [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com) for along time, but I am pretty good at selling. I am pretty good at writing Ebay auctions. We can often bring a seller more than 20% more than they could get on their own. Especially people that don't want to mess with it. Anytime someone new to Ebay says, "Oh, I just dread all of this shipping." It turns out that it is not that hard, but it is an unknown to people who are new to Ebay. They dread shipping. They think, "Yeah it is worth us paying the 20% to sell these items for us." So when you run out of items, by the time you run out of the extra things in your home, I bet that you have friends and family who are starting to ask you if you will sell their items or at least that was our experience.

When we first started selling, we started selling pretty regularly and started selling a lot of our own things. We moved from a very large house in town out to the country to a much smaller home. It is own large acreage, but the house is smaller so we had to get rid of things quickly. Here in the middle of nowhere you can't have a garage sale and have many drive-by customers. Ebay was our only option. Fortunately that turned out to be a good thing. Once we finally got rid of our stuff, what happened is that we had friends and family that

would kind of snicker that we were on Ebay. This was before Ebay really became a household name also. They would kind of make fun. Have you sold those old socks yet on Ebay? The same people that said that stuff, three months later they were saying, "Hey, do you think that new basket over there that I never used, do you think that would sell on Ebay?" We would say, "Yeah, we think we could sell that very easily on Ebay." It turned out that many of our friends and family started asking us to sell things for them." I am sitting up in my office where we do all our Ebay work. I have an office full of boxes. I don't know how I am going to get to all of this stuff. Our friends and family's stuff still that they bring us after all of these years to sell.

So we never worry about what are we going to sell next. It is how are we going to get around to selling all of this stuff that we already have.

Michael: Let me ask you this. Let's say that someone listening wants to do that as a little part-time business. What do you tell that person who says, "Okay. Great. I have boxes and boxes of this stuff. I don't have time to do it. I would like you to handle this and you sell them on consignment. I understand that you are going to earn 20% of the selling price, minus listing fees but what else are you going to tell me to expect? Do I have to go through every item with you? What if I said, well I am only going to take this for this? How do you set the criteria for choosing a good friend or associate and to sell their stuff?"

Greg: First of all, we let them know right away that it may be a while before we get to their items because we have a lot of people in front of them and a lot of items in front of them. As long as they are not in a rush to sell something yesterday, then that is cool. That so far has always been okay.

Number two; we reserve the right to refuse to list anything, for whatever reason. Almost always that reason is that we don't think it will sell. You can go on Ebay and do a search and click a box that says completed items. You can see if something has sold recently or not on Ebay. If there have been a lot of attempts to sell something and it is not sold or it hasn't sold for much, then we just tell the people it is really not worth selling. You need to sell this on your own.

Michael: So when they bring you the box of stuff, will that be one of the first things that you do is look at the completed auctions to see if there is a realistic chance of it selling?

Greg: Most. When they bring the box of stuff and then we get to their box from other people in line before them. Then, we might find things in

the box that simply won't sell. We will let them know that we are not going to list this and it is in your best interest not to. We also let them know that they need to make a list of everything that they give us because we won't really do that for them. It is kind of silly to do that. Most of our consignment people don't do that and that just blows my mind. People just give us boxes of stuff and they don't keep track of what is in them. It kind of worries me and maybe for liability reasons we should be listing them anyway and giving them a list of what we have because maybe one of these days someone is going to say I know that you had a blue glass jar that I was trying to sell. You didn't sell it; it is not here in this return box. Where is it? They never did give it to us, but how can we prove that. It would be best and we should do this to require that your friend, family or consignment client should always give you an itemized list of what is in the box. Then when you get the box, the first thing you should do is go through it and make sure that everything is on the list.

Michael: You scan the items and you kind of determine which ones have the best chance of selling. How many times will you run the auction in case it doesn't sell the first time and do you get that agreed upon beforehand? What is the expectation as far as how hard you should try and sell the item? How many times you should list it?

Greg: Believe it or not, one time. If it doesn't sell, we return it. We do have an exception that we don't tell them about unless it happens. We have something called an Ebay Store and I didn't want to confuse and convolute this call for newcomers. An Ebay store is really just an Ebay account where you can put fixed priced items up for sale for 30 days or longer and they don't charge very much money to list. It's like 50 cents. We have a piano that we are selling right now and I don't know how we are going to ship that, but we are selling a piano in our Ebay store and it only costs 6 cents a month to keep that in our Ebay store. To most of Ebay it looks just like a fixed price listing. There is nothing really special about an Ebay store except it is a low fee to list and you can list for a long time, but if the item sells Ebay takes a higher percentage of the selling price.

Michael: So from a business point of view, your consignment business, you are going to choose the best items. You are going to give it one chance to sell a 7-day auction. How do you set expectations for starting bids and stuff like that?

Greg: If an item doesn't sell, but it has a lot of attention. We got questions about it and the counter on Ebay looks like 30, 40, or 50 people looked at it. Also there are what we call watchers where people have clicked

to watch an item, that means that they get an email everyday from Ebay telling them what the item is going for now. If an item shows interest, but it didn't sell, we will move that into our Ebay store for 30 days. We will at that point tell our consignment clients what we have done. Then, I am not going to explain all of that, because it hardly ever happens. Usually it sells or gets no interest.

Michael: What about starting bids? Is that to your discretion?

Greg: Almost. We always tell them that we are pretty good at figuring out a starting bid. I always say the following to our consignment clients. "I figure if the world has 7 days to bid on something I am selling, whatever it sells for is probably what it is worth." Every time I have said that and I can't think of an exception, I have always had the client say, "Yeah that is true." They have always pretty much left it to our discretion. We had one person, Janie's brother, tell me, "Make sure that that sells for \$10 or more and it was an old stereo worth about \$1. It is now sitting in my garage because I am waiting for him to pick it up. He wanted that minimum bid to be \$10 or higher and of course I will honor that. No problem, that's fine. You are paying the listing. I don't really care. It would be great if it gets it. Unless it is really jacking and then I won't list it, but that had an opportunity to sell.

Janie and I are very open to people who have a minimum price to some of their special items. If they come to us with a box of things and a box of minimum bids for each item, that doesn't allow us to use our Ebay expertise to get the most out of that item because if it is say a recent DVD that is going to get bid, we want to start that at like a penny because we want to get a bidding war started. If they say start it at \$7, there might only be 3 people bid on that thing and it may not go as high. We never had a problem with a client not allowing us to do what we need to do. On the few items when they wanted more control, we worked it out and absolutely no problem. We in general say though, "You need to let us know if something needs to go for a certain amount, otherwise you are going to trust us to do what we think is best. Is that all right?" They have always said yes.

There is another way to get items to sell on Ebay even if you don't have any friends or family and that is to go to swap meets, garage sales, and yard sales and just find things. As you use Ebay more and more you are going to learn about strange items that actually do pretty well. For instance, 8-track tape players are selling on Ebay for like \$20, \$30, \$40, \$50, or \$75. I don't know why, but they are doing really well. It is because they are rare and they are not making them anymore. Whenever you are out at a garage sale or something, you

need to be looking for items to sell that you can buy for a dime and sell for a dollar. You can modify those numbers as you need to modify them, but what Janie and I do is one of us will go to a garage sale and call the other on the cell phone, off to the side not right in front of the person there and say, "Hey, look up this stereo set or look up this iron or this sewing machine and see how much these sell on Ebay." Whoever is home will look it up and give them the price. We do that all the time. Often we have bought an item because we could double our money from the garage sale. The garage sale owner is happy. We are happy and it is worth our time and all of that, but technology has made that even easier.

For example, the new I-Phones have an Ebay application that allows you to go online, on your I-Phone and go to Ebay and look up items and make bids and pay for things. So you can be looking at that sewing machine, go over to the side, go onto Ebay on your I-Phone. Other cell phones, I am sure, can do this or they will be able to do it soon. Look up that model number and see what it is selling for. You will know right then before you leave if that sewing machine is worth it. Heck, you could even list it on Ebay before you have even bought it I guess if you wanted to do something like that. I don't know. Any way technology has allowed Ebay to go with you wherever you are in the world. That has created for a seller a very efficient market. Just tools that is magnificent.

Michael: That is exciting. I can't wait to get an I-Phone and have that application. Greg this has been awesome. I mean more incredible content. How can my [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com) listeners contact you to learn more about you?

Greg: I created a web page only for listeners on this call. I am never going to tell anyone else about this web page. It is at bidmentor, my Ebay ID, bidmentor.com/Senoff, S-E-N-O-F-F. I am going to spell all of that if you don't mind. B-I-D-M-E-N-T-O-R dot C-O-M, forward slash, capital S-E-N-O-F-F, the S is the only thing that needs to be capitalized. Bidmentor slash Senoff. On that web page I have my email address and how to contact me, but I also put a lot of resources. I am not selling a bunch of stuff. I do have one e-book that I sell. It is at the very end and everyone can just ignore that. The goal of this resource page is just to be a resource for our callers. It is going to be obvious to you that there is like a ton of content. Just one little classified ad at the bottom of the page if anyone wants to go further. It is going to have a link to all of the newspaper columns that I have ever written. It is going to have a link to some seller guides that I have written for Ebay that are actually up on Ebay's site. It is going to have an e-book that our

listeners can download. It is going to have a link to my twitter account. I don't know. How many people have heard of twitter.com?

Michael: Tell us what is it?

Greg: Twitter.com is a fairly new social networking site, fairly new in relation to my space and all of that. Twitter. com. T-W-I-T-T-E-R dot com is a place where you can answer the following question. What am I doing right now? Twitter gives you 140-character answer to that question. I like to look at twitter as being a text messaging web site where your messages never go away. Someone who logs into twitter can look at every message that I have ever left on my twitter account. I have a link on that web page where you can log-on, get an account, and look at mine. You don't even have to get an account to look at all the twitter messages that I have left. My twitter account only has Ebay tips. I am fairly new to Twitter, maybe 2 weeks old and I have already put 40 or 50 tips up there. If you go to the links that I have given you; all you do is just look at my twitter link. There are no affiliate links or anything else involved. It is just look at what I have written. You will find a bunch of tips for Ebay. I am going to keep adding three or four a day. It is almost like a very short blog that is very targeted. Listeners might like twitter.

Michael: Are you getting traffic?

Greg: I am getting a lot of traffic.

Michael: How much is a lot?

Greg: I said that it is not for affiliates or anything, but I did put an affiliate web site up on my about me on twitter. People are clicking that and going to Ebay and buying things. My affiliate click has skyrocketed. I joined twitter two weeks ago. Unbelievable. Keep in mind, all I am doing is putting content. I am not saying how are you doing today, like most people do. It is very Ebay content specific. Just as a side for you, Ben Settle has an interview on how to use social networking sites and I am only on twitter because of that. I don't have face book. I don't even have a blog yet, which is silly, but I don't. Twitter is so easy.

Michael: I did listen to that interview that Ben did and that influenced me. I have had linked-in for some time. I have my, My Space. I have all the other ones. They are proving to be effective, but the Twitter one I haven't taken the time to look into, but I am going to do that.

Greg: It is just that it is so easy. There is no maintenance like a blog or anything. So on that page your listeners can find a ton of stuff and I promise our listeners that I will add more. I put several tips up there now and I will keep adding to it as I run across things. It will be, not an extremely active site, but as I create a web page or come up with a neat tip that takes more than a twitter link or something, I will post it on bidmentor.com/Senoff

Michael: All right. We had a lot of great content.

Greg: Hey, thanks for everything. I really appreciated your trust in me for another interview.

Michael: No problem, Greg. My pleasure. It is great stuff. As I said, I love Ebay.

Greg: Well I am glad that you do. Write if you have any questions. If I don't know them, we will figure them out together.

Michael: Okay, you got it.

Greg: Bye.

Michael: Bye, bye.