Content creation at eBay | 2002-15

- **Roles:** A journey of progressively increasing responsibilities centered around content, community, and social media.
- **Highlights:** Managed seller content and communication channels, including blogs, announcements, and newsletters. Chief editor for eBay's first blog, The Chatter, designed to celebrate the eBay Community. The blog (now defunct) averaged 100K daily page views. Edited and published a weekly internal newsletter about eBay Community themes and sentiment that went out to 2500 employees, including senior leadership.

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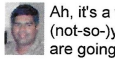
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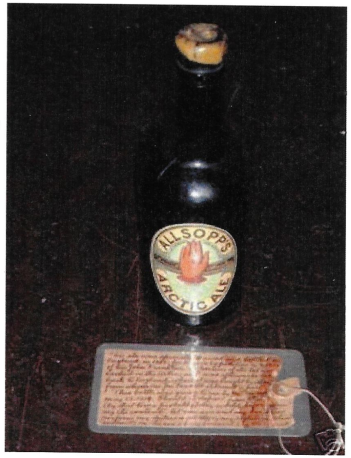
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The world's rarest beer... on eBay!

Posted by Ninad on August 17, 2007 at 03:08 PM in eBay in Pop Culture , General | Permalink



Ah, it's a warm summer Friday afternoon and, as the weekend beckons, a (not-so-)young man's fancy turns lightly to thoughts of beer. I'm sure many of us are going to enjoy a brewski or two in the company of friends and family this weekend -- nothing like a couple of cold ones on a hot summer day. Well, they don't come colder than this bottle of Allsopp's Arctic Ale, which went on an Arctic expedition led by Sir Edward Belcher. (What a magnificent name for a beer drinker!).



And they don't come any *older* than this bottle either. Back when Sir Ted was sinking pints (and no doubt living up to his name soon afterwards), the year was 1852. That makes this the oldest, rarest bottle of beer in the world. I have that on authority from the Brookston Beer Bulletin, a rigorous, scientific, peer-reviewed (and beer-reviewed) publication whose focus seems to be coverage of beer-related news around the world. (And a nobler occupation would be hard to find.)

Naturally, the world's rarest bottle of beer was sold on eBay, home to the world's most avid collectors, whether it's beer or any of our other many Collectibles categories. The winning bid -- and I can only hope it wasn't the bidding equivalent of drunk-dialing -- was a whopping $503,300!

It's an amount many of us may ponder on as we stagger out of beer-dispensing establishments late on Saturday night with the urgent desire to eat pizza with lots of cheese, hug the nearest lamp-post, or look on complete strangers as our best friends.

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eBay - The Chatter - 'Tis the Season of Re-gifting

http://www.ebaychatter.com/the_chatter/2007/12/tis-the-season.html

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'Tis the Season of Re-gifting

Posted by Ninad on December 06, 2007 at 04:46 PM in General , Tips & Strategies | Permalink



Ah, 'tis the season of giving again. 'Tis also the season, though many of us might drag a coy foot about it, of re-gifting. The fine art of re-gifting has come a long way since the time it was famously scorned on an episode of Seinfeld ("He's a regifter!" yells Elaine on discovering that her thoughtful gift of a label maker -- the Label Baby Junior -- has been slyly re-purposed).



While re-gifting has become much more socially acceptable since Elaine chastised Tim Whatley, many people are using eBay as a smarter way of "gifting it forward." A recent study conducted by Harris Interactive found that 83 percent of U.S. adults receive unwanted gifts during the holidays. Of those, nearly half (47 percent) typically re-gift or resell these misfit holiday presents, many on eBay. Not that there's anything wrong with it, as Seinfeld would have said.

After all, where else but on eBay would your "white elephant" become someone else's treasure? One of my friends always gets several pug calendars for Christmas, because she has two adorable pugs. Inevitably she ends up getting more than one of the same kind of calendar. Naturally she quickly heads over to eBay to list her duplicate calendars.



But how do you know which gifts will be most appreciated (or re-appreciated) on eBay this season? One way is to turn to Marsha Collier, author of the popular Santa Shops on eBay and "for Dummies" series of books about eBay, and a familiar figure at previous eBay Live! events. She's planning an entire series on gifting and re-gifting suggestions on her blog, Marsha Collier's Blog, so check it out.

A word of caution, though. When recycling your presents, beware the Gift of Gaffe! A story in the New York Times lays out the delicate etiquette and the pitfalls of re-gifting. Like making sure to remove the card addressed to you while re-gifting your gift to someone. Now *that* could have been the basis of a great Seinfeld episode.

Comment on this post in the Discussion Board

e It! (1 Reviews)

Note: URLs for these articles are no longer available as the blog is now defunct.

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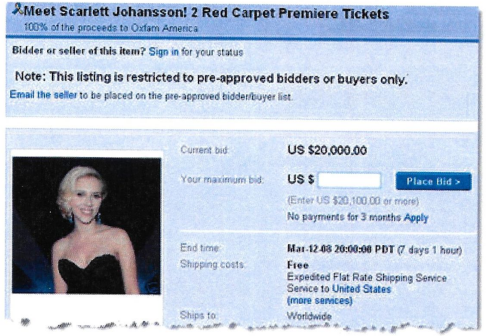
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Meet Scarlett Johansson on eBay!

Posted by Ninad on March 05, 2008 at 05:13 PM in eBay in Pop Culture | Permalink



The Scarlett Johansson adrift in hotel hallways or Tokyo's neon-streaked disorienting streets in *Lost in Translation* we know. The luminous Scarlett (just like a Vermeer painting) from *Girl with a Pearl Earring* we know as well. And we know Scarlett as the charming yet steely Annie the Nanny in *The Nanny Diaries*. But do we know the real Scarlett? There's always been an aura around her (I think) of being far-off and unreachable, in all the roles I've seen her in.



Not any more. In her latest role, Scarlett Johansson is playing herself — and she's doing it on eBay! The winner of her charity listing will get to meet Scarlett in person, at the premiere of her upcoming movie *He's Just Not That Into You*. The winner can take pride in knowing that the proceeds from this auction are going to Oxfam America, an international relief and development organization that creates lasting solutions to poverty, hunger and injustice.

As a fan of Scarlett Johansson, I would have loved to spend a few minutes getting to know her in person. Last time I looked though, the high bid on the auction was up to $19,100 -- an amount way beyond my modest means. Some other lucky winner will have the joy of being chauffeured in style to the premiere, their hair and make-up cleverly crafted by Prive. But if I had enough doubloons in the old war chest, you can be sure that I would have snapped up a date with Scarlett with a quick Buy It Now, so that in years to come it would be said of me, "His BINs were Scarlett, but his blogs were read."

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EBAY'S BLOG ABOUT THE COMPANY AND THE COMMUNITY

Harry Potter and the Impatient Chatter Blogger

Posted by Ninad on July 23, 2007 at 11:44 AM in eBay in Pop Culture , General | Permalink



I wish I had an Invisibility Cloak or some Polyjuice Potion. I'm only 150 pages into *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, and would like to continue reading it uninterrupted. However, pesky reasons stand between me and finishing the book (for example, having to earn a living, paying the rent, etc.). I did find some Polyjuice Potion on eBay, but my cunning plan to feed some to my cat so he can masquerade as me at work -- while I stayed at home to finish the book -- was thwarted by that smart creature's refusal to be turned into a clumsy, bumbling Muggle. I also found several Invisibility Cloaks on eBay but -- apart from the fact that it probably wouldn't fit me -- Laura, my boss, has a Marauder's Map which helps her see exactly where her team members are at work, and what they're up to. Curses!!

I haven't given up, though. There's so much Harry Potter stuff on eBay (including Marauder's Maps), that I'm convinced at least some of it is really magical and will help me finish my book in peace. At the very least, I'll try to find the Muggle coworker whose car I spotted in the eBay parking lot. Seems like their other car is a Firebolt! Perhaps I can borrow it to zip home quickly at the end of the day and continue my reading.



Note: URLs for these articles are no longer available as the blog is now defunct.

Content at eBay| Product/policy updates

Safety tip: "Passwords are like underwear...

Posted by John McDonald on November 09, 2007 at 02:55 PM in Customer Support Tips , General , Tips & Strategies , Trust & Safety Corner | Permalink



...change yours often."

Did I get your attention? GOOD!

As the guy in charge of Trust & Safety messaging, you might say my job is an uphill battle. Safety messages are, to be blunt, boring. (This is also one of the reasons why we're making our Security Center friendlier and more inviting.)

Most serious content on the vitally important subject of password security (including eBay's Help page, I'll admit) reads like mom's admonishment to "eat your vegetables" or "clean up your room." We roll our eyes and inwardly groan, "Not another litany about passwords...I know, mom! I KNOW!!"

We often feel like the messages are for someone else. We might even feel a bit patronized by them. "Of COURSE I use strong passwords, duh! My passwords are NOT my birthday, my pet's name, my favorite sports team, or the word 'password123,' so what could possibly go wrong?" we say.

Well, plenty.



We can thank the University of Wyoming for taking the subject of password security out of the realm of broccoli and room cleaning. Evidently someone there knows how to grab the attention of the notoriously capricious student mind. Heck, introduce underwear into the conversation – that time-honored, giggle-inducing topic we learn to love in kindergarten – and you make even the most apathetic of users sit up and read. We all are kids at heart, after all.

The picture is from U-Dub's brilliant page on Using Strong Passwords. Once you're done chuckling over the underwear analogies, you'll find that the information is pretty darn serious.

How fast can someone guess your password?

We all know that the bad guys behind phishing and identity theft scams are out to steal our passwords, but thinking that they're hunched over their computers trying out different combinations manually to arrive at our passwords is wrong.

These crooks write software programs that can "guess" passwords far more easily and quickly than you might think. Even desktop personal computers have now become powerful enough that they can process 100,000 encryption operations per second. And here's a sobering statistic: according to the University of Wyoming, if your password has 5 characters and uses only lower-case letters, it can be cracked in under 2 minutes. If it's 6 characters, it takes a bit longer, but it can still be cracked in under an hour!

Times Needed to Crack Passwords

Number of Characters in Password	Total Number of Characters from Which Password is Selected		
	26 (lower case letters only - abc)	36 (lower case letters plus numbers - abc123)	52 (upper and lower case letters - AaBbCc)
5	1.98 minutes	10.1 minut	
6	51.5 minutes	3.74 hour	
7	22.3 hours	9.07 days	3.91 months

Countdown to Winning!

Posted by Renee on November 13, 2007 at 12:04 PM in General , Sneak Peek , Tips & Strategies | Permalink



You're filled with anticipation as you wait to see whether you're the winner. Looking good so far...

What's this? Some dastardly competitor is trying to sneak in a last minute bid? "Take that!" you trumpet, as you enter a bid with just one click.

The countdown hits 00:00:00—the listing has ended and you're the winner!

That eBay moment was made possible by eBay Countdown. It's a tool that works in conjunction with Internet Explorer or Firefox to let you watch eBay auctions that are part of your My eBay activity.

For example, say you find that perfect Hot Wheels Redline custom Corvette. You add it to your Watch list, where you eye it over the next several days. After clearing a special spot for it in your display case, you place a proxy bid. That's the top price you're willing to pay. The current price is well under your proxy bid for now, but as others nibble away at the listing, the price goes up. You're not worried, because eBay is placing bids for you on your behalf (and will continue to do so, as needed, until your proxy bid price is met).



Days later, the listing is coming to an end. You're the high bidder. eBay Countdown shows you a timer that counts rapidly downward, ticking off each second until the listing ends. While you're waiting, you can gaze at the bottom of the Countdown window to see pictures of other listings, such as those in your Saved Searches. (I personally love that feature because I can do some productive shopping while I'm waiting!) If you see that someone places a bid that finally beats yours, you can quickly place another bid with just one click: another great Countdown feature!

You should definitely give eBay Countdown a whirl. If you're into buying and love to win, I think you'll really like it. Watch what Jeff Loui from our Buyer Experience team has to say about Countdown below.

Renee

Introducing MicroPlace, and How Elizabeth Got Her Groove Back

Posted by Ninad on November 02, 2007 at 12:51 PM in Best of the Chatter Blog , General | Permalink



Exactly how far can $90 go? Much, much farther than you might think. For Elizabeth from Atonsu Kumasi, Ghana, $90 went far enough to help her start a successful bakery and get back on her feet after her husband's death left her as the sole provider for four children. Today, the bakery that she started with a $90 microfinance loan is helping her pay for the healthcare and education of her children. And the poor widow with five mouths to feed now employs eight employees of her own! (Read Elizabeth's inspiring story on MicroPlace.)



A big part of Elizabeth's success is a concept called "microfinance." Widely recognized as an effective tool against poverty, the most common microfinance service is the provision of small loans – often as low as $50 – to enable the working poor to lift themselves from poverty through their own hard work and entrepreneurial spirit.

It's a concept that should strike a chord among many eBay sellers, thousands of whom have also built up successful businesses through their own hard work and entrepreneurial spirit.

There are millions of people like Elizabeth around the world who just need that little start, a microfinance loan, to lift themselves out of poverty. Unfortunately, most of them are unable to obtain loans from banks or other traditional lending institutions. And likewise, even though there are millions of good-hearted Americans willing to put their money behind the Elizabeths of this world, they're not sure of how to go about it.

That's where a new company named MicroPlace comes in.

MicroPlace (a wholly-owned subsidiary of eBay, Inc.) enables consumers in the U.S. to use the internet to make microfinance investments that not only address global poverty, but also provide a financial return to the investors. The site's philosophy can be summarized in four words – "Invest wisely. End poverty."

How does it work? I spoke to Tracey Pettengill Turner, Founder and General Manager of MicroPlace (watch her video below). She explained, "Everyday people can purchase investments – for as little as $100 – from microfinance security issuers. Through MicroPlace's secure platform, we enable investors to direct the impact of their investment to a specific country and microfinance institution in the developing world. The microfinance institutions use the funds to make small loans to the working poor, who in turn use the loans to start or expand small businesses and lift themselves out of

hat my money is helping someone raise themselves out of poverty, I also like the idea of making a socially responsible investment and earning a return. I'm looking on www.microplace.com for good opportunities, and suggest you check it out as well.

Note: URLs for these articles are no longer available as the blog is now defunct.