

Understanding Ebay's VeRO Program

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What's VeRO? What on Earth is that? Well, it's a very scary eBay program that can get your auctions shut down, that's what it is.

VeRO stands for Verified Rights Owner. It is the eBay policy that deals with complaints about your auctions from companies who own copyrights, patents or trademarks on the items you are selling. Unfortunately, it is often abused to remove items from eBay that are perfectly legitimate to resell, simply because the copyright owner doesn't want people getting their hands on them. If the copyright of something you're selling is owned by one of eBay's 5,000 verified rights owners, be prepared for trouble. eBay have given these companies the right to remove any auction from eBay that they see fit, and, say eBay, "eBay cannot require the rights owner to provide you with the exact reason of the request to remove your listing". Worse, eBay may even suspend your account, or give your real-world contact details to the company in question.

Why Do eBay Do This?

Basically, they do it to avoid getting sued, or even getting threatened with being sued. There is a law called the DMCA (digital millennium copyright act) that means that eBay must either take these auctions down when it asked to or take full responsibility for them from that point on. eBay doesn't want to take any responsibility for your auctions.

It's not worth worrying too much about it - 99% of the VeRO program is aimed at stopping fake brand-name goods or pirated media being sold through eBay. Big companies also seem to get quite upset when eBay sellers take the company's ad copy, logos or professional pictures and use them for selling on eBay.

If you'd like to take a slightly patronising quiz about copyright to help you understand eBay's policy, go here: <http://pages.ebay.com/help/tutorial/verotutorial/intro2.html>.

So Who Are These Companies?

There's a complete list available here:

<http://pages.ebay.com/help/community/vero-aboutme.html>. This list includes everything from the Microsoft and Adobe to Chanel and Nike, not to mention the RIAA (recording industry association) and MPAA (motion picture association). Most of the companies, understandably, deal in software, media or fashion.

eBay Say I Violated VeRO and I Want to Appeal.

Use the link at the bottom of this page:

<http://pages.ebay.com/help/confidence/vero-removed-listing.html>. That'll get you to eBay's VeRO Seller Appeal Form, where you can put your case to them directly. You are supposed to take it up with the company that complained about you first, however - and sometimes you might find that they just back down, which makes the whole thing a lot easier.

If you have no luck getting any response from eBay by email, it's not really worth trying to phone them - you'll find they're most responsive if you use the Live Chat feature or write them an actual, real-paper letter. You're best off being nice to eBay: they have absolutely no

obligation, after all, to ever let you sell anything at all.

On a happier note, have you ever heard of eBay Anything Points? No? Well, youâ€™re not alone. The next email will explain what these little-used points can do for you.