

10 Ways To Save Time And Money With Packing And Shippin...

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Created On: 14 Oct 2009 10:41 AM

One problem with eBay is that unless you are careful you can end up spending far too much time on routine tasks such as packing and shipping. Not only is there the time spent wrapping the items, but also when you take them to your local post office to have them weighed, stamped and posted. As someone who never seems to have enough time I have adopted some time saving measures which frees up my time to do other things.

1. Buy Stamps in advance.

Many of the items that I sell are similar, CDs , audio tapes and books. Therefore I know exactly what the postage is for these items and I buy in advance a quantity of stamps for the various denominations that I use. I can then pack, stamp them and just drop them into the post box without the need to wait at the post office counter.

2. Get a set of scales

Of course one really helpful piece of equipment is a set of postal scales. Not only does this save you time by allowing you to pre stamp packages but it is also very useful when you are listing an item. You can quickly and accurately calculate the exact cost of postage for each item. This can save you making those errors of under estimating the true cost of posting an item or having to make a special journey to the post office just to find out what it will cost to post.

3. Buy packaging materials online

A thriving industry has grown on eBay offering packaging materials. It really is a case of selling spades to miners, but as a result the competition in this field is very fierce. This means that you can make considerable savings if you go to the Business, Office and Industrial Category and look in Packing and Postal supplies. Also many of the major stationers such as Staples and Viking offer a good 24 hour service and often have some attractive special offers or gifts to make an even better deal. Most offer free postage for orders over a certain quite low amount.

4. Whenever possible use padded bags.

If it is suitable for your products one of the great time savers is the use of padded envelopes. They come in a big range of sizes and thickness and are suitable for a wide range of products. It is much easier and quicker just to pop something into an envelope and seal it than putting something in a box, put in padding and using tape to seal it. Also these days padded envelopes can work out cheaper than other forms of packaging.

5. Hold a stock of Post Office Forms

These days forms control our lives and it is no different with the postal authorities. Normally if you are a regular postal user your local post office will be happy to supply you with a stock of the forms that you might need. The ones I keep handy are customs declarations, recorded International and national forms and supplies of airmail and fragile stickers. Completing these and applying them to your packages before you go up to the post office can save considerable time.

6. Use Rubber stamps

I also have a selection of rubber stamps with First Class Mail, Do Not Bend, Small Packet Rate, This

saves the time rather than writing these phrases over and over again.

7. Pre print return labels

I would never send out a packet without a return address on it. Over the years that I have used eBay I have had about 5 parcels come back to me because they were undeliverable for one reason or another. If I had not had a return address label on them they and the contents would have been gone forever. You can of course order a pack of name and address labels from the local printer but I have found the most cost effective is to use the sheets of plain labels such as Avery, the 65 labels to a sheet are ideal and print them off as required a sheet at a time. I then just stick one of these on to every packet I send out. And of course it also makes you look a little more professional with your packaging.

8. Pick the time that you go to the post office

There are always some times in the day or days in the week when your local post office is liable to be more busy than others. If you ask the counter staff I am sure they would be happy to tell you when these times are likely to be. Also they would also be able to tell you the times they would expect to be less busy. If you use this information you can cut down the time you spend waiting in line at the post office.

9. Copy addresses from Paypal notification.

Whenever you get payment notification from Paypal it will contain the name and address of the buyer. I always highlight and copy this and using my labelling software I paste this into the label template this saves having to write or type the information in. I always print my labels on the AveryL7160, 21 labels to a sheet paper.

10. Compare prices

There is plenty of competition to ship larger items and it is worth comparing prices for the various shippers and couriers to get the best deals. In my experience with smaller items it is difficult to beat the Post Office but for items that need to be shipped fast or weigh over 2 Kgs (4 1/2lb) it is worth looking for the best deal.