

## Using Ebay to Advertise Offline Stores

Author:  
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Ebay is a fabulous way to sell items, but did you know that it can also be used to advertise and drive sales for your offline business? When you list items on Ebay, you can also include information about other offline businesses. This results in a marketing one-two punch; buyers are drawn to your auction as well as your store information. It's a legitimate tactic that does not violate Ebay's terms of use, and savvy sellers are taking advantage of it.

With a bit of research and practice, you can soon come up with auction titles that catch the eyes of potential buyers. When these buyers view your item description, they will also be exposed to any information you list about an offline business. This is particularly useful for sellers of antiques, collectibles, and other items that can take a long time to sell. Smaller items can be listed on Ebay, along with the address and phone number to the seller's offline store where larger merchandise can be found. If this sounds like an easy and effective marketing tool, that's because it is.

There are a few tips to remember before you advertise your other businesses on Ebay. First, consider whether this sort of advertising will benefit you. If you sell products within a niche market, such as musical instruments or rare artwork, advertising your shop in your auction listings will probably drive business to your offline store. But if you're a supplier of general goods that are easily obtained, you might not benefit as much.

Successful merchants who use this marketing strategy always include basic information about their offline stores. You need to list a phone number and physical store address so that buyers can contact you. Put up a schedule of store hours. If your store is in an urban location where parking is a bit tricky, be sure to give a brief description of the parking situation. Will buyers need to pay to park? Will they need to park down the street? Extra information like this will prepare buyers for a trip to your boutique.

Another thing to consider is a map of your store and the surrounding area. Buyers like to know where they are going. If they can visualize your store's location, they will be more likely to visit. Also, put up a picture of your storefront and interior. This makes your store seem more familiar to buyers and paints an accurate picture of your establishment.

Finally, buyers like to know that you want their business. In your Ebay listing, put in a brief paragraph about how your business prides itself on excellent service. Then invite buyers to call or come by. Even a simple invitation can make the difference between a casual browser and someone who will take the time to come and look at your merchandise.

Many offline shops use Ebay to sell their overstock, but really sharp sellers use Ebay to market their other stores, too. Advertise your business on your Ebay auction listings and you will bring your store's name to a whole new audience.