

The eBay Business Answer Book: The 350 Most Frequently Asked Questions About Making Big Money on eBay

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More than one million people in the U.S. make a living selling on eBay, a Fortune 100 company that started its unique retail format a little more than ten years ago. There are many more who dream of making it big—or just making it period. This book reveals that it takes more than just having material to sell. It takes hard work, business acumen, and perseverance.

Instructions for buying and selling on eBay are well-documented on its Web site, which may bring into question why this book is needed. The author explains that searching for answers online can be cumbersome and time-consuming. He also points out that despite the wealth of material online, the same questions come up again and again in online discussions and in eBay education sessions. The goal of the book is to shorten the learning curve for eBay success by covering these frequently answered questions in one spot.

The book's twenty-one topical chapters use an easy-to-use question and answer format. Each chapter starts with basic introductory questions for the topic, moving on to the more specific or technical. The first chapter addresses the most basic question of all: Am I running a business or is it just a hobby? The author clarifies the difference, stressing the legal and tax advantages of being a business. He moves on to questions about what is legal, and not, to sell on eBay, how to deal with buyers that aren't honest, tips on packaging and shipping materials, and what to do if a seller goofs when placing an auction item up for bid. PayPal, an essential part of most eBay business, is covered in detail. The advantages are discussed of having an eBay store, which is not a brick-and-mortar building but an organized Web site where buyers can view all inventory a seller has available. Policies have been developed for many aspects of eBay operations and these are referenced frequently throughout this book.

The author, a lawyer and faculty member of eBay University, has written other books on eBay and small business operations. He wrote this book with the cooperation and consultation of other eBay experts whom he frequently quotes.

Seven appendices are included offering suggested additional reading, such as how to use the Web site effectively, deductible and nondeductible business expenses, and guidance on when and how to post a selling question to the eBay community without looking foolish. Its index was not available for review but it should be a valuable access point for quick reference.

There is some repetition and overlap of information given the book's topical arrangement and format but this is understandable as most won't read cover-to-cover but dip in to find the answers to their immediate question. This is a valuable addition to the number of eBay how-to guides because of the author's experience and consultation with other experts. Ennico has created a book with friendly writing style and logical organization.

MARY CARY CRAWFORD (April 11, 2008)

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