

eBay offers assortment of essential goods

Place bids on everything from practical to extravagant purchases and everything in between

Diana Notartomaso
Reporter

I knew practically nothing about eBay, the Internet auction Web site, before this summer. Often I would ask people, "Where did you get that video game?" or "How did you get your tickets to the concert?" and the casual response would be "On eBay." Online shopping is growing more popular. Though I felt a little out of the loop, I never had the desire to check out the site.

My lack of interest may have been spawned from a story my friend told me about a girl bidding \$10,000 for a piece of half-eaten toast chewed by N'Sync's Justin Timberlake. More likely it was because I saw no use for it in my

own life. I also did not like the idea of conducting business online. What if I paid money for an item that really did not exist? Who would know I got ripped off? How would I get my money back?

Several of my friends assured me that eBay takes care of situations such as these, but I was still skeptical. I decided to check the site out for myself.

I found the user-agreement section and skimmed through, noting that eBay takes many

precautions to ensure that both the seller and the buyer are protected. There are rules posted regarding the behavior of the buyer and the seller, the types of goods that are eligible to be sold, and the pricing of items. Bidders who fail to pay



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may be warned and later a note will be attached to their record so that others will know not to sell to them. On the other hand, if the item bid on is never received or is in poor condition, the bidder may file a claim and in serious cases may report the seller to the National Fraud Complaint Center or to the Internet Fraud Complaint Center.

Browsing through the items for sale, I realized why eBay has become so popular among students. eBay has quite the selection; you can find anything on this Web site, from baby bottles to a 1965 Pontiac GTO red convertible. Anyone looking for


"Spongebob's Spongy Sea Songs" CD? Or perhaps you would prefer an old ukulele banjo, or a hog farm in Arkansas? They have those, too.

On the more practical side, I found items useful to college students. For example, the site has hundreds of textbooks for sale. It also has a wide variety of calculators available including the TI-86 and the TI-89. These I found for \$50 less than they are sold for in stores. For entertainment, the site also features PlayStation 2, Nintendo, Sega and every other system and game you can think of. DVDs and videos are also available, along with CDs and


tapes. Tickets to concerts and other events can also be bought and sold on eBay.

After viewing the site I concluded that eBay is extremely useful if you know what you are looking for. It is an inexpensive, safe way to buy and sell online without leaving home. I have not bought or sold from the site yet, but I would recommend it to shoppers interested in saving time. Forget about spending hours in lines and paying exorbitant prices for something you aren't even sure you want. Check eBay before you head to the store and save yourself the hassle and the money, which could be used for other more important things, such as pizza at 2 a.m.

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