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# I sold it on eBay!

Internet sales are an increasingly popular way to make money

By Sheldon Traver • Freelance Reporter

## "Divorce Forces Sale"

was the listing for a wedding dress on eBay. The seller acknowledged he thought it "looks like a \$1,200 shower curtain." That shower curtain earned the seller five marriage proposals, a guest appearance on NBC's "Today Show," more than eight million hits to the auction site and a winning bid of \$3,850.

Larry Star had no idea when he donned the pure white wedding gown and modeled it, tattoos and all, that he would become an international celebrity. He said he only hoped to receive enough money for "a couple of Mariners tickets and a beer," according to his eBay listing.

Star is a model of how to successfully list on eBay. As online auctions become an increasingly popular way to buy and sell, University students can make some money without setting up a yard sale.

Junior Jared Bellum regularly sells his textbooks online.

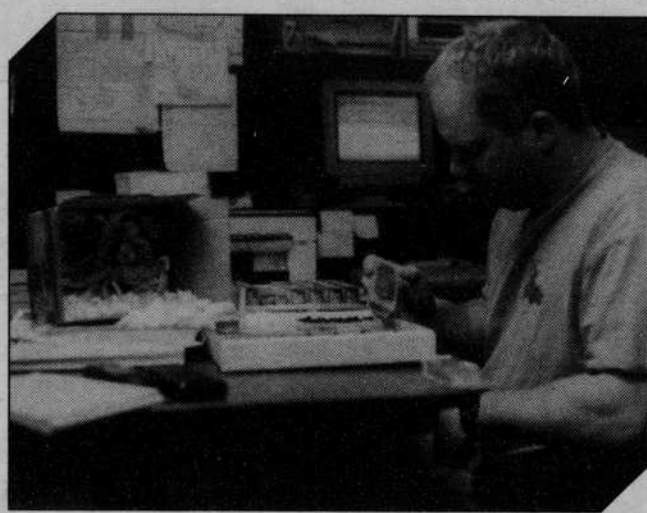
"A friend turned me on to selling," he said. "He sold clothes and has done fairly well."

Bellum said he is usually able to sell the books for almost as much as he paid for them. He also buys many of his textbooks online at substantial savings. Bellum said students hoping to sell their books should start early.

"You want to list before the term starts," he said.

He also said to make sure not to list them before the term ends. The book must be sent immediately upon receiving payment, which can hurt during finals week, according to Bellum.

http://www.ebay.com offers tips for how to be a successful seller. The site states that the most successful listings are those with photographs and good descriptions of what is being sold.



Courtesy Sheldon Traver

University graduate Mike Rademacher has had 366 successful eBay sales. An avid model train collector, he buys and sells the components to his sets online. Auction sites such as eBay are also good for selling textbooks.

Almost anything can be put up for auction, so students should not be afraid to sell. On any given day, buyers can scour the site for items such as glass Snoopy banks, pocket recorders, ukuleles or Velvet Elvis tapestries. To become a seller, bank account information must be given to eBay. This is to ensure payment for services provided. Fees depend on what is being listed and what the initial asking price is.

University graduate Mike Rademacher is an eBay PowerSeller with 366 successful sales.

"It's the garage sale of the world," Rademacher said. "Anything you want to sell can be sold on eBay."

He said the easiest items to sell are small enough to be easily packaged and mailed. Rademacher is an avid model railroader and buys and sells rare trains.

"I started buying specialty railroad cars that would take three to four years to find at

swap meets," he said.

However, Rademacher expressed caution about buying high-value items on eBay.

"You should stick to sellers that have good feedback," Rademacher said. "If they have feedback in the high 90s and have sold lots of stuff, you should be OK."

He said any high-value items be bought using eBay's escrow services to avoid losing money to a crooked seller.

Ebay has had some bad feedback regarding customer service.

"Ebay's system of complaints is very bad," Rademacher said. "You must go through eBay procedures that make it very difficult to make complaints about sellers."

While few students will get rich selling used twin comforters or unopened math books, a little creativity will make a listing more attractive — just think of Star at a Mariners game with a beer in one hand and \$3,850 in the other.

Sheldon Traver is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

## TIPS

continued from page 2B

help renters out. For instance, if a renter is unable to pay rent one month, Breen said the best thing to do is call the landlord.

"Most of them are nice and will work it out within reason," Breen said.

However, if the renter fails to pay rent and doesn't communicate with the landlord, after seven days, the landlord can serve the tenant with a 72-hour notice under the Oregon Residential Landlord and Tenant Act. The notice gives the tenant three days to either pay the rent or vacate the premises. If neither happens, the landlord can then file the claim in court.

Breen said the most common problem he encounters with his clients is when tenants don't give a 30-day written notice of termination.

"In the summer, we have a two-week period where

around 300 or 400 students move out," Breen said.

By writing a letter to the landlord, the renters ensures they won't pay for extra days. Even if the renter's lease will expire, a written notice is needed. The letter should indicate where the keys will be left and remind the landlord of broken items mentioned in the checklist at the beginning of the lease.

Most importantly, tenants should provide their forwarding address to receive their security deposit back. Under the Oregon Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, the landlord is required to return the security deposit or a letter stating why the deposit is not returned within 31 days of the termination of the lease. If the landlord fails to do so, he or she has to pay up to twice the amount owed to the former tenant, the law states.

"We get a lot of calls on day 32," Breen said.

He added that getting the

money back is a very common problem, especially with multiple roommates. If roommates want the security deposit split, Breen said they must write a letter with all the names and forwarding addresses provided.

Communication goes both ways in a tenant-landlord relationship. The Oregon Residential Landlord and Tenant Act states: "Rent may not be increased without a 30-day written notice thereof in the case of a month-to-month tenancy or a seven-day written notice thereof in the case of a week-to-week tenancy." The law also states that landlords must also give a 24-hour written notice to the tenant before entering the dwelling.

"So many of your rights depend on giving written notices," Miani said. "Landlords know that writing a letter is getting legal gears in motion and take it more seriously."

Emily LoVerde is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.