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eBay

Why do we need a company like eBay? eBay is great, tax free (for the most part), direct sales, free from government imposed free market distortions. I can instantly find people of like mind selling very specific items that are hard to find and hard to sell for that matter. Vice versa, I can sell items that are so specific in client base that I would have little or no chance of selling if not for the internet. People can post what they are willing to pay for such a product and, we either reach an agreement where everyone is happy or we do not. Good business or no business, what a great way to operate.

Why does eBay treat our rights and us so poorly? Immediately after that one crazy guy shot all of those poor, unarmed people at Virginia Tech., eBay decided to stop allowing the sales of gun magazines and switchblades. So I had to turn to one of the million other private sale websites to buy extra magazines and automatic knives, or god forbid actually buy from a buddy on a newsgroup. eBay is now dodging what they see as potential political turmoil. The fact is, eBay is not and CANNOT be in any trouble. It is the seller's responsibility, and rights hard wired directly into the country's Constitution. Just look at Craig's List, it works. eBay has continually bent to the whims of the liberals.

eBay is the sellers market that turned into a buyers market that turned into nobodies market. For those of you not familiar with "Sniping Programs", I will explain. A "Sniping Program" is a piece of software that synchronizes your computers clock with eBay's global clock. These programs know when bidding on a particular item ends (to the second). It's essentially like having a personal proxy bidding machine that can bid faster than any human. You set the maximum you are willing to pay, the increments of raising the bid and when to start bidding. If no one bids on something like, say, an oscilloscope a second before the auction ends, this program will push in the minimum bid. This equates in to a situation where all of your stuff could all be sold at the opening bid price. This is a cheat from the buyer's side as well. Honest buyers will never have a chance to up their bid since the programs wait until the bid only has seconds (a second) left. I have personally written many letters to eBay with suggestions to combat these programs. One solution would be to end bids within a ten-minute window, meaning that within the last ten minutes of an auction the auction could end in one minute or eight minutes randomly. Another solution would be to put an image of random numbers or letters on the screen under the bid confirmation that the user must manually input into a text box (something computers can not do yet). Yet another solution that would be by far the simplest would be to simply make an automatic bidding rule that makes it impossible to bid on an object in the last ten minutes if you haven't bid on it a day before. eBay has given me nothing but an automated response and obviously has thought of these solutions before me; this means they are fine with these "Sniping Programs". I don't know how they could possibly benefit eBay or the customers in any way, but still, these sniping programs remain.

What do we do about eBay's big government outlook that people are sheep? Hey, don't hate eBay, overall they have been a good company. They do however need some MAJOR tweaking. If eBay wants to stop selling motorcycle parts or X-actos because they

think they are too dangerous for eBay's children (us), more power to them. I don't have a problem with that, I just won't support them. I propose writing letters to eBay and checking other auction sites for what you need first. If the alternative sites do not have what you need, then use eBay. This methodology hinders monopolies, supports up-and-coming sites and can be an effective threat against eBay's bad politics. People are fed up with eBay and are (mostly for convenience) using sites like Craig's list for most of their would be eBay stuff. This mentality is already making a difference; this is illuminated by eBay's recent price decrease for listed items, the only decrease in 6 years if I'm not mistaken. Lets help eBay tune back in to their original patrons, let's use other online auction sites to help eBay listen!

Here is a list of alternatives

www.amazon.com
www.auctionguide.com
www.auctionarms.com
www.buysellguns.com
www.classifieds2000.com
www.ebang.com/
<http://us.ebid.net>
www.esyll.com/
www.gunbroker.com
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