

Increase Profits with These Little-known Auction Timing Strategies, by *Skip McGrath*

BONUS REPORT TO THE 2009 EDITION THE COMPLETE eBay MARKETING SYSTEM
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If you look below you will see the auction calendar that appears on page 90 of The Complete eBay Marketing System. This is a good general guide to listing and ending auctions, but there are some little secrets that can allow you to schedule your listings in such a way that they always appear above your competitor.

Before we explain how to do this, let's review a few basic facts about how listings are displayed in the eBay search engine:

1. The default search result is "Best Match." In best match, eBay displays the results according to a formula that rewards sellers with more sales and higher DSRs.
2. The other major item in the formula is *time ending soonest*.
3. Time ending soonest always appears above the other factors.

So what does this mean to you? If you grow your business to PowerSeller level and give excellent service, then you will have good feedback and DSRs and your listings will usually appear ahead of other competitive listings. But when you are a new seller or if your competitors have better scores than you, then all else being equal, their listings will appear ahead of yours. So how do you get an advantage?

It's all about timing !!!

That's right: timing. Remember that time ending soonest matters more than the other items. This is the one thing that eBay has put in place to help small sellers level the playing field.

Most sellers schedule their auctions. You can use the eBay scheduling utility (10¢ per listing), or if you use a service that I recommend like [InkFrog](#) or [Auctiva](#), the scheduling is free. Now here is the trick and it is very simple:

Most sellers schedule their items at even times such as 4:00, 4:15, and 4:30 and so on. Most schedulers default to 5 minute intervals. So the trick to appearing above your competitors is as simple as picking an earlier time. Rather than end your listing at 4:15, end it at 4:12 and your listing will appear above your competitors.

The other thing that a lot of sellers –especially larger sellers, do is they get into a rut of always ending their listings at the same time. So if I am selling the same thing as one of my competitors, I first look at their listings and see when they end. If they always end their listings at 5:30 then I will end mine a 5:24. This way, on the last day when most bids are received, my listings will always appear ahead of his (or hers).

The other timing strategy uses the calendar below. As you can see, Sunday and Monday evenings are the best ending periods for most products. However, stuff still sells on the other days –just not as much.

So here again, I look and see what my competitors are doing. If they are always ending their auctions on Sunday then I will pick Monday. But if Sunday and Monday are chock full of competitive auctions, then I will try Wednesday. Or if I have plenty of supply I will do both –list on Monday and Wednesday and then see which one works better.

When I am selling something where there is a lot of competition, I can often do better on the less popular days because my competitors are slaves to the most-popular-day concept

Monday	Excellent	A lot of people surf eBay at work. After the weekend they need their "eBay fix." Monday is statistically the best day to end an auction—especially in the early evening. But you should test listings that end around noon as well to catch those “at work” shoppers.
Tuesday	Worst	Tuesday statistically receives the lowest number of bids on eBay.
Wednesday	Fair	Wednesday is not quite as bad as Tuesday.
Thursday	Fair	Thursday is not a bad time to end an auction in the spring and summer, because people who go away for the weekend will bid on Thursday before they leave.
Friday	Fair	Friday before 7:00 PM can be a good day for students and young people, but in general not that good for most folks. Probably the worst day overall
Saturday	Good	Saturday works great for some products such as tools and DIY items, but almost always before 4PM. Saturday evenings are pretty horrible to sell, but a great time to buy as prices are low.
Sunday	Excellent	Sunday evening is the 2 nd highest time of bidding activity on eBay. If your auction ends about 10:00 PM Eastern time you will maximize your bidding activity.

Remember that this calendar is a generalization and there are lots of exceptions. So use it as a starting place but always experiment. Believe me a

little money spent in eBay listing fees to make sure your product is in the best time period is not a waste of money in the long run.

Oh –don't forget: All eBay times are Pacific Time.