

A Web Content Rx White Paper

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**Write Better eBay Ads  
and Include Superb Photos**

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## **Introduction**

Selling is an important skill to have online that means being able to write and take high quality digital photographs.

So, here you get both. Not to worry, you do not need expensive photographic equipment. Any digital camera and other things you have around the house will do nicely.

The ability to write ads for the online world, and for print, is something that we will all need sooner or later. Here we will talk about writing the words and taking the picture that will accompany the ad. Let's start with the photography.

### **Making The Picture**

You do not need a high end digital camera. You just don't. If you have one, so much the better, but any digital camera that will get an image into your computer will do. What we will be doing is making a simple in-home photography studio made a white bed sheet, or towel, masking tape, an ironing board and an iron. And if you have one a tripod would be nice, but again not required.

Locate near a well lighted window, or near other good light source. You want a strong light source. Don't hesitate to combine a window and several lamps. A little practice will reward you with excellent photos.

You will use the sheet as a seamless background. Pick one that is white, beige, or some other light color. Should you be photographing a light colored object you may need to use a darker color for better contrast. Now iron the background to remove wrinkles. Place the sheet on the support and tape it securely. Depending on the size of the sheet and the size of your merchandise you may want to tape the sheet at eye level.

Now pull the sheet forward, towards you, and place it so there is a smooth curve where it goes from horizontal to ventricle. Now tape the background to the floor so that it will remain in position. If using a table top you will not likely need to tape the material down. Your studio is complete.

Now place your item on the background roughly half way between the edge closest to the camera and the smooth curve. Turn on all of your lights or open the curtain. Your item should look great with no obvious shadows. If you have a shadow and it does not hurt the picture, leave it there. If the shadow interferes with the picture, add another light or move your existing light(s). Remember, when you stand at the camera position what you see is what the camera sees. There is no need to take test photos. Simply stand where you will take the picture and look at your merchandise. What you see is what you get. Shoot a half dozen pictures and you are done with that item. Shoot additional items while you have the studio set up. Here is an professional photographer's trick. Do not take the studio down until the pictures are in your computer and on eBay. This way, if you need to re-photograph you are ready to go. This is far easier and faster than installing the background, setting up lights, taking the picture, and uploading to the computer again.

By doing this you will have excellent pictures and learned that the quality of your photos is not controlled completely by the camera, but by the process that you use to create the pictures. Is the quality of the camera important? Certainly, but it is not the deciding factor. Okay, so you now have great photos.

## Writing The Ad

Perhaps the single most important words you will use are the make, model, and description of your item. This is critical to the item being found by eBay's search engine. Be sure that you know what the item's name is, who made it, the specific model and any enhancements or accessories that are included before you begin. If you do not have this information go online and research the item. Believe it or not, people do have goods that they do not know anything about. A friend of ours had an antique tool that he could not find any information on. It happens.

Next be sure to choose the category that your merchandise falls into. This make it easier for people to find it. Choose your starting price and do some research for shipping costs. You may also want to list two prices for shipping one in the USA and another for international delivery. Selling on eBay gives you an international presence and it is best to be prepared for that.

Here is an ad and photo for a camera that were sold on eBay.

Voightlander Vito BL 35mm Camera With Leather Case

- \* f2.8 50mm Prontor-SVS Lens
- \* Incident light attachment for light meter inside case

If you look closely you can see the white sheet that the camera is resting on and that the shadows do not hinder the photograph's ability to show the camera and case. This photo was taken on a table top with the white sheet taped to a window sill and photographed with a Nikon D50. The apparent yellow color on the background, the sheet, comes from the exposure of the photograph. Had we given the picture more exposure, the sheet would been white, but we were after a good picture of the camera - not the sheet and so used this picture.



The description does the job of telling the camera manufacturer, Voightlander and the model, Vito BL. Then we write that it is a 35mm camera. We specifically did that so that there would be no possibility of anyone mistaking it for a digital camera. While this is unlikely, we were not about to take the chance.

Then we mention, and show, the leather case and tell the reader that about the lens, f2.8 50mm Prontor-SVS Lens, and then: Incident light attachment for light meter inside case.

This description and photo sold the camera. We did not mention condition because the photograph shows that it is in fine shape. There are no hidden blemishes.