The Holiday Toy Guide for 2016
Helping you maximize your profits selling toys online!

"Jenni’s incredible HOT TOYS guide is the #1 way to make money on Ebay this Christmas season! Learn exactly what toys to buy, when to sell them, and even how to sell them at higher prices than your competition.

This is a **must have** step-by-step guide that will introduce you to the world of toys and the magic of Ebay at Christmas time. Based on my many years of experience on Ebay, I highly recommend selling hot toys this holiday season. You’ll be amazed at the results!"

Sherah Taylor, **Ebay Powerseller**
Publisher of Auction Moms Newsletter
2016 Holiday Toy Guide: Selling Toys Online

Limits of Liability/Disclaimer of Warranty:

The author and publisher of this book and the accompanying materials have used their best efforts in preparing this program. The author and publisher make no representation or warranties with respect to the accuracy, applicability, fitness, or completeness of the contents of this program. They disclaim any warranties (expressed or implied), merchantability, or fitness for any particular purpose. The authors and publisher shall in no way be held liable for any loss or other damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages. As always, the advice of the competent, legal, tax, accounting or other professional should be sought. This guide does contain some affiliate links to products – but, in no way does clicking on these links mean you will pay more if you choose to make a purchase after clicking on one of the links included. I do, however, receive a small fee for sales through affiliate links included in this report.

This manual contains material protected under the International and Federal Copyright Laws and Treaties. Any unauthorized reprint or use of this material is prohibited. This ebook and the material in it may not be resold or given away without permission of the author.
# Table of Contents

About The Author ............................................................................................................. 4

Looking to Upgrade to the Gold Level? ................................................................. 5

Selling Hot Items for the Holidays Online ............................................................ 6
   Get Started Selling on Amazon ............................................................................... 9
   Moving On To Your Selling Strategy & Plan ..................................................... 12

Staying Above the Competition ............................................................................... 17

Tips to List By ............................................................................................................. 24

Using the List .............................................................................................................. 29

Hot Toys for Holiday Resale ..................................................................................... 31
   Toy Trends .......................................................................................................... 32
   Toy Trends For 2016 .......................................................................................... 35
   Hot Toy Predictions ........................................................................................... 37
   What About Used Toys? .................................................................................... 38

In Closing ..................................................................................................................... 39

APPENDIX .................................................................................................................. 40

© copyright 2012-2016, Hunt Information Services
About The Author

**Jenni Hunt** has been successful with turning her eBay/Amazon hobby into a real business with real profits. She has spent thousands of hours researching trends of what children’s items are selling well online and sharing that info with her followers. You might know her from the popular Private Niche Groups and Holiday Toy Guide that has been published annually since 2003. Although she specializes in researching trends with selling children's items - many of the principles she teaches can be applied to other markets.

She is a stay at home mom who decided to leave her high tech marketing position when her first child was born in 1999. Jenni enjoys applying her marketing experience to her online business and has developed many strategies for producing profit from it. In fact, she has consistently doubled her profits every year since starting her eBay business in 2003. And, when her husband lost his job in 2013, she used her skills to quadruple their income. She has a passion for helping other online sellers do the same by introducing them to the idea of internet marketing and moving beyond just selling physical product(s) online.

**Jenni lives in the beautiful Pacific NW with her husband, James, of almost 25 years where they homeschool their three children Liam (15), Halle (13) and Caeden (10). In her free time she blogs over at [www.NoLongerAshes.com](http://www.NoLongerAshes.com).**

You can follow Jenni at [www.jennihunt.com](http://www.jennihunt.com)
Looking to UPGRADE to the GOLD Level?

Gold members gain access to the awesome private Facebook community and receive 3 updated reports to the hot list – along with access to hot toys available online that our dedicated VA is researching for the us... and, honestly, so much more!

You can learn more at www.HolidayToyGuide.com – but, there are only a handful of spots available... it will close up when it reaches it's 200 member capacity.

I have a few spots available for upgrading... but we are capping the number of Gold Level members to 200 – so act quickly!

You will only find this offer available here:

CLICK HERE to Learn More & upgrade to GOLD LEVEL

Remember – when it fills up, it closes up.
Selling Hot Items for the Holidays Online

After TWELVE years of publishing the Holiday Toy Guide and researching holiday trends, I think I’m willing to trust what I have seen over and over again in the industry... and of course, I share all these observations in this Original Holiday Toy Guide for you.

It all started back in 2003 when one of my readers sent me an email filled with all kinds of questions about selling toys during the holiday season. Knowing that others likely had the same questions, I developed the Holiday Toy Guide as a tool to help answer those questions and help sellers get the most out of the selling season.

Over a decade later... these questions are still burning in the minds of online sellers – and the Holiday Toy Guide has morphed to continue to be a top resource that provides answers.

It is no secret that toys are a hot item around Christmas time. In fact, many retailers depend on the last two months of the year to make up 40 percent of their annual sales!

But when toys get hard to find from big retailers, parents – aunts – uncles – grandparents... turn to Amazon and eBay. These two sites have become an incredible resource for buyers looking for that 'something special' that can no longer be found on store shelves.

If you have done your research and know what toys are expected to sell well, you have a good start – but, that is really only half the battle.

One of the most popular parts of the Holiday Toy Guide is the Hot Toy Hit List. I want to be as clear as I can on what this Hit List is and what it isn’t.

The Hot Toy Hit List is NOT a shopping list. Don’t assume I am telling you to go buy everything on the list... I guarantee you will lose money if you do.

The Hot Toy Hit List IS a spring-board to help us determine what will be HOT this year... and all the research is provided in the list itself so you can use it that way.

The first Hot Toy Hit List (coming mid-October when sources have their lists published) is a compiled list of all the top toy industry experts and what they expect to be the most popular this holiday season. You can bet there will be
advertising dollars behind these items and they will be popular – simply from media manipulation if for no other reason. ;-) But...

The hot lists put out by industry experts are not necessarily what will be the best sellers for you. Keep in mind, it comes down to the demand verses the stock available in stores.

This first Hot Toy Hit List is a spring-board... a starting point or benchmark for us to start tracking. As we get going and get into the updates, we will be updating the data on the Hit List and also adding any new hot toys that we have noticed need to be tracked.

The thing is, you really can't just do the research once and hope for the best. I've been watching Holiday toy sales since 2003... and the one thing that has been consistent year after year is that the hot sellers tend to go up and down through out the season. In other words, the research really needs to be done on an ongoing basis.

That is where the Holiday Toy Guide list comes in.

Not only does this guide list out what is expected to be the most popular Christmas toys... we have pulled it together to help you create the best strategy for listing your holiday merchandise in order to ensure the highest potential profits. There is just a short couple of months to this hot selling season – so, building a selling strategy is necessary.

What Is Your Strategy?

Before we dig too much into strategy – I wanted to talk to the newbie sellers. This isn't a course or curriculum... there are plenty of other programs out there that provide this (Jim Cockrum's PAC is one of the best).

However, I have found that it can be a bit intimidating to “take the plunge” and dive into selling on Amazon – even if you have been an eBay seller for years and years.

I have heard every excuse in the book... and, in fact, I've probably used some myself. Even though I started selling on Amazon back in 2002 (before my eBay days even), I was intimidated to sell on Amazon through their FBA program. I was afraid of all the regulations to prepare shipments... labeling, poly-bagging, listing, restricted items... it all intimidated me. I have heard the same story from other sellers...

They don't have time to learn something new.
They don't know how to know what sells.
They aren't approved in the category they want to sell in.
Sound familiar?

Whatever the reason you have... let me tell you about a phrase we use in our home often – It's become our family motto:

DO IT AFRAID.
I guarantee... once you start selling through Amazon's FBA program, you will not look back. All of the customer fulfillment... inventory storage issues... Amazon deals with that! The time you save by adding FBA to your online selling strategy will only increase your revenue.

One final word before we dig in and get started. As I have been preparing this guide for 2016, there has been a bit of a frenzy with Amazon sellers who use the retail and online arbitrage strategies. Amazon has come down more heavily with brand restrictions than we have seen heavily. Quite a few sellers have gone into panic mode – and I want to encourage you... Clearly there are no guarantees; however, after doing this for so many years... this isn't worth getting worked up about. Do you need to adapt? Probably. But, isn't that the case with every business? Below I'll share a few points I've made on my facebook page – but, know that crisis always brings opportunity.

Keep in mind as well that this issue is in flux right now. You can also follow along on the MST FB page here: https://www.facebook.com/groups/mysilentteam/

No matter where you stand on Amazon's recent brand restrictions – here are the facts:

| FACT: At least once a year there is a new restriction that causes panic... especially for those who are newer to selling online. |
| FACT: In the last 12+ years I've been selling online, there has always been a silver lining in these “panic attacks”.
| FACT: Many sellers will walk away from retail arbitrage and online arbitrage strategies because of the fear caused by these estimated restrictions. This is GREAT NEWS for those who remain! Less competition! |
| FACT: There are still millions and millions of items you can resell on Amazon that are not restricted. |
| FACT: Your business can still THRIVE and grow! |

If you are still concerned, here is a tip.

| TIP: If you are concerned about RA and OA brand restrictions – buy inventory that is not brand driven. |
| There are 5.7 million items listed in toys & games right now. That is a significant amount more than previous years at this time... and that means the pie is bigger – there are plenty of items that are not restricted to sell. |

It is important to note that Amazon does not keep a list posted for restricted brands; however, it is not difficult to find a published list from a quick google search. Keep in mind that not every list published is exhaustive. Your best bet if you are unsure of an item and whether it is restricted for you is to email a request to: pq-preapprovals@amazon.com

So...

*How do you get started?*
Get Started Selling on Amazon

First of all – know that almost anything you do can be undone or changed if you make a mistake...

#1 - Set up an Amazon account

Set up your Amazon account if you haven't already. You'll want to go pro if you plan to use any apps to help you scan and find inventory in stores. The pro account cost $40/month and if you are selling 40 items/month, it pays for itself because of the way Amazon does FBA fees for regular and pro accounts. Q4 – you'll likely do 40 items/month minimum... but, you decide what is best for you. You can always upgrade later.

#2 Finding What Sells

This is all about toys – so you need to find some inventory. You can start by looking at the Hot Toy Hit List included with the Holiday Toy Guide.

One of the top questions we get about selling online is how do you know what will sell. Honestly, a lot of our expertise comes from years and years of researching the toy market. At some point you recognize trends... and you can move on an item based on a hunch. But, when you are just getting started – having a process in place to do your own research helps.

It benefits you to take your scanner or smart phone with you to a store and simply start scanning toys. If you don't have an app to scan... or aren't using a smart phone yet – you can do this online at home. Head over to Kmart.com or Walmart.com and start looking at toys – just like you are browsing the isles in the store.

Here is what you are looking for...

- When you have a toy that you are curious about, note the name of the item and find it on Amazon.com and/or eBay.com.

- Check the Amazon/eBay selling price. This is the first indicator to look for. If the item is listed on Amazon for at least 2x the price I can buy it for, I look a little deeper. On eBay, if the item has a good number of bids (I like to see 5) and has some history of successfully completed listings, I consider it a decent eBay seller.

- After checking the price to be at least 2x the price on Amazon above what it can be bought for, scroll down to check the rank. Rank isn't everything, however, it can be a good indicator as to how popular of a seller this particular toy is. A toy that has a rank of 1, is the number 1 seller on Amazon at that point in time. A rank that has a toy of 10,000, is the 10 thousandth seller on Amazon. Now, 10k might seem like a big number... but, in the toy category – it's not! In fact, 10k is an excellent rank.
***NOTE: Looks like Amazon is changing things up. Days after this report was finished, Amazon seems to no longer be including total number of categories as described below. I will keep this method in the book for now in case Amazon changes the way it displays this info again. In the mean time, you can view the total number of items in a category by going to the category you are interested in and scrolling down to the left side of a category and **adding up the number of items filtered by price.** See the image below...

Following is the old method – and word has it that this still works for some so I have left it in the guide this year.

Here is how you determine a good rank in any category you are looking to resell in on Amazon. Go to the category on Amazon and in the search box type ‘[]’ (without the quotes). Hit return, and you will see the number of items in that particular category. (see image below)
I just took a quick screen shot of my search of '[]' in the toy category.

From this search, we can see that there are 5,469,125 items listed in the Toys & Games category (By the way, that is almost double the number from 2015 at this time!). As a rule of thumb, I want my items to be in the top 5% of the demand on Amazon. If fact if I can keep them under the top 1%? That's even better! :-)  

So, in this category, 5% of 5,469,125 is 273,456. This is, therefore, the rank I want to stay under (1% would be 54,691). With this information – you can see how a rank of 10,000 is a great rank and an item with a rank in that range will likely sell quickly.

• It is also important to consider the competition when researching items. How many sellers are there – and are the sellers listing the products as Merchant Fulfilled with shipping rates (Amazon) or FBA (Fulfilled By Amazon – with free shipping offered through Prime)?

On eBay, look at how many sellers to determine if the bidding would be diluted. Too many items available on eBay and not enough bidders means the bids are spread out and your item won't sell as high.

Let's go back to your selling strategy...
Moving On To Your Selling Strategy & Plan

If you are willing to take a bit of a risk, you may be in store for high profits. If not before, soon after 'Black Friday' (what is known as the 'biggest' shopping day of the year – the Friday after Thanksgiving), retail stores begin to run low on the hot selling items for the year... especially toys!

NOTE: Many profitable sellers have noted that the highest profits were made AFTER Thanksgiving weekend! - This is when the profits sky-rocket!
Parents start to panic as they can not find the special toy their son or daughter desire most... and in this panic, are willing to go to extreme measures and pay incredible prices. The 1996 movie, Jingle All The Way with Arnold Schwarzenegger is a perfect, albeit extreme, example. In the movie, Howard (Schwarzenegger) promises his son the hottest Christmas toy after missing his karate practice. It’s the day before Christmas and the “Turbo Man” is sold out everywhere. The movie is all about his comical quest to find this hot toy...

If only eBay was well known in 1996. At the same time... don't get too greedy here. If you can get an amazing price selling the item earlier, it might not be worth the risk of waiting.

We'll do our best to educate you so that you can make an educated choice as to when you should be listing items.

Take advantage of the hot toy list at the end of this guide to find out what the predicted popular toys are for this year... If you are a Gold Member, you can note the trend for that toy on eBay and Amazon in the three additional reports that you will receive starting the first week of November – and don't forget to buy, buy, buy!

Keep in mind that the list of predicted toys are what are expected to be the most POPULAR for the toy industry – not necessarily on eBay or Amazon.
This point is very important... because, in all honestly, there is no way anyone can accurately say what is going to sell for the highest profit.

**HOWEVER, here is what we CAN do:**

1. We CAN examine trends
2. We CAN watch where large retailer stores are putting their advertising dollars
3. We CAN watch these toys to see if they are or are not hot sellers
4. We CAN use this information to find new (not as popular) toys that have less competition and just as high returns.

Based on these four things, we can pull together a list of toys that are expected to do well this holiday season... and then it is all about watching eBay and Amazon and comparing their performance to other retail stores.

No worries though, that is the value of this Holiday Toy Guide. We will take each of the toys that are expected to be the most popular (and therefore pushed by the media and stores) and **gauge how they are performing on Amazon and eBay in the reports that will be sent out starting in November.**

**It is extremely important to remember that not all these toys will perform well!**

We will continue to monitor them and also add any new toys that we see performing well or that look to have potential as the weeks go on.

Also keep in mind... in most cases, you can return any merchandise that doesn’t sell. Being able to return the unsold merchandise lowers your risk considerably. **Beware, however, some stores are implementing strict return policies. Be sure you understand the return policy of the store you are shopping at before making purchases.**
**Your Plan**

You need to have a plan for how and when you are going to list your items. As you build your plan here are some things to consider:

1. **How are you going to gauge the market?**

The Holiday Toy Guide Gold membership will provide you with three updates to how toys are performing online – but, there are things you can do to gauge the market yourself as well that are very effective! **As an eBay seller, one of the best strategies you can implement to help you gauge WHEN to list a particular item is to list as a fixed priced item instead of an auction.** You can list all of your items as fixed price items until you are confident the market is going to drive the bidding to a nice profitable price.

Here is how it works…
Let’s say you scored on a great deal for one of the toys that is expected to be the most popular. You list the item right away as a fixed price item (not as an auction)... and it sells within the hour! This is a good indicator that it is time to try out an auction for this item. **Move one of your items to an auction format... and raise the prices on your fixed priced items in your store!** Let the market determine the price of your auction listing... if they are moving out of your store quickly – there is a very good chance that you will make more in an auction listing format.

Or, perhaps you have a toy that you think is going to be a hot seller but aren’t sure. List it as a fixed price item at your minimum selling price. It might sit there for a few weeks – but, keep watching it. When it jumps and you start selling a few, test it as an auction listing while at the same time raising your fixed price for those that you don't move to auction. This will help you gauge when to sell... and how much to sell it at.

2. **How are you going to get everything listed and manage your time?**

This goes back to having your inventory in a store format for the holidays... you can list it whenever you want (or have time). You do not have to concern yourself with figuring out the best starting or ending day/time for your listing.

When you start moving things to auction format – it won’t take as long as setting up an initial listing because you will already have the item pictured and set up in your store.

But – I have to say... selling through Amazon’s FBA program will be the best use of your time for Q4! You don't have to be pre-approved or meet any criteria other than that your account is in good standing. There is an email that was going around from Amazon that was a bit confusing because of the regulations Amazon was putting on toy sellers for Q4… **HOWEVER, the regulations do not apply to Amazon FBA sellers. Get an FBA account going and keep it in good standing and you are good to go!**

I have found sourcing (researching and buying) throughout the week... with one day devoted to prep works great. As we get into Q4 and get busier – we will likely have 2 days devoted to prep... And outsourcing the prep is an excellent way to manage your time no matter how you are selling! My kids know how to prep products... I put them
Another option is to use a prepping service like the Bullard's My Fulfillment Team. You can have all your inventory sent over to the Bullard's warehouse and they will prep it and send it in to Amazon for you! Pretty sweet – you never have to touch your products!

3. **Know how to use the Holiday Toy Guide for selling toys in today’s economy**

It’s no secret… toys are one of the most popular items that fly off store shelves during the months of November and December (although Christmas seems to be showing up earlier every year – don’t you think?). The big question that I’m hearing is...

"**How is today’s economy going to affect holiday sales… and more importantly online sales?**"

First of all, let’s be honest. The economy has sucked these last few years. Times may be tough and a bit unpredictable; however, we can make assumptions based on things we do know...

**What we know:**

1. **We know that many will do whatever they can to get the children in their lives toys for the holidays.** We have been tracking toys since 2003 and every holiday season – through the high and low economic changes – **toys have been a hot seller.**

2. **We know that more are expected to buy online this year than any previous year!** Half of holiday shoppers did their shopping online in 2014 – and this has been a growing trend... it has been recognized that many consumers window-shop (called "show-rooming") at the stores and then go to buy online. Smart phones make this easier than ever.

3. **We know that Amazon surpassed eBay with traffic numbers the summer of 2011...** this means it is a good idea to include a strategy for selling on Amazon as well as eBay because those two sites hold the largest market share. In fact, you can save yourself time by **having Amazon's FBA warehouse fulfill your eBay orders.** You pay a bit more in fees – but, it is worth outsourcing to free up your time this quarter.

4. **Industry experts are showing a lot of excitement about this year's holiday toy sales again... in 2015, holiday sales increased 3%...** And – 56% of searches during the Holiday season were conducted on mobile devices. [source nrf.com] In addition, there is a nice range in price for what is expected to be the most popular this year – allowing most people the opportunity to purchase these hot toys.

5. **47% of consumers said free shipping was a deciding factor in their holiday purchase in 2016!** [FBA people!!]
People might be discouraged about the economy... but, that is when people turn to what is truly important in their lives. I have a feeling that just like previous years, this year it will be all about the children... That adults will put aside their own wants and desires if need be and focus on providing the best holiday season they can for their kids – and this translates to better toy sales.

Another option for parents, however, is to look for used toys. There are plenty of people who had to get last year’s ‘latest and greatest’... and their children have lost interest. Kids grow out of toys so quickly that it isn’t difficult to find last year's hot toys offered at thrift shops, garage sales and consignment stores in decent condition to resell on eBay or Amazon. Heck – I've even seen them on craigslist.

Selling used toys involves more of a risk – but they tend to have a better return too (isn’t that how it always is?). You can find toys for pennies on the dollar (literally!) and turn them around for an easy 400-500% profit... but, returning the item if it doesn’t sell or isn’t a good seller isn’t always something you can do. Don't despair though, there are ways to trade up your used toys for other items that will sell for you – lowering your risk. (keep reading ;)

Sometimes, I prefer selling used toys... I don’t mind investing $1-2 on toys and taking the risk to sell them. If just one of the 5-10 toys I buy to resell goes for $30-$40, that more than covers the loss I might have gained with the other items that didn’t sell. Plus, you can always take what doesn’t sell and trade it at a consignment store for other toys that do sell – decreasing any loss even more. I have actually made money turning around items I have picked up at a yard sale that didn't sell for me by simply dropping it off at a consignment store!
So, you are building your hot toy inventory, you are starting to build your selling strategy... How do you list the item to stay above the competition?

Every year the percentage of online shoppers grows. And that, my friend, is good news for online sellers.

We now have 12 holiday selling seasons behind us... and the trend has been that the most popular toys tend to sell best online the last 15 days before Christmas – December 10th through the 25th.

They do so well during this time because this is when there is the biggest time crunch and people are super desperate. While I predict this trend will likely continue to be true for this year’s selling season... analysts are suggesting that there will be two spikes in sales – and from what I’ve seen in the research I have conducted already this year, I tend to agree.

It looks like consumers are expected to spread out their buying schedule... We certainly saw this last year, and I think we’ll see it again thanks to the encouragement of major retail stores. Until 2014, the Holiday Toy Guide wasn't released until the mid-late October... and even then, most of the toys were still selling at retail on Amazon. This didn't change until mid-November and things started to go crazy. This year, I'm researching more than a month earlier again.

This is great news for online sellers!

You can also take advantage of these layaway programs (see Appendix for a list) to help reduce your risk in reselling. All to say, more consumers are planning on starting their buying early for Christmas. This implies that there will be a spike in sales earlier than usual.

At the same time – there are always those who shop at the last minute... Did you know 25+ million shoppers are expected to shop on Christmas Eve! All of the parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents who have put off their Christmas shopping for one reason or another are now looking for the very toy that is sold out everywhere... Where do they turn? online! And you will be right there, ready to give them exactly what they are looking for. At the same time, don't let these numbers scare you. This new trend shows about half of holiday shoppers DONE by December 10th (up about 2% from previous years). So – there is plenty of pie early in the season... and right on up to the holidays themselves! [source: https://nrf.com/]
Another interesting statistic from the 2012 holiday shopping season. You might know that the Monday after Thanksgiving has come to be known as 'Cyber-Monday'... online stores have pushed the day to be like the online version of 'Black Friday' and it has worked. In 2012, online shoppers spent 1.47 BILLION US dollars on this day – making Cyber Monday the biggest online spending day of all time! And this trend continues to grow.

Please heed the note I mentioned earlier in this report... the last few years we have been treading on new ground with the economy and continued growth with online buyers – and even though we can look at trends from previous years and make educated decisions based on that information... don’t get greedy! If you can make a very nice profit on toys NOW... or next week, go for it! Why take the risk and hold onto an item that is selling well now? Remember, these are predictions not a "sure-thing".

I should also mention another trend that has been developing the last 2-3 years – and my guess is that it will continue this year as well.

**Your competition is learning.**

More and more people are holding off to sell their toys during this traditionally hot selling period (December 10th–25th). If a ton of sellers wait to list their items until that period of time... there is going to be a lot of competition on eBay and Amazon – and that can mean diluted bids and sales.

Here is what I suggest...  
**Don't put all your eggs in one basket.**

Use your fixed priced listings on eBay to determine how popular an item is for you. If people are buying from you early, by all means, take advantage of the market and move the items to auction format and/or send them into Amazon. **If you want to take a bit of a risk and list after December 10th to try to take advantage of this crunch time for buyers – and you are focusing on eBay - then, I would list some now and hold onto some for later.**

**But – if you are on Amazon FBA I'd get everything in as you buy it.** You can adjust your pricing, etc. along the way.

**Staying above the competition is all about being aware of what your competition is doing and finding a way to do it better...** at least in the eyes of the buyer.

**Here are a few strategies to keep you a step or two ahead –**

**Strategy #1: Pay the Lowest Price**

This may be obvious... but, you’d be surprised how easily the ‘obvious’ goes out the window when you are excited about something ;-) 

*I have a small group that I work with and we are always sharing hot deals... so many times I am posting something because I'm so excited about it – only to have*
someone else in the group ground me by pointing out the rank not being the best… or that it’s oversized. Don’t jump the gun – pay attention to what you are buying!

Watch the notices for sales and deals different stores are having on toys… and get creative. There are usually bargains like ‘Buy one get one free’ or ‘Get $5-10 gift card with each purchase’… combine those discounts with a service like Ebates or Big Crumbs and you can save even more!

[If you aren’t signed up with Ebates – it is a MUST! The service is free and the savings is great! You can shop from over 800 online stores through Ebates and earn money with every purchase. The coupons and deals are updated regularly so there is always an opportunity to earn… in fact, a friend of mine was surprised by a $854 check from Ebates!]

**Strategy #2: Know Where To Find The Hot Toys**

**9 Tips For Finding The Hard To Find NEW Toys**

Just because you may not see a toy on the shelf in a store, *doesn’t mean it is out of stock.* Use these nine tips to find even the toys that are the most difficult to get your hands on.

1. Communicate with your local stores to learn stocking patterns
2. Talk with store stockers just to learn how they run their store
3. They are more likely to talk with collectors than dealers - I don’t recommend lying… but, I would be careful of the wording you use. They will figure out that you are a dealer/reseller when you visit buying the same things over and over
4. Talk with customer service folks - Don’t assume all employees have the same level of information. Sometimes they have information the stockers don’t have. Where a stocker may not know when they are getting a shipment of a specific toy, the customer service folks may be able to tell you.
5. Avoid the big stores - check out drug stores, grocery stores - even smaller online toy stores
6. Visit grocery stores/drug stores in less affluent areas
7. Visit out of the way cities
8. Look behind other toys on the shelves
9. Look under shelves in hidden storage areas - and places employees would hide toys.

**More tips for finding new toy inventory...**

1. There are some great resources online… one of my favorites is Gottadeal.com. Be sure to take a look at [http://www.gottadeal.com](http://www.gottadeal.com) to
find out what stores have what items on sale. Stores such as Toys R Us, KB Toys, Kmart, Wal-Mart, Sears, and Target are listed. Even if you get this report after Thanksgiving weekend, this is a great site to view incredible sales and deals going on. Another one of my favorites is www.FatWallet.com

2. As I have shopped around for the toys on the following list, I have found that the ‘less popular’ stores tend to have a greater stock. The most popular places for people to shop for toys are: Toys R Us, Wal-Mart, Target and Amazon.com – it might be worth your while to start your shopping at the less popular stores such as Sears, Kmart, Walgreens, or Rite Aid. Locally, in the Portland area, we have Bi-Mart and Fred Meyer stores. You may even consider looking in your local telephone pages under ‘Toys’ to be reminded of the not so popular stores in your area.

3. If you have a smart phone install an app like Shopular that not only shares deals and weekly ads but will alert you when you are near a store on your list having a sale.

**Strategy #3: Maximize Your Auction Exposure When Listing on eBay**

[Remember: If you are selling on Amazon's FBA, you can also list on eBay and have Amazon fulfill your customer's orders through Multi-Channel Fulfillment!]

By maximizing your auction exposure on eBay, you bring your listings in front of as many potential bidders possible.

Unfortunately, there is what I call the ‘dead zone’ in any listing duration. Notice that most of the bidding takes place during the first 24 hours and the last 24 hours of a listing… the time in-between is what I call ‘dead-time’. The key to gaining more exposure to your listings is to find a way to get visitors to your listings during this dead time – Go to the Appendix to read my strategy I teach that deals with this dead-time in the Magic Window of Opportunity… but here is a key to this strategy:

**Don’t list all your items on one day.**

*Simple, huh?*

I can’t tell you how many times I have had people ask when the best day to list on eBay is… but, by listing all your items on one day you miss out on a huge opportunity.

Try this...

Instead of listing all of your auctions on one day... spread them out. List some of your auctions every day of the week – so you have some ending every day. At the end of the week, you will have some auctions starting and ending every day of the week.

Simply put, the key is to cross-promote between your listings. This way, when a potential bidder sees the listings you have started or ending on a particular day, they also are encouraged to look at the other auctions you listed that might be in the ‘dead zone’.

*The goal is to get a potential bidder interested in everything you have to offer – not just a particular listing they have clicked to view.*
What you have done is spread out your listings so that you are taking advantage of the hot 24 hour period when an auctions gets the most attention. Even though you have less auctions showing up during each 24 hour period, because you are cross promoting, all of your auctions get more exposure.

**Strategy #4: Differentiate Yourself**

To stay ahead of the competition – you have to find ways to make yourself stand out... be different. This may require some creative thinking, but the effort placed is well worth it. Here are some things to consider when trying to differentiate yourself from your competition.

- **Do you know who you are selling to?**

  Know your market better than your competition and you will be way ahead. With the toy market – especially during the holidays... you are selling to parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles. *Remember that many people who don’t usually shop online (or on eBay/Amazon) come out of the woodwork during the holidays.* Keep this in mind when you are listing your items by being very clear with the auction terms and how you do business.

- **How does your pricing compare?**

  Are you starting your auction at $49.99 when your competition is starting at $9.99? The ending price may average at $70+ but you will likely lose the sale if you are starting your bidding so much higher than other auctions.

- **Can you add value where your competitor isn’t?**

  A few years ago the Fisher Price Kid Tough Digital Camera was a hot item... some sellers added value to their auction by offering both the camera and case in one listing. The cases became so difficult to find in stores that those auctions were sky rocketing! It doesn’t have to be big – just something that makes your item different and have more (perceived) value.

  **Bundling on Amazon can be a great way to differentiate yourself...** you create something Amazon (and/or other sellers) can't easily duplicate and you can do quite well.

**Strategy #5: Stop worrying about the competition and look at the big picture**

This is a biggy... and I have found that many have a difficult time ‘getting it’... but, if you can – you will be way ahead of the game!

First of all – look at the big picture.

**Do you ever wonder how people can sell something for $1 and still stay afloat in their business?**

Usually these sellers are looking at a bigger picture that is beyond eBay.
Let me explain...

One of the best strategies for growing your online business is to learn how to use eBay to generate traffic to a mailing list... the money is made in the follow up with this mailing list (or... the 'back-end'), Remember, it is always easier to sell to a current customer than to try to bring in a new customer – so why not take advantage of this and create a plan to keep in touch with your customers so you can give them the opportunity to buy from you over and over again?

NOTE: Jim Cockrum is THE expert for using eBay to generate traffic to a mailing list... and since it isn’t the purpose of this eBook, we are just going to touch on the topic. If you are interested in learning more – I highly recommend Jim’s ebook, The Silent Sales Machine.

Let’s look at this simple example of how focusing on the big picture can increase your profits.

Assume you have found a very popular item that you think will be a good seller online. You list it and it does alright – but, you really didn’t make as much as you expected. Let’s say the toy cost $15 for you… and it turned around for $25. Not much profit there... but, at least you made your money back, right?

If you have a system in place to drive your customer to a mailing list so you can follow up with them after the sale – you will have opportunity after opportunity to sell to them over and over again through correspondence. It’s proven that the more you can get in front of a customer/potential customer, the more likely you will make the sale. So, if you follow up with your mailing list... always pointing them back to your listings (or website if you have one), you will likely see a nice increase in profits.

But, it doesn’t stop there. It’s important that you point your customers to your mailing list so you can sell to them again and again... but, what about all of those potential bidders who looked at your auctions and never bid? If you can get creative, you can get those people on your mailing list too! They might not buy from you today... but, you increase your chances of them buying from you in the future if you have a plan in place to build a relationship with them through a mailing list.

You may have only made $10 (less any fees!) on your auction... but, if you had 2000 people looking at it and only 5% signed up for your mailing list – you would have 150 people that you can work to sell to in the future. These people are now ‘yours’... not ebay’s... you can sell to them OUTSIDE of eBay and lower your fees while increasing your profits! Cool, eh?

At the time of this writing (August 2016), you can include outside links on your listing as long as you aren’t selling or competing with eBay at the site you are pointing people to from your Profile page... In addition, you can include links to social media (Facebook, etc.) on your profile page. Here is a link to eBay's listing policy: http://pages.ebay.com/help/policies/listing-links.html.

So – what you CAN do is invite your auction visitors to join your mailing list in exchange for a free downloadable report or some other incentive that is related to the products you are selling and giving more info to the potential buyer. You can
mention this free report with your mailing list link in your listing as long as it is related to the item you are selling.

If you are interested in learning more about 'making money on the back-end' of your mailing list, you can take a look at my blog: www.jennihunt.com/blog ... we’ve talked about it in depth over there... but, again, I really can’t speak highly enough of Jim Cockrum and the resources he has. He has a gift of teaching and really knows how to get the wheels turning when it comes to your mailing list.

Another “big picture” to look at when looking at your competition is price. When you are on Amazon it is tempting to want to be the lowest price... but, statistics show that the lowest price doesn't always get the sale! It is more valuable to have the “buy-box” (or the page that comes up with your item for sale when you search in Amazon) then it is to have the lowest price... and the good news is that you don't have to have the lowest price to get the buy-box. In fact you can list your item 1-2% ABOVE the lowest price and get the buy box... so be careful about trying to beat your competition out on price when selling on Amazon. It can be a quick spiral down to a tanked price for a hot item.
Tips To List By

You can have the best product in the
world... it can be in high demand... a proven
seller on ebay and/or Amazon...

BUT if you don’t take care in how you list
the item it might never sell! This is
especially true for eBay sellers...

Having the hot product is only a part of the
big picture. Use the tips mentioned in this
section to help better your eBay listings... if
you sell on Amazon – there are some gems
here for you as well...

10 Tips For Listing

1. **eBay and Amazon: If you can, wait for stores to be out of stock before you list.**

   You take a bit of a risk here... but, when the stores get low on their inventory (which they always do), **online resellers will come to the rescue!** Traditionally, retailers expect sales to steadily rise every week from Thanksgiving weekend until Christmas. It is likely the stores will increase their stock right before Black Friday for the high traffic expected that weekend. Since the stock will be higher, **online sales may be low during this week...** but, don’t worry. This implies that as the supply decreases in the stores, the demand will grow... **this is the perfect scenario for making profits on eBay and Amazon!**

   In fact, it is the perfect setup for Cyber Monday... the Monday AFTER Black Friday is now known and marketed as... ‘Cyber Monday’... and it refers to what retailers are trying to make the biggest ONLINE shopping day of the year. Even though online retailers will be offering specials and deals just for Cyber Monday – it is still an opportunity for eBay and Amazon sellers because the traffic is already online and ready to buy!

   **Here is what this looks like for Amazon FBA sellers:** If you are selling via FBA, get your inventory in as you buy it. You can adjust your price based on store stock. Don't be tempted to just drop your price... keep up with your research and make educated decisions – not emotional decisions.

2. **Ebay and Amazon: When you list your item, be sure to let your bidders know that you will ship within 24 hours.**

   In fact, put it all over the place! If you have room, add it to your title – or it...
might be worth using the sub-title feature eBay offers for this information. This will help you stand apart from the competition.

Remember too, that many of your customers are probably not regular eBay buyers… this means that their expectations can be different – be very clear in your terms that although you ‘regularly ship on Monday and Wednesday, you are more than willing to ship an item within 24 hours if contacted ahead of time’… of course, you’ll want to use your own wording.

As an Amazon seller – selling FBA is all you need! Shipping options are fast and efficient and customers trust Amazon Prime… and all FBA sellers sell through the Amazon Prime program.

3. **Ebay and Amazon: Be aware of Postal Service Deadlines.**

   You can check out the Post Office Holiday delivery deadlines at their website [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com). Make sure you know whether or not your item will make it to your customer before Christmas… don't count on your customer knowing this information. You are better off making the assumption that they want your item before Christmas than to think they don't have a problem getting the item a day or two after.

4. **Ebay: Consider straying from the traditional auction listing and just list as a Buy It Now (BIN).**

   There are two things to consider when deciding whether to list your auction as a BIN or a regular auction. First of all, many eBay Christmas shoppers aren't looking for the thrill of the auction. Many are new to eBay and are only interested in finding the specific item they have been searching everywhere for. The last thing they want to do is have to bid and wait for an auction to end… Not only that, they also want to be SURE they are going to get their hands on the item they want; therefore, they aren’t interested in taking a risk of losing an auction to someone else. This is where listing as a Buy It Now is a good choice. You will also want to use a BIN when there are only a couple days left before the holiday shipping deadline or selling season is over. This is when you (or your buyer) do not have the time to wait for an auction to end – otherwise, Christmas will have passed you by. (I need to mention that I have heard from many sellers who do VERY well after Christmas and right on up to the New Year!)

5. **Ebay: Sometimes it is still best for the traditional auction.**

   On the other hand, as an eBay seller, you know that the bidding is what can cause the final selling price to reach new heights! Do a little research on the particular item you have and see how the auctions are doing. Of course, if you are a gold member, the regular updates you will receive on this list will help you know how the item is performing from… but, I would take a look before listing your particular item anyhow.

   Be sure to check current auctions as well as completed auction. You can do this by entering in the item you have to sell – as though you were to be looking to buy one on eBay. Once you reach a list of the item you have to sell, view by “Highest Price” (located in the top as a pull-down menu). Notice
the final selling price on the item and the number of bids. Note the number of bidders as well. It only takes two bidders to make a bidding war – but, for an item to be a good seller more than once, you want to note if previous items had more than 2 bidders. If the price is good enough for you and the number of bids is high (over 5), it might be a good choice to sell the item as a regular auction.

6. **Ebay: Shorten the auction duration.**

There are so many items selling on eBay, that most bidders only browse through the items that are either newly listed – or ending that day. This means that the 5 days in-between (a 7-day listing) is usually pretty dead. You may have noticed this with your auctions. You get a larger number of watchers (and hits) within the first 24 hours... then, again during the last 24 hours. I have had great luck with reducing my listing time to 3 days. They tend to do just as well – if not better - than the default 7 day auctions. This is also a good compromise between listing as a BIN or a traditional auction. You still have the bidding wars – but, you (and your customers) do not have to wait as long for the auction to end.

7. **eBay: Use competitor’s success as a template for your own.**

Research is the key to having the most successful auction. Research the items you have and notice the auctions that have the highest ending selling price. *Look at those auctions and study them.* Notice the starting price, title, pictures, and description... and use it as a template for your own success! I am not saying you should copy another auction – *just make observations as to what makes that auction successful and apply those principles to your own listing.* You can also use this information to gain an edge over the competition.

I have a great example from a pair of UGG boots I listed a while back where I applied this principle. I purchased them at the Nordstrom Rack for $36. Even though I knew these would sell well, I hadn’t listed Uggs before... so I did my research. I found a seller who focused on Ugg boots. In fact, that is all they sold. They were obviously good at what they were doing because their Ugg Boots were selling for about $20-40 more than the others listed. I noticed the key to their success was that they started their auctions at $.01 and didn’t have a reserve on the auction. So, I did the same. I listed my Ugg Boots for $.01 – **but I offered a few other things to separate me from any competition.** I lowered my shipping rate from the competition by $3. Boy did this pay off! The auction ended at over $110.

8. **eBay: Make your starting bid super low.**

In all the research I have conducted I have noticed that almost every time there are two of the same item listed – **the one that has the super low starting price does better.** Why? Think of it this way.... *If you were a bidder looking for a specific item and found two that were identical what would you do?* One item has a listing price of $29.99 – which you might be willing to pay. However, the other has a starting price of only $.99

hmmm... which would you choose?
I would bid on the lower item even if I am willing to have my maximum bid be over $29.99... just in case I can get it for less. I most definitely would not recommend listing every item you may have at a penny or ninety-nine cents; however, if you truly have a HOT item, the risk may be well worth it. Maybe just try it on one or two auctions until you feel more comfortable with it.

9. **Ebay: Do NOT list more than one of the same item at one time (unless you are using Buy It Now).**

If you have more than one of any hot selling toy, *don’t compete with yourself by listing them all at once.*

This may help you decide whether to list as a BIN or traditional auction... **If you have 20+ of an identical item, you won’t have the time to list all of them one by one as a traditional auction.**

A good way to proceed may be to start with a couple traditional auctions to see how high bidders are willing to go on the item – then, use that information to base your Buy It Now price.

**To avoid too many listing fees, you can sell one item, then offer the next as a second chance offer to the next lowest bidder.** If the next lowest bidder is only $.50 lower than the winner... it could be well worth offering your other item to that bidder (since the listing fees are more than the $.50 it is cost-effective).

10. **Ebay: Test the market with fixed price items first**

We covered this earlier... but, I’ll mention it here as well. One of the beauties of having an eBay store is that if you aren’t sure how an item is going to sell... you can start it in your store as a fixed item. List it with a nice price that you are happy with. **Once the item starts moving, you can list it as an auction and have a better idea of how it is going to perform for you.** Use your fixed price listing(s) as a gauge for when to list items as auction.

**When To List**

As mentioned earlier – more and more people (ie., customers) are comfortable with buying items online... and this is good news for online sellers. Keep in mind, if you are selling on Amazon with FBA – ship in your inventory as you buy it. There is no reason to hold onto it during Q4 (or even in Q3 leading up to Q4).

If you aren’t already familiar with what are usually the big shopping days for the holidays – google held a webinar a couple of years discussing these trends.

According to Google...

- **Black Friday** – Most people know this is the biggest shopping day of the year... for off-line sales. This year, Black Friday falls on November 25, 2016.
- **Cyber Monday** – This has become one of the most popular online shopping days and is the Monday after Thanksgiving, November 27, 2016.
• Monday’s throughout the month of December have traditionally generated more revenue online than other days.
• Traditionally, the first and second week in December generate the highest revenue on average for online sales.

As an Amazon FBA seller, I'd get your inventory in ASAP and price accordingly. You can keep your pricing high if you want until the market changes... but get those items to the warehouse so you can control your pricing.
On the following pages you will find a list we have put together that includes what retailers and industry experts are **predicting** to be the most popular this holiday season.

This list, as well as the updated reports include predictions of hot selling new toys as well as what is actually already disappearing off the shelves.

This information is gathered from top players in the toy and retail industry. We all know, however, that there are no guarantees in life... especially when it comes to selling online! Of course, with the regular updates of the Gold membership that start in November, you will have current statistics for each toy listed. Hours of research have been put into developing this hot list for you – so, here are a few tips to use it to its maximum potential with the lowest risk factor.

**How To Make The Most of the Hot List**

1. Remember, the items on this list have links to Amazon, eBay and retail stores where it is available. Even though the current price is on the list, this info will change as we get closer to the holidays. You can use these links on the list to check the pricing anytime you want. At the beginning of Q4, the list below is more of a benchmark or starting point.

   **Use the following list to know what items to keep an eye out for and possibly put on layaway or buy** (while keeping the receipt!).

   *What is a great seller one week, could be a bomb the next week. But – usually this is a pattern in Q4. If a toy bombs, there is a good chance it will go back up before the end of the year... so don't get discouraged!*

2. If you find items on this list that aren't selling well online just yet but you think they could be a good seller, you can put them on layaway in your local store. This way they will hold the item(s) for you for a period of time (often 30-60 days) while you watch to see if the online demand grows. Be sure to read your local store's layaway policy for details.

   I've included a layaway cheat sheet in the Appendix for you... some stores are offering free layaway programs this year!

3. When looking online for hot toys to purchase for resale, you can use this little tip to find out if the item is a hot one. Add the item to your cart – only don't just add one item! Add 999 (or another high number)... many times you will be notified as to how many are available. You will see a note that says
something like this,

“I'm sorry but our inventory is limited to 13 of these items. Please adjust the amount you have requested accordingly.”

This gives you an idea as to whether this item is selling like hot cakes or not. If you do not get a notice like the one above then they probably have enough stock to process your order... If the website has 999 of the item you are looking for in stock, it is likely not to be a great seller online. You are looking for items that are in high demand and a low supply – that is what causes the online sales to sky-rocket!

4. Remember – we have twelve years beyond us in providing the Holiday Toy Guide... and one thing that has remained consistent every single year... **if a toy is showing signs of reselling on eBay/Amazon higher than retail this early in the game (September/October), it will likely go up as we get closer to the holidays.** It might not be where you would resell now; however, showing even a slight profit now with a good rank is an excellent set up for a solid hot toy for Q4. These are the items to watch closely as we get closer to the holidays.

5. **Use this list as a spring-board!** Look at other items people who bought these toys are looking at... you can find all sorts of gems this way! **Don't take this tip lightly!** by using this list as a spring-board, you will find all sorts of other items that are popular and perhaps easier to find.
Hot Toys For Holiday Resale

This list is provided to let you, as a seller, know what toys are expected to be the most popular and how they are performing on eBay and Amazon compared to retail pricing.

Please note: In no way are these lists guaranteed. Understand that although the items listed are based on hours of research I do not claim it to be all inclusive. This list does not guarantee any profits or lack thereof from reselling these items.

You found it!

This is the list you will want to have with you at all times this holiday season (and if you have the gold level, don’t forget to print out the updates for the most current information!).

There are two types of lists in the Holiday Toy Guide: Toy Trends and Predicted Popular Toys (more later on what these lists include).

The internet has opened a whole new way of shopping that allows many items to be bought at retail prices... and resold online at a much higher price.

For example, an item may retail at Wal-Mart for $9.99 and only be available in the west coast stores (not made available online) – or just be out of stock other places. This provides a wonderful opportunity for sellers who can gain access to these highly demanded products. Customers who are looking for these hot items are no longer limited to the items available in their neighborhood stores... If Wal-Mart is out of the the high demand new toy and isn't selling it in their online store, people can now turn other places on the internet. Ebay and Amazon are two of the most popular websites customers are turning to these days.

Keep this in mind as you shop – even though your local store has what may seem like overstock on a particular hot item, it doesn’t mean that it won’t sell well online for you. You will find that stores in other parts of the country (and world) are willing to pay top dollar for those items because they can’t get their hands on them in their neck of the woods.
**Toy Trends**

Trends are based on research of what items have been considered hot items in the past. A "toy trend" is a type of toy that has had a past tendency to sell well. **Trends are not specific items**; rather, they give suggestions for types of toys to keep an eye out for. Let me say that again... **Trends are not specific items.** Trends are worth paying attention to because they provide insight into themes of products that will be popular in coming seasons.

One of the trends we are seeing is that the range in toy pricing is a little higher this year... This implies that retailers are expecting parents to pay more in 2016. And, as always, we are visiting some hot toys of the past. We are going to see classic Lego and Barbie... along with revisiting "real" pets and Star Wars. This year's expected to be popular toys are also building on the success of previous years. There are almost always hot toys during the holiday season that reflect what was hot the previous year.

**But how do we determine the trends in the toys we will see this year?**

First of all – we need to look at technology and how it continues to impact the toy industry. It's all about fusing entertainment with technology... and of course the toy industry is hitting the market and taking advantage of the technology hype. We have seen tablets for kids come out over the last few years along with apps that require toys for parents to buy. It started a couple years ago with the game apps – but, these types of toys are getting more sophisticated. **The line between technology and play is more blurred than ever and you can expect to see some hot toys this Christmas reflecting that.**

Secondly, **movies and television have a huge impact on what toys tend to be most popular** for the year. This year, we have had Finding Dory, the Secret Life of Pets... and of course Star Wars coming right before Christmas... and all will likely have a licensed toy (or two... or 2 thousand!) following that will be worth watching. **If the movie is super hot – the toys from this movie will likely be hot through January and into next year.**

Third, you can always expect some remakes of what was once super popular. We have seen this over and over in previous years... Furby is a great example and seems to always makes some sort of come-back. The "Little Live Pets Clever Keet" has been popular the last two years – and this year there is the Little Live Pet Lil' Turtle that some are saying will be popular.

As much as we look at previous hot toy trends to help determine trends for this coming holiday season, keep in mind - trends are not only based on the toys that are expected to be the most popular this holiday season, **toy trends are effected by the economy and current events as well.**

Studying trends in the toy industry will prove to be extremely helpful as you build a shopping list for selling toys this holiday season. Knowing what types of toys are
expected to be the most popular will help you be able to spot an item that has a high potential of selling on eBay and Amazon.

According to the Toy Industry Association, trends for 2016 include the following:

1. Technology: Robots, Drones and “Toys-To-Life” - We have seen these types of tech toys show up over the years but the hottest robots of the year will be customizable and teach kids important concepts... and they will be a part of most of the popular toys. Younger children will find them in or with their action figures, puzzles and bath toys. Tech toys provide a “360-degree interactive play experience while enhancing classic play patterns.

*Examples: robots/robotic pets, Remote-Control that interact with smartphones, apps that allow kids to play with physical toys in new and different ways (even Pokeman Go!), smart tablets for toddlers, augmented reality, wearables, flying nanodrones, etc.*

2. Family: Like many generations before them, millennial parents have grown nostalgic for childhood board games, puzzles and other traditional toys. Believe it or not, the TIA is seeing a growing number of toys that although they promote technology, they focus on promoting socialization and face-to-face interaction.

*Examples: family and board games, craft activities, outdoor games, etc.*

3. "Ultimate Creator": My kids fall in this category as far as passions in their play. Culinary creations, “Pinterest-worthy” designs and stop-motion movies are some of the many creative ideas in this category. These types of toys teach skills and provide creative medium for expression where children can share their physical and digital masterpieces.

*Examples: stop-motion tech and videography sets; food/baking sets; jewelry making; building sets, etc.*

4. Brain Boosters / “Steam”: Educational toys have always had their place in the Holiday Toy Guide trends... and this year is no different. Educational toys are “STEAMing ahead and include toys that reinforce Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM). Parents and educators are big fans of the STEAM toys because they reinforce what children are learning in schools and help build important spatial, reasoning, critical thinking and problem solving skills.

*Examples: Classic toys with an educational twist; infant/pre-school learning toys; science and engineering kits that teach coding and advanced mathematical concepts; activity-based books and educational board games that teach language and culture; toys that encourage parental/educator involvement and teaching; etc.*

5. Collectibles: In 2016 expect to see affordable collectible toys everywhere. Collecting is a favorite pastime for children and it's an art form for kids who are on the hunt for the one item to complete their collection. Keep in mind, collecting is social as kids enjoy sharing and trading their items.
Examples: novelty toys; high-quality miniature versions of existing lines; franchise collectibles, etc.

If this is confusing at all... it will make more sense as you look at the list. Please note that the specifics that are listed in the list on the following page are used as examples of items that might fall under the aforementioned trend.

Following is a list of toy trends for this year.
Toy Trends For 2016

- **Licensed characters/hot movies/video games/apps:**
  The media plays a huge role in the toys that are popular for children. Many roll out their DVD just in time for the holidays.. and along with these DVD’s you’ll find a new wave of popularity with the toys that correspond to them. With the popularity of the smart phone and ipad – we have also seen popular licensed characters come from a popular app.
  1. Star Wars
  2. Finding Dory
  3. The Secret Life of Pets
  4. Paw Patrol
  5. The Avengers
  6. Frozen
  7. TMNT (Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles)
  8. Pokeman
  9. Zombies/Vampires
  10. Polar Express and other Christmas themed movies

- **Technology:**
  1. Playstation/Nintendo/Sony consoles with new releases
  2. Video game accessories (biggy!)
  3. tablets for kids
  4. smart phone/ipad games “apps”
  5. Music/videos
  6. Children's toys (interactive)
  7. Online Add-Ons (toys with an online addition like app toys)
  8. Wearable technology (Kidizoom SmartWatch)

- **Classic/Retro Toys for the holiday**
  1. Trains (always a holiday favorite! - both new and used) – Polar Express and holiday versions
  2. Pretend Play and Dollhouses (new and used)
  3. LEGO
  4. Barbie
  5. Matchbox/HotWheels
  6. Board games revisited

- **Budget Toys:**
  1. Collectible and used toys
  2. Mini toys allow parents to buy as little or as many as they want or can afford

- **Educational Toys**
  1. innovative toys to help teach science
  2. toys that teach skills (knitting, cooking, gardening, etc.)

- Crafts and creativity
- **Realistic/RobotToys**
  1. Pets (Birds, Turtles, Fish)
  2. Baby Alive (and other dolls and accessories)
  3. R2D2/Robot/RC vehicles

- **Create & Invent**
  1. building/construction toys
  2. programmable toys
  3. design kits
**Hot Toy Predictions**

Toys that are predicted to be the hottest or most popular for the holiday season are based on researched trends. Following is a list of to-be hot toys predicted from multiple resources.

**THE TOY LIST**

**This is an early release of the Holiday Toy Guide eBook. The first Hot Toy Hit List will be available early October.**

The Hot Toy List will be posted on a password protected site for you after early October. You can visit: [http://www.holidaytoyguide.com/hotlist-cockrum](http://www.holidaytoyguide.com/hotlist-cockrum)
password: HTG2016letmein
What About Used Toys?

Even though used toys sell well through the holidays (and all year long, actually), I think there is wisdom in diversifying your inventory and including used toys.

In addition, many buyers are looking for vintage toys or collectables... and some just looking for a great deal on a themed toy. For example, a few years ago, my son was into Star Wars (well, he still is) – knowing there would be some great Star Wars stuff on eBay, we checked it out. We ended up buying all sorts of fun stuff for him that isn’t on the market anymore. It wasn’t terribly vintage (like from the 70’s when the movies first came out) – but, it was used. We didn’t care – he loved the stuff! So, now is the time to clean out those toy boxes and get ready to list the toys!

Try experimenting a bit when you are out to garage sales. Keep an eye open for toys that were popular when we were kids – TMNT, Strawberry Shortcake, Fisher Price Little People, CareBears, My Little Pony, Blues Clues, etc. This is a fun time of year to try out some new things!

An excellent resource for used toys is the eBay community boards... new and seasoned sellers are always willing to offer their two cents on toys in the Toys & Hobbies board! Just go to eBay and click on ‘Community’ and discussion boards at the top right corner.
In Closing

This report is just the beginning... the real value in the Holiday Toy Guide is going to be in the Private Facebook Group that is bundled with the Holiday Toy Guide Gold Membership.

For Gold members, the 3 updates will start the first week of November and continue through to the week of Christmas. They will be emailed to your inbox as a pdf format and will include most of the toys in this list plus any new toys that come up to research. You will also find the weekly lists posted on the Private Facebook page.

If you joined at the Silver level for just the eBook be sure to check out the private page where we will post the Hot List the first week of October. Be sure to watch your inbox... and add my email address to your 'whitelist' so you get the update!

jenni@huntedtreasure.com

Here is to your success!

Jenni Hunt
www.jeninhunt.com

UPGRADE to the GOLD level Today!

Gold members gain access to the awesome private Facebook community with proven experts PLUS receive 3 updated reports to the hot toy list – along with access to hot toys our dedicated VA is researching for the us... and, honestly, so much more!

You can learn more at www.HolidayToyGuide.com – but, keep in mind, the Gold Level is only open to 200 members - there are only a handful of spots available... it will close up when it is full.

Only $127 to upgrade to GOLD – Come join the community and step up your Q4 toy sales!

LINK TO UPGRADE HERE
APPENDIX:
Layaway Programs for 2016
Many stores are waving their layaway fee for the holiday season!
2016 Layaway Programs for the Holidays

Magic Window of Opportunity Ecourse for eBay sellers

When To List Your Items

**Note: some of this may be outdated... but the principles are the same. Think outside the box and get creative about how you are selling. ;-)**

Before I get into this section, I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to test for your own market. One question I am asked – probably more than any other – is, “When is the best time to start a listing?”... there are plenty of market research programs available (for free – just google and you’ll likely find more than you can count) to give you a bunch of stats showing when other sellers have started and ended their auctions. These programs will compare that data with how high the auction ends to determine the ‘best’ time to start and end an auction in a particular market or niche.

I don’t pay much attention to that data... If I remember correctly, Sunday and Monday evenings are suppose to be the best times to list an item for my market. I use to list most of my items during that time-frame... but I noticed something. And this something absolutely transformed my business. In fact, it actually will tie together all the pieces we have discussed so far in this workbook.

I noticed that when I listed an item – I had the most ‘activity’ during the first 24 hours of a listing... and then again during the last 24 hours. I call the in-between time ‘dead time’. As I observed this, I also noticed that as a buyer I would tend to only look at items ending in the next 24 hours... or those that were most recently listed. There are just too many items on ebay to look at every single item for sale in the category I am interested in.

My first test was to shorten my auction duration from 7 days to 5 or 3 days. I actually saw an increase in my bidding activity when I did this – but, what really made a difference was when I started listing a few items every day. Think about this – combine listing a few items every day with a shipping special and cross-promoting and you have developed a very powerful system for getting ALL of your listings in front of those (many) bidders who only check out the first and last 24 hours of a listing.

This whole technique and strategy is outlined in my ecourse, The Magic Window of Opportunity On eBay. I highly recommend you go through the course... I have only received positive feedback – and almost all of it has been stories of how this system

© copyright 2012-2016, Hunt Information Services
has increased sales, allowed them to manage their time better... and enjoy more time doing the things they love vs. being tied to the computer all the time. In fact, you don’t even need to sign up for the course – I’m including it in this workbook. If you have been through the course already, it might be a good review... or you can just skip to the next section. Keep in mind that this ecourse is a stand-alone product and there is some overlap with some of the ideas and material already discussed in this workbook. The purpose, however, is to help you tie everything together... enjoy!

Here are what a few people have said about the course:

"Jenny, an update on how your MWOO helped me out so much. I have been selling on Ebay for 8 years and have loved every minute of Ebay. I have expanded my business outside the "four walls" of Ebay and am helping others get started selling on Ebay. My customer, who used MWOO 5 months ago, just this month she sold over 1000.00....this is a PowerSeller for sure!

What makes her so different is she is 66 years young...she has literary caught the vision of your course. She sets her hours so Ebay isn't consuming her time, posts a few items day and lives a life outside of the computer. Thank you so much for the hours you have poured into this course. Also thank you for making your course free.” ~ Lisa

"Yes, I have applied the "window of opportunity". I had more watchers and more hits than ever before on my recent auctions. Thank you so much for sharing your knowledge.” ~ Patty

"Hello Jenni! I am not big on writing emails. However this email is easy to write. FIRST Thank You for everything that you have sent me. I have prospered from each of them, you are truthful and honest with your findings. I have put them to the test. Now that I list items daily I have more time for myself and family and I seem to get more responses to my auctions. Plus It’s truly better to work two hrs. a day than ten hrs. one day (night).I also purchased the garage secrets ebook, I tried two to the tips and WOW just like Magic, they worked. I am a better seller because of your coaching. These days I look forward to your wisdom filled emails. You have my Humblest Thanks! WISHING YOU ALL THE BEST” ~ Gregory

The Magic Window Of Opportunity On eBay

DAY 1: Every seller wants to know... when is the best day to start and end auctions?

Are you asking the right question?

Rather than focusing on what day ebay gets the most traffic... or, trying to discover when your market is likely to be surfing the net (and hopefully bidding)... As sellers, we need to be looking at how we can maximize the exposure our listings are getting. Certainly if we are listing our auctions so they begin (and/or end) during the busiest time on ebay, we are likely to be getting more bids and potentially more sales.

But, is that really enough?

Are you maximizing the exposure your auction is getting by listing them during these times? Some may say yes... but, the purpose of this report is to shed light on a different perspective.
Changing the way you look at your listing strategy could make all the difference in your sales... and it all begins with asking the right question. We shouldn’t be asking when the best day to list is... rather,

“How do I get the most exposure for my auctions?”

The Magic Window Of Opportunity on Ebay is a short e-course designed to help you explore the idea that more can be done to maximize how many potential bidders view your listings... and if more people are looking at your auctions – that can translate into what every seller is looking for... more bids. So, get ready to revolutionize the way you manage your auctions.

DAY 2: 24 is KEY!

Today we are going to discuss the most important 24 hour window of opportunity ebay offers it’s sellers. Many sellers know that they get the most bids during the last 24 hours of a listing – but, they do not use this to their benefit.

In case you didn’t know by now ;-) Ebay is just huge! I mean... HUGE! At the time of this writing, there are 564,385 auctions just under the category: books – Amazing! There are so many items listed at any given time on ebay that often bidders do not have the time to look at every listing of the item they are looking to purchase. I’ve been there and I am sure you have been as well... I’m looking for a specific item. I type in my keywords and 5,000 items (and 10+ pages of listings) come up. I’ll usually scroll through the first page or two – but that’s it. In fact, many buyers only look at the auctions that are either ending within the next 24 hours or that have just been listed. For your selling success, it is imperative that you take advantage of this 24 hour window of opportunity. One way to do this is to list one day auctions. It is logical to think that by listing as one day auctions your items are always within this 24 hour window. However...

What if I told you there is a way you can have your listing show up within this time-frame every day for 7 or even 10 day auctions?

Look at it this way...

let’s say you have 100 children’s items to list on auction.

On Sunday, you prepare your listings and post 14 items as a 7 day auction. These items will remain in the 24 hour window until Monday... until 24 hours after you list the item – and then again on Saturday for the last 24 hours until the auction ends.

On Monday, you list 14-15 more items. These items will remain as “new” listings until Tuesday. They will remain in the 24 hour window of opportunity for the first 24 hours it is listed. Again, these items will be in the 24 hour window on Sunday for the last 24 hours it is listed until the auction ends on Monday.

Continue listing 14-15 items as 7 day auctions until all 100 items are posted.

You now have 100 items posted... all ending on different days of the week.

Now... here is the key! This is the secret to your success in listing your auctions – and if you get nothing else – GET THIS! The key is to get your potential bidders to
look at the other auctions you have listed. It is a simple concept that many sellers miss completely... and if you apply it correctly, it will make a huge difference in your auction sales. **By listing some auctions every day of the week and pointing your visitors to look at all your auctions, you are exposing every one of your listings to this 24 hour window of opportunity.**

Tomorrow we talk about how to cross-promote your auctions effectively. Combining the listing strategy you learned today with Cross-promotion is one of the best ways to maximize the exposure your auction listings receive.

**DAY 3: Consider these before you start Cross-Promoting your items**

Yesterday we looked at half of the key to maximizing the exposure of your auctions... the 24 hour window of opportunity. Today, we begin to look at the other half – cross-promoting.

Cross-Promoting your auctions/listings, is simply promoting the other items you have listed at the same time. This is an essential technique many sellers fail miserably at but will reap nice profits if you are able to master it.

**From now on, when you are thinking about listings and your auctions, think about cross-promoting.** Make it the foundation of everything you do with your auctions. Following are a few important tips to consider before we get into the “how” of cross-promoting.

1. **Consider your inventory**

   I like to encourage sellers to have some sort of theme to their inventory. Sure, you can list sporting goods and antiques – but, you really benefit if all of your inventory can be marketed to the same bidder (not to say that someone interested in sporting goods wouldn’t be also interested in antiques... ☐). I like to sell children’s items... this includes clothing, toys, gear, bedding... even maternity and items for moms (since it is usually the mom buying the items for their children). All of the items I sell that are related to children’s items can be cross-promoted with each other. One way to do this effectively is to list the items that are age-appropriate at the same time. If I am listing newborn clothing, then I might consider listing baby gear (infant car-seat) and maternity items during the same week. If I am listing clothing for a preschooler, I might consider listing toys that are age appropriate too (such as dress-up costumes or character bedding). If you are only selling toys, consider listing all of one line at the same time (for example, all Star Wars items or Dora items). This way, your potential bidders have a reason to look at your other inventory... all you have to do is tell them to look.

2. **Avoid Key-Word Spamming**

   When Cross-Promoting your auctions you want to stay away from Key-Word spamming. Ebay will take down your auctions if they discover you are doing this... and well, that defeats the whole purpose of cross-promoting! Following is an excerpt from an article by Sherah Taylor at Auction-Moms.com. *Sherah is a powerseller and has published the popular Auction-Moms Newsletter for a few years. This is an older article – but still applicable and a good read to better understand keyword spamming.*
Auctions Cancelled Due to Keyword Spamming!
By Sherah Taylor, Auction-Moms Newsletter

After hearing from three separate people this week asking about this issue, I figured there are probably a lot more wondering the same thing. Keyword spamming. What is it? How do I know if I’m doing it or not?

This is something that as a new seller especially, it would be easy to get the wrong idea about keywords and how to use them. A classic example is this email I received from a reader:

***********************************************************
I just had an auction cancelled and one of the reasons was "search manipulation". I have a saved listing that every auction I do, at the bottom I state that I am listing many designer clothes, such as Gymboree, Children’s Place etc. They said that isn't allowed and I can't figure out why?

How do you get traffic to your auctions without being able to say those things? I really am listing those brands. For example, I have a Baby Bonjour outfit. What are the odds of someone searching for that particular name? None really, so instead I thought if someone is searching for Gymboree they would see my outfit and go "Hey, that's pretty cute."

I just know my sales will go way down if I can't put key words in my auction. Any advice?

***********************************************************

Keyword spamming is basically using words in your auction to attract more bidders. Words that don’t belong there.

Let me ask you this: Have you ever done a search for something, and your results bring auctions that have NOTHING to do with what you’re looking for? **For instance: Say you’re looking for a Baby Gap pair of capris that came out a couple of years ago.** They have ladybugs on them so it should be fairly easy to find them. Just enter “Gap capris ladybugs” in the search, and check the “titles and descriptions” box. This means it will not only search for the words “Gap capris ladybugs” in the titles, it will also find those words written inside the auction description.

A few seconds later, your results bring back 200 auctions. What the heck?! There can’t be THAT many ladybug capris! Here’s what happened, and why keyword spamming becomes such a great source of irritation for bidders. A seller has an outfit up for auction from the Gymboree Ladybugs line. It includes a set of capris. There is no reason for this auction to come up in your search because she’s not selling a Gap outfit, right? Wrong.

In her description, she has written, “Be sure to check my other auctions! I am listing lots of Gap, Gymboree, Tommy Hilfiger, and Ralph Lauren this week”. This is a BIG no-no. And if Ebay finds out, her auctions could all be cancelled without warning for keyword spam. You see, her auction has nothing to do with Tommy Hilfiger, Ralph Lauren, or Baby Gap. Yet it came
up in your search for the Gap capris. She is selling a Gymboree item, not those other brands. So those three brands become keyword spam.

We all hate spam. We get it in our email inbox every day, sometimes by the dozens. Thus the words “keyword spam”, because you get UNWANTED auctions in your searches.

But if I add more brand names, won’t I get more auction exposure? Well, yes.

But the so-called “exposure” is going to be basically people that are pretty annoyed at you for barging in on their searches. The majority of people hate spam in their email inbox, and this is no different.

**HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM KEYWORD SPAMMING?**

Besides your basic brand names, it goes a little further. If you were to say, “Be sure to see the matching shoes in my other auction” that would also be keyword spamming. Anyone searching for shoes would come up with your auction.

If you have matching pieces, then call them just that: matching pieces. If you are selling a Baby Lulu outfit and have more Baby Lulu in your other auctions, you can certainly say so ~ since you ARE selling a Baby Lulu.

Anyone looking for Baby Lulu will pull up your auction, and rightly so since you are selling it.

**Suggestion from Ebay Seller p00bears:**

Anything that draws me as a bidder to your auction that you are not actually selling is Keyword Spam. Basic rule: **If it’s not being sold in that auction, you shouldn’t include it in your listing.**

**EXCEPTION:**

Here’s where it gets a little confusing, but I’ll see if I can make it simple. You ARE allowed to make one comparison. Just one though, no more. You can say, “These Gap pajamas remind me of Hanna Andersson” and that is legal. I know that still sounds like it constitutes keyword spamming, but this is the exception Ebay has allowed. It must be a comparison.

You can only use this comparison in your description, not your title. Ebay’s entire guidelines on this topic are outlined clearly in more detail here:

**Ebay Keyword Spam Guidelines**

One reader wrote,

"Can I say something like "click here to see more boutique brands" or " check back to see more boutique brands I will be listing daily" or something like that? Or is that keyword spam using "boutique"?

From what I understand, boutique IS a search word that many people use to
look for clothes. So it would be considered keyword spamming if you were selling something that was NOT boutique, yet you had that word in there. However, if you were selling something boutique (and many of the children’s brands are) in that specific auction, then you certainly could direct them to look at your other auctions for more boutique clothing.

So, how do you make Cross-Promoting work for you? Tomorrow, we will discuss this further and share suggestions for cross-promoting effectively while and staying legal with ebay.

**DAY 4: Cross-Promote your auctions with great success**

After reading yesterday’s article regarding Key-Word spamming on ebay, you might be wondering how in the world you are going to be able to cross-promote your items? If you can’t state in your listing that you have newborn clothing items up for auction in your maternity clothing listing, how do you get your bidders to look and see what else you are selling?

First of all, it is all in your wording. Instead of saying, “Check out the shoes that go with this outfit I have listed…“ you can say, “If you like this item, you will love the other items I just listed this week!”… but, an even more effective way to get your bidders to look at your other auctions is to offer a shipping special.

There is something psychological that comes into play – bidders will almost always pay more money for an item if the shipping is free (or super low). I see it all the time in my research… one item is selling up to $49 with free shipping – the same item is listed by another seller for $19 with $10 shipping and has no bids! Which one would you bid on? The math shows that the latter is the better deal, right? But, bidders are drawn to the “special” they get (or feel like they are getting) with the free shipping. Another example is when a store has a sale or clearance event. There is an outlet in my local area that has a $5, $10, $15 sale twice a year. I went into the store the week before the sale and got some great items for $3-5 to resell on ebay for $20. I returned the next week for the sale to see what they had… I couldn’t believe it. The SAME item I had bought for $3-5 was “on sale” for $10! And, it was disappearing off the shelves! Everyone thought they were getting such a deal because they were on “special”. It really is a psychological game... and one worth learning to not only increase your sales, but save you money when you are the buyer.

It is expensive to buy from multiple sellers and buyers are drawn to shipping specials. It is an instant way to peak their interest and have them look at what other items you have for auction.

Back to the shipping special... remember, the goal is to use a shipping special to cross-promote. Here are some suggestions:

1. Win more than 1 auction and only pay $5 to ship it all!
2. Win 3, Shipping is on ME! (Free shipping with 3 wins)
3. Win 3, Shipping is FREE!
4. FREE Shipping with more than 2 auction wins!
5. ALWAYS $5 Shipping no matter how many items you win!
You want to GRAB the attention of the bidder... be sure to not have an entire paragraph dedicated to your shipping special. It has to be short, BIG, and to the point or it won’t get read and your bidder will go onto someone else’s auction. If you have to list details of the offer, do so at the end of your listing under “terms”... but, have a nice, catchy mention of the deal as the first thing the bidder sees... then, again after the description. After the mention of the shipping special, include a link to your other auctions...

Win 3... Shipping is FREE!
Click HERE to see my other auctions

Finally, be sure to link your shipping special to your other auction listings. You can find out what the link is by going to one of your listings and clicking on: “View other seller’s items”. Copy the url for the list of your other items (even if you don’t have any listed for sale at the time – the url/link will be the same for when you do have items listed). Paste the url as the link your bidders will go to when they clock on your shipping special. Remember, you want to make it as easy as possible for your potential bidders to view all your auctions. Don’t make them have to search for a link to your other auctions – offer the link to your other listings when you mention your shipping special.

**DAY 5: Summary**

This is it - I wanted to send out one more note just to sum up all that has been mentioned during these past few days. The concept shared in The Magic Window of Opportunity on Ebay is a basic one... yet, many sellers completely miss it! Don’t be one of those sellers...

By Listing "like" items every day of the week and offering a shipping special to cross-promote those items, you will be maximizing the exposure your auctions receive. Although only a handful of your auctions will be starting/ending on any given day, each one will have the means to draw bidders to all the listings that are up but in that “dead” auction time. This strategy allows each auction to be seen in the “Magic 24 Hour” window of opportunity and has the potential to increase your auction sales and profits.

In summary:

1) Stick with a “theme” of like items for your inventory so you can sell more items to the same bidder. If they found you because they are interested in a fishing pole you are selling they are more likely to buy another fishing item than maternity clothes. Don’t worry if you have a large variety in your inventory... just be sure to have the “like” item auctions running at the same time.

2) You increase your “dead” time (the time between the first and last 24 hours of the auction) by listing all your items to start and end on the same day.
Instead, list a handful of your items every day of the week... this way you always have some items in that 24 hour window of opportunity.

Have every auction you list point to other listings you have running! The most effective way to do this is by offering a shipping special for multiple wins. Give the bidders incentive for looking at the other items you are selling — and even if your items are competing with another seller, the shipping special will motivate them to buy from you because it saves them money.