

## Using Auction Listing Services and Software

**P**ractically every eBay seller starts out by using eBay's default sell your item form. As we discussed in the previous chapter, that form allows a good bit of listing customization, thanks to the Listing Designer feature, but it's certainly not the most robust way to create fancy-looking auction listings.

That's probably why so many third parties have entered the market for creating eBay auction listings, with a variety of listing creation services and software. Some of these services/software are freestanding, dedicated only to the creation of auction listings; some are part of a more comprehensive auction management package that also offers end-of-auction emails, checkout services, bulk feedback listing, and so on. Most of these sites and programs come with a fee, although a few are free to use. Almost all let you create listings that are somewhat more sophisticated than those you can create with eBay's Listing Designer.

Should you avail yourself of one of these third-party listing services or programs—and if so, which one? That's what this chapter is all about, so read on to become more informed.

## Using Auction Listing Services

An auction listing service is, quite simply, a website that lets you create eBay auction listings from within your web browser. You create the listings, apply some sort of predesigned template (or perform your own custom formatting), and then have the service upload the listing to the eBay auction site. Depending on the service, your listings may be free; you may be charged a per-listing fee; or you may pay a flat monthly subscription charge. And, as part of the package offered by the site, you may have other auction management services available to you.

That's it in a nutshell—although the specific features offered will differ from site to site.

**NOTE** Whatever fee you do or don't pay to the third-party site, you still have to pay eBay the standard insertion fee for your listing.

### Why Pay for an Auction Listing Service?

If eBay lets you create basic auction listings for free (aside from the normal insertion fee, of course), why would you pay money to do the same thing at a different site?

That's a good question, with a few good answers.

First, remember that eBay listing creation is free only if you want a standard text-based listing. If you include more than one photo, you have to pay extra. And if you want to use the fancy Listing Designer background themes, you pay an extra dime for that service. So listing creation on eBay isn't always free.

Second, there's the matter of variety and flexibility. As you learned in Chapter 2, "Using Standard Text Formatting and eBay's Listing Designer," the themes that eBay offers aren't that spectacular, really. And there's only so much customization you can do; eBay's themes don't automatically create separate sections or formatting for different parts of your listing. So if you want a wider variety of better-looking predesigned templates, you have to look outside of eBay.

Which is why all these listing-creation services exist.

### Popular Auction Listing Services

There are a number of sites that offer auction management services, and almost all of them include fancy listing creation as part of those services. In addition, there are a handful of sites that offers standalone listing-creation services, without all the other auction management stuff. We'll look at the major ones next.

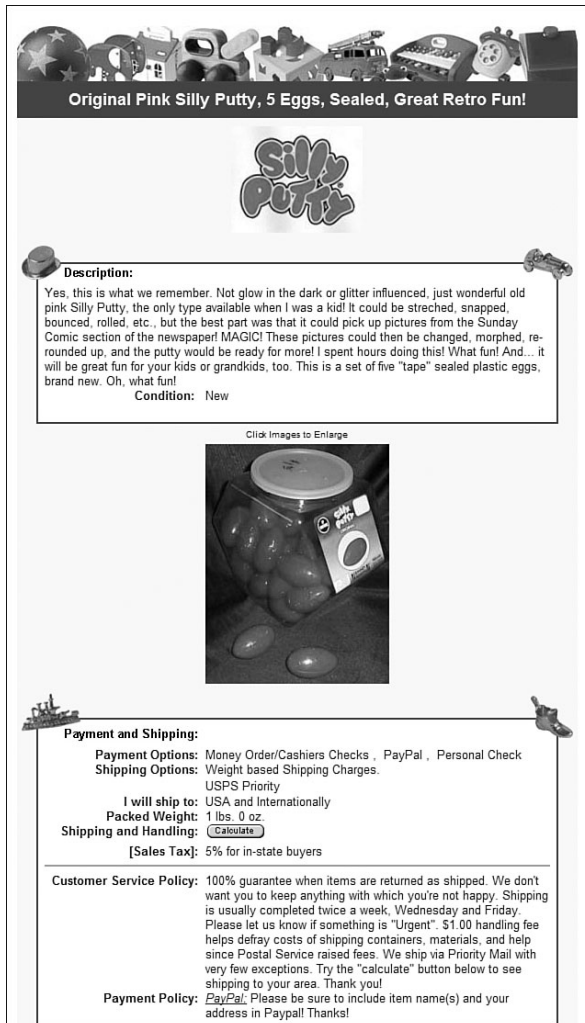
**TIP** You have lots of choices when it comes to choosing a third-party listing-creation tool. Don't assume that the most expensive tools are the best—or that the most affordable ones lack features. Most of these tools are offered with some sort of preview plan, so take advantage of the offer and give 'em a trial run!

## Ándale



Ándale ([www.andale.com](http://www.andale.com)) is a site that offers various services for eBay sellers. Chief among these tools is the Ándale Lister bulk listing creation tool.

Ándale Lister lets you create good-looking listings, working from a catalog of more than 100 professionally created listing templates. (Figure 3.1 shows a typical Ándale listing template.) You also get a built-in HTML editor, so you can customize the existing templates or create your own custom listings.



**FIGURE 3.1**

*A listing created with Ándale Lister.*

You can create your listings in bulk and then upload them according to your designated timetable. You can even program a series of listings to launch on a regularly occurring schedule—or until your inventory runs out. Other listing features include a built-in spell checker, delayed launch scheduling, inline images (and an image hosting service), and pre-filled information for many item categories.

**NOTE** Ándale also offers the Ándale Lister Pro software-based listing tool, discussed later in this chapter.

Like most of the other third-party listing creation tools, Ándale Lister isn't free; Table 3.1 details the tiered pricing schedule.

**Table 3.1** Ándale Lister Fees

Monthly Fee	Listings Included	Each Additional Listing
\$2.00	10	\$0.50
\$7.50	40	\$0.30
\$16.95	110	\$0.20
\$33.95	275	\$0.18
\$56.95	550	\$0.15
\$89.95	1,100	\$0.12
\$149.95	2,750	\$0.10
\$224.95	5,600	\$0.08

## Auction Hawk



Auction Hawk ([www.auctionhawk.com](http://www.auctionhawk.com)) is a web-based auction listing/management service with quite affordable pricing. The site offers various tools in its main service, including built-in listing creation, image hosting, end-of-auction checkout with automated winning-bidder email, bulk feedback posting, and profit-and-loss reporting.

The site's primary listing-creation tool is the 1-Page Lister. As the name implies, it uses a single form-based page to create your eBay auction listings. More important, 1-Page Lister lets you choose from over 2,000 pro-series templates (like the one shown in Figure 3.2), or use your own image backgrounds for your listings. You can also include up to 50 of your other listings in a scrolling cross-promotion gallery.

Powered by Auction Hawk

**Vintage Hat & Box Lot #3 MUST SEE**

This lot is a grouping of 3 vintage hats and 2 hat boxes. Honestly, I know zip about hats other than they are fun to wear! I am helping a wonderful lady liquidate her 80yo aunt estate and we thought someone might enjoy these. So, please look at the pictures, you will know more about how to describe the style of these items than I ever will. The first hat is black with a slightly white band. It appears to be a linen like material. This has also has a black grosgrain ribbon attached. This is in excellent condition.

- The second hat is a beige-taupe color and appears to be made of netting material. The bit of netting appears to be dark brown. There is a small group of pale beige silk flowers (a bit worn). The base hat is in excellent condition.
- The third hat is a yellow wool with a foiled wide satin ribbon. This has a stamp inside which is pictured below. This needs to be cleaned, but is in otherwise good condition.

The boxes are broken up, so consider them a bonus. Both are from high end Fort Worth/Dallas department stores. Shipping will be less if you do not want the boxes. If your interested, please ask questions & I will answer as best I can!

[Redacted]

**TERMS OF SERVICE**

Please email me with any questions you have before then end of the auction. I take care to accurately describe all articles I sell and will do my best to answer any questions you have. I am not an expert, though I try to educate myself regarding the items I sell. Items are eligible for a refund in any transaction that I have misrepresented. I do not knowingly do so, but there is always the possibility of missing something or not detailing something that is an issue for a buyer.

Please review your item upon receipt, and contact me within 24 hours of receipt with any concerns. I will issue you a return authorization, with instructions for returning. ONLY items referencing my return authorization will be eligible for refunds.

Click to enlarge      Click to view full screen

Shipping & Handling	Payment
<p>Insurance: \$1.30 (optional)</p> <p>Large packages are shipped USPS Parcel include a \$1 handling fee. Shipping will be combined for multiple purchases. If other shipping methods are preferred, please contact me and I will adjust the shipping rates. Shipping rates are for the continental US only.</p> <p>Fragile items are well packaged in bubble wrap and with plenty of shipping peanuts.</p> <p>Insurance is mandatory on all items selling for more than \$50.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>	<p>Please use ebay checkout. All payments are due within 10 days of close of auction. I accept the following forms of payment:</p> <p>US (Visitors): Money orders, checks, and PayPal (Preferred);</p> <p>Outside the US: international money orders, payment through and PayPal (preferred); all bids are payable in U.S. Dollars.</p> <p>Orders will be shipped within 3 to 5 business days of payment clearing.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>

Thanks for looking!

**FIGURE 3.2**

A listing template created with Auction Hawk's 1-Page Lister.

Auction Hawk offers a five-level flat pricing scheme, as detailed in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 Auction Hawk Fees**

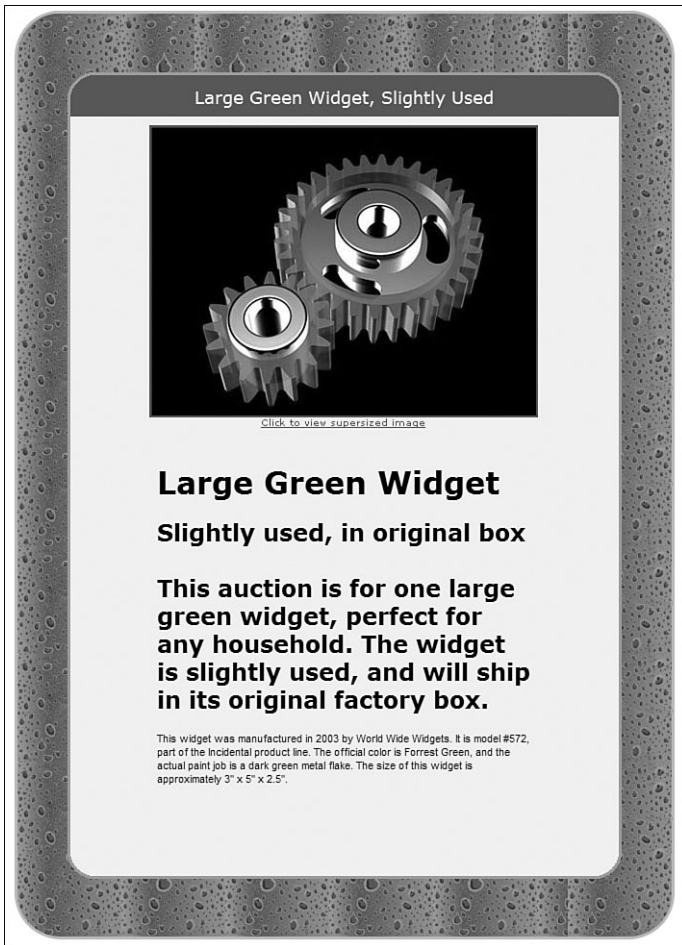
Level	Monthly Fee	Number of Listings Included
Basic	\$12.99	110
Power	\$21.99	250
Preferred	\$29.99	550
Professional	\$44.99	1,100
Unlimited	\$89.99	Unlimited

## Auctiva



Auctiva ([www.auctiva.com](http://www.auctiva.com)) offers a variety of different auction listing/management services, all of which are completely free of charge. Free is good, which explains Auctiva's newfound popularity among eBay sellers.

Auctiva's One-Page Listing Tool (this one-page thing is a popular marketing angle, in case you haven't noticed) lets you choose from hundreds of predesigned templates, such as the one in Figure 3.3. The templates are pretty basic, similar to what you get with eBay's Listing Designer, but they cost 10 cents less than eBay's templates. (They're free, in case you forgot.)



**FIGURE 3.3**

*One of Auctiva's free predesigned auction templates.*

## ChannelAdvisor



ChannelAdvisor ([www.channeladvisor.com](http://www.channeladvisor.com)) offers a variety of auction and retail management tools—most of which are targeted at larger online merchants. The service you want to look at is ChannelAdvisor Pro, which is actually HammerTap Manager in disguise. (We'll get to HammerTap next.) This service is a surprisingly easy-to-use collection of auction management tools, quite reasonably priced at a flat fee of just \$29.95 per month.

With ChannelAdvisor Pro you can choose from a variety of predesigned templates or write your own HTML. You also get delayed scheduling, image hosting, and the other expected listing-creation features.

## HammerTap



Next, we come to HammerTap ([www.hammertap.com](http://www.hammertap.com)). HammerTap sells various auction management software and services, all offered with a la carte pricing. The tool you're interested in is HammerTap Manager, the kissing cousin of ChannelAdvisor Pro, which offers web-based listing creation. As noted in the ChannelAdvisor Pro discussion, HammerTap Manager offers both predesigned templates and do-it-yourself HTML listing creation. Pricing is on a tiered schedule, as shown in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3 HammerTap Manager Fees**

Level	Monthly Fee	Number of Listings Included
Standard	\$29.95	500
Gold	\$54.95	1,000
Platinum	\$99.95	2,000

## inkFrog

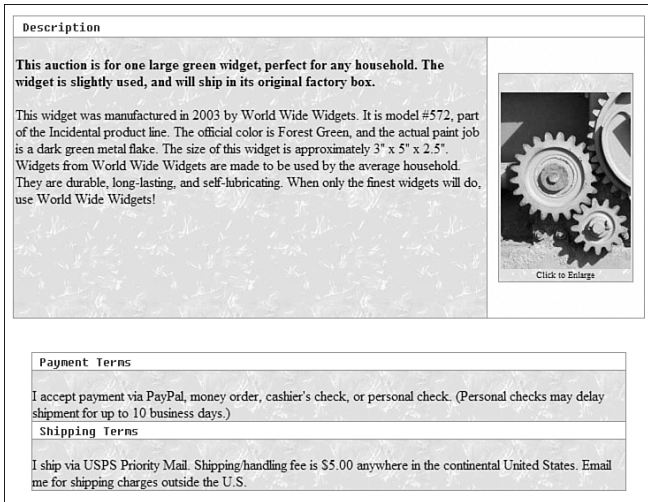


inkFrog ([www.inkfrog.com](http://www.inkfrog.com)) is a cute name for some heavy-duty web-based auction management services. The one we're interested in is the i-Lister, which lets you create your own custom-built auction listings, based on a variety of predesigned templates. (Figure 3.4 shows a typical inkFrog auction template.) You also get bulk listing, delayed auction launching, free image hosting, and the i-Showcase cross-promotion tool. Various pricing plans are offered, starting at \$7.95 per month.

## SpareDollar



SpareDollar ([www.sparedollar.com](http://www.sparedollar.com)) is a top choice of frugal eBay sellers. This popular site offers a complete package of auction management services—including the sdLister bulk upload tool—for just \$8.95 per month. No extra charges, just a flat \$8.95, no matter how many listings you create. Not a bad deal!



**FIGURE 3.4**

*A listing template created with inkFrog's i-Lister.*

The sdLister tool is a web-based editor complete with a variety of predesigned listing templates, like the one shown in Figure 3.5. You can schedule your listings to start hours, days, or even weeks in advance, and you even get the ability to relist unsold items in bulk. It's a pretty good deal—especially when you consider the other tools (auction tracking, image management, and so on) you get as part of the package.



**FIGURE 3.5**

*A listing template created with SpareDollar's sdLister.*



## Vendio



Vendio ([www.vendio.com](http://www.vendio.com)) claims to be the largest third-party supplier of services to eBay sellers, used by tens of thousands of sellers each month. The company offers the Sales Manager service, which is a powerful set of listing creation and auction management tools. You can use Sales Manager not only to create new item listings, but also to manage all of your current and post-auction activity.

You can actually choose from two versions of Sales Manager. Sales Manager Merchandising Edition is designed for sellers who sell a lot of unique items; Sales Manager Inventory Edition is designed for sellers who sell multiple quantities of similar items. Both versions let you create listings based on predesigned templates (and customized with your own HTML), such as the one in Figure 3.6.



**FIGURE 3.6**

A listing template created with Vendio's Sales Manager service.

Whichever version you choose, the pricing is the same, using a combination of monthly fees, per-item listing fees, and per-item final value fees. It's all a little complicated, especially when you consider that Vendio offers both variable rate and flat rate plans. Table 3.4 details Vendio's current pricing.

**Table 3.4 Vendio Sales Manager Fees**

<b>Plan</b>	<b>Monthly Fee</b>	<b>Listing Fee</b>	<b>Final Value Fee</b>
Pay as You Go Plan	none (\$2.95 monthly minimum)	\$0.10	1%
Variable Rate Premium Plan	\$12.95	\$0.05	1%
Variable Rate Power Plan	\$29.95	none	1.25%
Flat Rate Premium Plan	\$12.95	\$0.20	none
Flat Rate Power Plan	\$39.95	\$0.10	none
Annual Listing Plan	\$250 (yearly)	\$0.06	none

If you're interested in using Vendio primarily for its listing creation services, you probably want to sign up for one of the flat rate plans, which don't take a hunk out of your final sales price. Or, if you just want to check things out, perhaps the Pay as You Go Plan is the best way to go, as you don't have a hefty up-front monthly charge. I don't know; all these pricing variations are probably good, but they confuse me.

## Using Auction Listing Software

All of the services we've discussed so far in this chapter are just that—services, based on the company's website. To create an auction listing, you use your web browser to access the website, log in, and then get to work.

But many sellers prefer to do their listing creation offline, at their own pace. For these sellers, a listing creation program is the preferred tool, like the ones we'll discuss next.

### Why Use Listing Software Instead of a Web-Based Service?

There are a few advantages to using a listing program instead of a web-based service. For one, using a software program lets you work offline, at your own pace; you can create your listings at any time of day or night, and upload them at your leisure.

Second, since you work offline, all your auction information is stored on your own computer—not on somebody else's website. That makes it easier to access past information when you're not online, and to manage it as you see fit. (Many sellers like to create their own sales reports using Excel or Access, which isn't always doable with web-based management services.)

Third, most web-based listing services charge you money for each listing you create—or sale that you make. That’s not always the case with listing creation software; while some programs come with subscription plans, many are available as simple one-time purchases, just like most of the other software you have installed on your PC.

## Popular Listing Creation Programs

If the software route sounds like the way you want to go, then here are the programs to check out. It’s important to note that several of these listing creation programs are offered by eBay, which doesn’t make them any better or any worse than the other programs; it only makes them “official,” whatever that is worth.

### Ándale Lister Pro



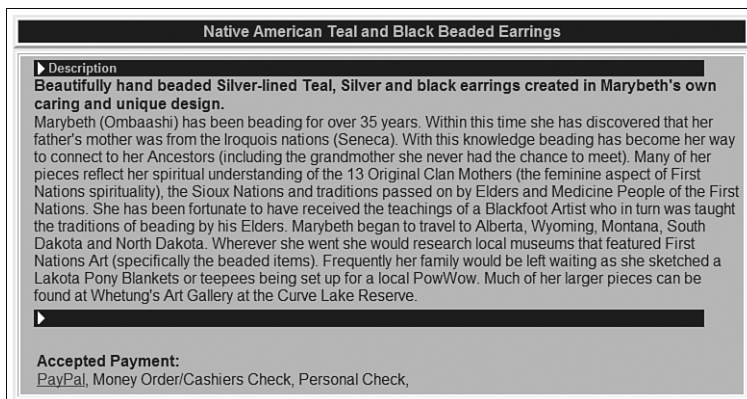
Earlier in this chapter we discussed the web-based Ándale Lister service. Ándale also offers a software-based listing-creation tool, called Ándale Lister Pro ([www.andale.com](http://www.andale.com)), which provides the option of creating all your auction listings offline, at your leisure. The software is free to download, although Ándale still charges fees for all listings you upload.

**NOTE** There’s no need to repeat Ándale’s fee structure here. Refer to Table 3.1 for all the details.

### Auction Lizard



Auction Lizard ([www.auction-lizard.com](http://www.auction-lizard.com)) is an easy-to-use listing-creation software program. It creates simple auction listings using forms and templates; you can also format your auctions using a WYSIWYG HTML editor. (Figure 3.7 shows one of many Auction Lizard auction templates.) Auction Lizard is shareware, with a \$29 registration fee.



**FIGURE 3.7**

*A listing template created with Auction Lizard.*

### Auction Wizard 2000



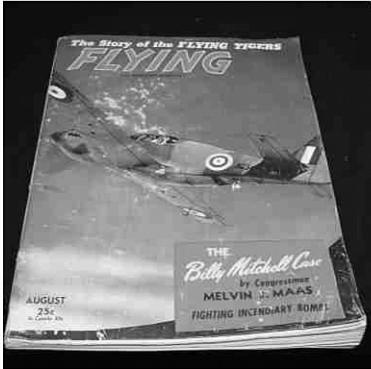
Auction Wizard 2000 ([www.auctionwizard2000.com](http://www.auctionwizard2000.com))—that’s *wizard*, not *lizard*—is an auction management software program that includes a listing creator, an image editor, a report generator, an FTP manager, and an auction database. It costs \$75 for the first year (and \$50 for each subsequent year) with no monthly subscription fees.

CD-ROM



Auction Wizard’s strength is as a bulk listing tool. It does offer predesigned listing templates, and lets you do a variety of formatting within the templates; a typical auction template is shown in Figure 3.8.

## August 1942 Flying and Popular Aviation Magazine



Up for bids is this August 1942 (Volume XXXI Number 2) issue of Flying and Popular Aviation Magazine. First off; the magazine is far from mint! The 3 staples are rusty; the cover is mostly separated from the binding, but not completely; the cover has some obvious blemishes and soiling and it has a slight musty odor. On the good side the pages are readable and the mag is full of period advertisements and stories. The magazine measures 8&1/2" by 11&1/2" and is 116 pages. A Good Resource Magazine?

**THANK YOU FOR LOOKING & GOOD LUCK BIDDING !**

(Please Email any questions *Before* bidding, Thank You)

**PAYMENT TERMS:**  
Personal check, certified or cashier’s check, money order or Paypal payments are accepted. Payment must be received within ten (10) days of auction close. (Please allow 7 - 10 business days for personal checks to clear , sorry for the delay )

**SHIPPING NOTICE:**  
Winning bidder pays all shipping (actual) and insurance costs (delivery confirmation is on the house). I generally ship USPS and will calculate charges after the auction closes based on your shipping area zip code, package weight, and shipping options. Unless you specify otherwise, your item will be shipped USPS Priority or First Class Mail (Media rate for books). Shipping is usually within 4 to 5 days of date payment is received or your check clears the bank.

Another eBayer's Auction  
Check out all our current eBay auctions!

**FIGURE 3.8**

A listing created with Auction Wizard 2000.


### AuctionSage



AuctionSage ([www.auctionsagesoftware.com](http://www.auctionsagesoftware.com)) is a software program that lets you post and manage your eBay auction transactions. It includes a basic listing creation tool, capable of

**CD-ROM** creating auctions like the one shown in Figure 3.9. The program is available on a subscription basis—\$29.95 for 3 months, \$49.95 for 6 months, or \$79.95 for a year.

**925 SILVER WOMENS 2 PC SET 5MM RND CZ W/ CZ "V" BANDS**



SIZES 6-9 AVAILABLE  
PLEASE INDICATE SIZE

**KEY FEATURES**

- This auction is for a STERLING SILVER WOMENS 2 PC SET 5MM RND CZ W/ CZ "V" BANDS (MSRP \$52.35). Perfect for you, or as a gift for that someone special. We have a vast inventory of HIGH END 925 silver (sterling) Jewelry. All in numerous designs, sizes, and lengths.
- Check out our other auctions for companion Jewelry pieces as well as a vast selection of many other pieces of fine silver Jewelry!
- This is not costume Jewelry! This is 925 fine silver. All of our Jewelry is brand new. We are an authorized dealer and sell only the highest quality Jewelry!
- Your computer monitor cannot do this beautiful piece of Jewelry justice.



*STERLING SILVER WOMENS 2 PC SET 5MM RND CZ W/ CZ "V" BANDS (MSRP \$52.35)*

Silver possesses working qualities similar to gold but can achieve the most brilliant polish of any metal. To make it durable for jewelry, however, pure silver (999 fineness) is often alloyed with small quantities of copper. In many countries, Sterling Silver (92.5 silver, 7.5% copper) is the standard for jewelry and has been since the 14th century. (The copper toughens the silver and makes it possible to use silver 925 for decorative and fashionable jewelry.)

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

I accept the following payment methods:

Major Credit Cards, PayPal, Checks\* and Money Orders.

\* If you pay with a check please email me for instructions and be prepared to allow up to 10 days after your check is received for your item to be shipped.

\*\*\*WE COMBINE SHIPPING, ONLY \$2.00 ON EACH ADDITIONAL AUCTION COMPLETED WITHIN 7 DAYS\*\*\*

You must wait until all auctions you are bidding on have ended. Then check out combining all items and shipping fees. If you wish to combine items, please **DO NOT** pay for each item individually, otherwise you are automatically charged the full s&h fee for each item.

\*\*SHIPPING & HANDLING INCLUDES INSURANCE, PACKAGING (INCLUDING WHITE GIFT BOX), POSTAGE AND LABOR. WE USE QUALITY PACKING MATERIALS TO INSURE YOUR JEWELRY IS DELIVERED IN PERFECT CONDITION. \*\*

**NEED FURTHER INFO?**

"My Email"

Please Email Me If You Have Further Questions!

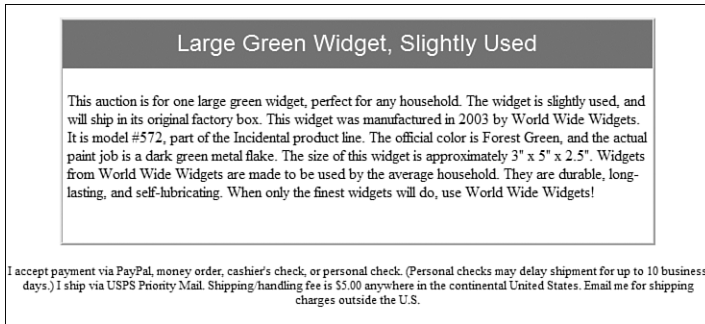
**FIGURE 3.9**

An auction listing created with AuctionSage.

## AuctionTamer



AuctionTamer ([www.auctiontamer.com](http://www.auctiontamer.com)) is an all-in-one auction management software program for both sellers and bidders. For sellers, it features an WYSIWYG HTML editor with a handful of simple templates, like the one in Figure 3.10. Cost is \$12.95 per month or \$99.95 for a year.

**FIGURE 3.10**

*An auction listing created with AuctionTamer.*

## eBay Blackthorne Basic



eBay Blackthorne (previously known as Seller's Assistant) is an auction listing/management program offered by eBay. It comes in two variations: Basic and Pro.

Blackthorne Basic ([pages.ebay.com/blackthorne/basic.html](http://pages.ebay.com/blackthorne/basic.html)), shown in Figure 3.11, is the best program for casual and small-volume sellers, offering HTML-based listing creation (using forms and templates), auction tracking, and basic post-auction management. The software is available on a per-month subscription; you'll pay \$9.99 each month, no matter how many listings you create. (Figure 3.12 shows a fancy listing created with Blackthorne Basic.)

## eBay Blackthorne Pro



eBay Blackthorne Pro ([pages.ebay.com/blackthorne/pro.html](http://pages.ebay.com/blackthorne/pro.html)) is essentially Blackthorne Basic on steroids, with many more post-auction management features for high-volume sellers. It also includes free Listing Designer templates, which (if you like them) are worth 10 cents a pop. Other than the Listing Designer templates, the listing-creation functions are identical to those in Blackthorne Basic. The program costs \$24.99 per month.

## eBay Turbo Lister



eBay Turbo Lister ([pages.ebay.com/turbo\\_lister/](http://pages.ebay.com/turbo_lister/)) is eBay's official software program for the bulk uploading of multiple auctions. Although Turbo Lister doesn't offer any auction tracking features, it excels at bulk uploading—and it's free, with no monthly subscription fees.

**TIP**

If you're an Apple user, check out eLister ([www.blackmagik.com/elister.html](http://www.blackmagik.com/elister.html)), a Macintosh-only listing creation program. The subscription fee is \$19.95 for three months.

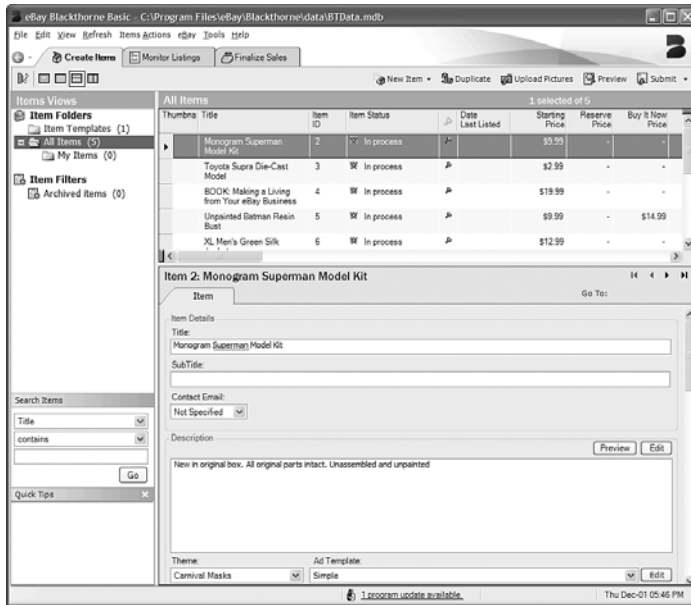


FIGURE 3.11

*eBay's Blackthorne Basic program.*

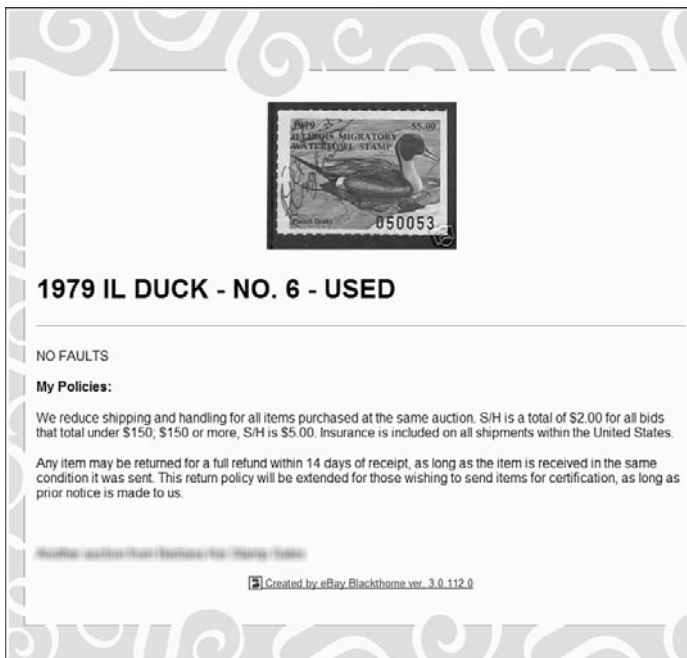
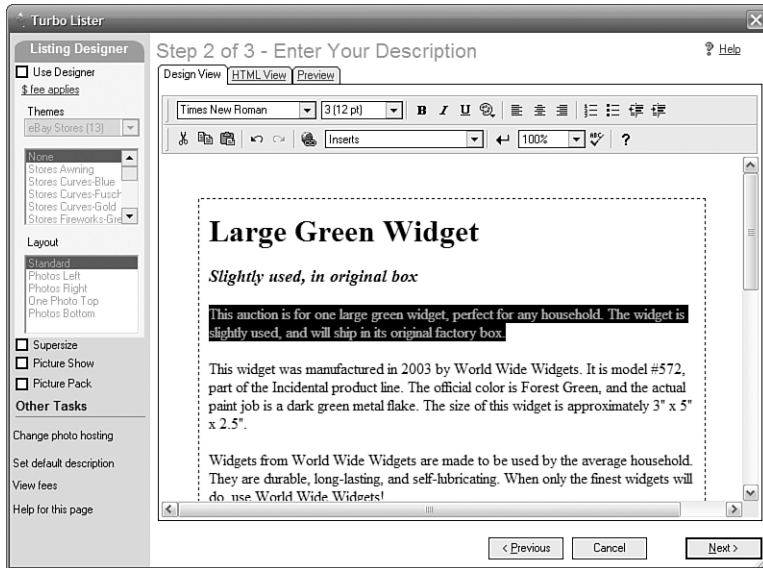


FIGURE 3.12

*An auction listing created with Blackthorne Basic.*

The Turbo Lister software is quite easy to use. As you can see in Figure 3.13, it uses a series of forms to request information about your listings. You can format your listings with the built-in WYSIWYG text editor, a raw HTML editor, or just apply a Listing Designer theme. (You'll get charged the standard 10 cents per theme when you upload your listings.) In short, using Turbo Lister is like using eBay's web-based sell your item pages, but it works offline, on your own PC.



**FIGURE 3.13**

Creating a listing with eBay's Turbo Lister program.

## Another Listing Creation Option: Third-Party Auction Templates

In this chapter and the last, we've discussed websites and software programs that create and upload entire eBay auction listings. But maybe you don't need all those auction launching and management functions; maybe you just want to create great-looking eBay listings.

To do this, all you need is a program or website that provides predesigned auction templates. Once you access the website or download the template, you add your own title, description, and photos, and then generate the HTML code for the completed listing. Launching your auction, then, is a simple matter of copying the custom HTML code into eBay's sell your item page.



This process is a lot easier than it sounds, since you don't have to write the HTML code yourself; the template provides the code for you, no coding required. Some of these templates are free, some aren't, and some are provided for your use on this book's included CD. Learn more when you turn the page and read Chapter 4, "Using Third-Party Auction Templates."

*This page intentionally left blank*