I Need a Little Help™

Creating an eBay®
About Me Page

Renée Gentry

publisher of *Renée Gentry's eBay Journal*
http://www.eBayJournal.com

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For information about the purchase and/or download of this book, please see:

http://www.eBayJournal.com

First Edition
July 15, 2006
1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Dedicated

to the folks on the About Me Pages discussion board,
and, in particular,
to 2packrats4ever, bobal, lesley_feeney,
merrygocats, shipscript, and *zip

Acknowledgements

eBay is a community of members who seem more willing than most to help fellow members learn about eBay—including those on eBay's About Me Pages discussion board. It is in that spirit that I wrote this book, so I do hope you find it useful.

I'm especially thankful to eBay members who either directly contributed to or indirectly inspired portions of this book. They include Clanky, Zenoli, and Terim, who granted me permission to share their About Me pages with you.

I'd also like to thank the eBay employees who have worked on the About Me feature over the years. It's probably not seen as one of the sexiest things to work on, but About Me is a very important way for eBay members to participate in the eBay community, and for eBay sellers to brand themselves. So for your late nights and weekends: thank you.

I ask forgiveness from listeners of my podcast, who had to wait longer than usual for the next episode while I wrote this book. Thank you for your patience. Thank you for emailing me with topic ideas and tips to include in various episodes. Thank you for just saying, "hi." And…thank you for helping me spread the word about *Renée Gentry's eBay Journal.*

In a book that's "About Me," I must thank Krisela Rivera for taking the picture of me used as the cover photo. And, of course, I must also thank the better half of me: my friend and husband, Marc VonBergen—for his understanding when I spend hours hidden away in front of a keyboard. My cat, Max, is pretty cool about this writing thing, too!

Contents

Your Mother Taught You to Be Modest, So Why Have an "About Me" Page?

There are two ways to build a reputation on eBay. Both are important. Ironically, the easy way is too often the forsaken way.

You can build your reputation over time by building a positive feedback rating. The higher the score (the number in parentheses that follows your user ID), the better. Whatever the score, you should strive to maintain a percentage of 98% or higher positive feedback.

You won't get feedback for every transaction you make on eBay. Some of your trading partners won't know to leave it. Others will be too lazy. A few will forget. And a handful may choose to follow their mothers' advice: "If you don't have anything positive to say, don't say anything at all."

Mothers are good at giving advice. ;-) One thing many mothers teach their children is to be modest. If you're one of those kids, now all grown up, good for you! No one likes an egotistical fat-head in constant search of center stage. But there are times when it's a good thing to take the initiative to talk a little about yourself, and there are appropriate places to do it.

eBay is one of those places. By creating a simple About Me page, you can tell others a little about yourself:

- If you're a buyer, this helps makes eBay an interesting community.
- If you're a seller, this helps your buyers see that there is a caring human behind the transaction.
- If you're a board poster, this helps you point to other places where the people you're helping can get even more help. About Me pages are good in and of themselves.

Search Engines Like About Me Pages, Too

About Me pages are also good vehicles for helping people—potential buyers, fellow collectors, or others who share your passion for a particular cause—find you when they do a search on Google, Yahoo!, or another search engine.

I heard that eBay CEO Meg Whitman, and President of eBay North America Bill Cobb, put the shirts they wore at eBay Live 2006 up for sale on eBay—the proceeds to benefit a charity. So I went to Google and look what came up: an About Me page!

eBay **View About Me for execstaffshirtsforcharity**
These staff **shirts** were worn by **Meg Whitman** and **Bill Cobb** during our biggest and best eBay Live! yet. And they are autographed too! **...**
members.ebay.com/aboutme/execstaff**shirts**forcharity - 34k - Cached - Similar pages

Along with Reviews and Guides, eBay About Me pages are great vehicles for putting permanent pages out on the Internet where the search-engine spiders that crawl the Web looking for interesting content can find them.

Building Your Personal Brand

eBay is a unique marketplace because of the community that frequents it. Share a little about yourself. Build your personal brand. This isn't MySpace! I'm not saying to talk about the party you were at last night or all the people you like to dislike. Rather, just share a bit to show you are a human who is pleasant to deal with. That shouldn't be hard!

Guy Kawasaki, in his book *Selling the Dream*, makes this important observation: Everyone is interesting. In chapter 14, Guy reminds us that evangelism is an everyday skill that can be applied to many things, including the items we sell and the people we are. To evangelize yourself, become a cause! Guy says, "A good cause embodies a vision, makes people better, generates big effects, catalyzes selfless actions, and polarizes people."

Polarizes people?! Yep. If you work hard to be successful (however you define that), make people better, right a wrong or keep a good thing going, most people will like you. But some will not. They'll think you make them look bad. You'll make them feel lazy. Don't let that stop you. Press on! Fight the good fight!

Cat Got Your Tongue?

If you're not sure where to start, consider telling what your user ID means, how long you've been with eBay, or how you got started buying or selling. You don't have to write a lot. And if you're really at a loss for words, try using a picture!

Include a picture that shows how carefully you pack. Or show off a few of your prize collectibles.
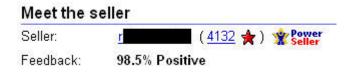
I have a cat. He goes camping and boating with us. Walks on a leash. He's quite a character. When we were looking for a new cat after our old cat friend passed away, we happened across a breeder's page who showed a picture of the father cat wearing a life jacket, sitting on a dock. We were sold!

I recently was looking for a new vet for my cat. The Web site for the vet who was recommended to me included a brief blurb about each of the veterinarians in the office. It mentioned the kind of pets they had and how old the pets were. I felt good about bringing my cat to a vet who has a cat herself. She knows what it's like to have a cat!

Now carry those examples over to eBay and consider a seller who sells pet supplies. As a buyer of such supplies, I'd feel great about buying from a seller who actually had a pet. If that's you, tell your buyers that you have pets, too. Show a picture of one or two of them. That will make me likely to spend more time looking at the products you're selling.

Short or long, your About Me page speaks volumes about you. So leave people with a good impression. (That means don't include a bunch of fine print that a cranky person would write—sellers can't hold bidders or buyers to the fine print in an About Me page anyway.) It is a great idea to mention, as you do in your item description, that you cheerfully combine purchases to help buyers save on shipping.

And speaking of shipping: Look at this guy! He's a PowerSeller, but he's charging $8.95 to ship a book with optional insurance of $4.40. Already my impression of this seller is that he's going to eek every last dollar out of me he can. Does that mean he's going to skimp on packing materials, too? Will the book arrive in a tattered manila envelope? Will I be left wishing I'd gone for that insurance? He doesn't have an About Me page, so I can't even find out more about him. I'm looking for something—anything—that will balance out the lukewarm impression I have of him. This poor seller has missed out on a great branding opportunity. I'm going to look elsewhere.

This PowerSeller, on the other hand, took time to create a simple About Me page. There's not a whole lot of content on the page, but it's enough. From it I learn that she's a person who not only sells, but buys, too. That tells me she can relate to me as a buyer. She knows the kind of service buyers expect on eBay. Plus she's shown me her feedback comments. Nothing to hide. I like that.

I Need More Ideas
       or: The Genius of Clanky and Other Stories

I recently happened upon a seller who may just hold the record for the longest About Me page in history! But I read every bit of it and am glad I did.

Clanky is the star of this section. I think you'll get a lot of great ideas from him. I'd never met Clanky prior to seeing his About Me page. When I chatted with him on the phone (when seeking permission to reprint his About Me page in this book), three things were apparent:

- Clanky is an everyday guy who has found success selling on eBay. He told me he doesn't really know HTML, but he learned a few basic things like <B> (bold) and <CENTER> and was good to go.
- Clanky is a straightforward guy. The kind of honest seller with whom you want to do business.
- Clanky has personality! I think you'll see that in a minute.

To thank Clanky for his willingness to share his About Me page with you, please take the time to visit Clanky and check out what he has to sell. Clanky frequently sells vintage toys, but he's been known to sell everything from decorative brick pavers to many a truck, car, and minivan.

So let's take a look at the genius of Clanky. You can access his About Me page here:

http://cgi3.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewUserPage&userid=clanky.

Feedback is important to Clanky.

Clanky tells us in a separate section of his About Me page that he is proud of his reputation. He has 99.7% positive feedback, which indeed is something to be proud of. So we know Clanky values feedback left for him and wants to make his buyers happy. We read here that Clanky not only takes time to leave feedback for his buyers, but also takes care to leave personable feedback.

Clanky's feedback rocks!!!

I try to leave positive feedback that is fun to read. One time, ebay user and hip-daddy vintage sign connoisseur "bidbaddict" bought a sign from me and left some pretty good feedback. I came back with, "Bidbad rocks the bay!" Well, bid's girlfriend was reading through his feedback [does she have nothing else to do?] and liked mine so much that she made her man a tee shirt out of it. And at long last, Clanky gets his 15 minutes of fame.

Happy customers are important to Clanky.

Did this picture of Diane Keaton grab your attention? Look at that smile. Clanky nicely uses it to point out that he made this buyer happy. Buyers like to be happy. Plus, notice how Clanky associates getting a good deal with his auctions!

The stars get in on the Clanky action!!

Actress/director/producer/writer Diane Keaton beat out all other bidders to win a paint-by-number clown painting from Clanky! With shipping, the total came to something like $15, so it's no wonder she's smiling now! Way to go, Diane!

Clanky is a keeper.

This picture and caption says it all. Clanky thinks his wife is a keeper. I'm sure she thinks the same of him. And likely that Clanky's buyers do, too. I'd bet many of them have added Clanky to their Favorite Sellers list. You go, Clanky!

Clanky's Wife. I Think I'll Keep Her.

My wife often says, "Clanky, you have so many interests. How can you expect to stay focused?"
She is a fine one to talk about focus.

Clanky isn't all sizzle and no substance, however. As a seller, Clanky has used his About Me page to make his buyers feel good about things that are important to them:

- The item is as described.

Clanky "Just Says No" To Repro!

Look at this clever tin Roy Rogers and Trigger toy. Nice, huh? Maybe *not* so nice, actually. Not vintage, anyway. And it is certainly not what we would ever call original. It is a simple "copy job" made very recently in China. Be on the lookout for REPRODUCTIONS and FAKES on EBay. They are everywhere. At Clanky, your items are guaranteed original. We do NOT sell REPRODUCTION items unless we tell you first (in which case we spell it out loudly and clearly in capital letters as REPRODUCTION).

- The item will be carefully packed.

How Clanky Packs

For packing, we use newly purchased boxes, DHL boxes, or USPS Priority Mail boxes. We also use newly purchased Jiffy Bags or Jet-Lite bags for certain items. We pack your item carefully with professional packaging material and either pressure-sensitive or water-activated tape. We print up a clear label so that the carrier is very clear about where to deliver the package. This is all simple stuff, but not everybody does it this way.

- And important to some buyers: The item comes from a non-smoking environment.

The Sweet Smell Of Clanky

Clanky is a non-smoking environment. Bid with confidence!

I Need More Ideas, Part II
   or: The Queen of eBay Loves the King of Cowboys

Don't think for a moment that About Me pages are the exclusive domain of sellers. Buyers can have About Me pages, too.

eBay buyer Zenoli has an interesting story to tell. I met Zenoli (who, by the way, also has plenty of eBay selling experience) at the first eBay Live in Anaheim, California. We were having a nice chat when Zenoli mentioned that she had just published a book (quite a good one, I might add): *Tips, The Server's Guide To Bringing Home The Bacon – The Customer Speaks!* I had written a couple books, but always under contract with a publishing house. But at the time, I didn't know my way around the publishing world at all when it came to getting a book *produced*. I was in a serious quest to produce and publish a book written by my grandmother. Zenoli told me how to do it.

As it turns out, Zenoli is eager to *hear* stories, too—especially those that relate to her quests and passions. Look how she introduces herself in her About Me page. I know it's hard to read the text in this screen shot, so I'll include the text after the shot. For now, notice how she makes great use of photos from a particular event to tell you a bit about herself and her interests.

Tricia's Projects

Welcome! And Thank You!

Welcome to my **ME** page. Thank you for taking the time to check out my information. I always treat my ebay transactions with kind fairness, and it is my sincere wish that you find your experience with me to be smooth and rewarding.

I am also involved in other projects, and below, you will find information on other current pursuits.

THE TOUCH OF ROY AND DALE

"The Touch Of Roy and Dale"

I am a fan of **Roy Rogers** and **Dale Evans**. I was so fortunate to be able to attend the estate sale at their home in April/May 2001, at the museum in July 2001, and again in May, 2003, as the museum got ready for its move to Branson, MO.

Here are some photos of those events. The first photo shows the outdoor venue at Roy and Dale's home. That's Roy "Dusty" Rogers, Jr. sitting on the stool in the blue shirt and white cowboy hat. If you look closely in that photo, you will see a cameraman from the "Incurable Collectors" TV program which covered the event. The second photo shows Dusty speaking at the May, 2003 museum auction (I got that terrific little cast iron stove you see on the table there). And the last two photos show some of the horses, figurines, saddles, and tack I got at the sale. Watch for all of these goodies, and so *very many* more Roy and Dale items from time to time on ebay!

Through the thousands of wonderful items I got at the sale, many of which I have already resold on ebay to nice people like you, I've heard many great stories from Roy and Dale fans.

And one of the spectacular lots I got at the sale included fifteen giant boxes stuffed with nearly 40,000 pieces of fan mail sent to Roy and Dale. It took me nearly 4 months, but I finally got every single letter read. Some of it is touching, some quite funny, and some is sad. But all have a common thread – the love of Roy and Dale. I am in a unique situation with both the fan mail and the ebay connection to so many fans of the King of the Cowboys and the Queen of the West, and I realized there is a magnificent story to be told about two very special heroes of our time, and, their fans. I hope someday soon to be able to share those stories with you in my book, "The Touch of Roy and Dale"

Happy Trails!

Here's a reprint of Zenoli's text for those of you who can't find your glasses. ;-)
Ha! Check it out! If Zenoli ever buys a Roy Rogers and Trigger toy from Clanky, she can be confident it won't be a repro.

Tricia's Projects

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<pictures>

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Happy Trails!

All Right! I'm Ready!

Good. I'm glad you're going to create an About Me page. It's easy to do.

There are two ways to go about it. The first way is to use the "Step-by-Step" method provided by eBay. You type some text. You fill out a short form to list any favorite Web sites you might have. (I certainly hope eBayJournal.com is among them!) This way is a good way to get the job done.

If that sounds good to you, skip ahead to the section called, "About Me: The eBay Way."

Would you prefer a lot of control over the layout of your About Me page? Do you feel semi-comfortable with HTML or are you at least willing to learn a little bit about it? If so, you're like Frank. Skip ahead to the section called, "About Me: I Did It My Way."

About Me Page Templates

You don't have to be an HTML pro to create an About Me page with HTML. You can get HTML code (often for free) by using an About Me page template that has been created by one person expressly to share with another. Many templates are provided by eBay members on the About Me Pages discussion board. Click the Community link in the navigation bar at the top of any eBay page. Click the Discussion Boards link in the Connect section. Then click the About Me Pages link.

For example, try these sources to see how beautiful your page can look:

http://www.shipscript.com/workshop/ME_templates.htm from eBay member shipscript and others

http://www.isdntek.com/demo/spring/templates.htm from eBay member 2packrats4ever and others

You can also buy a set of reasonably-priced templates from Seller Sourcebook (founded by an eBay seller) so your item description pages and your About Me page are coordinated:

http://www.sellersourcebook.com/cgi-bin/affiliates/clickthru.cgi?id=rgentry

Also, check out the Helpful Resources section at the end of this book for links to sites that can help you with templates.

About Me: The eBay Way

There are three ways (at least) to access the page that starts the About Me page creation process.

- Since you're reading this book and consequently have this link handy, just give it a click:

  http://cgi3.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?AboutMeLogin

- Click the ME icon (**me**) next to any user ID of any member who has created an About Me page. You'll see it next to their User ID and feedback score. That will take you to their About Me page. Scroll to the bottom of any About Me page and you'll see a link to use to create your own About Me page:

  View this member's Reviews & Guides.

  To create your own About Me page, click here.

- Click the Community link in the top navigation bar on any eBay page:

  home | pay | site map

  | Buy | Sell | My eBay | Community | Help |

  Then scroll to bottom of the Community landing page and click the "Create an About Me page" link:

  More Community Programs

  ■ **Support charity with eBay Giving Works**
  Make a Better World! Buy and sell on eBay for charity.

  ■ **Find or share knowledge in the eBay Wiki**
  Read up and share information on topics important to you.

  ■ **Reviews & Guides**
  Share your advice and opinions or learn from others!

  ■ **Create an About Me page**
  Express yourself and build trust with this personalized page.

However you get here, this is the page you'll see:

(We're talking about creating an About Me page here. If you already have one, this screen will look a bit different to you. You will want to learn to *edit* your About Me page since you've already been successful in creating one. Refer to the "Editing an Existing About Me Page" section later in this book for details.)

Click the "Create Your Page" button and you'll end up here, at this fork in the road:

Select the "Use our easy Step-by-Step process" radio button, then click Continue.

The page you see next will look like the following screen shot. I just want you to see the big picture here, so, ironically, I will do that by showing this little picture! We'll look at each individual section on the page next.

Add Text

You can complete this page in any order. You can even skip the sections you don't want to complete. I'll tell you about this page from top to bottom, though, starting with the Add Text section.

Add Text
Personalize your About Me page! Be creative with the title and your story.

Page Title:

Example: Adventures with Antiques, Bob's Books and Comics, etc.

Paragraph 1:

Enter either plain text or HTML.

Paragraph 2:

Enter either plain text or HTML.

First, write the title for your page if you already have one in mind. I often find that when I write the paragraphs that make up the body of the story, the title comes to me somewhere along the way. So skip the title for now and go back to it when your muse finally speaks.

Next, type the body of your page. You'll worry about layout later. For now, just get your words down on paper, so to speak. eBay gives you text areas for two paragraphs. If you have just one paragraph, simply leave the second paragraph area empty.

Oh, but what to do if you have three or four or five paragraphs to write? No problem! Use one little HTML tag and you're problem is solved: <P>.

The <P> tag is the way to denote that you want to insert a blank line and start a new paragraph. It looks like this, shown in the last line of text here:

Paragraph 2:
Here I am at paragraph 2. I want a third paragraph also. But there is not another box called Paragraph 3. So to make my third paragraph, I'm going to use the HTML tag for a paragraph (which is a P in angle brackets).
<P>Now I start my third paragraph!

Enter either plain text or HTML.

If it makes things easier to read for you, put the <P> on a separate line, like this:

```
<P>
Now I start my third paragraph!
```

HTML is just a way to tell a browser like Internet Explorer, Firefox, or Safari, how to display a page. The <P> tag will cause the paragraph formatting you want to display.

However, the person who reads your page will not actually see the "<P>" part of what you've written.

Rather, your text will display in your final About Me page like this:

> Here I am at paragraph 2. I want a third paragraph also. But there is not another box called Paragraph 3. So to make my third paragraph, I'm going to use the HTML tag for paragraph (which is a P in angle brackets).
>
> Now I start my third paragraph!

Now, I know this isn't supposed to be the section about HTML, but if you're up for it, I'll show you one other HTML trick—er, tag—you can use.

If you'd rather not have a blank line that a paragraph tag (<P>) gives you, you can just break the line with the equivalent of a "carriage return." Yikes! Did I just date myself or what?! You'll use a line break tag called <BR>.

Here's what you'd type into the paragraph box in the Add Text section:

```
Here I am at paragraph 2. I want a third paragraph also. But
there is not another box called Paragraph 3. So to make my third
paragraph, I'm going to use the HTML tag for paragraph (which is
a P in angle brackets).
<BR>
Now I start my third paragraph!
```
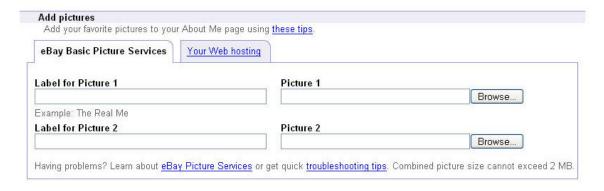
And here's how your text will display in your final About Me page:

> Here I am at paragraph 2. I want a third paragraph also. But there is not another box called Paragraph 3. So to make my third paragraph, I'm going to use the HTML tag for paragraph (which is a P in angle brackets).
> Now I start my third paragraph!

Add Pictures

You can add up to two pictures to your About Me page using the Step-by-Step process. (You can add more if you go the HTML route and use the image tag (<IMG>).)

You can upload them from your local computer and have eBay host them through eBay Pictures Services. Unlike a standard eBay listing, in which you only get one free eBay Picture Services picture, you get two pictures at no charge for your About Me page.

Type a "label" or caption for each picture if you'd like. Then click the Browse button to open a dialog box from which you will locate the picture on your local computer or network.

The total file size for your photos cannot exceed 2MB (megabytes). Oh! Please don't even come close to that, though. Even people with high-speed Internet connections don't like to wait for a page that "weighs" that much. And pity the long-suffering dial-up user who now has to suffer all the more!

Pictures hosted by eBay Picture Services should be 400 pixels (or less) on the longest side. If your picture is smaller, the original dimensions are used. If your picture is larger, the picture gets resized proportionally.

(If you're not sure how to edit your images—so they are right-side-up, show only what you want them to show, and are a pleasing size for two human eyes to take in—please refer to episode 6, "Taking and Editing Pictures," of *Renée Gentry's eBay Journal*.)

If you prefer to host your own images, either on your own Web site or with a hosting service other than eBay, click the "Your Web hosting" tab.

Type the labels as you would if your pictures were hosted by eBay Picture Services. But rather than locating the pictures on your computer or network, you'll provide the URL (also called a Web address). For example:
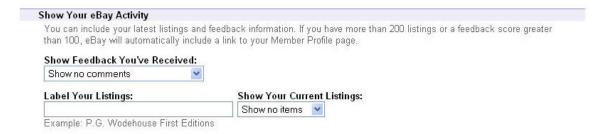
```
http://pics.ebaystatic.com/aw/pics/aboutme-small.gif
```

Whether eBay-hosted or self-hosted, your pictures should be .jpg or .gif files. The former, pronounced *jay-peg,* are best for actual pictures, like the kind you'd take with your camera. The latter, pronounced *gif* —or if you're old-school like I am, you say, "jif," like Choosy Mothers do—are best for graphics such as line drawings and icons.

Show Your eBay Activity

Next, you can show what you've been up to as far as eBay transactions go. You can choose whether to show your recent feedback comments and/or a list of items you're selling.

If you don't want feedback comments to show, leave the "Show no comments" choice selected in the "Show Feedback You've Received" drop-down list. Otherwise, choose to show either your most recent 10, 25, 50, or 100 feedback comments.

Show Your eBay Activity
You can include your latest listings and feedback information. If you have more than 200 listings or a feedback score greater than 100, eBay will automatically include a link to your Member Profile page.

Show Feedback You've Received:
Show no comments

Label Your Listings:

Show Your Current Listings:
Show no items

Example: P.G. Wodehouse First Editions

It would look something like the following screen shot if you chose to show your last 10 feedback comments. eBay automatically inserts the colorful bar titled, "Feedback."

Notice that since this seller has more than 200 listings or has a feedback score greater than 100, eBay includes a link at the bottom of the comments list that says, "To see all feedback for this member, go to the Member Profile page." The link to that page will show the viewer more information about you, including how long you've been a member on eBay and what kind of feedback you've gotten from buyers and/or sellers.

Feedback

User: ▮▮▮ (109 ⭐) Date:Jul-09-06 17:56:41 PDT	
Praise: Putter as Described, Smoooooth Transaction, Fast Del.A+++++++++++++++++++++++++	
User: ▮▮▮▮▮ (74 ⭐) Date:Jul-08-06 18:26:23 PDT	
Praise: GREAT PRICE, QUICK DELIVERY.	
User: ▮▮▮ (479 ⭐) Date:Jul-06-06 19:12:16 PDT	
Praise: Easy deal.Thanks	
User: ▮▮▮ (63 ⭐) Date:Jul-06-06 04:42:43 PDT	
Praise: As described, thanks	
User: ▮▮▮ (340 ⭐) Date:Jul-05-06 18:02:29 PDT	
Praise: A	
User: ▮▮▮▮ (390494 ⭐) Date:Jul-05-06 02:55:22 PDT	
Praise: Fast Payment. A++ Wish to do business again	
User: ▮▮▮▮ (13 ⭐) Date:Jul-04-06 11:17:19 PDT	
Praise: GREAT EBAYER THANKS	
User: ▮▮▮▮ (1753 ⭐) Date:Jul-03-06 13:09:47 PDT	
Praise: Nice packaging, prompt shipping, good product	
User: ▮▮▮▮ (69153 ⭐) Date:Jul-02-06 14:03:30 PDT	
Praise: Quick Pay, Smooth deal. THANKS !	
User: ▮▮▮ (57 ⭐) Date:Jun-30-06 09:16:23 PDT	
Praise: Very pleased with the golf club and I highly recommend the seller.	

To see all feedback for this member, go to the Member Profile page.

Now refer back to the screen shot of the Show Your eBay Activity section. Just as with your feedback comments, you can choose to show your eBay listings. If you want them to show up on your About Me page, choose 10, 25, 50, 100, or 200 from the "Show Your Listings" drop-down list. Optionally, you can add a label to those listings, which will appear as a sort of title for the resulting table that displays information about your listings.

In the example shown here, I've chopped off some of the listings, but you get the idea. The label for the listings is "A Sample of My Fantastic Listings." eBay automatically inserts the colorful bar titled, "Listings."

Notice also that eBay includes a link at the bottom of the listings table, or grid, so that people can see other items you have for sale. Clicking this link is the same as clicking the "View seller's other items" link in an item description page.

Listings

A Sample of My Fantastic Listings

Item	Start	End	Price	Title	High Bidder/Status
270002710573	Jun-29-06	Jul-09-06 19:30:00	$0.99	Star Wars Trilogy Laserdisc Set Empire Strikes Back + +	▮▮▮▮▮
270002712281	Jun-29-06	Jul-09-06			

Go see all current items for sale by this member.

Add Links

Finally, you can add links to your About Me page. These links can point to pages outside of eBay. For example, link to pages you find helpful for using eBay, charities you support, your family home page.

Oh! Look at the example below. What a coincidence that I've shown you how to include a link to the eBay podcast at eBayJournal.com (known by it's formal name as *Renée Gentry's eBay Journal*).

Add Links

You can point to your favorite Web addresses and give names to the links. Read the About Me Page policy.

Name:	Web Address:
Renee Gentry's eBay Journal (free!)	http://www.ebayjournal.com

By the way, the "name" will be the underlined link text a person can read. Clicking on that "name" will take the reader to the Web address (URL) you've specified. If you choose not to name a link, the URL will also serve as the name.
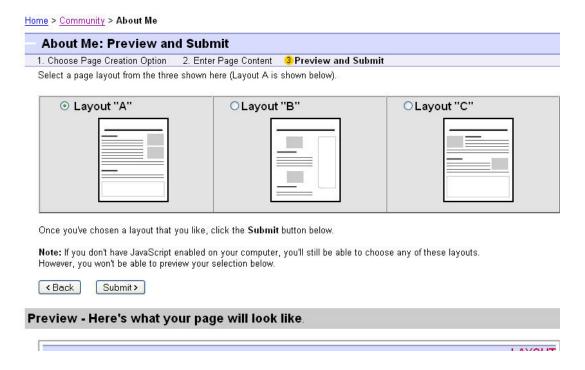
OK, look your page over. Things look good to you? (Do you need to go back to the top of the page to add a title for your About Me page?) To get a peak at what your page will look like once it's final, click Continue.

Preview and Submit

You're now at the "About Me: Preview and Submit" page. Here you can select from eBay's three different layouts, creatively named "A," "B," and "C." Layout A is selected by default (pre-selected).

Scroll down the page to preview what your final page will look like. If you don't like the current layout, choose another by clicking the "Layout 'B'" or "Layout 'C'" radio button.

The preview automatically refreshes to show you how your masterpiece looks in the new layout.

If you see content that you want to change, click the Back button (the one next to the Submit button—not the one by your browser menu), then make your change.

If the content is purrrrfect, or at least good enough, and you've decided the layout you're going with, click the Submit button.

Congratulations! You've created an About Me page. eBay gives you the URL you can use to tell others about your page. Include that Web address, for example, in your email signature. (Hint: the URL is the same for everyone except for the part that follows "&userid=." That means if you know a person's user ID, you can replace your user ID in this URL with theirs as a way to quickly get to their About Me page.)

About Me: I Did It My Way

And now, the time has come…to do it your way. However you want your page to look, you can do it with HTML.

This section will show you the basics. Entire 400 page books have been written to provide complete coverage of HTML. This is not one of them. (If you want something between the basics and a 400-page tome, refer to the end of this book. There, I've listed several helpful, online HTML resources.)

I told you to skip ahead to this section if you knew you wanted to go the roll-your-own HTML route. However, if you've read straight through the last section and into this one, without yet determining which is the way you want to go, bear with me a minute while I repeat myself. This time, though, I'll take you down the other path when we hit that fork in the road.

There are three ways (at least) to access the page that starts the About Me page creation process.

- Since you're reading this book and consequently have this link handy, just give it a click:

  http://cgi3.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?AboutMeLogin

- Click the ME icon (me) next to any user ID of any member who has created an About Me page. You'll see it next to their User ID and feedback score. That will take you to their About Me page. Scroll to the bottom of any About Me page and you'll see a link to use to create your own About Me page:

- Click the Community link in the top navigation bar on any eBay page:

Then scroll to bottom of the Community landing page and click the "Create an About Me page" link:

However you get here, this is the page you'll see:

(We're talking about creating an About Me page here. If you already have one, this screen will look a bit different to you. You will want to learn to *edit* your About Me page since you've already been successful in creating one. Refer to the "Editing an Existing About Me Page" section later in this book for details.)

Click the "Create Your Page" button and you'll end up here, at this fork in the road:

Home > Community > About Me

About Me : Choose Page Creation Option

1 Choose Page Creation Option   2. Enter Page Content   3.Preview and Submit

How would you like to create your page?

○ **Use our easy Step-by-Step process**

⊙ **Enter your own HTML code**

[< Back]   [Continue >]

Select the "Enter your own HTML code" radio button, then click Continue.

And there you have it. A big empty text box waiting for you. Well, you'd think it would be empty. For some reason, eBay inserted the word "default" into that box. Default? Don't you think it would have been nicer to say, "Have a pleasant day"? Or maybe an affirmation: "My About Me page will be the rage when I'm finished."

Home > Community > About Me

About Me: Create Your HTML

1. Choose Page Creation Option   2 Enter Page Content   3.Preview and Submit

Make HTML changes in the text area, then click the **Continue** button below. Include HTML tags and any eBay-specific tags that reflect your eBay activity, such as your User ID, item listings, or feedback.

```
default
```

[< Back]   [Continue >]

Type your content, with HTML tags, into the box. (If you don't include HTML tags, your content will just appear as plain text without any formatting.) Alternatively, you can paste some HTML code you've copied from someone who has provided an About Me template for you. There are many people who can help get you started with a template. I've included a couple resources at the end of this book.

The HTML code you include in this box should just consist of the code you would typically put between the <BODY></BODY> tags in a standard HTML page. This is because eBay is actually creating the <HTML></HTML> and <HEADER>-related code for you.

eBay also provides special HTML tags you can use on your About Me page. These tags, as well as basic HTML tags commonly used for About Me pages, are described in the next two sections.

> It's a good idea to make a copy of the HTML code you've used for your About Me page. If you ever delete your page, you can't get it back. So right-click in the HTML text box to select all of the content there, then copy it (Ctrl-C in Windows). Paste it into a text editor such as Notepad and file it away for safe keeping.

Assuming, for now, that you've entered some content with HTML formatting in the text box, click Continue.

You're now at the "About Me: Preview and Submit" page:

Home > Community > **About Me**

About Me: Preview and Submit

1. Choose Page Creation Option   2. Enter Page Content   **3 Preview and Submit**

Here's what your About Me page will look like. If you like this look, click the **Submit** button to create this page.

< Back   Submit >

Preview - Here's what your page will look like.

There is a significant difference between this Preview page and the one provided in the "Step-by-Step" eBay way. That is, there are no pre-defined layouts you must choose. This is because you've controlled the layout of the page with the HTML formatting tags you entered previously.

If you see content that you want to change, click the Back button (the one next to the Submit button—not the one by your browser menu), then make your change.

If the content is perfect, or at least good enough, and you've decided the layout you're going with, click the Submit button.

Congratulations! You've created an About Me page. eBay gives you the URL you can use to tell others about your page. Include that Web address, for example, in your email signature. (Hint: the URL is the same for everyone except for the part that follows "&userid=." That means if you know a person's user ID, you can replace your user ID in this URL with theirs as a way to quickly get to their About Me page.)

Home > Community > About Me

Your New About Me Page Has Been Created

Your new About Me page has been successfully created. You should shortly be able to view it at this Web address: http://members.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewUserPage&userid=

Where would you like to go next?
- Item I last looked at
- My eBay
- More Community Resources

Standard HTML Tags

In this section I've listed some HTML tags (and, sometimes, some of their optional attributes) that are commonly used in About Me pages. This is by no means an exhaustive list—although I expect to be exhausted by the time I finish writing this section! It should be enough to get you started, though.

> If you run into trouble or have a question that I don't seem to answer here, there's a good chance you can get an answer on the eBay About Me Pages discussion board. Click the Community link in the navigation bar at the top of any eBay page. Click the Discussion Boards link in the Connect section. Then click the About Me Pages link.
>
> Also, check out the Helpful Resources section at the end of this book for links to sites that can help you with HTML.

In this section, I will use the convention of using capital letters for tags. However, neither standard HTML tags nor special eBay HTML tags are case-sensitive. Use lowercase or a mixed case if you like that better.

You can also use spacing and line breaks to format your code to help you more easily read it. For instance, both of these code examples will appear the same in a Web browser:

```
<CENTER>This is centered text.</CENTER>

<CENTER>
This is centered text.
</CENTER>
```

Basics

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<Hn></Hn> where *n* indicates the heading level, expressed as a number from 1 to 6 (where 1 is largest in text size)		<H1>Heading 1</H1> <H2>Heading 2</H2> <H3>Heading 3</H3> <H4>Heading 4</H4> <H5>Heading 5</H5> <H6>Heading 6</H6>

Display:

Heading 1

Heading 2

Heading 3

Heading 4

Heading 5

Heading 6

Other Notes: You don't have to use the heading tags in sequential order (e.g., you can skip <H1> and start with <H2>). Don't just use them for layout though. HTML is not a layout language. It's a markup language that just marks text in a way that is close to how you want it to look. Different browsers and computer monitor resolution settings may cause different display layouts from one reader to the next.

What you *should* use heading tags for is to give a clue to search engine spiders when they crawl your About Me page looking at the content. A heading tag tells the spider that what's between the tags are important keywords that relate to the content of the page. The higher the heading level, the more important the keyword/topic.

So while you might be tempted to use a beautiful graphic for your top-level heading, don't do it unless you also accompany it with a <H1> or <H2> heading.

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)

<P>
Ending the paragraph with </P> is not required but it's a good practice to follow.
	align="*orientation*" where orientation is either "left," "right," or "center"	```You can learn more about eBay by visiting Renee Gentry's eBay Journal.</P>```
		```<P><IMG SRC="http://www.ebayjournal.com/ images/ReneeGentryseBayJournal110 0x100.jpg" align="right">```
		```<P align="center">```
		```This paragraph is centered.</P>```

Display:

You can learn more about eBay by visiting Renee Gentry's eBay Journal.

This paragraph is centered.

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)

		```This is one line that will```
		``
		``
		```break where I want it to.```

Display:

This is one line that will
break where I want it to.

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)

<CENTER>
  </CENTER>
		```This text is left-aligned.```
		```<CENTER>```
		```This text is centered.```
		```</CENTER>```

Display:

This text is left-aligned.

This text is centered.

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<BLOCKQUOTE> </BLOCKQUOTE>		Here is some text that makes a great example for my next point. <BLOCKQUOTE> And here is some text that is indented on both sides. </BLOCKQUOTE>

Display:

Here is some text that makes a good example for my next point.

> And here is some text that is indented on both sides.

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<HR>	width="*n*" where *n* is a number of pixels width="*n%*" where *n* is a percentage of the entire width size="*n*" where *n* is the height in pixels color="*x*" where *x* is a color expressed in human-readable words or in a hex value noshade which suppresses the shadow effect	Here is an example of some heading rules (those lines that can help break up a page into sections): <HR> <HR width="50%" color="blue"> <HR width="50%" color="#000066"> <HR width="111" size="5"> <HR width="111" size="5" noshade>

Display:

Here is an example of some heading rules (those lines that can help break up a page into sections):

Other Notes: It's easy to express a color, of course, as an English word such as "red" or "blue." I think it's even more fun to express yourself by picking a particular hue expressed as a hexadecimal or hex value. Basically, that's the code that starts with the pound sign (#). It looks like a bunch of technical gobbledygook, but it's ultra easy to use. You can see great color palettes with corresponding hex codes here:

http://www.web-source.net/216_color_chart.htm
http://www.isdntek.com/demo/internetcolors.htm

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<EM></EM>		This text is emphasized with <EM>italics</EM>.
<I></I>		This text is also emphasized with <I>italics</I>.

Display:

This text is emphasized with *italics*.

This text is also emphasized with *italics*.

Other Notes: Why do both tags actually have the same effect? Most browsers today are graphical, which means they render <EM> in italics. On the off-chance a browser doesn't support italics, then <EM> will still emphasize your text in some way.

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<STRONG> </STRONG>		This text is emphasized with <STRONG>bold</STRONG>.
<B></B>		This text is also emphasized with <B>bold</B>.

Display:

This text is emphasized with **bold**.

This text is also emphasized with **bold**.

Other Notes: Why do both tags actually have the same effect? Most browsers today are graphical, so they render <STRONG> in bold text. On the off-chance the browser doesn't support bold, then <STRONG> will still emphasize your text in some way that is stronger than a mere <EM> emphasis.

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)

<STRIKE> </STRIKE>		`List price:`
		`<STRIKE>$1,000</STRIKE>.`
		`<BR`
		`Our price: $699.`

Display:

List price: ~~$1,000~~.
Our price: $699.

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)

<FONT> </FONT>	face="*font*"
	where *font* is the name of the font to use for text
	
	size="*n*"
	where *n* is either a particular value for type size or it is a relative value expressed as +*n*.
	
	color="*x*"
	where *x* is a color expressed in human-readable words or in a hex value
		`<FONT face="verdana"`
		`color="blue">Here is some`
		`blue text in Verdana.</FONT>`
		`<P>`
		`<FONT face="arial"`
		`color="blue">Here is some`
		`blue text in Arial.</FONT>`
		`<P>`
		`<FONT size="+5"`
		`color="#006666">Here is text`
		`in a size larger than the`
		`first and in a darker`
		`blue.</FONT>`

Display:

Here is some blue text in Verdana.

Here is some blue text in Arial.

Here is text in a size larger than the first and in a darker blue.

Other Notes: On an About Me page, eBay limits the "face" to just a few allowable fonts. Experiment with using either Arial or Verdana.

The <FONT> tag is much like a knife. Used properly, it can be a great tool with surgical precision. In the hands of an HTML-newbie gone wild, it can hack up a page to such an extent that readers will want to flee the scene of the crime. While the following guidelines aren't as applicable to About Me pages because eBay limits font selection, they do apply to other HTML pages you might create (even those intended for print). So I include them here for your reading pleasure:

- Use a san-serif font for Web pages intended to be read online. San-serif fonts (such as Arial, Helvetica, and Verdana) are easier to read on a screen. Serif fonts (such as Times New Roman and Garamond) are easier to read on a printed page.

    This is Arial.

    This is Verdana.

    This is Times New Roman.

  Serif fonts have extra little ornamentation on the letters, like the short little lines that hang from the top of this **T**. San-serif (without serif) fonts use cleaner lines, like this simple **T**.

- Don't use more than three different fonts on a page. That's just a rule of thumb, but trust me, the type on your page will start bothering the reader if you use many different fonts. The same guideline doesn't apply to type sizes, though. Vary size as you desire.

- Use a font that is common to most personal computer (PC and Mac) systems. This includes the fonts that come with your standard installation of Microsoft Word. If you use a font that someone else doesn't have, your page will look great on your computer, but it could look quite unlike you'd imagined on the other person's screen.

    For example, this is a great effect:

    But this is how it looks on a browser that doesn't have that font installed:

    Penguins Rock

    That's not a mistake. Most browsers default to Times New Roman (the same font this book uses) if a specified font is not available. "Safe" san-serif fonts are Arial and Verdana.

Lists

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<UL></UL>		``` An unordered list: <UL> <LI type="square">is deliberately not numbered <LI>uses bullets of various types (here is a nested list, which is a list within a list): <UL> <LI>Circles <LI type="square">Squares <LI type="disc">Discs </UL> </UL> ```
<OL></OL>	start="*n*" where *n* is the number on which the list should start (particularly useful for continuing the count from an earlier list)	``` An ordered list: <OL> <LI>is sequential <LI type="A">uses numerals or letters (here is a nested list, which is a list within a list): <OL> <LI type="i">Roman numeral lower <LI type="i">Roman numeral lower (second instance) <LI type="I">Roman numeral upper <LI type="I">Roman numeral upper (second instance) <LI type="A">Uppercase alpha <LI type="a">Lowercase alpha <LI> Type not specified </OL> </OL> And finally, after all that explanation, here is the 100th thing on our list: <OL start="100"> <LI>It's a dandy! </OL> ```
<LI> Ending the list bullet with </LI> is optional.	type="*shape*" where *shape* is circle, square, disc, for an unordered list type="*format*" where *format* is the format of the numeral such as I or i (Roman) or the alpha character (a) for an ordered list	

Display:

An unordered list:

- is deliberately not numbered
- uses bullets of various types (here is a nested list, which is a list within a list):
    - ◇ Circles
    - ■ Squares
    - ◆ Discs

An ordered list:

1. is sequential
B. uses numerals or letters (here is a nested list, which is a list within a list):
    i. Roman numeral lower
    ii. Roman numeral lower (second instance)
    III. Roman numeral upper
    IV. Roman numeral upper (second instance)
    E. Uppercase alpha
    f. Lowercase alpha
7. Type not specified

And finally, after all that explanation, here is the 100th thing on our list:

100. It's a dandy!

Images

Tag	Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<IMG>	**Required:** src="*URL*" where *URL* is the Web address of the image file (.jpg or .gif) **Recommended:** alt="*text*" where *text* is the description of the image (search engines read alt text) height="*n*" where *n* is the height of the image in pixels	```<IMG SRC="http://www.ebayjournal.com/images/PinkRibbon.gif" width="30" height="48" border="0" alt="pink ribbon for breast cancer awareness">```

	width="*n*" where *n* is the width of the image in pixels **Optional:** align="*position*" where *position* indicates the position of the image relative to the text around it: ▪ "left" or "right" puts the image on one side of the page or the other and the text wraps around it ▪ "top" aligns the top of the image with the top of the text, and "bottom" aligns the bottom of the image with the bottom of the text border="*n*" where *n* is the size of the border in pixels that appears around the image (0 is no border)	

Display:

Other Notes: Always use ALT text. It's the only way a search engine can know what your image is so that it can include that content in its set of searchable keywords for the page. Likewise, be careful about using an image instead of a <H1> or <H2> tag. It bears repeating: Search engines can't read images. Images with text in them may look nice, but they won't help people find your About Me page.

You can get pretty fancy with image borders. Here is an example of some HTML that puts a double pink border around this pink-ribbon image:

```
<IMG SRC="http://www.ebayjournal.com/images/PinkRibbon.gif" width="30"
height="48" border="0">
   
<IMG SRC="http://www.ebayjournal.com/images/PinkRibbon.gif" width="30"
height="48" style="border:double 10px; border-color:#D87093">
```


eBay member bobal has a great page of various border examples:

http://www.bulls2.com/indexb/bordersaroundyourphotos.html

Specifying dimensions with the "width" and "height" attributes is optional, but highly recommended. This is because images typically load more slowly on the page than text, so "width" and "height" are used by the browser to put a placeholder on the page for the image. The placeholder will be the proper dimension, though it will be temporarily empty until the image loads. The benefit to the reader is that the text around the image won't change locations with a sudden jerk when the image loads if you pre-define the dimensions with the <IMG> tag.

I usually like to keep images to a reasonable size—one that strikes a balance between being pleasing to the eye and not taking a mind-numbing length of time to load. To get an idea of how an image that size appears on the screen, take a look at Zenoli's About Me page:

http://members.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewUserPage&userid=zenoli

The longest side of the picture in the upper-right is 458 pixels wide.

Tricia's Projects

Welcome! And Thank You!

Welcome to my **ME** page. Thank you for taking the time to check out my information. I always treat my ebay transactions with kind fairness, and it is my sincere wish that you find your experience with me to be smooth and rewarding.

I am also involved in other projects, and below, you will find information on other current pursuits.

THE TOUCH OF ROY AND DALE

"The Touch Of Roy and Dale"

I am a fan of **Roy Rogers** and **Dale Evans**. I was so fortunate to be able to attend the estate sale at their home in April/May 2001, at the museum in July 2001, and again in May, 2003, as the museum got ready for its move to Branson, MO.

Here are some photos of those events. The first photo shows the outdoor venue at Roy and Dale's home. That's Roy "Dusty" Rogers, Jr. sitting on the stool in the blue shirt and white cowboy hat. If you look closely in that photo, you will see a cameraman from the "Incurable Collectors" TV program which covered the event. The second photo shows Dusty speaking at the May, 2003 museum auction (I got that terrific little cast iron stove you see on the table there). And the last two photos show some of the horses, figurines, saddles, and tack I got at the sale. Watch for all of these goodies, and so *very many* more Roy and Dale items from time to time on ebay!

Through the thousands of wonderful items I got at the sale, many of which I have already resold on ebay to nice people like you, I've heard many great stories from Roy and Dale fans.
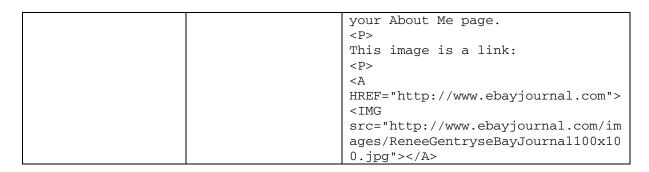
And one of the spectacular lots I got at the sale included fifteen giant boxes stuffed with nearly 40,000 pieces of fan mail sent to Roy and Dale. It took me nearly 4 months, but I finally got every single letter read. Some of it is touching, some quite funny, and some is sad. But all have a common thread – the love of Roy and Dale. I am in a unique situation with both the fan mail and the ebay connection to so many fans of the King of the Cowboys and the Queen of the West, and I realized there is a magnificent story to be told about two very special heroes of our time, and, their fans. I hope someday soon to be able to share those stories with you in my book, "The Touch of Roy and Dale"

Happy Trails!

458px wide x 356px high as seen on screen with 1024x1280 display resolution with windowed narrowed to less than full-screen width

Links

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<A HREF> </A>	style="color:*x*;" where *x* is a color expressed in human-readable words or in a hex value target="_blank" which opens the resulting page in a new window	You can get tips about buying and selling on eBay at <A HREF="http://www.ebayjournal.com"> Renee Gentry's eBay Journal</A>. <P> This link opens a new window when clicked. That way, when people visit <A HREF="http://www.ebayjournal.com" target="_blank" style="color:#FF4500;">Renee Gentry's eBay Journal</A>, they still have a window open showing

		your About Me page.
		`<P>`
		`This image is a link:`
		`<P>`
		`<A`
		`HREF="http://www.ebayjournal.com">`
		`<IMG`
		`src="http://www.ebayjournal.com/im`
		`ages/ReneeGentryseBayJournal100x10`
		`0.jpg"></A>`

Display:

You can get tips about buying and selling on eBay at Renee Gentry's eBay Journal.

This link opens a new window when clicked. That way, when people visit Renee Gentry's eBay Journal, they still have a window open showing your About Me page.

This image is a link:

Other Notes: Be sure to use the `target="_blank"` attribute that you don't just send people away from your page after you've got them where you want them. When they finish looking at the page you send them to, they may surf around and forget how to get back to your page. When they close the new window that opens, they'll see your page waiting for them in the original window. (This is particularly important on an item description page.)

Be careful about changing link colors. You'll need to do it if link text is not readable on your page because the page has a dark background. But don't change the link color just because you think "it looks better." In the code sample section in the previous table, this code changes the color of the link:

```
<A HREF="http://www.ebayjournal.com" target="_blank" style="color:#FF4500;">Renee
Gentry's eBay Journal</A>
```

I deliberately didn't call this out in the Optional Attributes section because in general, it's a bad idea to change link colors. The purple in the display example tells me that I've visited that link already. If it was blue, it would mean I had not yet visited—within a time period I define in my browser. (Purple is the default color for a link you've visited; blue is the default color for a not-yet-visited link.) But was is that orange link? Have I been there or not?

Tables

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<TABLE></TABLE>	align="*position*" where *position* is either "left" or "right," indicating the position of the table relative to the page (makes the table act like an image in that paragraph text can wrap around the table) bgcolor="*x*" where *x* is a color expressed in human-readable words or in a hex value border="*n*" where *n* is the size of the border around the table in pixels cellpadding="*n*" where *n* is the space between the edge of the cell and its content cellspacing="*n*" where *n* is the amount of space between table cells in pixels width="*n*" where *n* is the width of the table as a whole, expressed as a pixel value or as a percentage of the page	*see display notes below*
<TR></TR>	align="*position*" where *position* is either "left," "right," or "center," indicating the horizontal position of the text (data) in the entire row bgcolor="*x*" where *x* is a color expressed in human-readable words or in a hex value valign="*position*" where *position* is either "top," "bottom," or "middle," indicating the vertical position of the text (data) in the entire row	*see display notes below*

| <TD></TD> | align="*position*"
where *position* is either
"left," "right," or "center,"
indicating the horizontal position
of the text in the data element
(cell)

bgcolor="*x*"
where *x* is a color expressed in
human-readable words or in a hex
value

valign="*position*"
where *position* is either
"top," "bottom," or "middle,"
indicating the vertical position of
the text in the data element (cell) | *see display notes*
below |

Display:

This HTML code generates the two tables that follow:

```
<TABLE width="500" border="1" cellspacing="0" cellpadding="0">
  <CAPTION>1999 State Quarters</CAPTION>
  <TR align="center">
    <TD bgcolor="#CCCCCC"><B>Quarter</B></TD>
    <TD bgcolor="#CCCCCC"><B>State</B></TD>
    <TD bgcolor="#CCCCCC"><B>Admission Date</B></TD>
    <TD bgcolor="#CCCCCC"><B>Release Date</B></TD>
  </TR>
  <TR align="center">
    <TD><IMG src="http://www.ebayjournal.com/images/coins/qtr-DE.gif"
width="100" height="97"></TD>
    <TD>DE</TD>
    <TD>December 7, 1787</TD>
    <TD>January 4, 1999</TD>
  </TR>
  <TR align="center">
    <TD><IMG src=" http://www.ebayjournal.com/images/coins/qtr-PA.gif"
width="100" height="97"></TD>
    <TD>PA</TD>
    <TD>December 12, 1787</TD>
    <TD>March 8, 1999</TD>
  </TR>
  <TR align="center">
    <TD><IMG src=" http://www.ebayjournal.com/images/coins/qtr-NJ.gif"
width="100" height="97"></TD>
    <TD>NJ</TD>
    <TD>December 18, 1787</TD>
    <TD>May 17, 1999</TD>
  </TR>
```

```
<TR align="center">
     <TD><IMG src=" http://www.ebayjournal.com/images/coins/qtr-GA.gif"
width="100" height="97"></TD>
     <TD>GA</TD>
     <TD>January 2, 1788</TD>
     <TD>July 19, 1999</TD>
  </TR>
  <TR align="center">
     <TD><IMG src=" http://www.ebayjournal.com/images/coins/qtr-CT.gif"
width="100" height="96"></TD>
     <TD>CT</TD>
     <TD>January 9, 1788</TD>
     <TD>October 12, 1999</TD>
  </TR>
</TABLE>

<P> <P>

<TABLE width="60%" border="1" cellspacing="2" cellpadding="1"
align="center">
  <CAPTION><B>Lincoln-Douglas Debates</B></CAPTION>
  <TR>
     <TD bgcolor="#CCCCCC"><B>City</B></TD>
     <TD bgcolor="#CCCCCC"><B>Date</B></TD>
  </TR>
  <TR>
     <TD>Ottawa, IL</TD>
     <TD>August 21, 1858</TD>
  </TR>
  <TR>
     <TD bgcolor="#F0E68C">Freeport, IL</TD>
     <TD>August 27, 1858</TD>
  </TR>
  <TR>
     <TD>Charleston, IL</TD>
     <TD>September 18, 1858</TD>
  </TR>
  <TR>
     <TD>Galesburg, IL</TD>
     <TD>October 7, 1858</TD>
  </TR>
  <TR>
     <TD>Quincy, IL</TD>
     <TD>October 13, 1858</TD>
  </TR>
  <TR>
     <TD>Alton, IL</TD>
     <TD>October 15, 1858</TD>
  </TR>
</TABLE>
```

1999 State Quarters

Quarter	State	Admission Date	Release Date
	DE	December 7, 1787	January 4, 1999
	PA	December 12, 1787	March 8, 1999
	NJ	December 18, 1787	May 17, 1999
	GA	January 2, 1788	July 19, 1999
	CT	January 9, 1788	October 12, 1999

Lincoln-Douglas Debates

City	Date
Ottawa, IL	August 21, 1858
Freeport, IL	August 27, 1858
Charleston, IL	September 18, 1858
Galesburg, IL	October 7, 1858
Quincy, IL	October 13, 1858
Alton, IL	October 15, 1858

Other Notes: You'll have an easier time designing your table if you *don't* think in terms of columns. Instead, think Rows and Data-per-Row (cells). This table has a caption and is made up of seven rows. Each row has two data points (cells).

Lincoln-Douglas Debates

City	Date
Ottawa, IL	August 21, 1858
Freeport, IL	August 27, 1858
Charleston, IL	September 18, 1858
Galesburg, IL	October 7, 1858
Quincy, IL	October 13, 1858
Alton, IL	October 15, 1858

You can use attributes for in any element of the table. For example, consider this:

```
bgcolor="#F0E68C"
```

When applied to a single data point (`<TD bgcolor="#F0E68C">`, as shown on the previous page), it gives the data or cell a background color. Had I applied to a row (`<TR bgcolor="#F0E68C">`), all data in the row (two cells, in this example) would have had the background color. And to color the background for the whole table, this will do the trick:

```
<TABLE bgcolor="#F0E68C">
```

There are lots more attributes available for table-related tags, including <TR> and <TD>. See these pages for some examples:

http://www.htmlcodetutorial.com/tables/_TD.html
http://www.htmlcodetutorial.com/tables/_TR.html

Here is a good tutorial about creating HTML tables:

http://www.htmlcodetutorial.com/tables/index_famsupp_27.html

Even if you copy HTML code rather than write it from scratch, tables can be the most complicated or confusing HTML to write. You can save yourself a lot of trouble by using this fantastic tool to generate HTML table code for you:

http://www.isdntek.com/tagbot/grids.htm

Special Characters

Character	Code Example(s)
	` `
¢	`¢`
©	`©`
©	`&#169`
é	`é`
é	`é`
®	`®`
®	`®`
TM	`™`
TM	`™`

The same ALT codes you use with Windows are the same codes you can use in HTML. For example, to create the © copyright symbol while typing in Word (on a PC running Windows), you hold the Alt key down while you enter 0169.

```
Windows:      Alt-0169
HTML:         &#169;
```

To put two spaces (each called a non-breaking space) together, type them like this:

```
  
```

To insert a copyright symbol (©), use HTML code like this:

```
&copy; 2006 Renee Gentry
```

You can get a comprehensive list of these symbols online at:

http://www.htmlcodetutorial.com/characterentities_famsupp_69.html

eBay-Specific HTML Tags

eBay provides a handful of special HTML tags for use on About Me pages.

User Related

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<eBayUserID>	bold email nofeedback nolink nomask	`<eBayUserID bold>` `<eBayUserID nofeedback>`
<eBayMemberSince>		`<eBayMemberSince>`

Display:

Other Notes: The <eBayUserID> tag displays your user ID and feedback score in a link that leads to your Member Profile page. If you don't want it to link to that page, use the "nolink" attribute. Likewise, if you just want to show your user ID without your feedback score, use the "nofeedback" attribute. Really, though, if you use "nolink" and "nofeedback" together, it would have been easier to just type out your user ID without using any special HTML tags at all!

Other attributes include "bold," which puts a bold emphasis on your ID, and "nomask," which is a nice way to hide your user status—for example, if you've recently changed your ID (or are a newly-registered user). If you want to make it really easy for someone to contact you, use the "email" attribute, which displays your registered email address. Be careful with this one, though. It makes it easy for spammers and scammers to harvest your email address for use in unwelcome ways.

Listings

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<eBayItemList>	bids border="*n*" where *n* indicates the size of the border in pixels caption="*title*" where *title* is the text that appears above the listings table cellpadding="*n*" where *n* indicates the amount of space in pixels between listings since="*n*" where *n* is the number of days ended items are shown in the listings table (the default if you don't specify this attribute is -1, which means only current listings are displayed) size="*n*" where *n* indicates the number of listings to display	`<eBayItemList tablewidth="60" sort="4">`

	sort="*s*" where *s* is the sort code defined by eBay as: ▪ *2* sorts by date listed, with the oldest item at the top of the list, down to the most recent item. ▪ *3* sorts by ending date, with the soonest-ending listing first. ▪ *4* sorts by price, in ascending order (lowest price at the top of the list). ▪ *8* sorts by date listed, with the most recently-listed item at the top of the list, down to the oldest item. tablewidth="*n*" where *n* indicates the width of the listings table in *percentage* of available space	

Display:

Item	Start	End	Price	Title	High Bidder/Status
266246778619	Jul-12-06	Jul-19-06 10:49:17	$12.00	Happy Birthday Balloon Bouquet	No Bids Yet
266246787749	Jul-14-06	Jul-17-06 17:42:11	$99.01	Stick Figure Drawing SUNNY DAY	Available
266246786246	Jul-14-06	Jul-17-06 17:34:58	$99.99	Stick Figure Drawing RAINY DAY	Available

Other Notes: Yikes! Why in the world would you want to use the "bids" attribute? It tips your hand to your bidding competition by showing what you are currently bidding on. If you're known as a knowledgeable collector, the last thing you want is someone shadowing you to bid on what you're bidding on "because it must be good."

Undocumented? I don't see where eBay documents this on the eBay help page that describes the special HTML for About Me, but it works! Use the "size='*n*'" attribute to specify the number of listings to show. For example:

```
<eBayItemList size="10">
```

Feedback

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<eBayFeedback>	alternatecolor="*x*" where *x* is a color of the top row in an individual feedback comment (row with userID and date) expressed in human-readable words or in a hex value border="*n*" where *n* indicates the size of the border in pixels caption="*title*" where *title* is the text that appears above the feedback table cellpadding="*n*" where *n* indicates the amount of space in pixels between feedback comments color="*x*" where *x* is a color of the bottom row in an individual feedback comment (row with the actual comment) expressed in human-readable words or in a hex value	`<eBayFeedback size="3" tablewidth="60" alternatecolor="F0E68C" color="#FFFFE0">`

| | size="*n*"
where *n* indicates the number of most-recent feedback comments to display

tablewidth="*n*"
where *n* indicates the width of the feedback table in *percentage* of available space (default is 90% if you don't specify a tablewidth) | |

Display:

Other Notes: The <eBayFeedback> tag displays your feedback score in parentheses along with the corresponding colored feedback star.

eBay System

Tag	Optional Attribute(s)	Code Example(s)
<eBayTime>		`<eBayTime>`

Display:

Jul-09-06 23:00:59 PDT

Under the HTML Hood: How'd They Do That?

One great thing about browsers like Internet Explorer and Firefox is that you can view the page source (HTML source code) of an HTML page. This means that if you are looking at someone's About Me page and you want to see how he or she accomplished a particular trick, you can view that About Me page in HTML-mode.

First, a friendly reminder: It's just plain rude—and could be a copyright violation—to copy someone's template and content. That's the same as plagiarizing. The whole point of viewing the page source is to examine the HTML to *learn* how something is done. You aren't learning if you're outright copying. Rather, we call that *stealing!*

To view the HTML code (page source) of an About Me page, first go to that page.

If you're using Firefox (my favorite), click the View menu, then select Page Source:

If you're using Internet Explorer, click the View menu, then select Source:

A new window opens and shows a bunch of HTML code. And I'll tell you, it looks scary! That's because the first part of an About Me page is HTML code that eBay developers wrote to create a page with the eBay header and navigation. It's not until much later in the page that you get to see the content an eBay member created for display on his or her About Me page.

The best way to zip past the eBay techie stuff to the heart of the About Me page is to use the Find function in your browser:

1. From the window that contains the HTML code, click the Edit menu.
2. Click Find.
3. Type the first few words of the eBay member's content.

For example, using Zenoli's About Me page, we see that the first few words at the top of the About Me page are "Tricia's Projects." So that's what we'll look for.

You can expect the content to appear after a bit of eBay-techie code like this (which may or may not be formatted as shown here):

```
<script
src="http://include.ebaystatic.com/js/e469/us/features/my_ebay/members_
e4691us.js"> </script>
<!-- **** Start of HTML from the template **** -->
```

There it is, in this code snippet:

```
<center>
<h1>Tricia's Projects</h1>
<font color=burgundy><h2>Welcome! And Thank You!</h2></font>
```

Editing an Existing About Me Page

Sooner or later, you're going to want to make modifications to your existing About Me page. For example, you may want to add a new link to your list of favorite links—eBayJournal.com, perhaps!

To get to the Edit starting point, you'll follow the same steps you did when you first created your About Me page. Of the three ways I discussed earlier, this is the one that's easiest for *me* to remember:

1. Click the Community link in the top navigation bar of any eBay page.
2. Scroll toward the bottom of the page and click the "Create an About Me page" link.

The page that appears will look very much like the Create page, but this Edit page has more appropriate choices. From here, click the Edit Your Page button to, well, edit your page. If you'd rather delete it, you can do that by clicking the "Delete your page" link.

You'll now come to that familiar fork in the road. Choose the path you followed when you originally created your About Me page. Otherwise, you'll likely not see your original content. So save yourself the heart attack.

When you make your choice and click Continue, you'll see a screen that shows your content. It will either be displayed in the Step-by-Step form or in that big HTML text box. Make your changes, preview, then submit.

By the way, even if you don't make a change at all, right-clicking the text in the HTML text box will select everything in that box. It's then easy to copy that text and paste it into a text file you can use to show to someone who might be able to help you troubleshoot or improve that HTML code. That text file is also a good way by which to save a backup copy of your About Me page.

Let Your Light Shine

In his book *Selling the Dream,* Guy Kawasaki closed with the following quotation. Since this book is really about how to say something about yourself to the eBay community, I'm going to quote the same:

> You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.
> Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand,
> and it gives light to all the house. Let your light so shine before
> men, that they may see your good works…
> —Matthew 5:14

Helpful Resources and Other Things

eBay's About Me Pages discussion board:

> http://forums.ebay.com/db1/forum.jspa?forumID=2006

Color palettes with hex-code translations:

> http://www.isdntek.com/demo/internetcolors.htm
> http://www.web-source.net/216_color_chart.htm

HTML reference and tutorials:

> http://www.htmlcodetutorial.com/quicklist.html

HTML special characters:

> http://www.htmlcodetutorial.com/characterentities_famsupp_69.html

eBay's special HTML tags for About Me pages:

> http://pages.ebay.com/help/account/html-tags.html

HTML table creator and tutorials:

> http://www.htmlcodetutorial.com/tables/index_famsupp_27.html
> http://www.htmlcodetutorial.com/tables/_TD.html
> http://www.htmlcodetutorial.com/tables/_TR.html
> http://www.isdntek.com/tagbot/grids.htm

Image borders:

> http://www.bulls2.com/indexb/bordersaroundyourphotos.html

About Me page templates:

> http://www.shipscript.com/workshop/ME_templates.htm
> http://www.isdntek.com/demo/spring/templates.htm
> http://www.sellersourcebook.com/cgi-bin/affiliates/clickthru.cgi?id=rgentry

About Me page login:

> http://cgi3.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?AboutMeLogin

Clanky's About Me page:

> http://cgi3.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewUserPage&userid=clanky

Zenoli's About Me page:

State Quarters Release Schedule:

http://www.usmint.gov/mint_programs/index.cfm?action=50_state_quarters_program

I invite you to use this sample code to add me to your Favorite Links section. This HTML code creates a text link:

```
<P>
Listen to a free podcast about buying and selling on eBay at
<A HREF="http://www.ebayjournal.com" target="_blank">Renee Gentry's eBay
Journal</A>.
<P>
```

Listen to a free podcast about buying and selling on eBay at Renee Gentry's eBay Journal.

And this code adds an image:

```
<CENTER>
<P>
Free podcast! eBay tips and tricks:<BR>
<A HREF="http://www.ebayjournal.com" target="_blank">Renee Gentry's eBay
Journal</A>
<P>
<A HREF="http://www.ebayjournal.com"><IMG
src="http://www.ebayjournal.com/images/ReneeGentryseBayJournal100x100.jpg"
target="_blank"></A>
<P>
</CENTER>
```

Free podcast! eBay tips and tricks:
Renee Gentry's eBay Journal

Get the free Firefox browser: http://www.mozilla.com/

Add *Renée Gentry's eBay Journal* to your iTunes podcast subscriptions
(and download iTunes for Windows or Mac for free):
http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewPodcast?id=95677928

Listen to *Renée Gentry's eBay Journal* with the free Pickle Player (nothing to install; it plays from the Web site) from Podcast Pickle:
http://www.podcastpickle.com/casts/4030/

Listen to *Renée Gentry's eBay Journal* with the free Yahoo! player (nothing to install; it plays from the Web site) from Yahoo! Podcasts:
http://podcasts.yahoo.com/series?s=c76ca4284c406cda9d56263a6eb4951d

Selling the Dream
Guy Kawasaki

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/redirect?link_code=as2&path=ASIN/0887306004&tag=everythingl04-20&camp=1789&creative=9325

Tips: The Server's Guide to Bringing Home the Bacon
Tricia Spencer

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/redirect?link_code=as2&path=ASIN/0971509808&tag=everythingl04-20&camp=1789&creative=9325

Dear Grandchildren: Growing Up on the Frontier
Alta F. Brean

http://www.altaomnimedia.com/deargrandchildren/

About the Author

Renée Gentry is the writer, "on-air talent" ;-), and producer for the podcast about buying and selling on eBay: *Renee Gentry's eBay Journal.* You can download free episodes at http://www.eBayJournal.com.

Renée started selling on eBay in early 1998. (Shh! Don't tell, but she buys a lot, too!) Via the eBay Journal podcast, she'll show you how to use eBay to buy and sell, with clear explanations about how to use eBay's rich features.

She is also the author of several books, including *WebTV for Dummies: Quick Reference.* Between podcasts and ebooks, and fishing trips with her husband and her cat, Renée may just write another book…

What is a Podcast?

A podcast is an Internet audio show that you can listen to when you feel like it. It's sort of like time-shifted radio. Isn't that what the Internet is about? You shop online during the hours that are convenient for you. Why not listen to an audio show in the same manner?

You don't have to have an iPod to listen to a podcast! You can listen to the show on your computer (with Apple iTunes or Windows Media Player or something similar). Or you can download it and move it to your portable MP3 player (an iPod, or other MP3 players by Creative, Samsung, and others).

And it gets better: You don't even have to keep checking the Web site to determine when the next episode is available. If you have iTunes (for Windows or Mac), you can click this icon or the link to subscribe. It's free!

http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewPodcast?id=95677928

You'll also find *Renée Gentry's eBay Journal* listed in the most popular podcast directories, including Podcast Pickle and Yahoo!

http://podcasts.yahoo.com/series?s=c76ca4284c406cda9d56263a6eb4951d