

MERIDIAN

DESIGN

## Using Established Sites to Sell Your Products

- **Café Press**
- **EBay**
- **PayPal**
- **MIVA Merchant, Froogle & Amazon**

### **Café Press (www.cafepress.com)**

CafePress.com was launched in 1999 as an online service where people could quickly create an online store to sell custom products with no upfront cost. Using Café Press is simple. Upload an image and get an online store where you can sell over 50 customized products.

Selling through CafePress.com is FREE. There are no pre-printing, setup or inventory fees. Every time you sell an item, Café Press keeps the base price and you earn your markup. Checks are sent out monthly.

#### Services include:

**Online merchandising:** Custom design and sell over 50 items including t-shirts, mugs, posters and stickers – all with no upfront cost.

**Book Publishing:** Allows authors to self-publish their books and manuscripts with no upfront fees or minimum quantities.

**On-Demand CD manufacturing:** Provides musicians and other audio content providers with a platform to sell CDs without having to manage inventory or fulfillment.

### **Hints & Tips**

- Consider Integration with a Premium Shop– For \$4.99/month, you can create a fully customized Café Press store. Why? Because you can seamlessly integrate your existing website with your Café Press store and drive traffic to your customized products. Also, Premium Shops offer the ability to create categories and subcategories along with a broader selection of customizable products. EXAMPLE: <http://www.blueridgebagsandmore.com>

- Be Sure to Visit the HELP DESK – Even though selling your products for free would seem like all you need to know, keep in mind that the success of your store will largely depend on how well you understand how Café Press works including base prices and discounts, how to create the best quality artwork for your products, and publishing guidelines. Visit the Help Desk at <http://www.cafepress.com/cp/info/help/>

## **EBay (www.ebay.com)**

Founded in September 1995, eBay is The World's Online Marketplace® for the sale of goods and services by a diverse community of individuals and small businesses. Today, the eBay community includes more than a hundred million registered members from around the world. People spend more time on eBay than any other online site, making it the most popular shopping destination on the Internet.

On an average day, there are millions of items listed on eBay. People come to eBay to buy and sell items in thousands of categories from collectibles like trading cards, antiques, dolls, and housewares to practical items like used cars, clothing, books and CDs, and electronics. Buyers have the option to purchase items in an auction-style format or items can be purchased at a fixed price through a feature called Buy It Now.

### Selling Tools include:

**Turbo Lister** - The free desktop software tool designed to make listing multiple items faster and easier.

- List multiple items all at once and save listings to re-use again and again
- Access convenient HTML templates
- Create listings easily with a WYSIWYG (What You-See-Is-What You Get") design editor.
- Schedule your listings instantly

**Selling Manager** - The easy-to-use online sales management tool that makes keeping track of your sales simple! (free for 30-days, \$4.99/month)

- Access this online sales management tool through My eBay
- Relist multiple items at once
- Get a one-page snapshot of your business
- Track buying, selling and account activities
- Reduce the time you spend on emails with custom templates
- Print shipping labels and invoices

**Selling Manager Pro** - The all-in-one online tool providing a powerful way for high volume sellers to list, manage sales and make more informed business decisions. (free for 30-days, \$15.99/month)

- Save time with this online bulk listing and sales management tool
- Become more efficient with bulk functionality
- Track buying, selling and account activities
- Manage customer emails faster
- Print shipping labels and invoices
- Manage inventory with ease and create financial reporting.

### **Hints & Tips**

- Visit eBay Seller Central – Here you will learn all you need to know to get started with an eBay store (\$9.95/month) and all other seller services offered by eBay. <http://pages.ebay.com/sellercentral/>

### **PayPal (www.paypal.com)**

Founded in 1998, PayPal, an eBay Company, enables any individual or business with an email address to securely, easily and quickly send and receive payments online. PayPal's service builds on the existing financial infrastructure of bank accounts and credit cards and utilizes the world's most advanced proprietary fraud prevention systems to create a safe, global, real-time payment solution.

PayPal has quickly become a global leader in online payment solutions with 50 million account members worldwide. Available in 45 countries around the world, buyers and sellers on eBay, online retailers, online businesses, as well as traditional offline businesses are transacting with PayPal.

#### Services include:

- Accept instant payment on eBay items and accept multiple currencies
- With PayPal, buyers can pay from their bank accounts or any of their credit cards.
- Payments are deposited directly into your account.
- PayPal has teamed up with the U.S. Postal Service and UPS to provide integrated shipping tools. From your PayPal account, you can calculate shipping costs, purchase and print labels, and track your shipments online.
- You can accept credit cards through your existing website using the PayPal payment gateway. There are no setup charges, monthly charges, or gateway fees. With PayPal, you pay as you go - with rates as low as 1.9% + \$0.30 USD per transaction.

- Invoicing through email, reporting tools, a shipping center, and instant payment notification all help you sell your products more effectively allowing you to track each order from the time it was placed to the time it reaches your customer.

## Hints & Tips

- Download the Merchant Overview Interactive Guide to learn all you need to know about using PayPal. From start to finish, this guide will teach you how to set-up your PayPal account, how to accept payments, how to handle payments, withdrawals and refunds, how to manage your account and use advanced merchant tools.

[http://www.paypal.com/en\\_US/pdf/merchantOverview\\_interactive.pdf](http://www.paypal.com/en_US/pdf/merchantOverview_interactive.pdf)

## MIVA Merchant, Froogle & Amazon

MIVA	<a href="http://miva.com">http://miva.com</a>	
Froogle	<a href="http://froogle.google.com">http://froogle.google.com</a>	(look for the "Information for Merchants" link)
Amazon	<a href="http://www.amazon.com">http://www.amazon.com</a>	(look for the "Sell Items" link at the bottom)

**MIVA Merchant** - Miva Merchant is a dynamic browser based storefront development and management system that allows merchants to create and administrate multiple online stores from anywhere in the world. MVA Merchant is offered through many web hosting companies free of charge. My recommendation is Hostasaurus (<http://www.hostasaurus.com>) given their quality service for MIVA and low web hosting prices.

MIVA is expandable with the purchase of Add-on Modules which will allow accurate data feeds to Froogle and Amazon. Hundreds of modules are available from third-party programmers which will allow you to create practically any feature you need for your website. I recommend joining a MIVA User Group to connect with merchants and programmers and get answers to your questions. ([http://www.miva.com/support/usr\\_grps](http://www.miva.com/support/usr_grps))

**Froogle** – In 2002, Google launched a beta version of a new shopping search tool called "Froogle" that the company claims is the most comprehensive product search engine available on the web.

Froogle is organized as a directory, with 15 different product categories. These categories include Apparel & Accessories, Arts & Entertainment, Auto & Vehicles, Baby, Books, Music & Video, Computers, Electronics, Flowers, Food

& Gourmet, Health & Personal Care, Home & Garden, Office, Sports & Outdoors and Toys & Games.

Much like the Google Directory, you can look for products either by using a keyword search or by drilling down through a particular category and its subcategories. You can also limit your search to a specific category.

Data in Froogle comes from two sources. Merchant feeds, and the rest is a crawl of web pages that identifies product offers.

Merchants provide product information to Froogle via FTP. Google encourages merchants to send updates frequently, to keep the information as fresh as possible.

To have your store included in Froogle, follow the guidelines at the Froogle Merchant Center to submit a data feed to Google. Doing so will ensure that your entire product catalog is included in Froogle, and it will also allow you to control the freshness and accuracy of your product information. Use the link provided at the beginning of this section.

**Amazon** – Whether you have a few items to sell or have a website and want to list all your products, Amazon has a variety of Seller tools available to help you.

Services include:

#### **Marketplace**

It is easy for anyone to sell new and used products at Amazon Marketplace. Have lots of stuff to sell? Amazon's Pro Merchant program has the tools volume sellers need to succeed.

#### **Advantage**

If you're a publisher, label, or studio looking for a distribution and fulfillment channel for your products, Amazon.com Advantage is for you.

#### **Paid Placements**

If you already have products for sale at Amazon.com, you can promote them using Paid Placements.

#### **Search Inside the Book**

Help customers discover your books by enrolling them in our Search Inside the Book program. With Search Inside the Book, customers can search every word in your book and browse sample pages, helping them find the title that's just right for them.

### **Associates**

The Amazon.com Associates program allows you to choose any items from the millions listed in our online catalog and promote them on your Web site. Best of all, Associates are paid up to 10.5% of the selling price of qualifying items that are sold through these links.

If you have products listed for sale at Amazon.com, you may link to them from your Web site to increase your product sales. You will also earn a referral fee for the purchases made through your links.

### **Web Services**

Amazon's API (application program interface) allows Associates to better integrate Amazon.com content into their Web site. Most of the rich product content is made available through our API, including cover art, pricing, availability, product descriptions, customer reviews, sales rank, and more. We also provide a remote shopping cart that enables your visitors to add items to their Amazon shopping carts without leaving your Web site.

### **Hints & Tips**

- Consider the powerful combination of a website using MIVA Merchant with the ability to provide a data feed of your products to Froogle and Amazon Marketplace. Although this is by far the most complex web solution presented in this document, your time and funds may be well spent.
- Enlist help from the MIVA User Groups and consider hiring a web designer to help you with your initial designs and added back-end programming. Once your store is set-up, you will be able to handle your website on your own.

### **A Final Note**

Feel free to contact me in regards to any of the information presented in this document or to ask for advice and answers to any questions you may have as you consider building your website. Poor planning is often costly in time and money later down the road. My contact information is listed at the bottom of every page.