

A little junk goes a long way

By Erika Cotton
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Jeremy Gersh helps people get rid of their junk.

And for many, his online auction drop-off service, ezAuctioning, is an easy way to make a quick buck, which is particularly nice during the holidays.

Ken Lopez, a busy executive, is a good example of such a client. The 37-year-old Alexandria resident said the commission is negligible considering that he is getting paid to hand over his unwanted valuables.

"It's like free money, and who can't use a little of that around the holiday season?" he said.

EzAuctioning researches and photographs auction items, lists them on eBay, fields inquiries from interested bidders and then packs and ships off the goods. Gersh takes a percentage based on what the item sells for, but some companies charge a flat fee for each item listed.

The process works especially well for people who don't have the time, desire or know-how to do it themselves; fundraisers and estate sales; and businesses with stale stock that don't want to expend the energy, money or time on an in-store sale.

A lot of the inventory items are things people think are "too good to donate" but don't use anymore, such as old iPods or gaming consoles, Gersh said. But items range from matching ceramic decorative Oriental dragons to key fobs.

One customer walked away with \$37,000 after bringing in a 1958 Buddy Holly concert poster.

"The guy was actually about to throw it out," Gersh said.

Like ezAuctioning, eSpot, a similar store that opened in May on K Street in the District, is also experiencing a holiday business surge.

Operations manager Ray Hohenstein said eSpot averages 27 bids a day now, up from 24 in October.

"Since we have about the same number of items up, that's showing we're getting more interest," he said.

Ron Fine, owner of AuctionStars.net in Bethesda, which opened August 2004, said the Christmas season is the best time of the year to get rid of slow-selling items like candle sets and no-slip socks.

After the holidays, it's typical to see a large increase in store traffic because so many people come in with unwanted items they received without a return receipt, he said.

EZAuctioning expands

- Grand opening for new store was held Nov. 18
- New location is at 6013-C Wilson Blvd. in Arlington
- Now has two locations, three partners, three employees

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