

The internet - buying and selling

Weekly Times Column

By Warren Joel

There is little doubt that the internet has had a major impact on the collectables market, but is it all for the good?

The amount of information that is now available to the collector is staggering. Without knowing much about antiques or collectables, you can simply put the artist of your picture or the brand name stamped on your vase into your search engine and out comes all the information. But it is not that simple. Is it a print or the original? Is the vase hand painted or transfer decorated? These questions will not be answered via the internet. It is only with much more specialised knowledge that the information from the internet will be useful.

So what about trading on the internet through one of the on line auction sites? My advice is be careful! I have many examples of the good and the bad side of on line trading.

On the positive side there are many great buys out there. Many dealers trawl through the net looking for and buying bargains. Many of these items are put up for sale by people who don't know what they are selling, so without the proper description the item sells for a much cheaper price. But if you happen to be the person selling that item, your lack of the correct description could cost you thousands of dollars.

If you do buy from the net get it checked out straight away. Having waited some weeks for your purchase to turn up, don't simply unpack it and put it on the shelf; have somebody experienced verify what it is, and the condition of the item.

Buying and selling on the net can be very rewarding, but you do need to be very careful.

Next week: "Danish Design Furniture"

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Warren is a third generation auctioneer and valuer specialising in Art, Antiques and Collectables, accredited by the Commonwealth in 2002 different areas of collectables.

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