



## INTERNET PHILATELIC DEALERS ASSOCIATION INC

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Describing stamps read my editorial
- A380 First to Fly
- Stampwants: A viable alternative to eBay? A sellers perspective
- How can you encourage dealers to join and how can you promote the IPDA???

### EDITORIAL WELCOME

Welcome to another edition.

I am looking forward, as I write, to so much in the coming month .

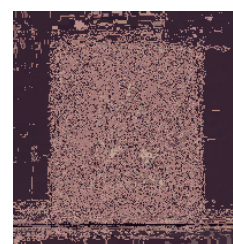
The winner of the IPDA competition, and then my flight from Singapore to Sydney on the first commercial A380 flight.

Get a life I hear you say, if that is all I have to look forward to. Ok I agree. But hey one has to have something to say in the introduction, doesn't one !!!

Actually I do have something to say about stamps. Stamp quality as described when listing on auction sites. All members will be well aware how important it is to be accurate. We are setting a standard as you all know. But what is a correct description?

Sometimes it is a difficult call.

In last months newsletter I said I would pass some comments. Simply put they are, do not exaggerate, even if unintentionally. Do not use the words, "great", "lovely", or "excellent" there are many more.. these are just a few... do not use these words unless you are 100% confident everyone would agree.. And that is where the subjectivity comes in, isn't it. Saying a "great collection" maybe your view, but why not just say a collection, then describe the contents accordingly. And, "excellent copy" .. Just say a copy and describe the stamp as it is. "Lovely copy".. Why not just say copy and describe the stamp as it is. Do you see my point. What about the example I show? Michael



So how would you describe this stamp. I realize it is hard to see from the scan but is "used and from what I can see fault free" a rather incorrect statement? You tell me.

Nice franking all the same.....

### A380 FIRST FLIGHT — 25 OCTOBER 2007

I am rather pleased about this if I say so myself.

I have a ticket on the Singapore — Sydney flight, the first commercial flight of the A380. I have designed a First Flight cover and a commemorative frank. I will be trying to get the Post Office in Singapore airport to frank the

covers as well, and then the Post Office in Sydney when I arrive. Yes I will be selling a few copies to try to cover some of my costs. First refusal will go to IPDA members. Then I will sell on eBay. Let me know if you are interested.

Numbers will be very limited as I will be using this (and the others) from the Singapore First to Fly Miniature sheet , on the cover.



**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

Something I have been wanting to do for a while and thanks to Alan (our Secretary) for helping me with this. A welcome to new members. The following have joined over the past few months:

Further details are available on the members list on the IPDA website.

- Carl Frackx, Belgium
- Philippe Poppie, Conchology Inc., Philippines and Belgium (really interesting website [Poppe Stamps](#))
- William Simpson, Spain
- Ray Cornish, UK ( great website Ray [GBstampmarket.com](#))
- William S. Kozersky, USA.
- James (Jim) Biehl, USA.
- Luis Mendonca, Lusitania Collectables, Portugal

If you have not got your website URL linked yet do send it to us and we will load it.

And talking about new members, does anyone have any ideas about

promoting the IPDA and getting more new members.

I often ask this and while your Board of Directors are always thinking this through at Board meetings we welcome your ideas.

Write to me at [michaelatipda@gmail.com](mailto:michaelatipda@gmail.com)

**NEW FROM GIBRALTER POST**

Something new from Gibraltar Post - Issued on October 1st A special edition folder titled called "Beautiful Corners of Europe". This has been issued by the 11 members of the Small European Postal Administration Cooperation and includes stamps from the Faroe Islands, Gibraltar, Greenland, Guernsey, Iceland, Isle of Man, Guernsey, Liechtenstein, Malta, Monaco and Arland. The stamps aim to highlight the history, nature and culture of the member countries.

In this first edition picturesque landscape have been featured.

**NEW UNITRADE SPECIALISED CATALOGUE**

The new Unitrade Specialized Catalogue of Canadian Stamps (2008 Edition) was published on October 1st.

This is a full colour, spiral-bound book, measuring 8 1/2" X 11" and includes Canada, British Columbia and Vancouver Island, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and PEI.

This catalogue features the Scott numbering system with prices in Canadian dollars and is a must for collectors of Canadian stamps.

The cost for this book is CAN \$42.95 plus shipping, I believe.

**AUSTRALIA POST— SPACE**

Australia space stamps issued 2nd October.

From a FDC to commemorate the Sputnik launch on 4th October 1957.

**STAMPWANTS. A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO EBAY ? A SELLER'S PERSPECTIVE**

***The following was submitted a few months ago by one of our members, Chris Jones who runs estamps.co.uk I have been trying to find space to use this. Hope you find it interesting and thought provoking. What are your views and how do you decide about selling at auction? and what returns do you get? Are you even measuring your returns?***

"I should begin by stating that I have no affiliation with either eBay nor StampWants and that the purpose of this article is not to open an "eBay is good/bad" debate but rather to share recent experiences of using an alternative platform with other members.

We have been listing a small number (between 50 and 100) of auctions per week on eBay for the past two years with our database directly outputting the necessary HTML for each lot. We have achieved a success rate of about 30% of all lots being sold, which, in our opinion, is about the minimum required to justify the listing and final value fees charged plus the time it takes. It has also been used as another form of marketing to drive collectors to our main site.

On the main site we have in excess of 15,000 unique items listed with about 8,000 having images and have considered also opening an eBay store to increase sales. However, upon examining and analysing the fee structure (see table below) we have concluded that the listing and final value fees would account for 15% of the sale price on average and if lots were priced at the cheaper end of the scale, the fees would be greater than the sale price.

Comparison of eBay and StampWants fees (Auction and Store)								
Sale Price	eBay Auction		eBay Store		StampWants Auction		StampWants Store	
	Insertion Fee	Final Value	Insertion Fee per 30 days	Final Value	Insertion Fee	Final Value	Insertion Fee per 30 days	Final Value
\$5.00 -	\$0.40	5.25%	\$0.05	10%	\$0.04	3%	\$0.00	4%
\$10.00 -	\$0.60	5.25%	\$0.05	10%	\$0.06	3%	\$0.01	4%
\$50.00 -	\$2.40	5.25 % /	\$0.10	10% / 7%	\$0.25	3% / 2.25%	\$0.02	4% / 3%

Editors Note: I have abbreviated the table due space constraints but not deleted data that would lead you to other conclusions than being tabled by the author.

The majority of our lots are priced at below \$25 and if we were to list all items that currently have images, the listing fee alone would be \$400 per month. There is also fixed monthly cost to maintain a (featured) store – on eBay this is \$49.95; on Stampwants it is \$9.95.

As you can see from the above, both auctions and stores are considerably cheaper to run on StampWants.

It is clear that eBay is not a suitable/profitable place to sell lower value items – the very items that most collectors will buy and most dealers have in their stock– without increasing the cost of the items to cover the extra fees which is hardly fair on the collector.

From all the publicity surrounding Stampwants.com with their Inverted Jenny giveaway advertised in the majority of the philatelic press, we decided to see how their fee structure compares and more importantly whether items actually sell on this platform.

In every instance the analysis confirms that a higher percentage of the final sale price is retained by the seller when comparing the two sites and on average this is 7.5%.

A quick comparison of some salient facts and figures (see table below) shows that StampWants is about 20% of the size of eBay in terms of numbers of items for sale and also the number of featured stores.

This is presumably the reason why (for the moment) *StampWants'* fees are considerably lower as they try to attract more buyers and sellers. In fact, until May 2007 these fees were even lower as a special promotional offer was operating.

Statistic		EBay	STAMP -
Number of registered users		Not known	12,514
Items for sale	Auctions	174,330	39,001
	Store Items	1,274,289	265,885
Number of featured stores		443	97

The number of eBay users is not known and indeed is not relevant, given that it is a general trading site. To test *Stampwants*, we decided to list all 8,000 of our items with images and this process took about 2 weeks to complete. Fortunately, we were able to modify our database to create bulk upload files directly, including a similar HTML format as we had been using on *eBay*. An upload template is provided by *StampWants* and this allows items to be uploaded en masse for both auctions and store inventory. As

it is in the standard CSV (comma separated variable) format it can be modified in any spreadsheet package.

The monthly cost for having these items listed is \$4 plus a percentage of the final price if they any sell. There is also the fixed fee of \$9.95 for having a featured store as opposed to a basic one. There seems to be little difference between the store types except that featured stores are listed first on the site. Given the minimal monthly cost, the decision to upload this many items was a "no-brainer" but considering the size of the user base, quite frankly we did not expect many items to sell.

However, the results have been better than expected. In a little over two months we have sold 4% of the stock listed (321 items) for a total of just under \$1,000 and achieved a feedback rating of 204 (positive) from a standing start. The total cost, including final value fees has been about \$70 – on *eBay* it would have been \$1,000; but, of course, we may have had more sales as there are more users - we will never know and given the listing fees, we are not going to try and find out.

In conclusion, we will be sticking with *StampWants* in the belief that it will develop further but will not be giving up our main store. We would encourage other members to give it a try, after all if you already have an *eBay* store, the inventory can be downloaded and easily (so the help page says) uploaded into *StampWants*, and for relatively little cost.

We have found that *StampWants* is frequented by good honest collectors, mainly located in the USA, willing to pay realistic prices for good quality items and service. The average *StampWants* user seems more inclined to browse through the stores than the equivalent on *eBay* and from a commercial perspective it is possible to list many thousands of low value items without incurring crippling listing fees.

Chris Jones: IPDA Member 121: Email: [chris@estampshop.co.uk](mailto:chris@estampshop.co.uk) Website : [www.estampshop.co.uk](http://www.estampshop.co.uk)  
*StampWants* ID: estampshop *StampWants* Store [www.stampwants.com/stores/eStampShop](http://www.stampwants.com/stores/eStampShop)

#### Disclaimer

The quantities stated were current on 8 June 2007 and the fee schedules relate to *eBay.com* – other national *eBay* sites do have different schedules of fees. *Paypal* fees are not included in this analysis – that is a whole other story.

## THE BACK PAGE – EDITORS THOUGHTS

My few words: Thanks to Chris.  
Very interesting article and full of ideas for all of us.

You remember the Competition? Well congratulations to Jim Biehl from the USA. I hope those who entered enjoyed the research. And also thanks to Jack, your Vice Chairman, who created the competition and donated the prize.

The A380 will have flown by the time I write my next piece. I am carrying my own designed covers.

I have had some excellent design advice from another Board member, Ken Sanford, who as you know is an authority on Aerophilately - have a look at his web site at <http://aerophilately.net/> if you have not seen it before.

If anyone wants to buy one of my covers. Please let me know. They will be a limited edition and I don't think I will be making more than 25 or 30 carried each way.

We are planning an IPDA Marathon chat for Halloween. I hope you can join us. Details in next issue.

[www.eStamp.com](http://www.eStamp.com)



Flown on SQ 380,  
Singapore to Sydney,  
first commercial A380 flight,  
October 25th 2007

Michael Dodd  
PO Box 3482  
Dural  
NSW 2158  
Australia

A cover to be carried... minus stamps and franks

Finally ....If anyone wants to write an article for the next issue I would be pleased to receive it.

Email me at [michaelatipda@gmail.com](mailto:michaelatipda@gmail.com)