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NATIONAL POST

A no-fuss quick and dirty garage sale

National Post

Saturday, January 15, 2005

Page: SP2

Section: Saturday Post

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Column: Getting & Spending

Source: Saturday Post

When it comes to moving my junk, I've always been a sucker for a quick and dirty **garage sale**: a few signs on local telephone poles and at the No Frills supermarket, price tags made from masking tape, an Egg McMuffin and coffee enjoyed al fresco as my "treasures" meet their new human companions. Throw a sale with a couple of friends and you've got a two-in-one social event and decluttering exercise.

But on these yucky post-holiday January weekends, when you look around with a feeling of materialistic ennui (robotic frog, home manicure kit, fleecy robe with flip-flops printed on it, plug-in wine chiller, fill-in-the-bleeping-blank), the idea of being stuck with so much flotsam and jetsam until balmy yard-sale weather returns is unthinkable. If donating it isn't your thing, dump it online, pronto. Even better, get someone else to do it for you.

Sure, you reduce your portion of the profit pie when you add a middleman to the seller-eBay-buyer equation, that of the "selling partner." But you also reduce the headaches. Selling partner Imagine This Sold has one storefront in Toronto, with additional locations slated to open in Vancouver, Regina, Halifax, Ottawa and elsewhere in Ontario through 2005.

For a service charge of from 20% to 37% of the final selling price (this is in addition to eBay's cut of approximately 5% to 10%), Imagine This Sold will, in the words of their Web site, "utilize analytical eBay mining tools" to post your item on eBay. You drop off the goods, they'll photograph them, compose descriptions, handle all aspects of the auction and shipping, then cut you a check for your moolah less their service charge. By your instruction, they'll even direct your cut to a registered charity instead.

Voila! Do it. And fuggedaboutit.

Idnumber: 200501150035

Edition: National

Story Type: Column

Note: Imagine This Sold, Toronto, 416-489-3904 imaginethissold.com. Yuki Hayashi is a senior editor at Style at Home magazine.

Length: 295 words

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