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Social Shopping at eBay

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Social Shopping

A Major Qualifying Project

Submitted to the Faculty of

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Bachelor of Science

By

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Alin Sirbu

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Sponsor: eBay Inc
Liaison: Neel Sundaresan

Professor David Finkel, Advisor

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Abstract

The goal of the eBay Social Shopping project was to implement a Social Shopping environment based around the eBay Auction Marketplace. We developed a product demonstrating a community based social networking environment for internal use by the eBay Research Labs.

Executive Summary

Since its inception the Internet has evolved from just a medium of information delivery to a venue for sales and more recently a platform for social networking. Online market places like Amazon.com and eBay.com have are just examples of the few online sellers that have arrived. Similarly Web environments provided by mySpace.com and Facebook.com are examples of social networking.

The eBay Social Shopping concept was created to pull these two elements, online sales and social networking, together into a single cohesive environment. The long term goal is to create a social networking application that will further drive trust and eCommerce within the eBay Marketplace.

Our project was to take an existing Proof of Concept provided by the eBay Research Labs and extend it. The intended goal of the project was to demonstrate what a community based social networking environment would look like. In the ten week time period we had to work on this project, we implemented features to encourage and support users interaction with each other and with eBay Auctions.

Though we were unable to complete every single feature that is necessary in a fully functional social networking environment, we were able to implement a large portion of the key features. We have provided the beginnings of a community based social shopping experience for eBay to continue work on.