



PRESS RELEASE

**the-saleroom.com confirms its new market dominance
- eBay's exit drives site user numbers to double and expansion into
over 50 countries**

London, 10 July 2009

eBay's exit from the live antiques auction market has helped London-based the-saleroom.com to double its unique visitors to more than 100,000 over the last six months and become the dominant market player with 85% market share. ATG Media, owners of the-saleroom.com and also industry bible Antiques Trade Gazette, expect the site's reach to continue doubling every six months for the foreseeable future. The site already has bidders in more than 50 countries.

Until January 1 2009 eBay provided a platform for a number of service providers to conduct live auctions. They attracted auction houses with the promise of providing access to eBay's 200-million-plus audience for their catalogues and auctions. But for the online giant, some early hitches meant that the problems outweighed the rewards in this specialist marketplace, and so eBay withdrew its live auctions online platform at the end of December 2008.

Live auctions online are a burgeoning marketplace, with huge potential audiences switching onto its capabilities as technology and service develop. The success rate for online bidders is now approaching 20%, double the level at the end of last year, with underbidders participating on a further 10% of final sales online.

The advantage of live auction bidding online is clear: Instead of having to visit an auction house to place a bid, or hang on the end of the phone, bidders can now log on from anywhere in the world and take part in the bidding process as it happens.

The-saleroom.com has built up its client base over the last eight years. It has a very high quality of bidder - serious buyers including dealers, decorators and collectors with money to spend that the auction houses want to attract. In addition, private bidders just looking to furnish their homes or buy something nice also bid regularly on the site.

The key advantage of the-saleroom.com is its **technology platform**. The site provides audio as well as a reliable live video stream. It is the only platform currently providing the true "in the room" experience. This proprietary platform allows someone bidding remotely to see the auctioneer's actions and decisions as if in person. In addition, the-saleroom.com has developed a screen for the auctioneer on the rostrum, so they can see exactly what bids are being placed – and even from where in the world.

UK-based Bromptons Auctioneers hold the record for the highest sale conducted through the-saleroom.com - a bidder in Japan paid £38,000 for a cello in November 2008.

From coins to ointment pots, tables to paintings, the online bidding environment is picking up in popularity and the potential for growth is considerable. In the UK, online live auctions allow salerooms in the remotest parts of Cornwall and the North West access to a global audience.

Anne Somers, Chief Executive of ATG Media is confident of growth in the long term:

"In the post eBay world of online antiques bidding, the marketplace is maturing nicely. As technology, online payment security and confidence improve, bidding live online will become the industry norm and the-saleroom.com is perfectly positioned to lead from the front. We expect our market dominance to grow and continue."

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Bruce Cairnduff, now a senior executive in Credit Suisse and former marketing director at Dreweatts, the biggest provincial auctioneer of art and antiques in the UK, is a converted sceptic. He has commented:

“Within three years, any auction house that expects to be able to compete seriously in the marketplace will have to be conducting credible live auctions online.”

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Notes to editors

ATG Media Ltd

ATG Media's core business is the weekly publication of the Antiques Trade Gazette – essential reading for anyone involved in the art and antiques business. For nearly 40 years, the newspaper has been an integral part of the auction community, bringing together buyers and sellers of art and antiques. In 2006, ATG Media expanded its range of services in line with changing industry needs by launching an online service, the-saleroom.com, where bidders can view hundreds of catalogues and participate in live auctions using live audio and video links. This proprietary interactive platform designed exclusively by the team at ATG Media also powers a second site, i-bidder.com, an online auction site of non-antique items. ATG Media Ltd was created in October 2008 following a management buyout from DMGT.

the-saleroom.com

the-saleroom.com provides a complete range of online services for buyers and sellers of art and antiques at auction, including the UK's leading facility for live online bidding. The site publishes a wide range of catalogues for upcoming sales, giving full details of the sale contents and highlighting star lots in each catalogue. The majority of catalogues are heavily illustrated. Using a market leading proprietary technology platform, the-saleroom.com dominates the UK market in LIVE online auctioneering, with over 110,000 regular bidders now using the site. [The-saleroom.com](http://the-saleroom.com) is a wholly owned subsidiary of ATG Media.

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