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About Jack Socha

eBay: Sell smart from the start author Jack Socha not only teaches how to sell on eBay, he is also a frequent buyer.

"Happily, I restrict myself to two areas," Socha says, "odd coffee making devices and Soviet era cameras and consumer items."

The interest in Russian cameras dates back to 1977, when Socha wrote "From Russia, With Lens" for a national photo magazine. The article told the story of how he mail-ordered a camera from Moscow to Minnesota, something unheard of in those tense Cold War days.

Since that time, he has acquired a considerable number of cameras and lenses. The iron curtain opened a flood of Russian goods, but eBay made it possible to locate them easily. He has ordered numerous items from Russian sellers and always has had a good experience.

He also uses this new availability in his tutorial as an example of why not to use the word *rare* in an eBay ad.

"Once rare Russian cameras are now very common. But they are still often listed as *rare*—making the seller appear less than knowledgeable. Search eBay for *rare Russian camera* and see what happens," Socha says.

His interest in coffee making cannot be traced. "I think there is a bit of an alchemist in me," Socha says. "I simply find it fascinating that coffee is made in so many ways—including so many weird ways." Two finds he is especially proud of: a "what were they thinking" non-electric Mr. Coffee from 1980 and what appears to be the only known Soviet-made espresso pot.

"For the espresso pot, they took the basic concepts of one of those Italian stovetop pots," says Socha, "and made a Russian one to specifications you would expect in a tank." He adds, "What demented five-year-plan included a People's Espresso Pot for a nation of tea drinkers?" Of course, Socha found it on eBay.

Socha's seven years of eBay buying and selling, plus his background in training CD's and audiocassettes for computer beginners, came together in 2003 when Western Technical College in La Crosse, Wisconsin, asked him to teach a 12-hour class on the topic.

With three years of classes behind him, and no limit in sight, it was time to produce another tutorial. "Because the classes have been so successful, I thought I must be doing something right," says Socha, "and I thought it should be shared with a wider audience."

Socha's next project? *Digital Cameras: shoot smart from the start*.

"Sadly," Socha says, "there are no Russian digital cameras out there—at least so far."

(Information on *eBay: sell smart from the start* is available at www.acpress.com.)