

## **The Verified Rights Owner Program (VeRO)**

**POLICY HIGHLIGHT:** Verified Rights Owner (VeRO) Program

### **WHAT IS IT?**

eBay is committed to helping other companies and individuals protect their valuable intellectual property rights, such as trademarks and copyrights. That's why we created the Verified Rights Owner (VeRO) Program, which lets intellectual property rights owners report listings that infringe on their rights. Violating these rights isn't just against eBay policy, it's against the law.

### **WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT TO TAs?**

When eBay is notified of a listing that violates a copyright, trademark, or other intellectual property right, we remove the listing from the site. Sellers who continue to violate intellectual property rights will be suspended from the site. eBay does this for several reasons. First, eBay must meet certain legal obligations. Equally important, eBay strives to maintain a safe marketplace, so that buyers do not receive counterfeit or illegal merchandise. When you sell products for your clients, you should be sure that the items you sell are legitimate, and that you present them in a way that does not violate any intellectual property rights.

### **WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES?**

Intellectual property comes in many forms. Here are some examples of things that are against eBay policy:

- Copying a photo or product description from a manufacturer's website (without permission)
- Saying in your listing that you're not certain if a designer handbag is real or fake
- Selling "fakes" and counterfeit items, even if you say that your item is fake
- Selling copies of OEM software
- Selling backup copies of software, movies, or software games

### **HOW DOES VeRO WORK?**

Intellectual property rights owners who join the VeRO program can ask eBay to remove listings that they believe infringe their intellectual property rights. Both eBay and the rights owners regularly monitor the site for intellectual property infringements. VeRO members demonstrate that they are in fact owners of the intellectual property they are reporting. If your item is reported, you will receive an email explaining why your listing was removed and how to appeal if you believe the rights owner made a mistake.

Repeat offenses will result in suspension on eBay. If you have multiple eBay IDs, your related accounts may also be suspended. Previously suspended users will be prevented from re-registering on eBay. Several drop-off stores have already been shut down as a result of repeat VeRO violations, so please be careful with your listings! After all, this is about obeying the law.

### **BEST PRACTICES FOR TAs**

Please take the time to become familiar with eBay's intellectual property policies. More information can be found in the links below. In addition, there are several easy steps you can take to minimize your risk of VeRO violations:

- If your client can't demonstrate a product's authenticity, don't accept it.
- Saying that you're not sure that an item is "real" is not enough (and is against eBay policy)—if you're not sure, don't list it on eBay.
- Don't sell homemade copies of CDs, DVDs, or movies.

- Don't copy photos or descriptions from a manufacturer's website.
- Don't compare items you're selling to brand names in the listing title (it's usually ok to do this in the listing description, if it's an accurate comparison).
- If your client has a receipt for the brand name item you're now selling, put a picture of it in your listing.
- Train your employees how to recognize potential intellectual property rights violations, and educate them about the VeRO program and policies.
- In your marketing materials, avoid including product images of items that often have VeRO issues (i.e., brand name handbags). Our experience with TA marketing is that clients bring in the products shown in your marketing materials.
- Don't accept items that are likely to violate intellectual property rights.
- Become familiar with the types of items that are often covered by VeRO. Some rights owners have outlined their policies to help sellers trade safely:  
<http://pages.ebay.com/help/community/vero-aboutme.html>

## **DETAILED INFORMATION**

Guidelines for Creating Legally Compliant Listings:

<http://pages.ebay.com/help/confidence/compliant-listings.html>

eBay's Handbag Authentication Discussion Board—on the Clothing, Shoes, & Accessories:

<http://forums.ebay.com/db2/thread.jsp?forum=7&thread=410309873&modified=1107367772697>

eBay's Jewelry and Watches Policy: <http://pages.ebay.com/help/policies/jewelry.html>

VeRO Overview: <http://pages.ebay.com/help/confidence/vero-rights-owner.html>

VeRO FAQs: <http://pages.ebay.com/help/confidence/vero-removed-listing.html>

VeRO Ended Listings: <http://pages.ebay.com/help/policies/questions/vero-ended-item.html>

VeRO Rights Owner Info: <http://pages.ebay.com/help/community/vero-aboutme.html>