

Cheap as Chips!

A guide to Psion bargain hunting
on



I'm afraid I'm going to use a rude word here, and that word is 'crap'. Its difficult to write a piece about Ebay without using the word crap!

Rude Word!

Please don't get me wrong, I don't think Ebay is crap, far from it, I think Ebay is fantastic, but it is the things I buy from Ebay that litter my study that are the steaming pile I refer to.

For all time if you take a man and show him a gadget he'll buy it. This became clear to me when I was lucky enough to be given my Great Grandfathers travel writing bureau.

Antique.

This beautiful antique has hide away draws, moving compartments for your pens (or quills I suppose) purple suede baize to write on and a secret area for your letters to fit into.

My point being my Great Grandfather didn't travel much, in fact at all (he was a talented engraver from a small fishing village in

Scotland).

Gadgets, the more useless to you the better! Its as if a man buys a gadget to pretend he is something other than he really is. Deep Sea Divers Watch for instance. Most men have one, few of us have ever been beneath the ocean waves!

Men and gadgets you see have existed for all time.

The bad news today is how accessible these gadgets are.

A few Beers!

Lets take this scenario; a man in front of his computer in the comfort of his own home. He's had a few beers, logs onto Ebay, types in his gadget favourite (mine is Psion) and bingo!

Lets then cut to a few days later, "Well done you've won a Datapak Eraiser for a Psion Org II, finishing price, only £90.00!", or "Congratulations, your top bid has got you a Psion 3c for a mere £120".

This last example (in fact both actually) has very bitter memories for me as POS are now selling brand new 3mx's for a £145!!

I bought one of course to add to my Ebay gained Org II, 3c (without backlight he says with a hollow laugh), Oregan Scientific Osaris, 2 Sienas (256k & 512k), and a MAS-SIVE Congo leather case for my 5mx.

The point of this article is to save you from the sleepless nights I've endured waiting for the postman's knock. Rushing down stairs to unwrap the crap I've "won" off of Ebay and hide it away before the wife can see!

Barging Hunt!

So in the interests of science I've logged into Ebay, chosen three items of Psion loveliness, and will track their progress to the final bid. Isn't this great? I'm going to run out and get a perma tan, cheap as chips folks!

I chose three items, one from each of three ages of Psion;
Classic Psion (Org 1 & 2 etc), SIBO (Series 3 etc), and EPOC (Series 5 etc).

Item One.

Right bargain hunters, the first item from my chosen list is a;
Organiser II with attached Bar Code Scanner.

As you can from the picture, it really is a very odd device, and seems to have some

buttons missing!

I set my maximum bid for this item at £10.00, mind you a thing to remember with eBay is you always have to add carriage. This may be more than the item total.

A week later I'd won this oddity for a mere £8.10. With a further £4.00 postage.
What can I say?

Again the only word that springs to mind is crap!

The item came unboxed, without a manual or software.

Power the little beauty up and a the screen flashes up with "Insert Pack" and that's your lot!

I've tried inserting the Bar Code Reader into my existing Organiser II and nothing! I was hoping software would be built into the scanner unit, as it is with so many Org II add ons, but no.



Okay. So lesson one;

Lesson One
Always read the write up on what you are actually bidding for.

Don't assume you will receive manuals or software if it doesn't say so!

Item Two.

On to item two;
Pack of 4 Psion Series 3 Items.

A few beauties to accompany your SIBO pride and joy, they are a Series Link for Apple Macintosh, 3 Fax - Pocket Fax and Modem, Travel Modem and Agenda

Synchroniser.

"The boxes are tatty, but on the goods are in great condition", read the Ebay write up.

Amazing Value!

My opening bid of £5.00 held good for a while, and although bidding hotted up towards the end, the final total including delivery was a little under £15.00. Amazing value!

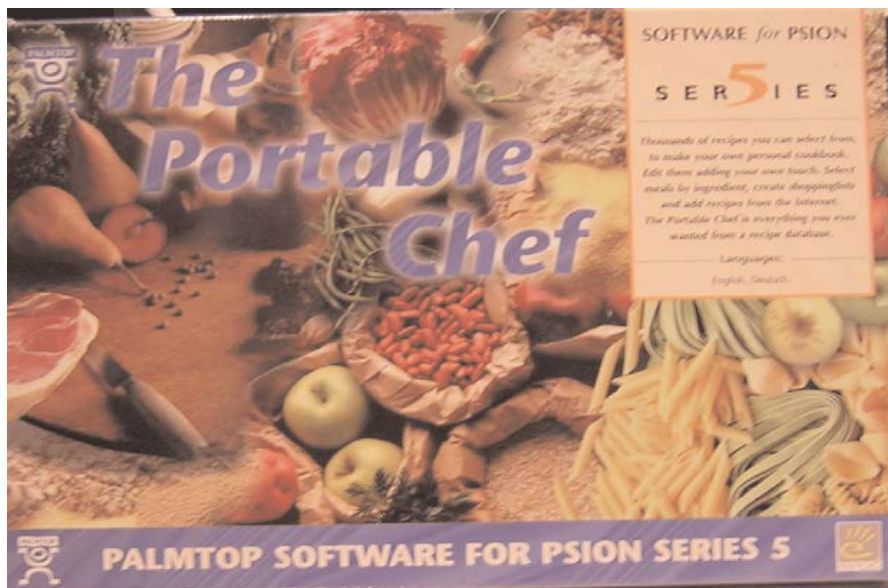
The original combined purchase price for this lot would have been over three hundred pounds!

When delivered the items were as good as new. Although the actual usefulness of some of the items is a little questionable.

Agenda Synchroniser has been replaced by PsiWin, and 3 Fax would only really be useful to a Series 3 Classic fan. I don't actually own a Mac, and the travel modem is only 33kbps!

Lesson Two
Do you actually need this stuff?





Item Three.

Finally item 3, Portable Chef Software from TomTom (which is also the name of my cat), or as it was known then 'Palmtop BV' (which isn't the name of my other cat, Mistletoe actually, and the dog is called Sam. I called the wife Vic.)

Now this is different. I've been after Portable Chef for ages and hunting round for it on Ebay discovered a copy while researching this masterpiece!

This software is really great for the cook in the house.

BBQ

It is very American based but when it comes to BBQ's for instance that's a real bonus. On receipt of the software for the next BBQ I cooked 'Pirates Steak', Salmon Spicy Burgers, and authentic New Orleans style ribs. Fantastic!

I'm unsure of the original purchase price of Portable Chef, but being a commercial product I would imagine around the thirty pounds mark. I paid twenty two.

Conclusion.

As I write this there are 454 Psion connected items available on Ebay.

Although Psion have stopped producing their wonderful machines in the main, you can still purchase anything you really want from the Psion back catalog.

I recently won a Ericsson MC218 for under £50! Compare this to £100 for a screen ribbon repair on a 5mx.

Good luck, and go Psion Bargain Hunt!

Top Tips!

If your new to Ebay here are a list of top tips I've found useful.

Top Tips

1. Never make your maximum bid a round figure, as most people do. Always go for £20.90 for instance. This means you have a much better chance of winning an item close to your maximum bid.
2. Always try and be there on bid closure. Often an Ebayer will put a bid in a few pence more than you in the last seconds.
3. Always pay through Ebay. If you pay via direct communication with the end user your transaction will not be recorded. This effects your Ebay 'credit score' and can make refunds difficult in the case of a problem.
4. Always read bidder feed back before a sale, and write feed back after a sale. This will encourage Ebayers to leave (hopefully good) feedback about yourself, increasing your chance of bidders trusting you if your selling, and increasing your Ebay Status.

Note on currencies.

I hope international readers will forgive my use of British Pounds in this article, I only use this as its the currency I traded in. The principles of the article, of course, remain the same throughout the world! Will Green.