

Chapter 11

Buying and Selling within the Marketplace

In This Chapter

- ▶ Introducing the Facebook Marketplace application
 - ▶ Using the Marketplace application
 - ▶ Posting an item for sale
 - ▶ Shopping for your favorite charity
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 - ▶ Complying with Marketplace guidelines
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If you are reading this chapter, chances are you're interested in making money using the Facebook Marketplace. Facebook offers several ways to buy and sell your wares within the Facebook Platform with assorted third-party applications (apps). (See Chapter 12.) More than two million people use the Facebook Marketplace, and as that popularity grows, so do the number of apps that members can add to their profiles.

In this chapter, we introduce you to the most widely used Facebook Marketplace application, and show you how to add it to your Facebook interface. We discuss how to shop using key Marketplace features and how you can shop for your favorite charitable cause. After that, we dive into selling in the Marketplace from posting and managing a listing to complying with the Marketplace guidelines.

Getting to Know the Marketplace

The official Facebook Marketplace application is a fully integrated package that you can add via the Facebook Applications menu. Powered by Oodle, a third-party software manufacturer, the Marketplace offers an easy to use

Home page (see the “Viewing the Marketplace Home page” section, later in this chapter). The predecessor to this Marketplace was owned and operated by Facebook itself, but was not as elegant as the new solution. By enlisting the help of Oodle, Facebook has supercharged this part of its platform and opened it up to over 200 local and national sites that Oodle is affiliated with.



Oodle is also a standalone Web site and is considered one of the fastest growing classifieds networks. Oodle powers other companies’ classifieds Web sites including:

- ✓ Traditional newspapers, such as The Sun, The San Diego Union-Tribune, and the New York Post
- ✓ Web site companies, such as Lycos, Local.com, and MySpace
- ✓ Nontraditional classifieds hosting sites, such as Wal-Mart

Therefore, when you post something on the Marketplace through Oodle, your listing appears on hundreds of leading media and publishing sites, which is good news for you.

The Marketplace is truly different from other popular sites like eBay or Craigslist because it integrates into the fabric of Facebook. Items that you post to the Marketplace appear on your Wall, thus allowing you to take advantage of the viral aspect of Facebook.

Facebook lets you view listings according to your default geographic location plus some distance from your location and that gives you some unique views on the Marketplace that you typically don’t get with eBay or Craigslist. Also, you don’t see features like Sell for a Cause or Giving It Away on a site like eBay that needs to charge for listings. Unlike eBay, however, the cost of posting a listing on the Marketplace is always free.

How you purchase items on the Marketplace is different from eBay and similar to Craigslist where you contact the seller via e-mail with the subject line of the e-mail pre-populated with the name of the listing. From there, you engage in a dialogue with the buyer and ultimately purchase the item if the price is right! Transaction payments typically use PayPal, credit cards, or cash if you meet in person.

Viewing the Marketplace Home page

The Marketplace lets you buy, sell, give things away, or ask for anything you want — from people you know in Facebook to anyone on the Oodle network. If there’s a cause or charity you support, you can sell on behalf of that cause too.

The Marketplace Home page (see Figure 11-1) organizes its wares into four major categories: Items for Sale, Housing, Vehicles, and Jobs, and defaults to your Facebook geographic location. Items for Sale is the default category and Facebook lists all items that are available in your geographic location in the center of your screen.

If you click any of these key categories, then you get to the corresponding main page, which contains a more detailed list and advanced search features for that category. If you want to be more specific, you can click any of the subcategories that you see listed.

Charitable causes

Unique to the Facebook Marketplace is the Causes link where you can buy or sell items to support your favorite charities. Say you're a Grammy winning artist and you would like to raise money for the Sierra Club Foundation. You could sell autographed CDs of your music to raise money and awareness for this charity. Anyone who buys your CDs automatically donates the entire selling price to the charity.

If you don't have a preferred charity, you can search from the list on your screen. For more information, see the "Shopping for Charitable causes" section, later in this chapter.

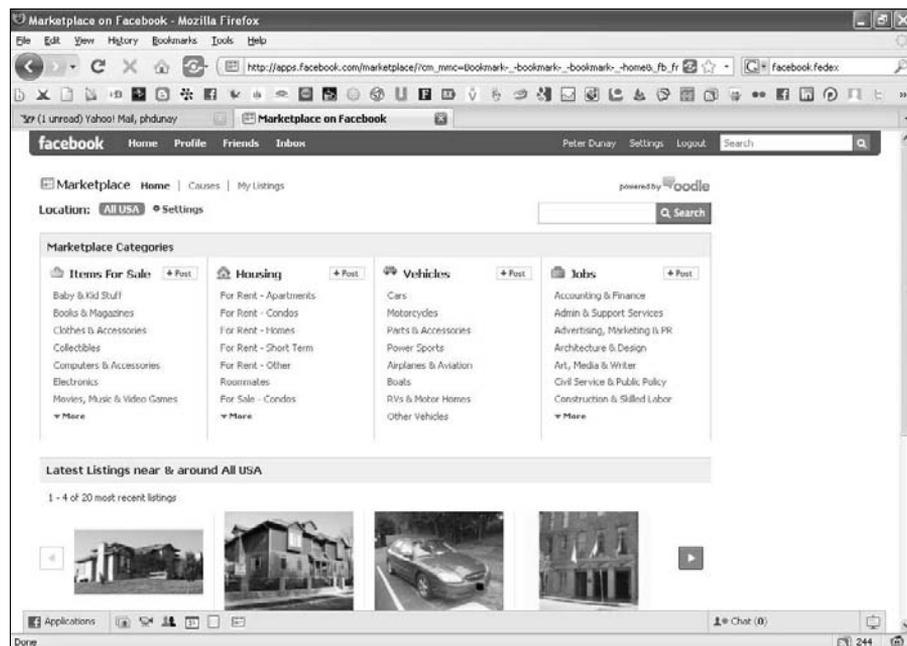


Figure 11-1:
The Marketplace
Home page
powered by
Oodle.

My Listings

My Listings screen lets you view all your listings: active, closed, or expired. For more information, click the My Listings link in the top navigation of the Marketplace. For more information, see the “Managing My Listings” section later in this chapter.

Others can find out about your listings in a few ways. When you post a listing to the Marketplace, it automatically displays on your Wall. You have several ways to share (as you do with a Facebook Page) using the Share button to send a message to your friends and fans or post to your personal profile (see Chapter 6 for more information).

Other Facebook marketplace applications

Actually, Facebook offers a few other applications you should be aware of that allow you to make money using the Facebook Platform. Some applications allow you to pull listings from outside Facebook to sell to Facebook members, and others allow you to make money via referral programs. You should be aware of (and keep an eye on) the following applications.

eBay and Facebook

The most obvious bunch of applications you should be aware of is the eBay and Facebook application. Facebook offers several applications that allow you to quickly and easily pull items you have for sale on eBay into the Facebook environment to share with your friends what you are buying, selling, and even watching on eBay. You can also update your Wall with any activity from your eBay account, such as when you buy, sell, or list an item and get or give feedback on an item.

Lemonade Stand

With about 1,000 monthly active users, Lemonade Stand allows you to make money from the sale of products you recommend to your friends. This is known as an *affiliate program*. All you need to do is add this application, search the Web for favorite stuff, and when someone purchases from your stand, you get paid. Bada bing!

iList

iList is another application that takes any classifieds listing and promotes it across your Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, FriendFeed, Pownce, and even Craigslist accounts. By adding the iList application, you can promote listings to your Facebook friends as well as manage your listings without leaving Facebook. With over 1,500 monthly active users, this application is another one to keep an eye on.

So dive in and start looking around the Marketplace.

Shopping in the Marketplace

Shopping in the Facebook Marketplace couldn't be easier with people selling everything from books to designer fashions. No matter what the product, everyone loves a bargain, and there are plenty to be had. The Facebook Marketplace represents a great opportunity for entrepreneurial individuals to sell your products directly to the retail market since there are very few major retail chains on the Marketplace at this point. In this section we discuss how to add the Marketplace application to Facebook and then how to search within the Marketplace for the items that you desire.

Adding the Marketplace App

Facebook allows you to have and bookmark up to six of your favorite Facebook apps in your bottom navigation bar. If you are new to Facebook, or don't see the Marketplace listed in your Applications menu, then you'll need to add the Marketplace app using the steps below:

1. In the lower navigation bar, choose **Applications** → **Browse More Applications**. (See Figure 11-2.)

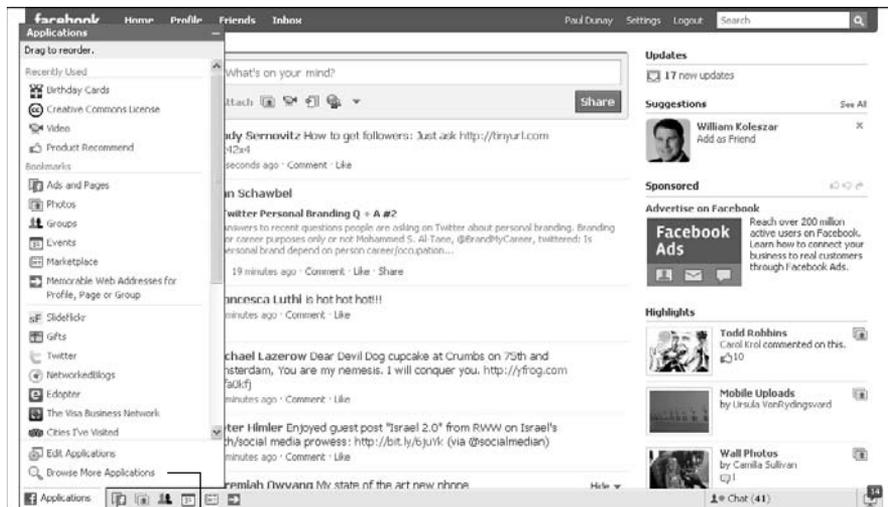


Figure 11-2:
Finding the
Marketplace is
easy.

Browse More Applications

2. Type marketplace into the Search box and press Enter.

The Marketplace application by Oodle appears at the top of the results in the Applications directory. (See Figure 11-3.)

3. Click the Marketplace icon to view the Marketplace introduction.

4. Click Go to Application to go to the Marketplace.

To find the Marketplace again, add the bookmark link to the bottom navigation bar by clicking the Marketplace link when it appears.



If you're an experienced Facebook user, you might already have a Marketplace icon located on the bottom navigation bar. If so, click that to access the Marketplace app.



Figure 11-3:
Searching
for the
Market-
place
application.

Posting by category

You can post items according to four categories of listings (for more information, see “Posting a Listing” later in this chapter). Any of these listings

can apply to your business, it just depends on the objective of your listing. The categories are

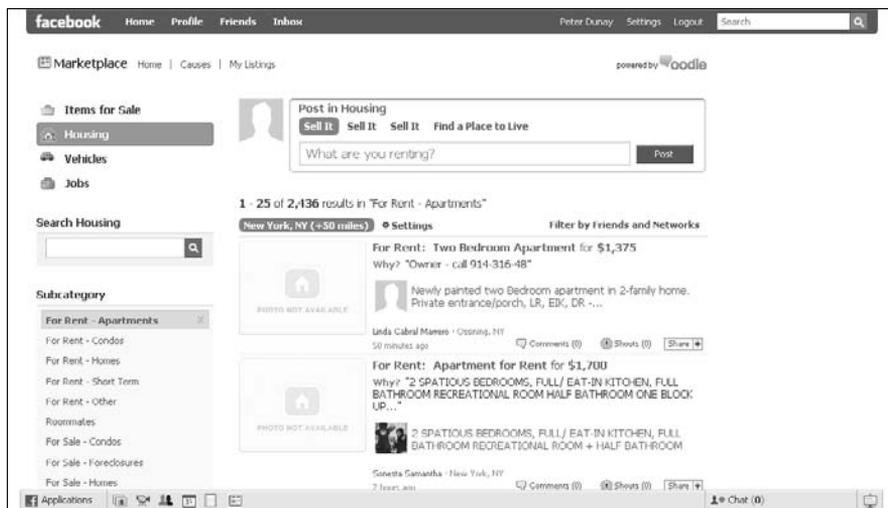
- ✔ **Sell It:** Sell items to raise cash
- ✔ **Sell for a Cause:** Donate the proceeds to charity
- ✔ **Give It Away:** Reduce waste and give it away
- ✔ **Ask for It:** Find something obscure that isn't displayed already

Changing your geographic location

Results are always based on your location, and in our case, the location is the USA. However, if you want to change the country or the settings of your location, you can use the Location Settings link to the right of the search box. You can narrow or broaden your search based on the number of miles that you want to surround your zip code. For countries outside the USA, you can search for items by just the country name, for example, Tanzania.

For this search, we narrowed the results to a 50-mile radius around a location (see Figure 11-4). This decreased the total listings from more than 97,000 to just over 2,400 with one click. This is quite handy to find items of interest you can go check out or even test drive if you need to.

Figure 11-4:
Refined
search to
just 50 miles
from a
location.



Narrowing your search in the Marketplace

All the primary search features are built into the left navigation column and make shopping in the Marketplace easy. You can switch to a new category of items to view by using the top four links: Items for Sale, Housing, Vehicles, and Jobs. Or you can search for a specific product by typing it into the Search box. If you still haven't found what you're looking for, refine your search by clicking the subcategory you want to display. Finally, the specific listing type can be changed by scrolling down and clicking your desired option.

Using the Marketplace Search box

The broadest of searches uses the Search box at the top of the left hand navigation bar. A quick keyword search for *Clothes* shows a mix of items for sale, items sold for a cause, items that are given away, and items that people are asking for. Items can then be narrowed to just items being offered within a certain number of miles from your home or items being offered by your friends. (See Figure 11-5.)

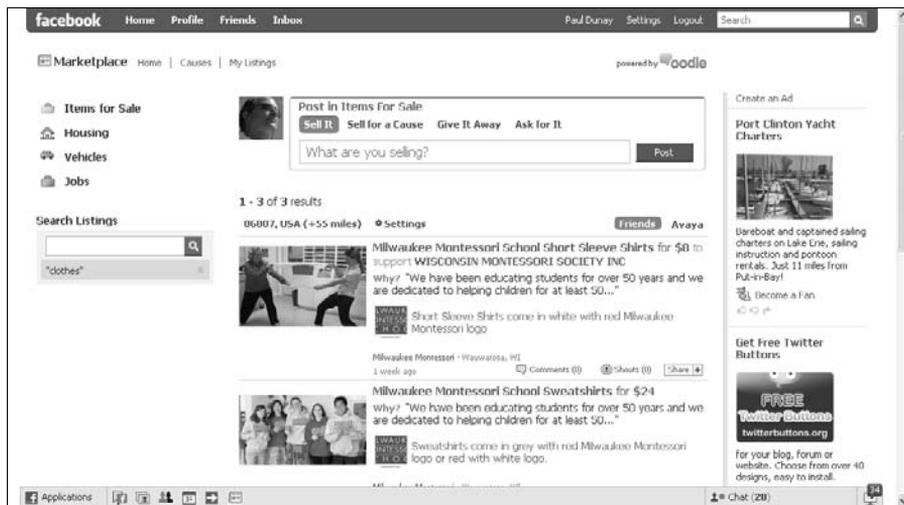


Figure 11-5:
Clothing
items
offered by
my friends.

Finding items in a category

Searching by category is your first step to getting the results that you're looking for. The categories are Items for Sale, Housing, Vehicles, and Jobs, and some categories are clearly more popular than others.

At the time of this writing, Housing – For Rent - Apartments (see Figure 11-6) had more than 97,000 listings of 229,000 total Marketplace listings (which is 42

percent of all listings). Vehicles had over 80,000 listings (or 34 percent of all listings), Items for Sale had 33,000 listings (or 14 percent of all listings), and Jobs had the remaining 3,000 listings (or 1 percent of all listings). Over time and as this space begins to get more interesting to members, the top categories may shift.



Figure 11-6:
Searching
by
Housing –
For Rent –
Apartments.

Posting a Listing

Entering a listing in the Marketplace is fun because it's so easy. The design of the page has been simplified so that it should only take you a few minutes to enter a listing. Best of all, every listing is free for Facebook members!



Because this book is about driving your business via Facebook no matter what size your business might be, we focus on the Sell It listings. The Sell It tab is the default tab under Items for Sale, which is potentially why a majority of listings are Sell It items.

1. On the Marketplace Home page, click the Post button next to the category you want to sell: Items for Sale, Housing, Vehicles, or Jobs.

2. Select the type of listing you want:

- *Sell It:* Sell something to make extra cash.
- *Sell for a Cause:* Sell something and donate the proceeds to a cause.
- *Give It Away:* Give away something you're not using.
- *Ask for It:* Ask Facebook members to help you find something.

As you might imagine, many of the listings are the Sell It type when it comes to Items for Sale (approximately 84 percent at the time of this writing). Clearly, if you have something to sell, like a book, this is the spot for it. (See Figure 11-7.)

Using Give It Away listings might make a great advertisement for your business if you sell products or services. Why not give away a free sample or a free assessment to those near your office!

3. Type a title in the What are you selling box, and then click post.

Be sure to keep your headline short and to the point by putting the name of the product or service at the beginning.

4. Type why you're selling the item in the Why Are You Selling It? text box.

Many people write practical descriptions, such as, "I just need the money," but consider a more provocative answer, something that will get your listing noticed. Because this space is visible in any search results, think of it as an extension to your headline although it isn't a mandatory field.

5. Type the price that you are asking.

Price is not a mandatory field. Unlike eBay, you have no way of gauging a market price for your item, especially if it's used. So consider doing a search on either a search engine or a Web site, such as eBay or Craigslist to determine fair market value of your item.

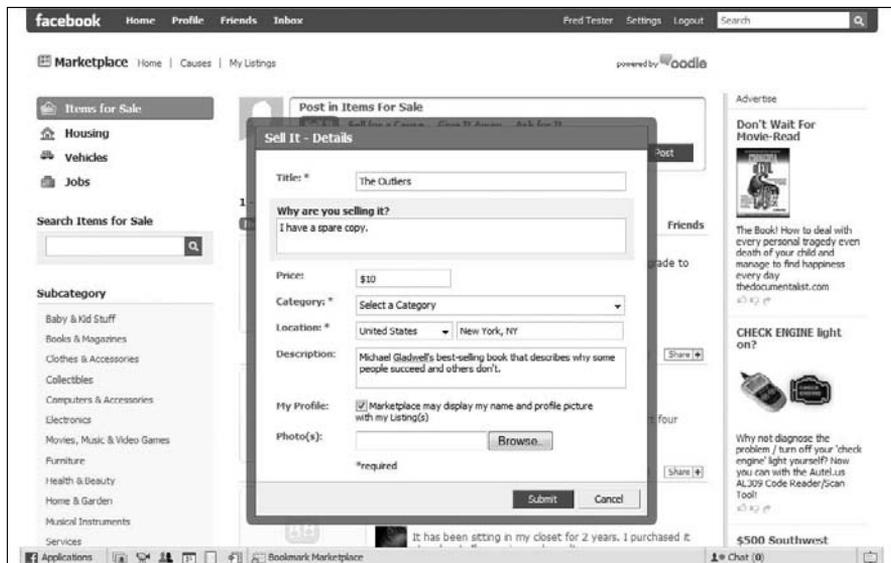


Figure 11-7:
The Sell It -
Details box.

6. Choose a Category from the drop-down menu.

Choices range from Baby & Kid Stuff to Everything Else. If you can't find a category that best describes your item, you can always use the catch all Everything Else.

7. Your location, derived from your profile, is filled in automatically.

You can change the location if you are selling something remotely or from a network different from where you are now.

8. Type a description.

While the box looks like it takes about two to four lines of type, it takes well more than that, so don't feel constrained.

9. Add up to two photos although only one is required.

In our example of selling a spare book, you could add the front and back cover. You can even add more photos later.

10. Be sure to certify that you have the right to distribute the photos, and then click Submit.

New listings take approximately 30 minutes to be included in search results. Many listings take much less than 30 minutes to appear, but 30 minutes is the maximum.

Facebook displays a miniature version of what your listing will look like, reminding you to expect an e-mail within 30 minutes telling you that your listing has gone live. Click Continue to close that dialog box.

A screen displays and asks whether you want to publish this listing to your Facebook Wall and to the News Feed of your friends' Home pages. It includes a dialog box where you can write comments. We recommend that you publish this to your profile so your listing reaches the broadest audience possible outside the Marketplace.

Promoting your listing to your friends

After you list an item in the Marketplace, it's time to promote your listing to some friends and put the viral aspect of Facebook to work for you. Sharing your listing will get your friends engaged in promoting your item for you.

Check out the Share this Listing section in the left hand navigation column. There are plenty of ways to share your listing by publishing it to your Wall and your friends' Home pages using various social expressions such as: Like it!, Check it out!, or Share something else (see Figure 11-8). Also you can enlist your friends to Like it?, Should I buy this?, or Ask something else. Or you could just send a virtual gift to make someone's day — from any listing page!



Figure 11-8:
Commenting
on a listing.

You can also share a listing with a friend using the more traditional method of sharing via Facebook e-mail. To share your listing, go to the individual listing and click the Share button. From there you can click Send a Message and type your text. Then you can choose up to 20 of your friends by either typing their name into the Search box or using a friend List. Add a short message about your listing and click Send. (See Figure 11-9.) (See Chapter 6.)



Figure 11-9:
Sharing an
item with a
friend via
Facebook
e-mail.

Promoting a listing to your profile

Use the Share button to post this item on your profile’s Wall. A message then also appears on the Wall of your friends.

Start with the specific listing that you want to post, and click the Share button. From there you can add a short message about your listing and click Share. (See Figure 11-10.)



Figure 11-10:
Promoting
an item on a
profile.

Shopping by Charitable Causes

The main idea of the Find a Cause page is to let you buy or sell goods to support your favorite charity. Shopping to benefit a charitable cause is unique to the Facebook Marketplace.

At the top of your Marketplace screen, next to the Home link, click Causes to get to the Find a Cause page. Under the Marketplace logo, you can type the name or keyword of your favorite cause in the Search box. You can also specify a new geographic location or a category of causes that you would like to view, such as arts, culture, humanities, environment, animals, or religion from the drop-down lists.

On the right side of your screen, Facebook displays a Featured Cause, which is a part of the Marketplace that runs in cooperation with an independent site called Guidestar. To have your favorite cause become a Featured Cause, you need to sign up with Guidestar via the Powered by Guidestar icon at the bottom of the Find a Cause page, or by navigating to their site at www.guidestar.org. (See Figure 11-11.)

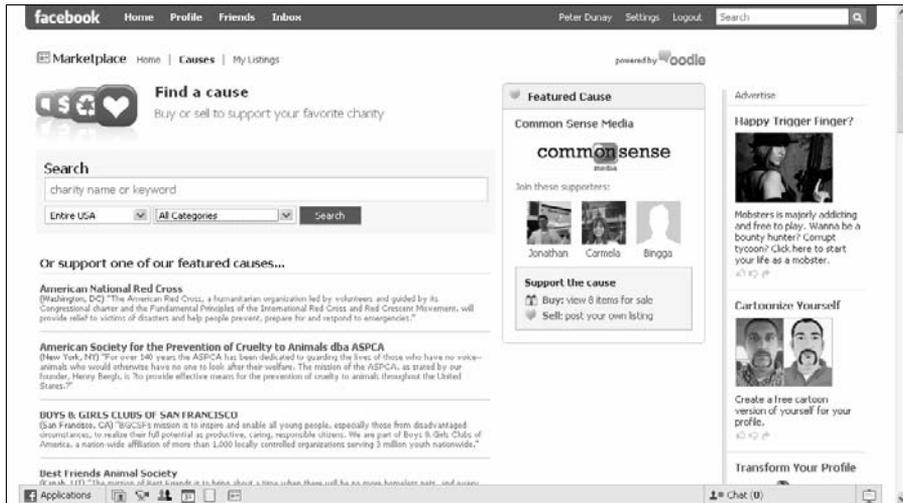


Figure 11-11:
The Find a Cause page in Facebook Marketplace.

Managing Your Listings

Managing your listings is made easy for you in the Marketplace. At the top of your Marketplace screen, click the My Listings link next to Causes. Facebook collects your active and inactive listings in one spot so you can promote, edit, or close them all from one location. (See Figure 11-12.)



Listings that are older than 30 days expire on their own.

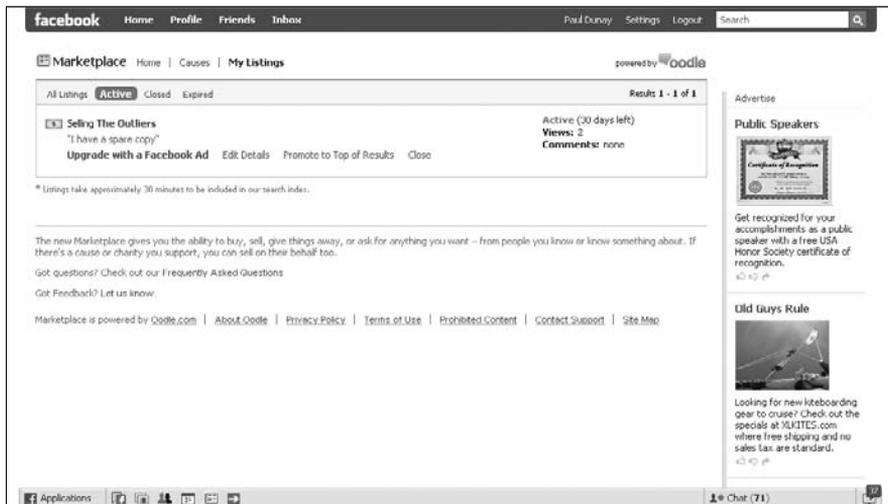


Figure 11-12:
Manage your existing listings on the My Listings page.

Promoting a listing

You have three ways to promote your listings in the Marketplace: Upgrade with a Facebook Ad (see Chapter 9), use the Promote to Top of Results link to republish your listing to the top of the search results for that item every 24 hours, and share your listing with friends (see Chapter 6).

Editing a listing

After you publish your listing, editing that listing is as easy as clicking the Edit Details link contained in the listing or located under any of the listings on your My Listings page. You can make changes to the same details screen that you used to enter the listing. You can also upload added photos, if you wish. Initially, you limited your upload to just two photos, but now you can add as many as you want.



The more complex the listing, the more photos you should use to help sell it.

After you tweak your listing with the changes you desire, click Submit to make them go live. You are then directed to publish this listing to your profile. We feel there is nothing to lose by promoting a listing on your personal profile.

Closing a listing

On your My Listings page, you can close the listing after you sell it or if you decide not to sell it. In the listing view, click the Close link, which is near the Edit Details link. Answer the question, “Did you sell [your item name]?” We assume Facebook is monitoring the success of this platform so your feedback is welcome.

Abiding by Marketplace Guidelines

As you might imagine, the Facebook members who use the Marketplace are very protective of the content. Poor content reflects poorly on all of the members so it is up to everyone to police it.

When looking at an individual listing, you will find at the bottom of every listing the Report link, which gives you the ability to report it to Facebook based on whether you believe the listing to be miscategorized, fraudulent, illegal,

inappropriate, spam, or unavailable. For more details on the Marketplace abuse policy, see the Terms of Use and the Prohibited Content list located in the Marketplace.

Below are some guidelines on what we feel are the most important things to keep in mind when using the Marketplace.

- ✔ **Listings must be accurate:** Be sure that your listing is as accurate as possible. Put disclaimers on a product or warnings if there is something you need to call the buyer's attention to. You don't want to be accused of fraud with your listing.
- ✔ **Only one listing of an item allowed:** Use only using one listing at a time for any given item, if you don't want to be reported for spam. If you do enter a listing twice by accident, be sure to delete one in a timely fashion.
- ✔ **Must have right to sell, lease, or rent item:** Be sure that you have the right to rent the space; otherwise, you might be reported. Remember the old saying, "I've got a bridge I can sell you"? Well, if it's not your bridge, you can't sell it on Facebook. One of the more popular categories is Housing – For Rent, which accounts for almost a third of all listings.
- ✔ **May not post inappropriate items:** Don't even think about posting a listing that is threatening to a group or individual, violent, obscene, or contains copyrighted material as inappropriate content is not tolerated. Marketplace members will report you quickly.
- ✔ **Must not promote illegal activity:** Do not promote illegal activity, such as pornography, prostitution, or drug-related activity. Marketplace members will report you.
- ✔ **All real estate listings must comply with the Fair Housing Act:** Know that the Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of dwellings, and in other housing-related transactions, based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status (including children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women, and people securing custody of children under the age of 18), and disability.
- ✔ **Certain items prohibited:** Don't post any item related to any of the following: nudity, pornography, drugs, threats to a group or individual, violence, obscenity, and copyrighted material, as they are strictly prohibited.
- ✔ **Parties are solely responsible:** Be responsible for your own listings and activity on the Marketplace. Every listing can be traced back to its owner, so don't publish anything you wouldn't want to see on the cover of the newspaper.



- ✔ **Listings are public:** Keep in mind that all listings are open to the public outside Facebook because they are part of the Oodle network. Potential buyers need to log into Facebook to respond to you and cannot see your profile (which is controlled by your privacy settings on your Profile page). (See Chapter 2 for information about privacy settings.)
- ✔ **Exercise caution in providing contact or personal information:** Be cautious about providing contact and personal information, because all listings are public. Use the features that are built into the platform, such as the Contact button under your picture or the Wall on your listing, for all communications.