# Expanding eBay through Interactive Media

A Major Qualifying Project
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## Abstract

Members of the Research Labs at eBay are examining new avenues to expand and improve the eBay experience. They requested that our team create an eBay presence in Second Life and provide an interesting and fun representation of the data stored at eBay. We created an eBay Store, image tagger game, and a series of Flash mini-games to meet these criteria.

## Executive Summary

Members of the Research Labs at eBay, "The World's Online Marketplace," are examining new avenues to expand its audience and improve the eBay experience. One of the areas they have explored is that of interactive social networking games, such as Second Life. They requested that our team create an eBay presence in Second Life and provide an interesting and fun representation of the data stored at eBay.

We used Second Life as a medium to allow users to browse various categories of eBay in a manner much more akin to going to a real store. In addition to creating another venue for people to connect to eBay, our virtual store is an environment for displaying and advertising items users may not have known they wanted when they walked into the store. Our prototype of the store can be easily extended to represent many more categories of eBay as needed. Future work on the store could add more items, and allow more direct interactions with individual eBay items.

Our land in Second Life also hosts our TaggerSL image tagging game. This game encourages players to generate useful data—in this case, tags for an assortment of images. Currently the game uses images from a static database; however, it is feasible that future developers could retrieve images directly from eBay listings, essentially creating a system in which buyers and sellers can improve eBay Search. Additional work on the system could expand the set of images it uses, and link it more directly to eBay's pool of data and listing images.

Finally, banners found in the store link to a series of Flash-based mini-games we created. We based these games on the Shop Victoriously advertisement series, and built them on top of the eBay Shopping API. In this way, the mini-games provide yet another means to browse and access listings on eBay, with the bonus of being associated with an eBay marketing campaign. Players can also specify their preferences for various criteria for items, such as price, time left in the auction, and seller feedback. These preferences affect how items behave in each game, making them an interesting alternate way of visualizing eBay search results. Our team created a common code-base for these games, allowing future developers to easily and quickly generate new games as needed.