

Re: Deliberately misspell in listing titles

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Source: <http://newsgroups.derkeiler.com/Archive/Alt/alt.marketing.online.ebay/2005-08/msg01649.html>

- *From:* "Angrie.Woman" <Angrie.Woman@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 06 Aug 2005 18:33:21 GMT
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Lumpy wrote:

I tried misspelling my name as "Yanni"
to try and increase my CD sales.

I love it when eBay improves things. It seems that they shoot themselves in the foot about 75% of the time, but are too proud to admit it.

<http://www.auctionbytes.com/cab/abn/v05/m08/i05/s03>
eBay Search Gets Disrobed
By Ina Steiner
AuctionBytes.com
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An eBay Powerseller discovered his searches were being hijacked due to eBay's own search feature. Blake Lambert sells a stackable camp cot called a DiscoBed, also known as a Disc Bed and Disc-o-Bed. He discovered in July that when users searched eBay for the word DiscoBed, results would come back with results matching the word "disrobed" instead of "discobed." And instead of camp cots, the search came back with posters for a vintage "nude girl" poster and a politically oriented book. (A search for Disc-o-Bed does show Blake's listings, as does a search for the word discobed in quotation marks.)

Lambert wrote to eBay on July 10 when he noticed the problem: "Now, I think it's great when you GUESS what someone means, but like Google does, I think you should ASK the searcher if that is what they meant. This is really going to hurt my sales and I hope someone at eBay will pay attention to this."

Blake said he went to eBay Live Help, which told him to report the issue using the eBay suggestion box, but got a "canned reply." He also said he

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got a request to fill out a survey asking him about eBay customer service. "I was offended that eBay went to such lengths to survey me, but not such lengths to help me in any way at all."

Lambert removed the DiscoBed auctions but still has listings for DiscoBeds in his eBay Store. At the top of the results for a search on discobed, eBay displays a message, "Your search using discobed returned 0 results. This keyword has been replaced with disrobed" and has a link to "undo," but it's easy to miss this warning.

So what happens if there are auction results for an unusual word like discobed? A search for the word "upiter" came back with one result for an Uputer album, and five results for listings with the word "united."

eBay spokesperson Hani Durzy said the alternate search-terms feature is designed help people find things more easily, when people misspell words, for example. He said Blake's problem only happens to a handful of phrases or words. "Ninety-nine point nine percent of the time it works as intended," Durzy said. He said the search feature also suggests alternate spellings if there are few results for a word. He said a search for "parkay" on eBay brings back listings that include the word parkay, but at the top of the results it asks, "Did you mean parka?"

Ironically, while shoppers won't find Blake's DiscoBed Store listings with a regular eBay.com search, they will find them using Google. A search on Google for DiscoBed displays Blake's eBay Store right on the first page of results.

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