

[Another eBookWholesaler Publication](#)



Insiders' Secrets To Flea Market Profits

Copyright © 2004 Larry L. Austin All rights reserved.

Proudly brought to you by

John Reese

[Email](#)

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

[Web Site Hosting Service](#)

[Internet Marketing](#)

[Affiliate Program](#)

Please Read This First

“Flea Market Secrets” is copyright © Larry L. Austin, P.O. Box 640, 12300 SE 130 Ave., Ocklawaha, Florida 32183 Email: FloridaBud@mfi.net

This book may only be sold by current Members of Ebookwholesaler. This book must not be offered through auctions or auction sites under any circumstances. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission from the author except for brief passages which may be used by a reviewer. Copying by any means including electronic methods, selling or hiring, transmission by voice, electronic mail, posting to a Web site or uploading to an ftp site or CD duplication is strictly forbidden. Legal action will be taken against offenders.

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: The author, his publisher, agents, resellers or distributors assume no liability or responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the use of and the advice given in this publication.

It is recommended that users of this guide seek legal accounting and other independent professional business advice before starting a business or acting upon any advice given in this guide. The user should seek the legality of the advice given pertaining to any laws that may exist in his or her local community, state, or country. This book is not intended for use as a source of legal, accounting, business, or financial advice. This guide is written for information purposes only.

Any perceived slight of any person or organization is totally unintentional.

Table of Contents

Please Read This First	2
Author's note	7
Introduction	8
Secrets The Flea-market Dealers Don't Want You to Know!	12
Wholesale Prices.....	14
Settle for Less....Get More	15
The 3x Mark-up	15
Where Dealers Buy and a Few Jokes For the Road	17
Where To Get Your Merchandise	19
Other Choices	22
Tail-Gaters	23
Table Swapping	24
Hard Luckers.....	25
Dumpster Diving	26
What to Sell.....	28
Where to Get Products	30
After-market merchandise by the pallet.....	31
Where to Set Up	32

1. Regular Markets and How to Find Them..... 32

2. Road Side Set Ups... On Your Own..... 32

3 Parking Lots 33

Necessary Permits35

The Big Question. 35

What You Will Need on the Road.38

Supplies and cost..... 38

“No One Home” Campgrounds.....42

The 5 Most Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them.....43

How to Deal With Jerk Vendors.....47

Give Me the Low Road49

Take the High Road52

Price Wars.....53

Have Some Fun, Start Your Own Price War With Your Partner! 55

How to Make Quiet Money... Dealer to Dealer57

Back Door Sales.....63

How To Stay Alive & Well On The Road.....64

E-Z Living...No Money - No Problem!.....65

Road Travel Note: 66

Part Time Work at Campgrounds67

Never Sell Low on Friday.....70

The Sales Tax Trap	71
Prices, Prices, Prices	73
Quick Trades Without Money	75
Stay or Leave	76
<i>Rule # 1. After you finish a market, leave.....</i>	<i>76</i>
Building Inventory vs. Money In Your Wallet	78
One-Day, Two-Day, Three-Day & All-Week Markets.....	79
One-Day Markets:	79
Two-Day Markets	80
Three-Day Markets.....	80
All Week Markets	81
First Monday Markets.....	82
Camping for Free	83
Sell Your Own Products	84
In Conclusion.....	85
<i>Try to be as self-contained as you can afford.</i>	<i>87</i>
Glossary of Terms	88
Confidential Sources of Supply	90
Businesses That Work	92
A Sales Tip.....	94
From a Female Point of View	95

Bathroom Procedures	95
<i>What to take:</i>	<i>95</i>
<i>What not to take:</i>	<i>95</i>
Know the prices of the merchandise:	96
What food to take with you:	96
Clothing to take:	96
Driving:	96
Breakdowns	96
<i>What not to do:</i>	<i>96</i>
Displays:	97
Helping With the Set-up at Markets	97
Odds & Ends	98
Make your own tables:	98
<i>Table Covers:</i>	<i>98</i>
Vendor awnings:	99
Tarpaulins:	99

Author's note

I'm forever thankful for what the road has given me; the freedom of life that few have experienced.

Most of what I've learned has come from my fellow vendors and customers. Like a vast network of learning...with every set-up, some new thing, a tip, a sales pitch, another location to try out.

All for free!

Introduction

Back in the early 80's, I was fed up with my going-nowhere job. Don't get me wrong, the job was well respected and the money was enough; I was a classroom teacher.

But after a few years, I found myself staring out the classroom windows at the real world. I wanted to travel. I had seen many people wait until it was too late to start living the good life. Many fell into tragic endings, including my own parents.

There had to be a way to break out.

So begins my story.

My journey - and hopefully yours very soon.

Not knowing anything about how to make money was a big problem.

I knew I had to learn; it was the only way that I could escape the classroom.

It wasn't easy. There was no one interested in showing me anything that would help. In fact, quite the opposite. Friends and relatives like to keep you in your place; you know - the little box they have drawn around your life. They want you to stay in that box. It keeps the pecking order in place.

No help came from that camp.

I really like to travel so the first thing I did was to make a list of possible ways to make money on the road. I wrote down the pros and cons of each idea.

Finally it hit me that the easiest way to make money with the least amount of hassle was to work flea markets!

Over the next two years, I haunted flea markets in my area. I checked out the dealers, what they were selling and also, how they were talking to the customers. I took notes on what seemed to work and what didn't.

Somewhere along the way I realized the **first secret**; only a few vendors were making any real money!

The **second secret** that I discovered was just as important; where and how the flea market was located and how it was managed.

This set the pace of business. Some products worked and some didn't. (What to sell and what not to sell).

The next big problem was I didn't know how to SELL...or...what to SAY to make it work. I found a cheap-priced flea market that was close to home. Finally with great effort, I got the courage up to rent a booth and, telling myself I could do it, tested the waters.

(If you have never sold anything to strangers, don't get too nervous about this short story. You can do it and, with a little practice, you will be making sales with the best of them, trust me. 😊)

I was a woodworker in my spare time, so I decided to make some routed wood signs. You know, the ones with sayings on them, (that way I figured I could make my own products at home and not worry about the extreme hassle of trying to take a workshop of electric hungry tools to market, let alone do the work and sell at the same time - No Way!)

So, there I was. It was getting close to Christmas. I made some neat folding lean-back racks for the signs to be displayed on. I placed my beautiful holiday signs on the racks. They really looked nice. Much to my pleasure a large crowd of people stopped at my booth. They exclaimed how beautiful the signs were. Some made remarks like “those are the best looking signs I’ve ever seen!” Wow, there must have been 30-40 great compliments that day.

One problem, at the end of the selling day I had made NO SALES AT ALL! The final blow was when some jerk came by and told me it was a great idea and he was going home to make some for himself! A Lesson Learned: **Sell What the Customer Wants, Not What You Want.**

After a few more tries I switched to several kinds of sample signs in my booth and let the customers place orders for them to be ready the next weekend...With Their Own Words On Them! You know, stuff like, ‘The Jones’, ‘Bob & Mary’, or ‘Thank you for not smoking’, etc, etc.

Of course I would always take a small deposit to secure the deal. I made out an order form with the exact size of the sign, type of letter style and so on (this is very important when doing custom work of any kind). Always make sure the customer signs the order form and you have a way to contact them during the week. (Don’t forget to get their phone number also if something comes up, as things happen once in a while.)

I finally was starting to make some weekend money. The dream of traveling was getting closer and closer. Then, quite by accident I discovered a “Directory to Flea Markets.” It listed the markets state by state, the phone numbers, hours of business, etc.

Boy, I was ready to hit the road! I had quit my teaching career and was living down on the Mississippi Gulf coast. With the help of my small weekend market work and a couple hundred a month I got from a real estate mortgage, I was ready to travel.

After trying a bunch of different items on the side, I finally decided that the only thing to do was put my wood sign business on hold and stock up on high mark-up items that took little space and could be sold just about anywhere. Incidentally, that item was jewelry, (see reference section for sources). When I had enough to sell, I packed up and hit the road.

Since that time way back then, I've traveled most everywhere that I wanted to go. The markets have always paid my way. My travels, as well as yours will give you fond memories filled with stories and adventures. I've camped with millionaires and outlaws both, each with their own thoughts and outlook on life. You will soon learn that there is a lot of fun to be had and a lot of things to do and see. Don't wait until it's too late. **GET STARTED NOW!**

P.S. I have had vendors tell me that the first time I break a \$1000 dollars in sales in one weekend, I will turn to my partner and say, "you know, even if I was worth something before, I'll never be worth anything again! Making this kind of money in one weekend!"

Chapter One

Secrets The Flea-market Dealers Don't Want You to Know!

Flea markets are not unlike large successful businesses. Each has its own special closely guarded secret. The main difference between flea markets and other large businesses is that a flea market is made up of many small individual businesses, each with its closely guarded secrets, most of which consist of where they got their merchandise and how much they paid for it.

Rule # 1 NEVER ASK ANOTHER VENDOR WHERE THEY GET THEIR MERCHANDISE.

If you ask they will do one of several things...

- × get mad
- × lie to you
- × get mad and lie
- × teach you a few new vocabulary words

Rule # 1A If someone asks you the same question....

Be calm, cool and collected (this is a hard row to hoe) just smile at them and say, "I'm sorry, that's confidential information!"

Once in a while you will get a person who will not take "NO" for an answer. They beg you for a source of supply (so they can go into competition against you).

Here's what I do. If they keep on with me I'll say, OK I'll tell you on two conditions.

First, I need you to agree that you will not set up at this market for (xxx number of weeks, months...never) Of course they will agree and think they have just about ripped you off.

Second, I will give you my source of supply, but first you must pay me for it....(Remember the dog eat dog reality of business.) Figure out how much of a threat the person appears to be and then come up with a LARGE amount of upfront, cash only money. Say.. \$ 500 to \$2,000 dollars. That usually shuts them up. If they agree, go for it, take the money and give them your second best source of supply.

Never your First! Never!

Chapter Two

Wholesale Prices

If there was only *one thing* that makes or breaks a vendor, it would be how much that vendor pays for his or her merchandise.

Just this morning (6-20-03), a vendor friend dropped by our local coffee shop. While we were shooting the breeze, he mentioned that some vendors at the market he worked went to K-Mart to buy their stuff. Then they were taking it to the flea market and trying to resell it at a profit.

I said, “You’ve got to be kidding?”

“No, I am serious”

I said, “How can they make any money?”

“They’re not!” he replied. “They’re old retirees who don’t know anything about making money.”

You must always be looking for a better price for your merchandise.

Your wholesale price is all you have to work from.

The lower it is the more room you have to deal with the customer.

Chapter Three

Settle for Less....Get More

I am always amazed at what other people think is important in their lives. Some place great value on how new and expensive their vehicle is, others on their video collection, etc.

What about the price they paid? Do they buy retail? Could they have used this money in a better direction?

Of course!

Every time you spend in the wrong direction you lose, not gain. (author's note: If you spend \$10 dollars a week on junk food, what do you end up with? Heart disease, stroke, the bloats, etc? If you take the same \$10 and buy good wholesale merchandise with it, you end up with an extra \$20-\$70 in your pocket every week!)

If you can find a way to change your spending habits and come up with an extra \$100-\$200 dollars a month, you can put that money into buying wholesale merchandise and start your own on-the-road business!

The 3x Mark-up

Most flea market items are marked up over cost *at least 3 times* what the vendor paid for it!

I know, I know, you were told that the grocery stores only makes a tiny bit of profit on each item they sell. The retail stores only make about 20-30% profit on their merchandise, blah, blah, blah.

The truth is that you must *mark your products up 2-7 times or more over what you paid for them* if you are going to make a profit on the road.

This 3x mark up is necessary for your survival. Most of the cheaper items that you sell for around \$3 should cost you less than a dollar wholesale.

Look at it this way. When you are on the road you need to break down your selling price into three parts. For an item that sells for three dollars, one dollar goes to replace the just sold item. One dollar goes for road expenses (booth rent, gas, food, repairs, etc).

The last one-dollar goes in your pocket as profit.

So, to put it another way, if you sell 100 x \$3 dollar items in a day (that would be a busy item), you take in \$300 dollars. Now take that money and

1. *put aside \$100 to replace your inventory* of those items.
2. *put aside another \$100 for road expenses* and
3. *put the other \$100 in your savings box.*

I like to use surplus ammo boxes for this, they have a watertight seal around the lid and are tough enough to stay with you. Of course, you can do it any way you see fit. This just works for me. Remember, *split the money into three parts*. That way you will always know where you are coming from.

Chapter Four

Where Dealers Buy and a Few Jokes For the Road

Auctions are a joke, spotters are usually placed in the audience to run the price up on junk that's not worth the opening bid. Auctions can cause bidding frenzy. If you find a good one in your area, do not tell anyone, period.

Catalogs The joke about many flea markets is that the dealers all buy from the same catalogs. Thus they create a back stabbing environment in which no dealer wins.

Let me explain: most amateur dealers are desperate to make a sale and sell way below the 3x mark up rule. Of course, they go belly up down the road. Catalogs can be a great source of merchandise if you get one that the other dealers don't know about. I use this trick all of the time.

Garage Sales Garage sales are tricky. They can be a joke, if the owners of the sale have gone to a few flea markets first and then price everything the same as the market vendors do. That's no profit left for you. If they have some good stuff that you know from experience will sell at a flea market for a 2-3-x mark up, **go for it!**

(Tip: Go as early as possible, even before it opens if possible. If they have some really good stuff, offer to buy it all at one easy price. That way, you both win. The garage sale never happens. The people don't have to use up their day in the hot sun. You load all of the stuff up and haul it all to the nearest flea market. \$\$\$!

Wholesale Stores The joke is the same if they are close to the market you are working. You can bet on it that there will be vendors selling the same products.

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

