

Gavel Guide

EFFECTIVE BIDSPOTTING



The role of a “ring person” or “bid spotter” can be a lot of fun, as well as very important to the energy and success of the auction. The following provides a guideline and suggestions so that you can be comfortable in your role, but feel free to add your personality as you see fit.

The purpose of a bid spotter is to:

- Assist the auctioneer to see incoming bids
- Elevate the energy level of the room to stimulate bidding
- Assist bidders who may need clarification as to what is being sold and for how much
- Encourage bidders to bid again
- Communicate information from a bidder to the auctioneer (i.e. a smaller bid increase or a question)
- Call out the bidder’s number once the item is hammered “sold”

The following are some practical suggestions:

- Make sure you are spread out throughout the room. I will have the most difficulty with low lit areas, tables furthest from the stage, tables hidden behind obstacles and tables to my far right or left.
- Know what word(s) you will use to announce to the auctioneer that you see a bid. I suggest a simple single syllable word as the auction moves quickly, though feel free to try something longer if you wish. Common words or sounds are, “bid”, “yes”, “yep”, “yo”. Dare to be creative!
- Practice yelling the word a few times in front of someone just to get the “first time” out of the way.
- Point in the direction where you see the bid.
- DON’T WORRY THAT SOMEONE ELSE MAY SEE THE SAME BID OR WORRY THAT THE AUCTIONEER ALREADY SEES THE BID. The auctioneer will see most bids anyway and is an expert at avoiding duplicate bids.
- Don’t be afraid to talk to a bidder; When doing so, make sure you are not blocking the auctioneer’s view of the bidder and that you are not distracting the bidder. The goal here is quick comments that get them to bid again. (i.e. “It looks like a great trip” or “one more time?”, etc.).
- If you have a question from a bidder that you can’t answer, you may shout out something like “I have a question Mr. Auctioneer”. Then be quick, concise and loud with their question.
- Be loud and energetic; smile and have fun.
- Applaud after every winning bid.

Specific areas to help the auctioneer:

- If the auctioneer looks at you and asks “are they in?” This means, ask the bidder you are standing near if they want to bid again or not. The bidder may not realize that they are the high bidder and the auctioneer needs to know if they want to bid again.
- Help the auctioneer to see bid numbers. Please call out the bid number clearly, loudly and 1 digit at a time (i.e. 295 would be “two-nine-five”).
- Occasionally an item is offered for sale where a second one is available at the right price. In these cases, the auctioneer may look to the #2 bidder to buy the second one at the same price. The auctioneer may need your help to “close that sale quickly”.