

Garage sales go virtual

Debra Keiser, For The Journal News Published 9:09 a.m. ET Jan. 16, 2015 | Updated 10:22 a.m. ET Jan. 16, 2015



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It was bound to happen sooner or later. Tag sale lovers, who typically have to wait for the snow to melt

...n't have to wait any
...one virtual.

...right now, 24-7, on
...s across the area with a
...ators and Foosball tables
...ackets. Even kitchen

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has 1,127 members.

...per early to be the first line
...or scrounging through cardboard boxes of old record



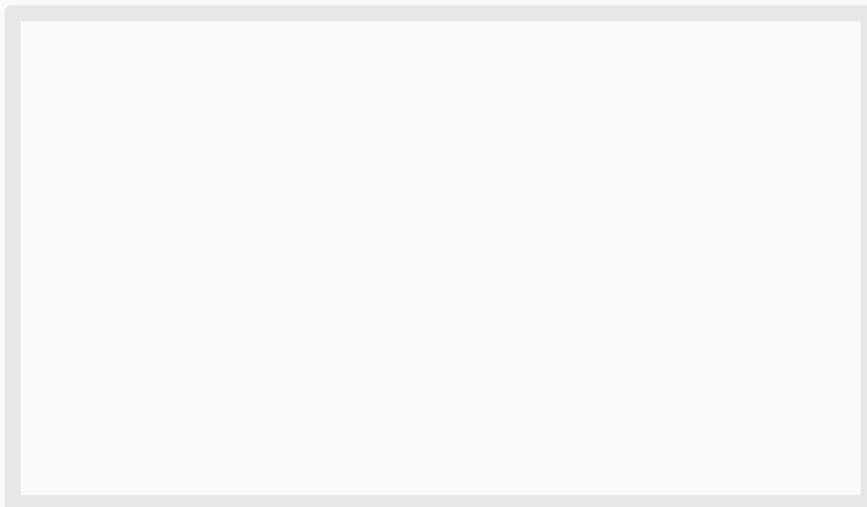
albums set on a card table on someone's front lawn. You can save time — and gas — by browsing at

home.

Search the name of your community or town, add the word "sales," and you will likely find a page where members, sometimes in the thousands, are actively involved in buying or selling "stuff."

The Chappaqua Moms Sales page, administered by Stacey Winnick for Westchester residents, was one of the early ones, started in June 2013. In the first week, Winnick had 500 members.

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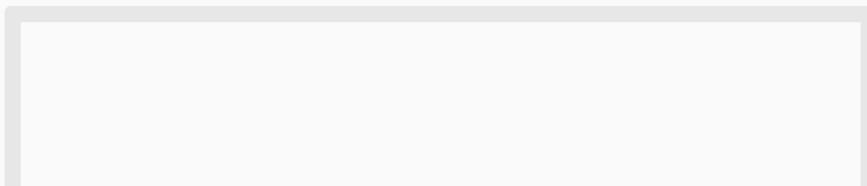


Now, the page has 4,235 members with 2,058 potential members still waiting to be approved.

"This is my life," said Winnick, who has been an appraiser for 25 years and loves the role she plays in bringing people — and their stuff — together. She also uses the page to blog about topics that will help members find success in buying and selling.

"I'm having fun and building my brand, while I support women and help them make money." (The page does have about 15 men as members, but Winnick feels it runs better as a women's page.)

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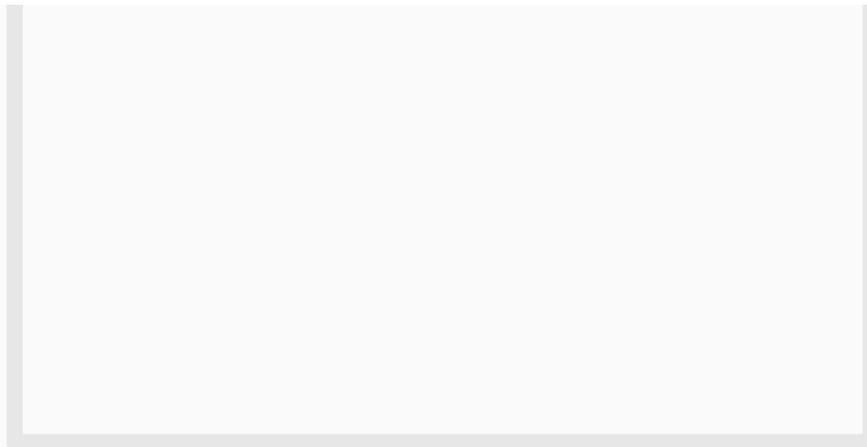
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While Winnick has a passion for vintage merchandise, the page reflects the myriad personalities of the members, and items move fast.

"This is like an upscale tag sale," she said, so you can expect to find lots of Michael Kors, as well as \$400 Tecnica boots (for \$150) or a custom-made coat with sheared mink trim for \$50. A Dutch oven sold in 15 minutes.

Many of the pages have rules since, without them, Winnick says, "It's like the Wild West." She and her assistant administrator closely monitor posts to keep the page running smoothly, and are supported by a close-knit core group of members who report rude behavior to the admins.

Bidding wars and other untoward behavior (such as bashing merchandise or people and trying to make their own deals outside of the page) are unacceptable and cause to be deleted. Civility is paramount and supported by Rule 1: If you are the first to respond to a seller, you are first in line for the item. The buyer has 24 hours to make contact, and after that it goes to the second person on the list. And so on.

In Brewster, Luanne Galasso noticed the void about 18 months ago, too. "I saw a lot of these pages in Connecticut and thought, Why not here?" Her page, Brewster Tag Sale, has 1,127 members. "It's a great way to recycle and declutter one item at a time."

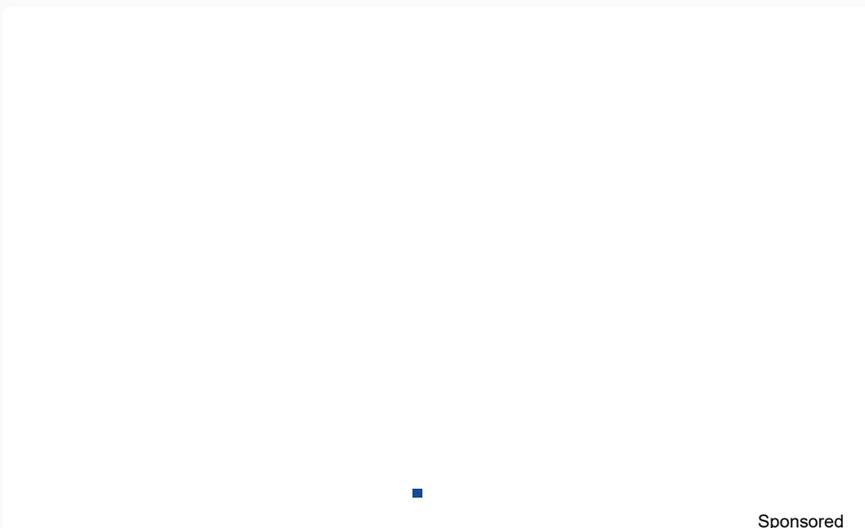
"Sometimes I get weird posts, like a half-used bottle of hand soap that you can get new for less at Bed, Bath and Beyond, or coupons from the Sunday paper, but I delete those."

Her page also has rules, which, she says, "are just common sense," like meeting in public places to do the exchange and having someone else at home if the item is large.

Some items are really large, like kitchen cabinets on the Chappaqua page. One member completely remodeled her kitchen with items from the page, which now even has an unofficial mover to make deliveries.

Galasso had a few actual tag sales over the years, but began to feel it wasn't worth the effort. "You put so much into it – organizing, pricing, getting it all ready, and then it rains!"

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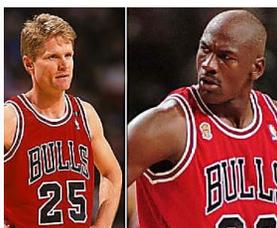
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