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## eBay Bot Fraud

*Positive feedback is used as an incentive to attract victims*

Fortinet, a Sunnyvale, California-based security company has informed the public of the prevalence of a new type of fraud targeting eBay customers. The scams imply the use of illicit accounts created by bots with the sole purpose to drive up the trust factor of vendor profiles. This process is an evolution of a traditional eBay scam that involved fake auctions for which the scammers would rake in the proceeds without ever shipping the inexistent products they had put up for sale. Using bots to boost auctioning profiles mean that scams can present themselves to unsuspected buyers with a positive transaction record and buyer feedback, aspects that generally act as sufficient incentive to determine a purchase. Fortinet describes the scam in relation with the 1-cent items sold on eBay. Fake accounts were set up by bots power scam auctioning accounts through automated e-mails on purchase that end up in positive feedback ranking on the profile. "Once they have 15 or 20 feedback items, they can use that account to set up bogus auctions," said Guillaume Lovet, the leader of Fortinet's virus research team in Europe and the discoverer of the scam. "They can set up an auction for an MP3 player, start the bidding at \$35 or so, and run a short auction so that it's less likely buyers will look at the details of the account's feedback." "This is a good example of a "cyber" symbiotic phenomenon (aka a win-win situation): sellers are making cash without doing anything, and scammers owning the fake accounts are building positive feedback, again, while sleeping, watching porn, or chatting on IRC - and only for a fistful of bucks. Indeed, with that 1 cent rate, building 100 accounts with 15 positive feedbacks each cost \$15. And 100 accounts are a reasonably solid base to set up a good deal of bogus auctions... Ironically, one of the most popular items among the 1-cent-buy-it-now-with-no-delivery-cost clique is an eBook called ,"