

## Online auctions

Sometimes things don't add up: to make online auctions more appealing auction managers recommend vendors to begin with a **very low bid price**. So, it may happen that if you offer a product for sale hoping to make a certain amount of money you'll see the bidding closed for a much lower price.

Do not fail to deliver the product sold by auction. The Italian Civil Code clearly states that it is an "**offer to the public**" which is binding upon the proposer and has to be finalized by a sale contract after being knocked down at the highest bidder.

Be careful who wins the auction: if the buyer is a private person (which is not always clear) it is not possible to apply the **10-day return policy** as provided for by distance selling regulations. In this case the contract is binding to all intents and purposes upon all parties from the moment the winning offer is accepted.

Lastly: when auctioning online you could run into a cunning old dog, who can disappear from the web **after cashing your money** without leaving any trace.

### Our quick tips:

Check whether the vendor is a private person or a business trader.

If you win an online auction, before sending the money, check whether the vendor is really existing.

Be aware that in case of cross-border purchases or auctioneers footed overseas other factors come into play (higher shipping costs, higher customs duties if from outside the EU, different legal customer rights).

25/03/2011