Criagslist Basics

Course Description

The classifieds have moved online! Learn how to use Craigslist--the largest online classified ad website--to buy, sell, trade, and more in this class.

**Curriculum Tracks**

Software & Apps

**Audience**

People who do not like auction websites, such as eBay, or want to view classified ads that have migrated away from print sources.

**Course Length**

60 minutes

**Training Method**

Lecture-demo

**Purpose**

1. To introduce patrons to Craigslist’s classified website
2. To get patrons ready to create and/or respond to classified ads and create their own
3. To inform users the risks of buying/selling on Craigslist and how to minimize risk

Equipment Requirements

Projection screen, laptop with internet connection, laser pointer

Software Requirements

Microsoft PowerPoint and an internet connection to access the Craigslist website.

Material Requirements

Power Point presentation, handouts, training evaluation, pens/pencils

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of the session, learners will be able to:

* Explain how to view and respond to classified ads
* Explain how to create a Craigslist account
* Explain why one would need a Craigslist account
* Explain how to create classified ads
* State strategies that will lead to safe transaction

**Assessment Technique(s)**

* Question/Response

Content Outline

***Prep (2-3)***

* Start up the Powerpoint
* Start up your web browser and load Craigslist. If you have an account sign into your account.
* If you are going to demonstrate how to create an ad make sure to have pictures handy for upload.

***Agenda (2-3 mins.)***

* Getting Started
* Searching through ads
* Making a deal
* Avoiding scams
* Creating an account
* Creating a classified ad
* Craigslist policies and resources

***Getting Started (2-3 mins.)*** Note: If possible demonstrate this through the website instead of the power point.

* Talk about how to get on to the site and navigate to the classified ads in their area
  + First go to **Craigslist.com** and click on **Chicago** as your location
* On the top of the classified screen it shows you different locations in the Chicago land area. For roughly a 30-minute driving radius of Elgin choose North West Suburbs. If you do not mind traveling into the city for an item leave the search to all of Chicago
* Finally choose whatever classified ad you are interested in

***Searching Through Ads (5 mins.)*** Note: If possible demonstrate this through the website instead of the power point.

* After you pick what kind of classified ads you are interested in you will get options to narrow down your search to even more specific ad types.
  + For example, under cars & trucks you can choose if you want to view cars being sold by a dealer or a private seller
* After you choose your facet you will be shown the main classified ads page. From here you can further narrow down your search further
  + You can use the facets on the left hand side of the screen to narrow your search even further
  + You can use the search bar at the top of the screen to look for more specific ads, change ad type and change your location.
* Directly above the search bar allows you to quickly navigate Craigslist by changing the types of ads you see
  + From here you can change location and auction type without having to go back to the homepage.
* Once you click on an item from the ad lists the full ad will appear. An ad will usually include the following
  + Pictures: You can look at all of the pictures for an ad by clicking on the small thumbnails under the full size picture
  + Description: The description is written by the seller and is located under the pictures. If the ad includes item specific information it will be on the right hand side of the ad.
  + Contact information: You can find the contact information in the **reply** button in the top left corner. This can include email, phone number, and name. All ads will have an email hidden by a craigslist email proxy to protect the seller from spam and harassment. To email the seller either click on one of the webmail links or copy and paste the email address into your email.

***Making a Deal (7.5 mins.)***

* Talk about how to read ads carefully to respect the seller’s preferences
  + Avoid asking questions that are answered in the ad. The seller went through lots of time and effort to post, respect their effort/time and carefully read their ad.
  + If the seller asks for a specific request such as no price negotiation, text me, call me, etc. respect that request if you answer their ad.
* Talk about making offers and agreeing on a price
  + Most people will often accept 10-20% less than their ad posts. Try to avoid offer too little because sellers can become insulted and refuse to even make a counter offer.
  + Making an offer is not a contractual obligation through Craigslist. Make multiple offers to multiple people to increase your chances of getting an item at your desired price.
* Talk about the risks involved when making a transaction on Craigslist
  + Meet at a safe location such as police station, coffee shop, restaurant, etc. during the day if possible. Many police stations now have Craigslist meeting areas. Utilize them they are the safest place to meet.
  + To increase safety, bring someone with you
  + Make sure to examine the item and test it before you pay. If the item is expensive, such as a car, make sure to get a bill of sale or receipt.
  + Finally explain that if at any time during the transaction you feel uncomfortable or have a bad feeling end the transaction. Craigslist has no contractual obligation, so if no money has changed hands you can walk away at any time.
  + Craigslist is not like eBay. It does not have any buyer protection what so ever you must protect yourself.

***How to avoid Scams (7.5 mins.)***

* Talk about some warning signs that you are dealing with a scammer
  + To avoid risk, make sure to always deal in cash or trade. **Never** send a money order, Paypal, etc.
  + If the seller starts making demands or threats end contact
  + Scammer can have US area codes so if be warry about area codes from different states. You can always Google the area code to see where it is from. If that number is not from IL do not talk to them.
  + Scammers are often from Africa or Eastern Europe and have bad grammar and spelling.
  + If the seller asks for a payment in advance through PayPal, check, Money transfer, etc. it is a scam.
  + Never give away personal information to a seller besides your email and phone number.
  + Rule of thumb: if you feel even a little bit nervous end contact and try another ad.

***How to create an account (7.5 mins.)***

* Explain the step by step process needed to create an account on Craigslist
  + Click on **my account** from the home page
  + Type in your email address and click **create an account**
  + Access your email to confirm your email address with Craigslist by clicking on the given link
  + Create a password. Remind the class the rules of passwords are to have 8 characters or more, use uppercase, numbers, and symbols. **Never** use a password for Craigslist you have used elsewhere.
  + Go over the different tabs on the Account and explain what they are for Note: If possible demonstrate this through the website instead of the power point.
  + Postings: Shows you all present and past ads. This allows you to quickly end, edit, or repost ads
  + Drafts: This is where you will find all of your saved ad drafts
  + Searches: This is where you will find and saved searches for quicker access to popular items you look up
  + Settings: Allows you to modify account settings
  + Billing: This will only be used if you are posting job ads. Otherwise you will never exchange money with Craigslist and can ignore this section.
* Explain the advantages of creating an optional account on Craigslist
  + Explain that creating an account with Craigslist is completely voluntary unless you are posting job ads.
    - Posting job ads have a cost so you need to create an account and set up a payment method.
  + Creating an account allows you to save ad drafts, watch and modify current ads, repost expired ads, and save searches.

***Creating a classified Ad (10 mins.)*** Note: If possible demonstrate this through the website instead of the power point.

* Show step by step how to create an ad on Craigslist
  + Go to the main page and click on **post to classifieds** in the top left corner of the site
  + Choose the type of ad you would like to list
  + Choose an item type to sell
  + Choose the location of your item (For Elgin choose Northwest suburbs)
  + Fill out the form
* Next a form will appear fill it out as best as possible
  + Fill out as much information as have about the item
  + Fill out the item description
    - Add as much detail as possible about the item
    - Never put contact or personal information in the description Only put that in the contact info section
* All information in the contact info will only appear when a buyer clicks on the **reply** button
* You can upload up to 24 pictures
  + When taking pictures use the best camera available to you
  + If possible, put the item on a white cloth or other neutral background
  + Have good lighting
  + Take pictures of the item from all different angles
  + Take pictures of damage or any other distinguishing features such as labels, manufacturer tag, etc.

***Policies and Resources (7.5 mins.)***

* Talk about the most import policies and rules when using Craigslist
* Explain how you can access all of Craigslist’s policies and resources on their website Note: If possible demonstrate this through the website instead of the power point.

***Questions/Demo (10-15 mins.)***

* Thank the class for coming and take questions.
* If people would like help setting up accounts or would like you to go over something again do so if time allows.
* Encourage the class to back for other classes the library offers
* Encourage the class to contact you for a one on one librarian appointment or ask you questions if needed.