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Foreword

It's easy to see how International drug dealers make their money. A kilo of cocaine costs about £350 when it leaves Columbia. But by the time it re-appears on the streets of a major city like London, the value has soared to over £50,000 a kilo. My calculator won't quite stretch to working out what percentage increase that is - but it's a lot!

Now there are special reasons for such a massive mark-up. The product is illegal for one thing. It has to pass through many hands to get to the end user, and every one of them runs the risk of getting locked up for a very long time if they get caught, or shot by rival dealers. They want a big return to compensate for that risk. But that's only part of the story.

You see what really ramps up the price is that supply is limited, and you simply can't manufacture cocaine in the UK. Cocaine is still illegal in Columbia, but it's relatively cheap. Why? Because there's plenty of it, and it's easy to make some more. So there's a huge profit in moving cocaine from central America into the UK – **from one market where it's plentiful and cheap, to another where it's scarce and expensive**. Not that I'm suggesting you get involved for all sorts of very obvious reasons!

But what if there was a way to cash in on the different values of products in separate markets, but without running the risk of spending the rest of your days in a cell? Just like the drug traffickers do, but without the risk. Well I want to tell you that there is. I want to tell you how absolutely *anyone* can do this. It's not rocket science. It's just a very simple system for taking advantage of different prices in different markets. And we're talking BIG differences in prices.

For example, you can order something in the post from America (over the internet or by phone) for £98 and sell it in London for over £1,000. Maybe more. You can order a similar item from Russia for \$99 that sells in the UK for £1,500. With opportunities like this, why would anyone risk their liberty selling illegal stuff?

Beats me.

All you need to cash in on these opportunities - and there are lots of them – is a little insider information. And that's what you will find within the pages of this manual. As you read what follows, want you to bear something very important in mind...

I use the Narconomics System on just two or three very specific markets, and the manual features examples from those markets very heavily. You could certainly follow my footsteps in those markets (they're very lucrative) or you could apply exactly the same principles elsewhere. I give you some further examples in the manual, and you'll find a further list of 'Narconomic compatible' markets in the appendix. Once you fully understand the principles underlying this, you really will be spoilt for choice.

So let's get started. I know you're going to have great fun and make a pile of money with this.

Introduction

If you've travelled overseas you're probably well aware of the foreign exchange market. When you converted your British Pounds into euros, dollars or yen you may have noticed differences in the buying power of your currency.

For instance, the pound is currently strong against the dollar, less so against the Euro, consequently a holiday in Spain this year would have set you back more than you'd have liked, whereas my trip to the US in June gave me more spending power than usual, allowing me even greater profit margins from my numerous "Narconomic" purchases.

Don't worry Narconomics isn't about trading in international currencies, and it most definitely isn't about dealing in illegal substances, although it does, however, draw on some of the more pertinent principles of both industries, the main difference being, Narconomics isn't anywhere near as complicated or risky! Oh, and you don't have to travel to the US or anywhere else for that matter, you can conduct your business at the end of a computer or telephone.

So What is Narconomics?

Well, put simply it's a system that takes advantage of price differentials, that is to say the value of an item (say an old book or a photograph) is worth more in one country than it is in another.

These items are called *Tangible Collectible Assets, or TCA's*.

It's also a system that identifies the need or desire in individual people to own something - "*I must have that painting!*" - not unlike an addiction.

I'm not talking about import and export here, purchasing cheap stuff from the Far East to sell on market stalls and boot sales in the UK. *Tangible Collectible Assets* are perishable commodities, usually paper, such as letters, photographs, autographs and postcards that can cost peanuts from one source but can change hands for hundreds, even thousands of pounds with another.

The trick is to identify those desirable *Tangible Collectible Assets*, purchase them for next to nothing, and sell them on again at a substantial profit.

And it isn't just internationally, trading between countries, the great thing about Narconomics is that it works regionally too, you could, for instance, purchase an item from one neighbour to sell to another.

Here's a simple analogy. In an auction room full of West Ham and Newcastle football supporters, which set of fans would most likely purchase a Lot comprising an old signed photo of Bobby Moore? Well, it would probably be split right down the middle because Bobby Moore is a national hero, a gentleman who epitomized everything that was good about sport - the only Englishman ever to lift the World Cup.

But if signed photo of Alan Shearer came up for sale in the same auction, how many West Ham fans would likely bid? Probably none. Shearer was undoubtedly a great footballer, but he's a hero on Tyneside, not in Britain and certainly not in East London.

In our example, a typical Narconomic deal for a Hammer's fan would be finding Alan Shearer's signed photo in a junk shop in East London, then selling it on for a profit in an auction room in Newcastle, or even to a Geordie mate at work! Ok, we're not talking the sort of profits that would make you faint, Shearer's only worth about £20-40 but you get the point.

But the *perfect* Narconomic sale was sourcing Bobby Moore's signature in the US, where relatively few people know him, and selling it on for a fortune through Bonham's or Frasers, which is just exactly what I did. Or rather, what I partially did. I certainly purchased a piece from a US seller paying a little over \$200 (£110) but, being an Iron's fan – and idolizing the great man and everything he stood for - I couldn't bring myself to sell it. I did get it valued though, and should I ever put it up for sale can expect to get around £500-£700. As it stands that's already around a 600% profit and since Bobby's signature is consistently yielding around 22% per annum it's a very good investment indeed.

Incidentally, if England *should* ever win the World Cup again (no, don't laugh, this is serious) memorabilia relating to the captain of the team won't necessarily soar in price. Celebrity doesn't always correlate with value. Today's "stars", for the most part, don't carry the weight of their predecessors. But then the age of a piece doesn't guarantee value either, there are other considerations including rarity, condition and the medium used - there is clearly a difference between a handwritten document and a scrap of paper!

One very important factor though is this, although valuation based on sentimental value doesn't enhance the *true* value of an item in investment circles, Narconomic sales *feed* on sentiment! No collectible item is *ever* bought at its manufacturing cost, but at whatever price someone is willing to pay for it. I'm sure you'll have heard of crazy bidding frenzies in the auction houses, when two or more bidders go against each other to own a piece of history or art or whatever that they've set their hearts on. Good sense is often left at home, and sentiment can push up the "value" of an item tenfold.

Take me and Bobby Moore or Billy Bonds and Clyde Best for that matter, basically any of the West Ham lads from the sixties and seventies, the golden years of football in my eyes, when it was a walk down to the ground with the old man, a rattle and a rosette and a few pennies to get in, none of the corporate greed, sponsorship deals and product placement that's around nowadays. More innocent times! Okay, maybe I'm looking at it through rose tinted specs but that's the point. The good news is that Narconomic deals work in any climate at any time it's just that sentiment helps profits go through the roof.

I'd like to reassure you at this point and tell you that absolutely *anyone* can do what I do. It's not rocket science—even my fifteen year old son has got in on the action! It's just a very simple system for taking advantage of different prices in different markets. And we're talking BIG differences in prices.

And don't worry, I will tell you exactly what you should be sourcing, where you can find these goods, and more importantly, where you can sell them on again for huge profits.

A Great Investment Too!

What I wasn't aware of when I started this lark is that serious investors have turned to the Tangible Collectible Assets market to secure their future financial security. Fuelled by constant positive media interest and increased awareness from the investment community, demand for high quality TCA's is booming.

That's not to say these investor's are busy sourcing the items themselves, finding suppliers and cheap deals, no, they're paying the full whack! They're also my typical customers. They'll be your customers too. The more the merrier I say! Because when supply is restricted and demand is high, *values go crazy*.

As traditional investment opportunities such as stocks and shares continue to flounder, it's easy to see why investing in *Tangible Collectible Assets* is such a growth market. Perishable commodities are reliable because of diminishing supplies, and they do well financially because they're underpinned by huge worldwide collector bases. So while demand increases and supplies diminish - together with natural loss through damage or destruction - there is a consistent increase in prices of items in good condition.

Another reason is diversification. We live in a world where terrorist attacks can occur at any time and place, where political tension threatens to disrupt normal trade relationships. Financial institutions are going down the tubes. Economic uncertainty seems to be a way of life. There are few sure bets in the global markets nowadays.

Investments in TCA's, however, have historically been broadly unaffected by political and economic vagaries. Just think of all the treasures that are smuggled out of bombed-out cities, when businesses and property are in ruins.

According to the international Institute of Trading Mastery, during the last inflationary period in the 1970s, the best investment was collectible material. The fundamental market forces of supply and demand suggest that perishable commodity prices will continue to rise.

Another advantage, relating to the UK market, is that a large percentage of collectors are in the 50-60 year age group, the only growth consumer market according to the UK Government Actuary Department, due to their higher disposable income.

With official British Government figures showing an expected 4 million extra over 50's by 2018 in the UK alone and 16 million by 2040, the next 25 years look set for a boom period for TCA's. This increased interest for a limited supply product can only have positive effect on prices.

And it's not just in the UK: the trend is worldwide. We are also seeing the emergence of new economies, with wealth on a staggering scale, especially in Russia, China, India and Brazil. New investors in these countries are looking to buy the items of their country that invariably have been sold abroad in the past as they appreciate their national heritage.

So if you decide to hang on to your purchases instead of immediately selling them on again, you'll be making very sound investments. Over time you could expect to see massive yearly yields, I'm talking several hundred, sometimes thousands per cent above what you would

typically expect from building societies, property, stocks and shares.

I'll talk more about investments later, but whichever way you look at it, whether you decide to cash in immediately on your purchases or hang onto them for even greater profits, you can't lose.

As a taster here's a look at a few of the top earners, in this case signed photographs of legendary figures from Fraser's 100 Index as of October 2008. I'll show you where you can purchase many of these items at a fraction of the price, an original Neil Armstrong for instance at around £800, Muhammad Ali for £150, Laurel and Hardy for £300.

Name	1997	2014	%Growth
John Lennon	£125	£4,950	3860%
Fidel Castro	£300	£3,500	1066%
Neil Armstrong	£475	£4,250	794%
Laurel & Hardy	£400	£3,500	775%
Pele	£100	£950	850%
Muhammad Ali	£179	£1,750	877%
Dad's Army	£250	£1600	540%
The Beatles	£575	£8,800	1430%

How It All Began

As I mentioned previously, Narconomics borrows from some of the underlying principles of the Forex market, that is, trading in currencies. It also utilises financial arbitrage principles too, in that arbitrage also takes advantage of a price differential between two or more markets. The thing to remember is that arbitrage isn't about purchasing items for resale at a later date—the whole point is that the transaction must occur simultaneously, or as soon as possible. This is really only feasible when the transactions are done electronically.

Fortunately you don't need to know anything about the highly complex world of Forex or arbitrage. Narconomics is fundamentally different in that it isn't speculative or high risk. It isn't associated with trading in finances such as bonds, stocks, currencies, derivatives and securities etc because you already know the respective values of the items *before you trade*.

Narconomics is only applied to more familiar everyday items, simple tradable commodities, usually paper based, objects that are easy to handle, easy to post and easy to sell, anything really, so long as the following conditions are met:

- **That the item you're purchasing does not trade for the same price in all markets.**
- **There is a burning need or desire for someone to own the piece.**

Putting it simply, there's a hungry crowd of buyers and a price differential which allows you to make a profit.

Generally the same asset in a single market sells for a similar price at every outlet. For instance, a Britney Spears CD bought from HMV in Birmingham will cost much the same as, say, Zavvi in London.

Having said that even in this single market it is possible to purchase goods from cheaper sources. FOPP, the now defunct (with the exception of a couple of shops) record store used to sell its books, DVDs and CDs for less than any of its competitors. Theoretically it would have been possible for HMV to buy up FOPP's stock over the counter and sell it for a profit in their own shops were it not for the small matter of transport and storage costs in addition to other factors.

But it is possible, more than possible, to source everyday goods at a *significantly* lower price and sell them on again for substantial returns, not just in a single market, but in multiple markets too. You just have to know where to look, and what to look for.

The truth is, I got into this by accident. I'm just an ordinary bloke who kind of stumbled onto it.

700% profit – I want some of that!

A couple of years ago I was sitting on the London tube. I'd hooked up with an old pal in Town for a couple of beers and was making my way back East. To be honest I don't use the tube that often as it makes me nervous, always has, but especially since the bombings.

I know the probability of being blown to bits is remote but it's impossible not to feel a bit apprehensive nowadays, particularly in crowded confined places, and it seems everyone's carrying a bloody rucksack!

Anyway, I overheard these two guys talking. They were laughing a bit hysterically, like they couldn't believe their luck, which is what drew my attention in the first place, but the long and the short of it was they'd bought these six items from the United States, had them flown over, and sold them for **seven-times** their cost. They were laughing all the way to bank, actually they were laughing all the way to Liverpool Street where they got off, but it got me thinking.

What really made me take note was a particular name they'd mentioned, *Neil Alden Armstrong* – the first man to walk on the moon, and like Bobby Moore, another hero of mine.

I've been nuts about space ever since I was a little boy. If you were born in the late fifties, early sixties it was difficult not to be. Everything seemed to be about space even my Action Man had a space suit, and, much to my pride, an Apollo 11 rocket made by my old man from a couple of Fairy Liquid bottles! I can still see me playing with it "Neil" riding that rocket *on the outside*, straddling it like John Wayne. What was ingenious about it was my Dad had even cobbled together the command module, the cone shaped bit on the end, which was detachable. Instead of an Eagle (the Apollo 11 emblem), I had West Ham's club crest, the castle and crossed hammers, painted on the side!



I've since seen the command module in the science museum, London and you know what, it's an absolute piece of junk! Truth is, you would be mad go to the shops in it, let alone fly half a million miles to the moon and back! The average smartphone contains up to 100 times more computing power and one MILLION times the computer memory! In fact, when Apollo 11 was about to land on the moon the computer crashed because it couldn't handle running two programs simultaneously. Armstrong had to land the craft manually!

I only mention this because I don't think it harms to have an interest in what you're purchasing. Actually I think it's hugely beneficial, nothing beats enthusiasm, it's probably one of the main reasons I took the plunge in the first place. If those two guys were talking about, I don't know, tennis champions, I probably wouldn't have batted an eyelid. But when I heard them mention Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins I took note, literally, jotting down company names on the back of my hand. At that moment, if I'm absolutely honest, I was as determined to own an exciting piece of history as I was to make a pot of money. I should just quickly add you don't *have* to have an interest in what you're buying. I've since bought stuff that doesn't mean anything to me at all other than making a profit.

When I got home I immediately went online checking out some the names they'd mentioned and within moments I could see what they were getting at – an absolutely huge discrepancy in the market!

“That can't be right I thought!”

What some investors were buying in London for £1,600 (It's around £3,600 now) I could buy from the United States for *less than a thousand pounds*. And I still can!

Here's a page from www.rrauctions.com – as of September 2014 – it's in the “Past Auction” section listed under Neil Armstrong. The prices to the right are what the photographs/prints sold for. Don't forget to factor in the exchange rate which is, as of September 2014, at £1 = \$1.63. So, for example, the first three signatures sold for £2,248, £911 and £500 respectively. Incidentally, SP stands for signed photo. The first item cost the most because it is “Undedicated”, of which more later.

RR AUCTION (800) 937-3880

Session I bidding begins at 11:00 AM ET

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Current Auction
 Bidding is Closed

Raleigh DeGeer Amyx

Presidents (307)
 White House China (19)
 Manuscripts and Autographs (13)
 The Olympics (73)
 Sports (8)
 All Auction Items (420)

Remarkable Rarity

Presidents (10)
 Notables (22)
 Military (9)
 Space & Aviation (12)
 Literature (5)
 Art (3)
 Classic Music (2)
 Modern Music (4)
 Classic Entertainment (7)
 Sports (5)
 All Auction Items (79)

Upcoming Auctions

9/17-18 DeGeer Amyx
 9/18 Remarkable Rarity

Past Auction Results (we are no longer accepting bids on these items)

You Searched/Browsed for: **Neil Armstrong**
 Showing: items 1 to 50 of 580 items found.
 Sort: [by item number](#) | [lowest prices first](#) | [by format](#) | [highest prices first](#) | [alphabetically](#)

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | Next

Sold In Auction	Item	Price
436 (Sep 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- SP	\$3,665.20
436 (Sep 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- TLS	\$1,485.93
436 (Sep 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- SP	\$815.85
436 (Sep 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- Signature	\$1,345.05
436 (Sep 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- FDC	\$3,660.30
436 (Sep 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- Signature	\$1,594.95
434 (Aug 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- Lithograph	\$2,266.25
434 (Aug 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- Signature	\$2,131.50
432 (Jul 2014)	Neil Armstrong and X-15 Pilots -- SP	\$5,360.60
432 (Jul 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- Signature	\$1,037.58
432 (Jul 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- SP	\$2,230.73
432 (Jul 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- Signature	\$1,383.03
432 (Jul 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- SP	\$1,141.70
432 (Jul 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- SP	\$1,407.53
432 (Jul 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- Stamp sheet	\$1,407.53
432 (Jul 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- SP	\$2,695.00
432 (Jul 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- Lithograph	\$1,842.40
430 (Jun 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- SP	\$1,737.05
430 (Jun 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- Signature	\$1,037.58
429 (May 2014)	Neil Armstrong and X-15 Pilots --	\$2,271.15
429 (May 2014)	Neil Armstrong and Early Astronauts -- Silver certificate	\$1,842.40
429 (May 2014)	Neil Armstrong -- SP	\$19,067.13

I couldn't quite believe what I was looking at, even allowing for a favourable interest rate. Was the American merchandise that I could buy cheaply facsimiles, copies? Why was there such a big discrepancy in the market? Who the hell was spending over three grand on something that costs seven times less than that?

And it wasn't just the Apollo 11 astronauts, the other nine, moonwalkers, with the exception of John Young, commanded huge discrepancies too. Here's an up to date list of moonwalker values, what you can buy them for from reputable sources in the US and what investors are paying in London.

Apollo Astronauts

Name	US Price	UK Price	Profit %
Neil Armstrong	£475	£4,250	794%
Buzz Aldrin	£55	£950	1727%
Pete Conrad,	£75	£295	367%
Alan Bean,	£44	£225	511%
Alan Shepherd,	£120	£475	395%
Ed Mitchell,	£26	£225	865%
James Irwin,	£73	£950	1300%
Dave Scott,	£84	£225	267%
John Young,	£300	£450	50%
Charlie Duke,	£33	£200	606%
Gene Cernan	£56	£225	401%
Harrison Schmidt	£45	£475	1055%

The Mercury Seven Astronauts – the first seven astronauts chosen to fly into space - also revealed some huge discrepancies

Mercury Astronauts

Name	US Price	UK Price	Profit %
Scott Carpenter	£41	£295	951%
Gordon Cooper	£42	£295	702%
John Glenn	£31	£495	1596%
*Gus Grissom	£1235	£3500	283%
Wally Schirra	£37	£250	675%
Alan Shepherd	£120	£475	365%
Deke Slayton	£45	£295	655%

*Gus Grissom's signature is worth considerably more than the others Mercury Astronauts because he died in a fire during a training exercise for Apollo 1 in 1967, consequently his signature is rarer.

Even some of the original test pilots, those first heroic pioneers who knowingly volunteered to enter an industry whose chances of survival were just 50-50, are traded.

Incidentally, in 1952 alone, **sixty-two test pilots died in just thirty-six weeks**, an astonishing ratio of two-pilots a week. No wonder these guys are held in such high esteem, and why there's a demand among investors, but it still didn't explain the disparity in the market.

I decided to sleep on it, and although I had a fitful night (the missus grunted her disapproval) I felt a childish excitement. I don't know whether it was the thought of making an easy profit or getting my hands on something as unique as Neil Armstrong's autograph – *the first human being in the entire history of our planet to walk on another world* – but I made a pact with myself: If I could prove that the American merchandise was genuine then I'd take the plunge. I should point out I didn't have money to throw around back then. £700 is *still* a lot to pay for *anyone's* signature.

The next day I was back on my computer. I checked out the sites again and everything still seemed genuine. Okay, I thought, I wasn't drunk last night, but I still wanted more reassurance. So I checked out some of the astronauts themselves, or rather visited their websites, and while it's possible to deal directly with Ed Mitchell, Buzz Aldrin states that he is under contract with several dealers and to contact them. So I did just that, researching each one thoroughly. Any reputable company dealing in ephemera and historical documents should be backed with lifetime guarantees. That is to say, if at anytime you doubt that your items are anything other than genuine the company will take it back off you with a full refund no questions asked!

Can't get fairer than that, I thought.

Here's a typical terms and conditions packed with useful information and all the assurances you need.

Terms & Conditions

Overview

If you're seeking either vintage or modern day collectables associated with the early days of the manned space program, this is the place to be. We are one of the largest space memorabilia websites in the world today. Our autographed material is authentically hand signed and often offered with unique inscriptions. In addition we offer a huge variety of unsigned memorabilia, so please feel free to browse and give us a shout if there's anything we can do to help!

Outstanding value, and your complete satisfaction are our highest priorities. That combined with our superb "bullet-proof" packaging/shipping worldwide and unparalleled customer service will make you want to visit us again and again.

We are a member in good standing of the Universal Autograph Collectors Club (U.A.C.C.). Why not visit www.uacc.org to learn more about this fine organization that devotes itself to furthering the hobby of autograph collecting.

We also co-produce a series of Space themed autograph shows, regarded worldwide as events against which all others are measured. To that end, our established connections to astronauts and other key players in the manned space program is unparalleled. This means that you can buy with confidence knowing that a great percentage of our material comes directly from the signer, though special arrangement.

Our Autographs

All autographs offered for sale are authentically hand signed by the individual whose signature appears. Most of the autographs offered are obtained either in person or through special arrangement between us and the individual signer. In addition we will frequently purchase collections and also accept consignment items, although we are very selective. When it comes to authenticity, our customers never have a worry as our return policy is about as flexible as you'll find anywhere. No one provides better customer care than us...we guarantee it!!

Space Photography

There are of course instances where we are not at all involved in the production of the photos used for certain autographs. Signers will sometimes provide their own images and sometimes an autographed photo will be vintage in nature.

We are however, directly responsible for the photos provided to the Astronauts who sign/inscribe for us. These photos and other space related images are custom printed under our own supervision. We currently use high quality Agfa Professional. All prints measure 8x10 and come with a satin finish, unless specified otherwise. All images are reproduced from negatives provided courtesy of NASA. They are NOT computer generated laser or inkjet prints, NOT produced on copy machines, or otherwise inferior quality prints. We receive great feedback on the high quality of our space images and it's no accident.

Certificate of Authenticity

Unfortunately most dealers and collectors in the know realize that a COA is not necessarily a guarantee that your item is the real thing. With today's technology, just about anyone can easily produce a professional looking COA with a computer, a printer, and some fancy paper. Therefore don't rely solely upon the COA to ensure that your item is authentic. The very best way to be protected against fraud or from simply the honest mistakes that even the most ethical of dealers can sometimes make, is to become an educated buyer.

To that end, we suggest the following:

Do some homework and learn about the type of item you're interested in purchasing.

Find a few dealers with excellent reputations and try to stick with them as much as possible.

Don't hesitate to ask for references and most of all, ask lots of questions. Be wary of any dealer whose answers to your questions are vague or who appear to be withholding information. Also be wary of any dealer who is unwilling to give you his/her telephone number so that they can be easily contacted.

Ask about the dealer's return policy. Make sure that there is one, that it's in writing and that it allows you to return your purchase for a full and prompt refund should you not be satisfied or have question regarding an item's authenticity. Remember this: "IF A DEAL SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, IT PROBABLY IS."

Payment

We accept personal checks, money orders, Visa/Master Card/or Discover and payment through Paypal or Bidpay.

Shipping

We generally use USPS Priority Mail with delivery confirmation (within the U.S.) and USPS Global Priority or International Air Parcel Post (small package rates) for shipments to international locations.

Insurance is offered and recommended at the buyers expense for actual cost. We cannot be held responsible for uninsured items that are lost or damaged during shipping.

Returns Policy

We have a most liberal return policy because we want you to buy with total confidence. Very simply...any item can be returned for a full and prompt refund within 14 days of receipt if in its original condition. This return policy is extended without time limitation for any autographed item should it's authenticity ever be questioned as long as in it's original condition. Customer satisfaction is our top priority.

Contact

I can be contacted anytime. Feel free to write, email or phone. Look out Contact details on this site.

Sound advice, lot's of great information there, and we'll look at some of the points in greater detail later.

When a company is as open as this it gladdens the heart. Whatever type of *TCA* you're on the look out for it's always wise to do as much research as one can. Find out everything there is to know about what you're buying and whom you're buying from.

But I still wanted more answers and so emailed each of the companies a few pertinent questions. Here's one of my emails word for word.

Hi there

I'm interested in purchasing the 10X8 vintage NASA litho of Neil Armstrong.

Are you absolutely sure the signature is genuine, and how come there is such a difference in price compared to similar items sold elsewhere? Do your photos come with any provenance?

If you have no objection I'd like to get the signature verified here in the UK. Your returns policy states that if at any time doubt is raised over the signature authenticity you will take it back with a full refund, can you reassure me that this is the case.

Yours sincerely

Martin

Every company got back to me, of course they did, they wanted my business but they were all extremely forthcoming with their answers. I love dealing with Americans, customer service is paramount and any good company will give you all the information you need, and then some!

What I managed to glean from them was an explanation regarding the disparity in the international market, and it turned out it wasn't just internationally.

Here's the scoop...

Basically two markets exist side by side in the collectibles industry. The one that is geared towards hobbyists, where dealers and suppliers recognize that funds are limited and consequently set their estimates and reserves to match the budgets of collectors, thus ensuring a steady and reliable income. And the swanky metropolitan galleries and salerooms that limit their sales to just a handful a year, where the lots offered are priced without any regard to market values. The audiences are inevitably made up of wealthy investors and, as such, prices achieved on these lots far exceeds market value.

And it's not just the swanky salerooms cashing in, brokers also represent investors, and since they get a healthy commission is it any wonder they're encouraging their clients to part with daft amounts of money.

To many collectors, the approach is puzzling and laughable. "Surely these investors had

become wealthy by doing their research and so they were bound to discover that similar items were being sold elsewhere for much less.”

Not a bit of it!

At a recent New York auction prices went through the roof.



For example an Apollo 11 crew-autographed photograph (Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins), estimated at \$2,500-\$3,500, closed at \$10,000, that’s about £6,000. Whereas a very similar item available from various reliable sources could be purchased for between \$1,300-\$3,000. (£800-£1,840).

Hobbyists and collectors have learned to live with the discrepancies. And reputable dealers, who are caught in the middle, are equally confused. On the one hand they have a steady stream of loyal, regular customers who are parting with their hard earned cash week in-week out and keeping the industry afloat, while on the other, there’s the opportunity for instant riches from Champagne-swilling investors with more money than sense. But it seems they know where their bread is buttered, loyalty runs deep within the space collectibles industry, for the time being at any rate.

But that doesn’t mean you or I can’t cash in! After all, it’s no secret that astronauts signatures are available to everyone at an affordable price. But if some lazy investors can’t be bothered to do even the tiniest amount of research and are willing to pay more than the going rate then who are we to argue?

It might surprise you to learn that if a rich person wants something, they’re not THAT critical on price.

And I should add, it’s not just astronautica where there are huge discrepancies – it’s the same throughout the historical documents and signatures market. From politicians to

notable and notorious characters, sport stars to entertainers, you'll be amazed at the price differences.

Here are a few examples from rrauction.com. Winning bid prices are based on the exchange rate at the time of purchase.

Name	Winning Bid	Fraser's 100 Index	Differential (profit)
Ali, Muhammad	£160	£950	600%
Astaire, Fred & Rogers, Ginger	£180	£1,950	1100%
Callas, Maria	£390	£1700	450%
Chaplin, Charlie	£550	£3750	660%
Churchill, Winston	£1700	£6900	400%
Dickens, Charles	£700	£3950	550%
Disney, Walt	£900	£3900	430%
Hitchcock, Alfred	£400	£2500	600%
Lugosi, Bella	£180	£2250	1250%
Princess Diana	£1200	£8500	700%
Silvers, Phil	£70	£790	1100%
Warhol, Andy	£350	£1900	550%

Or how about sporting memorabilia! Here are several examples from Mullocks Auctions. (www.mullocksauctions.co.uk) Mullock's are based in Shropshire, UK and hold monthly live and online sales.

Name	Winning Bid	Fraser's Price	Differential (profit)
Muhammad Ali – signed photo	£155	£955	600%
GB Olympic Rowing Team. Signed Print. Steve Redgrave, Matthew Pinsent, James Cracknell, Tim Foster	£40	£950	2400%
Gordon Banks – signed goalkeepers shirt	£20	£175	900%

As you can see some astonishing differentials in price!

By the way, you don't half get some crazy lots at the posher sales, especially the space sales! How about your very own spaceship, or rather a complete Soyuz re-entry capsule, only the second manned vehicle ever to be offered at public auction? Imagine the look on the bidders faces when that got wheeled in! Still, it failed to attract a single bid – can't think why at a paltry £750,000.

Taking the Plunge

I decided it was time to give it a whirl. Having said that, I still felt a bit nervous parting with a few hundred quid and thought it best not to tell the missus. She'd been going on about a new kitchen for months and if she'd have thought I was spending our hard earned savings on a punt she'd have lynched me. But even though I felt cautious (I am by nature) I was absolutely convinced what I was doing would turn out for the best.

Then I had a thought. Before I part with any money, let's see if I can get a potential buyer first. So I called Bonham's in London and had a quick chat with a lady in the aeronautica department. I told her I had a collection of astronaut signatures – notably the Apollo 11 guys - and was considering putting them up for sale and what could I expect to get for them. She coolly told me that, if genuine, I could expect to get between £4000-£7000.

Wow! That's it, I thought. Let's do it!

I chose three items from two companies purchasing Neil Armstrong for £740, Michael Collins for £160, and Buzz Aldrin for £55.

Total outlay including shipping charges £955.

No going back now I thought, but whatever happens I now own a commodity of exceptional historical interest and value: *The first three human beings to set foot on another world and return safely back to Earth*. Available from Fraser's London, at the time, for £7,500! Available from them now at over £10,000!

I realize £700 quid for a single photo sounds a lot, but you don't have to start so big, there are many smaller purchases out there offering similar great returns.

For example, what would cost you \$40-\$60 (£20-£30) from the US you could expect to sell in the UK for at least £150. One name that springs to mind, Ed Mitchell, trades for around \$69 (£38) (which you can purchase online) but sells for £295 (\$530) in London.

Even allowing for shipping charges that's still a huge difference in market values, and over a 700% profit! I sell Mitchell for £150, that's a 50% discount, citing the Fraser's price as the true market value. I'm still making almost 400% profit and my buyers think they're getting a great deal, which they are on the face of it, so everyone's happy.

Or look at the GB Rowing team in the table above! For a modest outlay of just £40 the lucky purchaser, it wasn't me unfortunately, is looking at least a 1000% profit, possibly even more.

Money Makes Money

You've no doubt heard of the expression "*Money makes money*" well Narconomics is no different, and the more you are willing to invest the more you will likely earn. The very best items, or rather the *most* collectible, inevitably cost more but they can be sold on very quickly indeed.

Although I'll occasionally put an Armstrong into auction I seldom advertise one to the general masses because I'd be inundated with potential buyers and a crazy bidding war. "*Are you insane?*" I hear you screaming! "*Think of all that profit!*" Well yes, that's true enough, but I also like the quite life.

Over the last couple of years I've managed to assemble a small client base of, at any one time, around ten to twenty investors. Yes, some have more money than sense – some have it falling out of their ears - but I'm not in the business of ripping people off.

In my experience whatever you do in life it's best to do it properly, honestly and fairly, that way nothing comes back to haunt you. And it's much easier in the long run, you're pretty much putting in the same effort whether you're cutting corners or not – cutting corners invariably creates additional problems – so do it the right way.

I don't have any problem that I'm making on average of 500% profit on each sale, my investors are still getting a great deal, and if they decided to put their collections onto the open market they would still make a healthy return.

They see me as an agent representing their interests, and they trust me because I know what I'm doing. Knowledge is power, I've done the research, made the phone calls, read the books, done the work. Yes, they could just as easily buy the same items themselves

from the very people I buy from, but they either haven't thought to or they've chosen not to. It's the way the world works. If I want a new carpet laid I get someone in. I could do it myself but I've better things to do with my time.

I work along similar lines as the dealer. *Don't bite the hand that feeds you.* It's important to me to create an atmosphere of trust, and that my clients feel they are getting great value for money, that way they keep coming back, and there's always somebody who wants to buy an Armstrong, which is why I don't need to advertise.

Neil Armstrong



On the subject of Armstrong, it's not just that he's the first man on the moon that makes him the most collectible person on the planet. Armstrong stopped signing autographs almost 18 years ago because he resented the commercialization, and many instances, exploitation of his name. Before he died on August 25th 2012, Armstrong was known to be a very private person and rarely gave interviews. He downplayed his contribution to history and typically credited the thousands of others that made landing on the moon possible.

One of the main reasons for stopping was that certain dealers known as "accumulator's" got wind that Armstrong would reply through the mail with up to thirty signed autographs when a teacher requested them for his class. Consequently these "accumulators" began faking educational affiliations or would pay or invent children!

In another instance the greeting card company Hallmark, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the moon landings, printed a card with a picture of an astronaut with a recording of Armstrong uttering his famous words "*That's one small step for man...one giant leap for mankind*" without his, or NASA's permission. Armstrong consequently sued Hallmark for substantial damages donating the settlement to his former alma mater Purdue University.

Autopens

The other main bone of contention for Armstrong, were the countless fake signatures that were flooding the market, especially the autopen signatures that were being passed off as original.

An autopen is a machine that replicates someone's signature. They're generally only used for small documents such as 8x10 photos, or letters. They came into being around 60 years ago where they were principally used by government agencies and institutions who had large volumes of "personalized" letters to send out. NASA introduced them with the arrival of the Mercury Seven astronauts when literally tens of thousands of individuals almost overnight requested autographs.

However, autopen signatures have many obvious flaws and are easy to spot. They are often done in "Sharpie", a thick pen, which attempts to hide the fact that the signature is of a consistent line-width from beginning to end (due to consistent pressure). The machines often vibrate when they are in use creating a very distinctive "shaky" signature. They also come to an abrupt halt frequently leaving a noticeable spot of ink at the ends of letters and words. **They're always the exactly same in that the length and height of each letter cannot be changed.** People of course don't write like that, it's impossible to write your name identically every time.

Don't be concerned, it's relatively easy spotting the fakes and autopens from the genuine article, and so long as you buy your items from reputable dealers (the one's listed in the back of this manual) you'll be fine.

No dealer will attempt to pass an autopen off as an original.

Just for the record if you see an Armstrong for sale at a price that's too good to be true then it most likely is too good to be true. Don't expect to pay less than £1,000 for a signed, dedicated Armstrong photo, and expect to pay three times that amount for an undedicated signature - that is to say where he just signs his name and no message.

I personally only buy the Armstrongs where he has made a dedication, something along the lines of:

*To Mr Boyer's Science Class.
With my best wishes.
Neil Armstrong*

There are several reasons for this, they're more affordable, harder to fake and, most importantly, autopens don't write dedications, they only write signatures.

Yes it's true some collectors only want an undedicated signature, but **since it's mostly the undedicated signatures that have been forged** they're the ones more likely to be faked. So the bottom line is, in my view, the more that is written the less likely it is to be faked. Finally, and most importantly, I think the disparity in values will change as time goes by, supply and demand will see to that. I suggest you only buy dedicated photos too.

Don't be put off by any of this, there's a good amount of genuine stuff out there – after all

Armstrong signed almost everything that came his way for the best part of 35 years!

But it's always wise to be prudent, even when you buy from the reputable guys. You'll be able to see an example of the items for sale online, copy those pictures onto your hard drive and compare them to the examples displayed on the numerous websites dedicated to collecting. Careful examination usually reveals slow pen speeds, shaky writing, improper scale, incorrect slants, and hesitation.

Probably the most famous and most commonly traded photo of Armstrong is the iconic picture of him standing in front of a backdrop of the moon (see page 19). All the Apollo astronauts were photographed in front of similar backdrops. Armstrong signed thousands of these 10X8's and studies have shown that he was quite meticulous in his signing habits in that he never wrote on the American flag.



He also quite deliberately avoided the oxygen and water supply outlets on his suit. That's not to say parts of his signature or dedications don't touch these areas but by and large they have clearly been avoided, a fact that was confirmed by his office.

Many forgers failed to notice this little idiosyncrasy which is good news for the savvy collector and amateur alike as it makes spotting forgeries - even extremely good fakes - that much easier.

Just to reiterate, you don't need to be unduly concerned about fakes or autopens as I've done the groundwork for you.

All the companies I recommend in this manual are reputable dealers with long outstanding histories. They all have their good names to protect. They will never knowingly sell you an item they believe to be anything other than genuine.

If at anytime you believe (or it's proven) that the item isn't genuine they will take it back, no questions asked. And for good measure, I've even listed several companies you should most definitely avoid.

Incidentally, although the majority of dealers I list in the directory sell Armstrong (Farthest

Reaches and Astronaut Archives for example) they don't always feature them on their websites. But don't let that concern you. Let them know that you're interested and they'll alert you as soon as one comes in. Alternatively, visit www.rrauction.com where there's always some superb examples and at very competitive prices. I only discovered rrauction.com earlier this year and it's an absolutely fabulous place to pick up a bargain!

This year alone they've sold over 50 Armstrong's! I was truly shocked when I found this site and could have kicked myself for not stumbling across it earlier. As I write this the September 2014 sale have six items for sale. And by the way, rrauction.com are a highly respected organisation and offer a lifetime guarantee on everything they sell which include presidents, artists, musicians, entertainers, sports stars notables and notorious personalities etc.

Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin



Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, on the other hand, the second man to walk on the moon, has made a career out of signing his name and is one of the most easily obtainable of all the astronauts.

Aldrin has contracts with several suppliers and you can pick up a 10X8, similar to the Armstrong suit/moon portrait for as little as \$100 (£50) depending on where you shop. Fraser's of London sell the same image for a whopping £975.

Aldrin attends many autograph fairs around the world and makes regular trips to the UK. He can usually be found at *Autographica* held annually at the Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, as can various other Gemini, Mercury and Apollo astronauts typically including James Lovell, Edgar Mitchell and Dave Scott among others. For £20 you can have your photograph taken professionally against proper backdrops and special props with these guys!

The great thing about these fairs is that not only do you get to meet and chat with well, *men from outa space*, you know absolutely categorically, one hundred percent, that the

signature is genuine! And get a photograph of yourself with whoever's signing it goes a long way proving that the picture is genuine.

Here, for your interest, is Buzz Aldrin's current price list!

SPACEFEST VI AUTOGRAPH FEES (Sat. only)

- Base fee \$600
- Large photos (Posters, Prints, 11"x14" or larger) \$700
- 3 Dimensional Items & Beta Cloth (Globes, Models) \$700
- Baseballs \$1500
- Beta cloth items (not flown) \$750
- Apollo 11 Crew Completion (w/Armstrong alone or with both Armstrong and Collins) \$1500
- Apollo 11 Crew Partial Completion (w/ Michael Collins) \$1000
- Books (not authored by Buzz Aldrin) \$600
- Books authored by Buzz Aldrin \$300

-
- Personalization free (with autograph purchase)
 - Mission or Date Inscription \$50 each
 - Additional Inscriptions (up to 10 words total) \$25/word

(Dr. Buzz Aldrin reserves the right to refuse to sign any items ie: First day covers, flown items, will not sign his name as "Edwin", will not resign items previously signed.)

Spacefest, held annually in the US, is another notable fair but unlike Autographica, which also features movie and TV stars, it is dedicated solely to all things space. In their 2009 event held in San Diego no less than six moonwalkers attended including Buzz Aldrin, Dave Scott, Gene Cernan, Alan Bean, Charlie Duke and Ed Mitchell. Not bad bearing in mind that three of the original 12 moonwalkers James Irwin, Peter Conrad and Alan Shepard were no longer with us, and Armstrong has also passed away!

The 2014 lineup included astronauts:

Buzz Aldrin
Gene Cernan
Alan Bean
Dave Scott
Edgar Mitchell
James McDivitt
Walt Cunningham
Richard Gordon

And six others! Let's face it, it's a terrific money maker for these people—and who can blame them?

Full details of Autographica, Spacefest and other specialist fairs can be found in the directory at the back of this book.

Michael Collins



Remember my rocket made from Fairy Liquid bottles and the detachable Command Module? Well, Mike Collins was the guy who flew the actual module while Aldrin and Armstrong frolicked on the lunar surface below.

Collins never walked on the moon and although not quite as desirable to investors as his two colleagues, he's an essential part of the Apollo 11 story.

He's not a prolific signer and so his signature is more costly than Aldrin's at around \$350 (£190), Fraser's sell it for around £975.

I hope you spotted something important there. Although Collins is less famous than Aldrin, the fact that Aldrin has signed tens of thousands of autographs, and Collins far fewer, makes Collins' autograph more valuable.

Collins also occasionally sells "personal effects" via Novaspace's Astro-Auction where you can pick up original watercolours and rare Apollo 11 items from his personal collection.

There were six successful Apollo missions that landed men on the moon and each of these flights had a Command Module Pilot like Collins. Unfortunately the other five guy's signatures aren't hugely collectible, or rather aren't attractive to investors, irrespective of a couple of them costing several hundred dollars apiece. Personally, unless you're planning on assembling a collection purely for pleasure, I wouldn't buy any of the other Command Module pilots.

So, just to repeat Neil Armstrong cost me £740, Michael Collins £160, and Buzz Aldrin £55. Total outlay including shipping charges £985.

The same three items were available at Fraser's of London for £7,500. Sold at a US auction six months earlier for \$10,000 (£6,000).

Touchdown!

About ten days later, and within a short space of each other, all three items duly arrived. The wife wasn't suspicious I've bought loads of things in the past from the US so no problems there!

I can't tell you the feeling I had when I opened each of them in turn – especially the Armstrong. The photo was an original NASA litho circa early 1970's. Armstrong had signed his name and written his dedication using his trademark faded blue pen. A good many of his signatures are signed this way (although by no means all of them) and it's another good clue when checking for authenticity.

The Buzz Aldrin piece was another 1970's litho and he'd just signed his name, a curiously childish style, which was what I was expecting. I'm glad I'd done my research otherwise there's a part of me might have wondered if it had been signed by a ten year old! Not that my writing's any better, there's been plenty of occasions, even when writing notes for this book, when I've not been able to read my own writing! And of course, if you're 'churning them out' as dear old Buzz does, you don't want a long, complicated signature.

Michael Collins' portrait had the same lunar backdrop but was printed on satin photographic paper. The texture and the overall quality isn't anywhere near as nice as the lithos but the signature was sharp. It doesn't affect the price of the piece whether it's a litho or a modern photo, it's the signature that has value, but since that first purchase I've always gone for the lithos, they're just so much better! Because a lot of these guys now make a living from appearance and signings, new photos – or rather reprints of the originals – are commonly used. But like I said, it doesn't affect the value it's just a personal choice.

Certificates of Authenticity (COA)

All the photos came with a Certificate of Authenticity, which to be honest aren't really worth the paper they're written on – you can even download them of the internet for free!

The fact is a COA is only as good as the company or person who issues it. It is no guarantee *in itself* of authenticity. Its main purpose is to act as a reassurance to the buyer and to serve as a record of where or from whom the purchase was made.

Most COA's would not stand much scrutiny. Indeed some of the world's best-known dealers do not even issue them, preferring to simply reimburse the customer if at anytime they express any sort of dissatisfaction with their purchase. By saying that, don't sling them away, they're YOUR guarantee.

After I'd made my online purchases I had a couple of days to think about what I would do with the items when they arrived. I thought I might hang on to them for a bit – just for a couple of months - I don't know why it felt so important I just wanted to actually *own*

something, even for a limited period, that meant so much to me. The plan then was to put them up for auction and hopefully see a 400-500% profit, but it didn't turn out like this at all.

Finding Clients

My business is the building trade, general repairs, carpentry, painting and decorating and for the last ten years I've done a lot of work for a couple of part time property developers, brothers Mike and Sam who buy terrace houses requiring updating from auction, give them the once over (my job) then sell them on again or rent them out on the open market.

The lads have done really well over the years but in the current economic climate things have slowed down.

They're both smart guys and have invested in all sorts of things outside of property including old books and paintings.

I told Mike that I'd bought the Apollo 11 astronauts as "*an investment*" and he was immediately interested. He'd recently read a book called *Moon dust* by Andrew Smith (which I've since read and can highly recommend), which throws light on what happened to the twelve moonwalkers when they came back to earth. It's a good question really, what do you do with your life after you've walked on the moon? Sell autographs?

What especially grabbed Mike was that of the eight surviving moonwalkers, the youngest, Charlie Duke, is nearly 80! The point being (presuming we don't go back to the moon anytime soon) is that in the not too distant future **there won't be a single living human being who has walked on another planet!**

Having said that, the Chinese have recently announced they plan to go to the moon, and the Americans have retaliated by saying they plan to return and land (a woman?) there also by 2018.

I think the Chinese will get there first, but whoever does it won't have anywhere near the same historical significance or impact as those few years in the late 1960's and early 70's, outside of China at any rate, but it will, however, give an even greater prominence to the original moonwalkers and further push up the prices.

Mike could see how that made it a very attractive investment vehicle. He was also mindful of the fact that 2019 will mark the 50th anniversary of the moon landings, and you can absolutely guarantee that in the months leading up to that event there will be a massive increase in memorabilia values.

Mike made me an offer for the photos. He knew I'd paid less than what Fraser's were quoting but I didn't tell him just how little.

Up until now I haven't shared this information with anyone, other than the missus. I always felt it was sheer good fortune and my love of space that sent me on this journey and I've protected my "secret" fiercely ever since. But I've changed my views recently in that I want these Narconomic deals – and not just space, but all kinds of Tangible Collectible Assets, stamps, postcards, ephemera - popularized even further, I want to see demand increased, more investors getting in on the act to continue to push up prices, which is where you come in. It won't affect my business you getting in on the act, the market is big enough for all of us, there's a whole world out there, one small step and all that!

Mike and I shook on the deal, which I can tell you was for £3,750, a little less than I thought I'd get at auction but it meant that **I made almost three thousand pounds profit, virtually overnight!**

But what had I actually done to earn this money? Eavesdropped on a conversation, spent a couple of hours on the internet and made a couple of phone calls! It was ridiculous really, or that's how it felt. It was even more amazing that **I'd actually managed to sell these items even before I'd received them in the post!**

So it was with mixed emotions indeed when I held the photos in my hand for the first time. I'd have loved to have hung on to them for a bit but I'd promised to pass them onto Mike as soon as they arrived, and since he was winding me up everyday for a week I felt I had no option other than to part with them.

It felt crazy to me that these flimsy bits of card were worth so much. The most expensive thing I've ever owned (aside from the house) is my van. But the thing is, most stuff isn't worth more than it costs to make – it's all about how much someone is willing to pay.

When I came home with nearly four grand in cash you could say the wife was slightly taken aback.

I figured it was time to spill the beans and sitting her down with a large glass of wine took her through the whole process.

“No way...you're having a laugh...don't be stupid...I can't believe it” was largely her contribution. Then she had a go at me for not telling her first, *what if I'd lost the money, what if it had all gone wrong*, all the usual stuff, but in the end she just started laughing.

I understood her points and maybe I should have said something first, but I don't believe if I had told her, even after showing her the proof she'd have run with it because she's more cautious than I am, or rather she's a worrier and can fret over even the smallest things.

But let me reiterate – I wasn't taking a reckless punt here, gambling on the throw of a dice. I hadn't kidded myself this was a “sure fire bet” – I'd done my research, granted it hardly ran into weeks but then it didn't need to, I double checked my findings, made *trebly* sure I was right, contacted the sellers and got all the guarantees I wanted, I knew I could return them if I wasn't happy, and had all the reassurance I needed from one of the world's largest auction houses that I would find a buyer for them. This wasn't a risk.

She wondered if I'd just got lucky but I didn't think that was the case. And then she really surprised me by suggesting that I do it again. After all, even if I spent another £1,000 we'd still be almost two grand up, whatever happened! The two of us went online, I showed the various sites and the disparity in the market and, like me a couple of weeks earlier, could hardly believe her eyes.

This time I decided on a slightly different course of action. Instead of the Apollo 11 guys, I planned to purchase the remaining 10 moonwalkers. The aim was to talk to Mike first and see if he would like to “complete” the set as it were, have in his possession not just the signatures of the first two men to walk on the moon, but all twelve men. That's quite a set,

and together worth a substantial amount. It doubted it would be a hard sell judging by the look on his face when he took possession of the first batch, but I figured I'd run it by him first before buying anything.

I checked several US dealers online including *Novaspace*, *Farthest Reaches*, *Astronaut Archives* and *Astro-Auction*. You should always make comparisons as depending on the arrangement that a supplier has with an astronaut the prices can fluctuate, not by a huge amount, just by a few pounds, but since you're shelling out for the same product anyway, and all the companies offer pretty much the same guarantees, why pay more than you need?

Below is a chart we compiled taking the lowest price I could find for each signature alongside the London Index. Dollar prices have been converted into pounds at the current rate of 1.83.

Mission	Name	US Price	UK Price	Profit
Apollo 12	Pete Conrad	£75	£295	367%
Apollo 12	Alan Bean	£44	£225	511%
Apollo 14	Alan Shephard	£120	£475	395%
Apollo 14	Ed Mitchell	£26	£225	865%
Apollo 15	Dave Scott	£84	£225	267%
Apollo 15	Jim Irwin	£73	£950	1300%
Apollo 16	John Young	£300	£450	50%
Apollo 16	Charles Duke	£33	£200	606%
Apollo 17	Harrison Schmidt	£45	£475	1055%
Apollo 17	Gene Cernan	£56	£225	401%
Total		£856	£3695	430%

Note that Apollo 13 is missing from this list. Apollo 13, carrying astronauts Jim Lovell, Jack Swigert and Fred Haise, was headed for the moon but two days after the launch the spacecraft was crippled due to explosion caused by a fault in an oxygen tank. All three astronauts survived and were returned safely to earth due to some astonishing improvisation and the drama was consequently turned into a movie starring Tom Hanks.

The signatures still make good investments, and are very saleable TCA's, but you wouldn't generally incorporate them with the Apollo 11 to 17 astronauts, those who actually got to the moon. They are a great stand-alone item, mind, and there's no reason not to include them if you're assembling a complete set, which comprise:

Crew Death During Training

Apollo 1

Crew: Gus Grissom, Ed White and Roger Chaffee

(Apollos 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 were all unmanned)

Apollo Earth & Lunar Orbiting Missions

Apollo 7

Crew: Walter M. Schirra, Donn Eisele and Walter Cunningham

Apollo 8

Crew: Frank Borman, James A Lovell and William Anders.

Apollo 9

Crew: James McDivitt, Dave Scott and Rusty Schweickart

Apollo 10

Crew: Tom Stafford, John Young, Gene Cernan

Lunar Landing Missions

Apollo 11

Crew: Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, Michael Collins.

Apollo 12

Crew: Pete Conrad, Alan Bean, Richard Gordon

Apollo 13

Jim Lovell, Fred Haise, Jack Swigert

Apollo 14

Crew: Alan Shepard, Ed Mitchell and Stuart Roosa

Apollo 15

Crew: Dave Scott, James Irwin and Al Worden

Apollo 16

Crew: John Young, Charlie Duke and Ken Mattingly

Apollo 17

Crew: Harrison Schmitt, Gene Cernan and Ron Evans

Notice that several astronauts were on more than one mission. For a true complete set you'd need to duplicate these signatures ensuring that the photo corresponds with the mission details, that is to say, if the category is Apollo 9, Dave Scott should be wearing the appropriate mission insignia for Apollo 9, not the space suit he wore for Apollo 15. Simply check the emblem on the suit.

It's worth pointing out that grouping your signatures into obvious categories makes commercial sense. It's a similar principal adopted by auctioneers who break up larger lots into smaller lots. They know from experience that it maximizes profits because some buyers don't want to purchase additional items they wouldn't otherwise be interested in. And it's not just signatures, whatever it is you're dealing in, books, records, teddy bears or toys, try to find appropriate "bite sized lots".

Most astronauts have appeal and will individually attract attention, and naturally some are more popular than others, but it can be useful organizing them into smaller groups, the flight crew from a single mission for example but these are the ones I usually stick with.

The Mercury Seven: comprising **Alan Shepard, John Glenn, Scott Carpenter, Gordon Cooper, Gus Grissom, Wally Schirra, and Deke Slayton**, the first seven astronauts chosen to fly into space, although Deke Slayton did not fly a Mercury mission due to a medical disqualification. The other six each flew one Mercury mission. For two of these, Scott Carpenter and John Glenn, the Mercury mission was their only flight in the Apollo era. Three of the Mercury astronauts, Gus Grissom, Gordon Cooper and Wally Schirra, also each flew a mission during the Gemini program. Alan Shepard did not fly a Gemini mission due to a medical disqualification, but later did fly an Apollo mission. He was the only Mercury astronaut to go to the moon. Wally Schirra also flew on Apollo, as well as Mercury and Gemini, the only astronaut to fly on all three types of spacecraft. Gus Grissom was scheduled to fly the first Apollo flight, but died in a fire on the launch pad during training. A film was made of these guys called *The Right Stuff*, and although a fabulous film it's been proven to be quite historically inaccurate.

Apollo 11; comprising **Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins**. The first manned mission to the moon, undoubtedly the most significant and saleable of all the categories. An absolute must for investors and collectors alike.

The Twelve Moonwalkers; comprising **Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, Peter "Charles" Conrad, Alan Bean, Alan Shepard, Ed Mitchell, Dave Scott, Jim Irwin, John Young, Charles Duke, Harrison Schmidt and Gene Cernan**.

Astronaut Firsts

These items are all very attractive to investors either individually or in groups. Firstly the Americans:

Alan Shepard, the first American in space. Launched aboard Mercury 3. He didn't achieve orbit, but rose to a height of 116 miles and traveled 303 miles before safely parachuting into the Atlantic Ocean.

John Glenn, the first American to orbit the earth aboard Friendship 7. The capsule orbited the Earth three times on a five-hour space flight.

Ed White, the first American to "walk" in space during the Gemini 4 mission.

Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, Apollo 11 1969.

Dave Scott, the first man to drive a vehicle on the moon, Apollo 15.

Sally Ride, the first American woman in space.

I generally put Alan Shepard, Ed White and Neil Armstrong together, it makes a great presentation.

Still with the Americans, we have:

Guion Stewart Bluford, the first African American man to fly in space and **Mae C. Jemison**, the first African American woman to fly in space. This is a great pairing and historically very significant, especially among collector's from the wealthier African nations.

Uri Gagarin – The first human being in space and Soviet hero. Gagarin was launched on April 12th 1961 aboard the Vostok 1. His flight lasted one hour and forty-five minutes, orbiting the Earth one time. Before the flight no one was entirely sure what would happen to him, consequently if he started acting strangely the craft's controls were locked, although there was a key onboard in a sealed envelope in case of emergency! *Vostok 1* shook wildly during re-entry, and when he was low enough, he ejected and used a parachute to return safely to earth where he famously landed in a field in full view of elderly peasant Anna Takhtarova and her granddaughter Rita. *"Seeing me in my orange spacesuit and white headset falling right from the blue sky, the old woman started crossing herself and wanted to run away,"* Gagarin recalled. *"Her granddaughter, was a lot less scared, however, and kept pulling the old woman in my direction. I kissed them both..."* Gagarin was killed in a plane crash during a training exercise in 1968.

Alexi Leonov – Considered the greatest living cosmonaut, Alexi Leonov was the first person to "walk" in space on March 18th 1965. He was outside the Voskhod 2 spacecraft for about 10 minutes and almost didn't get back in the door because his spacesuit had swelled due to the vacuum of space. Venting some air from his suit he eventually squeezed back through the airlock. Leonov flew again in 1975 on Soyuz 19 for the Apollo-Soyuz mission when the first docking of an American and Russian spacecraft happened. A Russian and American spacecraft would not meet again in space for many years until the shuttle docked with the Mir space station. Leonov is an artist nowadays and sells his work through various US dealers.

Valentina Tereshkova – The first woman in space. Tereshkova was a textile-factory assembly worker and an amateur parachutist when she was recruited into the cosmonaut program. She was launched into space aboard Vostok 6 on June 16th 1963.

Another good example of a disparity in the market concerns Leonov and Tereshkova. At an auction held by Novaspace in January in Arizona, signed photos of the cosmonauts sold for \$850 (£461) and \$1300 (£705) respectively. Yet identical photographs were available from a US dealer (Farthest Reaches) at the time of the auction for just \$79 (£42) a piece. At the time of writing this, the photos are available for \$99 each.

Obtaining cosmonaut signatures from Russia at no cost!

All current and former (flown) cosmonauts have mailboxes at "Star Town", the main training facility for cosmonauts. It is not necessary to include return postage when writing to Star Town. Flown cosmonauts are entitled to use the official mail at no charge. However, an addressed envelope is probably appreciated.

Here is the address of the training center in Star Town:

(Insert cosmonaut's here)
Lyotchik Cosmonavt
Yuri Gagarin Training Centre
141 160 Zvyosdny Gorodok
Moskovskoi Oblasti
Pochta Lyotchikov Cosmonavtov
Russia

There is good news and bad news regarding obtaining cosmonaut autographs from Russia. Firstly any response you receive is *almost* guaranteed to be authentic; cosmonauts rarely use secretaries or autopens to respond to autograph requests. You can write in English and still receive a response. About half of the cosmonauts who have flown in space will sign something sent to them (usually space-related covers) or will send you a signed photo at no charge. The bad news is response times are long; a wait of a year is not at all unusual and some cosmonauts, Alexi Leonov for example, are known to take *several* years. Letters and notes from cosmonauts are unusual. Photos are usually postcard sized and may not be in color. Russian's uses a different alphabet and a different handwritten script; it may be difficult to know who responded to you!

And of course: The **Chinese**.

I've a feeling these will become very collectible in the future amongst investor's in the Far East. Presently it's still possible to purchase Yang Liwei, the first Chinese yuhangyuan (astronaut) for around £50-100. If China do go to the moon Liwei's signature could become very valuable indeed. Recently China have successfully completed their first "walk" in space comprising the following yhhangyuan:

Zhai Zhigang's
Liu Boming
Jing Haipeng

Frankly it irritates me a little that so much fuss is being made of these Chinese missions. After all, it's hardly new - the Russians achieved these successes over 45 years ago, swiftly followed by the Americans!

I appreciate it's a massive thing for the Chinese, the growth of that country in the last decade is staggering and also there's a lot of pride floating around, it's just when it comes to space I wish we, as human beings, would dispense with this parochial outlook.

I called Mike and told him my "contacts" were offering me the other 10 moonwalkers and was he interested. He immediately jumped at the opportunity. I'd already worked out that it would cost me around £900 including postage but told Mike he could have them for £2,700. I suppose I could have asked for a little extra but I was more than happy with a £1,800 profit for what was literally just a couple of emails! Less than ten minutes work. Okay I'd already done some preliminary research but even that represented less than a days work, and I'd made just under £5,000, at the time a real fortune for me!

It was also important for him to feel he was getting a good deal too. That's the whole point with Narconomics, whatever items you're dealing in, if you do it properly everybody is happy. No comeback.

I felt like my ship had really come in; so much so that I paid off all my debts within two weeks, and not long after I packed in painting and decorating too and now work my 'system' full-time. Well, when I say full-time, I mean about an hour a day. And I can do this from home, from a cafe, travelling ...even from the beach!

Of course the business itself didn't happen overnight, that inevitably takes a little more time but not much. Although I made an incredible profit in a very short space of time and with virtually no effort, I realized that Mike was a stroke of good fortune, a typical example of the right man in the right place at right time. But there are plenty of other Mike's out there, or rather investors, especially now as the financial markets are in disarray, you just have to know how to find them and to seize an opportunity when it's there.

Having made so much money so quickly you can imagine how excited I felt. My mind was bouncing all over the place with ideas, big schemes – some of which in retrospect could have been quite costly. It's easy to get carried away when you've money in your pocket – money you're not use to – but it's important you stop to think for a moment.

The first thing I was going to do was set up a website, act as a broker dealing primarily in astronautica. I'd make contact with dealers around the world to see what stocks they had then be a conduit between them and investors. I even wrote and planned the site and was ready to pay a designer almost two grand to put it all together when it occurred to me that I couldn't factor in the sort of profits I was hoping for. Basically I'd be competing with other dealers who were offering the goods at a better price!

Most people who regularly use the internet, or rather anyone who shops online, will generally seek out the very best price and that goes for TCA's too. Yes, I could still make a profit, but I didn't want the hassle of running a store. It seemed too much like hard work.

Besides I wanted to offer a more bespoke service, tailor-made, specific to the client's

needs. Nothing beats the personal touch, a made to measure suit might cost more than off the peg but it isn't half worth it. I didn't want to offer what was already out there, be a shopkeeper albeit an online one. The image and services I wanted to project was a unique one, an investment advisor/broker dealing exclusively in lesser-known Tangible Collectible Assets, and for my clients to pay accordingly.

It's really all about how you pitch yourself. People will always take you at your own valuation. Set your heights high, and so long as you know your subject and are confident with what you're doing people will respect you.

Looking back, it wouldn't hurt at all to have a web presence, just a holding page with a few pertinent details, *who you are what you do*, but at the time I got so wrapped up with not having one I've just never got around to it, and by avoiding the internet and building up a client list, largely through word of mouth it felt that we were all part of an exclusive group which made the whole enterprise that much more special, not to say financially rewarding.

Research

But it was a salutatory lesson, and although I didn't spend (and probably lose) money on a website I easily could have done. So I decided to do some more research instead of simply wading in. Nothing too complicated, I read a few books on the subject of space, about the astronauts themselves, who else in the program was significant, what signatures were desirable, which ones weren't, who were valuable and who performed better in respect to annual yields, and of course which ones to avoid.

I also made a point of studying closely all the signatures I planned to deal in. I traced them, copied them – I don't mean I was making fakes – I just wanted to understand the nuances of each signature. The more you absorb yourself in a subject the more confident you become. I reckon I can look at any of the signatures now, even those I don't collect, and can instinctively tell what's good and what isn't. You don't *have* to do this all this research as most of what I found out is in this manual, but it wouldn't hurt.

I also looked into other areas of autographica to see if significant profits could be realised elsewhere. I'll go into more detail shortly but it was fairly evident that it isn't just astronautica where the big profits are, each category whether it's movies, royalty, militaria or music offer up some astonishing deals, but like astronautica, you have to know how to separate the wheat from the chaff. And it's not just autographs, there are many perishable commodities that translate in Tangible Collectible Assets and exceptional profits.

Although I didn't have a web presence I did get some business card printed up, just a simple design with my name, telephone, "job" description and abbreviated promo:

**Martin Fanshaw
Consultant & Brokerage**

**Alternative Investments &
Tangible Collectible Assets
Annual yields of 80-150%**

I gave some to Mike to pass onto his wealthy friends and interested parties, colleagues and people I thought might be potential buyers, from mates to passing acquaintances.

Nothing works better than networking, a chat in the pub, a party, the gym, wherever, as soon as someone realizes you're privy to insider information, that the knowledge you have is valuable and potentially worth a lot to them, they're interested.

But the great thing with TCA's is there's a reference point, **people immediately identify with what you're talking about.** With a lot of investments it's easy to switch off or get lost with the terminology, it's even harder to casually introduce the subject into the conversation, but with signatures, and memorabilia it's relatively easy, whether it's sport, film and television, politics, whatever.

Say a group of you are talking about something funny on television, *The Office*, for instance, how easy would be it be to drop in a few pertinent facts about comedy memorabilia. "*Oh, I just sold a signed photo of Stan Laurel - great investment actually - my client got it for 40% less than its list price*". Trust me, ears prick up! People always want to know more.

One the most important things I've learned over the last couple of years is that people aren't interested in how well you're doing, they're only interested in themselves, *what do they get out of it.* It's human nature.

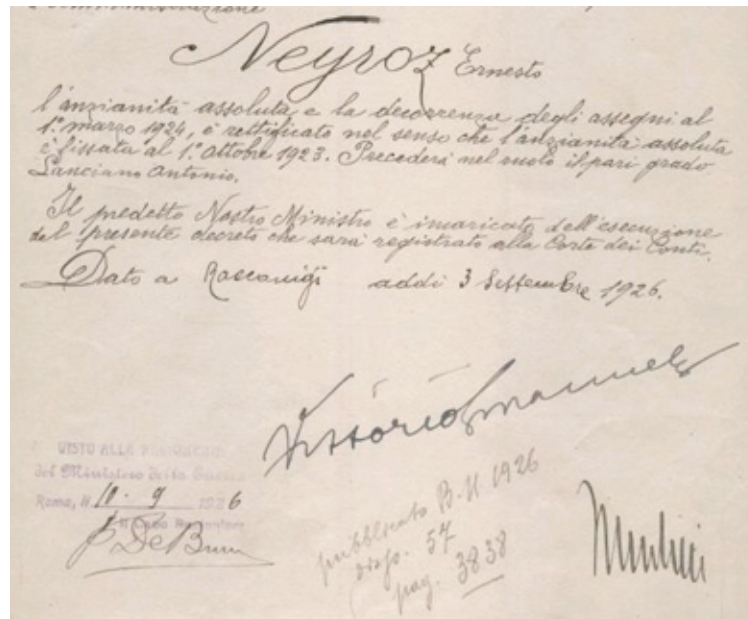
So whenever you're talking about your business, don't tell people how much you're making, tell them how much they can save, and at the same time, how much they can make.

This happened recently at a party when my wife and I were talking to a couple. The guy – he was only in his forties - was having a moan about the state of the country and how his pension had taken a nosedive due to the recent blip in world shares. He firmly placed the blame at the feet of the British government.

My wife pitched in (she's well rehearsed nowadays) that we, and all our friends, actually quite liked politicians as they had a habit of making us money rather than just doing us out of our taxes! He was intrigued. I explained that I dealt in alternative investments and certain politicians offered a great yield, particularly those who have already become a part of history; Nelson Mandela, John F Kennedy, Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher.

I quoted him some Index prices; Churchill £4,500, Mandela £1,200, I even mentioned Hitler at almost £5,000. To be honest I'm not comfortable dealing in political monsters, violent criminals, psychopaths and so forth but there are a good number of investors, and collector's especially of military history who would pay through the nose to own an Adolf.

That's not to say I haven't dealt in a few. Mussolini, Saddam Hussein and Fidel Castro to name but three.



Benito Mussolini and Victor Emmanuel, signed document, Sold by mullocksauctions.co.uk for £90. (Fraser's price £975) Profit 1000%



Fidel Castro, signed document, purchased online from rraction.com for £140. Sold in the UK for £1,500. (Fraser's Index price £2,500. Profit over 1000%)

I'm not *so* unhappy about Castro as a lot less is known of him. Okay, his human rights record isn't perfect but it's pretty damned good compared to Saddam, Hitler or Mussolini. From a commercial perspective it's fairly easy picking up cheap Castro posters from America as they're not too keen on communist leaders you know! And bear in mind it won't be long before he's dead (assuming he isn't already!) so as a long term investment Castro is a sure fire bet.

I'd like to emphasise at this point that although I've mostly concentrated on signatures, particularly astronautica, using it as my principal example throughout this manual, I wouldn't hesitate dealing in other areas of interest should the opportunity arise or should I feel inclined, and I'd recommend you do the same. Whatever it is you choose to deal in, signatures, stamps, records, books, memorabilia, paintings, prints, photos, football programmes, motoring etc, the principal of Narconomics remains the same.

Take LP vinyl records for example, punk rock to be precise, which is exactly what my friend Alan deals in. Alan got involved in Narconomics after seeing what I was making with the astronauts.

Whatever genre interests you (punk, Jazz, classical, folk,) firstly find out what investors/collectors are paying for the most desirable items - that is to say the *most* you see them being sold for. This is easy enough to do simply visit online specialist stores or read collector's magazines.

Then search again for those identical items, only cheaper, elsewhere – some of the lesser known internet auction websites would be my first stop, www.bidsnbuys.co.uk for example, there's dozens of auction sites out there, or better still visit car boot and jumble sales. I guarantee you will find those same items cheaper. Once you do, and more importantly can prove there is a substantial profit in it for you, you simply broker the deal. The point is knowledge is everything - and it's research that unlocks that information!

Here's Alan's advice in his own words.

Go for depth rather than breadth, as the rare albums will often be from more obscure bands. Some options for areas of focus include new wave, art punk, West Coast punk, British punk, hardcore punk, and early punk. You can also focus your collection on a specific city known for punk music, such as London, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago or even Minneapolis.

Develop an understanding of the rare punk records market through online resources. Read back issues of Record Collector free at www.recordcollectormag.com. Or better still purchase the latest copy of their Rare Record Price Guide.

<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/kennethdrury/price-guide.htm> feature current prices for rare albums in a variety of grades. These sites provide a good indicator of the amount collectors can expect to spend on an album.

Once you decide your area of interest make notes of all the groups that interest you, write down the catalogue number, download and print off album covers, keep a visual reference in a small notebook.

Seek out rare punk records in old boxes at car boot sales, table-top and jumble sales, even at charity shops. The valuers who sift through vinyl generally only have an overall knowledge of collectible records and identify the obvious ones. They're unlikely to know the true value of the more obscure pieces. Don't be surprised to find LP's you know to be worth £50 priced at 10p or 20p. Try not to laugh!

Inspect the surface of the record carefully for any defects, including nicks and scratches. Find out if there is any other merchandise or memorabilia that comes with the record.

Pay attention to the album art. In many cases, the covers of rare punk records can be valuable in their own right.

Read books and magazines on punk rock to gain an appreciation of specific musicians or albums. If you want to select the right albums, you need to be able to put each record into context.

Sound advice, and these points pretty much apply to all musical genres and, for that matter, areas of dealing in TCA's generally. The principal is always the same. Buy cheap, sell high. Trade on sentiment.

If I'm not familiar with a subject I research it. If someone asks me to purchase goods from, say, the world of opera or motoring I will head down to my local library or will get online. If it's signatures or historical documents they're interested in I'll see what Fraser's are selling them for, then I'll look at rrauction.com or mullockauctions.com and scour their previous results. I make comparison checks, **establishing whether there is a disparity in values and if I can make a profit.** If there is I proceed, if not I pass on the deal. It's quite simple really.

Naturally it's easier sticking with what you know, which is why I've remained true to the Apollo guys for the most part, but in truth there are literally dozens of markets where the principles of Narconomics can be applied. Okay I got into signatures by accident but it opened my eyes to lots of additional opportunities, potential deals that aren't always immediately apparent.

Anyway, where was I? Oh yes the couple at the party! I should add that I don't very often deal in political players because unless you're handling *significant* historical figures or can predict likely ones like Barack Obama before he became president, the rest - a bit like reality TV stars and short-lived celebrities - have a habit of being worthless and largely unsaleable as soon as they're out of the public arena. It was just a means of swinging the conversation in my direction.

Incidentally, a word of caution, if you do decide to deal in current, so called celebrities, don't expect to make big profits. **Most of these signatures are two a penny and you're unlikely to persuade anyone to part with more than a few pounds.** There's also a good many fakes out there as they don't get the level of attention that other, more significant, personalities might receive.

And if you're looking for a long-term investment, chances are they won't do too well either. Some might, depending on how their life pans out and what they achieve, but by and large even the more successful of today's stars will be long forgotten in the not too distant future. Generally stick with the ones who are already commanding interest among collectors, largely because they've already achieved legendary status, Madonna, Pele and JK Rowland for instance, £895, £500 and £1,500 respectively.



Madonna, purchased online from rrauction.com for £135. Sold in the UK for £670. (Fraser's Index price £865) Profit 500%



Pele, purchased online from rrauction.com for £96. Sold in the UK for £575. (Fraser's Index price £950) Profit 600%

The man and his wife were clearly shocked at how valuable certain signatures are, or as he put it “*How much, for just a little squiggle?*” I had to laugh because some of those “squiggles” had earned me thousands of pounds, but he had a point. The truth is, historically autograph collectors and stamp collectors have been regarded as a bit, well, nerdy. The next rung up the ladder from train spotters! Now I’m not into train spotting, and quite frankly don’t much see the point in writing down numbers, especially since it makes no commercial sense, but I guess they are simply following their passion so who am I to judge? But I have to disagree about collecting stamps and autographs, especially when you consider some of the sums involved.

Yes it’s popular image might be of hysterical girls waiting outside the stage door or bearded chaps who look like Open University lecturers but when you consider that one of those “hysterical” girls could have her hands on a £25,000 photo of the Beatles or a £4,000 picture of The Who, and that the stamp collector is regularly handling, pound for pound, the most valuable commodity on the face of the planet, who’s got the last laugh? Well, maybe not handling the *exact* stamp perhaps, but astonishing as it may seem the Treskilling Yellow stamp, which is the world's most expensive stamp at **£1.2 million** is also the most valuable commodity on earth by weight, equating to, wait for it, a staggering £46 billion per kilogram!

Whenever anyone sniffs at collecting, I generally drop that little fact in which certainly gets their attention.

We spoke a little more and I told him about the astronauts and he was very keen to learn more. I gave him my card and agreed to meet him later that week. He consequently bought the Apollo 11 guys for £4,000.

Always be ready to talk about what you do. Introduce it subtly into the conversation. Don’t beat the prospective client with a blunt instrument just let them know that you have access to fabulous investments, goods that will make them a significant amount of money, will give them a great deal of pleasure, and will give them a lot of kudos.

Whenever you find yourself in these situations try to follow these key points, and remember the same applies to whatever TCA’s you’re dealing in.

- Be friendly.
- Be enthusiastic about the subject.
- Throw in a few interesting facts and figures.
- Know your facts.
- Know your subject.
- Don’t come over as a salesman.
- Don’t make promises you can’t fulfil.
- List the benefits; diversity, consistent growth, worldwide collector bases, owning items of significant historical value.
- Give them your card.
- Reassure people. Make sure they know that the items are genuine, that they offer fabulous yields - much better than anything else presently available.

- They perform better, certainly in recent years, that stocks and shares, and property.
- That you're able to offer them a lifetime-guarantee. You are, of course, because someone else has already offered you one!

By the way, if you get Certificates of Authenticity with your purchases hang onto them along with the receipts. This is your guarantee! By all means pass onto the client any provenance that came with the signature but don't let them see what you paid for the goods or where you purchased them from. Instead draw up your own Letter of Authenticity. Use your own headed-paper and just copy what is more or less written on the original:

For example:

<p style="text-align: center;">Certificate of Authenticity</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I certify that the signature of Princess Diana is authentic.</p> <p>This endorsement is covered by a lifetime Guarantee. If at any time you have cause to doubt the legitimacy of this claim a refund for the full amount will be offered.</p> <p>Signed Martin Fanshaw</p>

Ideally print it out onto some heavy stock 'vellum' paper or suchlike.

Sports Memorabilia & Movie Stars

Although I deal mostly with Apollo moonwalkers I don't do so exclusively. As I mentioned earlier, sport is another big passion of mine, football especially, and I'm happy to handle a selection of legends including the 1966 England World Cup winning team, George Best, Pele and Maradona to name but a few.

Like celebrities, sports people come and go, and somebody who's a hero one minute is quickly forgotten when their career comes to an end.

But be careful because the modern football market is awash with fakes. Only ever buy from a reputable dealer who offers a guarantee of a full refund if it is later discovered to be a forgery. Police recently seized a hoard of signed pictures and clothing reported to be from sports stars including Steven Gerrard, Michael Owen and Jonny Wilkinson. It has led to an ongoing court case on an alleged multi-million pound counterfeiting operation.

My advice is stay away from the modern game, but outside of the modern football era you can find some truly great investments that are not tainted with any scandals. And away from the big clubs are some fascinating investment opportunities for fans whose teams are

rarely going to see such success again. For example, the only known surviving FA Cup winners medal for Barnsley – from 1912 – recently went up for sale with a guide price of £46,000! During the recession of the Twenties many players sold off their possessions, including international caps, just to make ends meet – sadly, some were even melted down.

Unique historic artifacts can also be of great value in different sports, original boxing posters and signed photos from the classic fight between Muhammad Ali and George Foreman in 1974 in Zaire springs to mind.



Muhammad Ali and George Foreman. Zaire, perhaps the greatest heavyweight fight of all time.

As with any TCA purchase, or potential Narconomics deal, **always look for nostalgia value** and consider the market appeal – big names and occasions are usually likely to fetch more. Prices have gone up tremendously in recent years.

Although modern football memorabilia can be a bit murky there are still some great and genuine bargains in cricket. You can still pick up items from more recent legends such as Derek Randall and Jack Russell for just a few pounds while early blazers and caps always seem to hold their value.

Pre-First World War is also a fascinating market particularly if relating to WG Grace or early yearbooks. You can still find original 1898 photos of the England cricket team for £400-500.

Even the Old Wisden Almanacks – how often do you see those in boot fairs – have taken off! Keep your eyes peeled for a full set from 1864 they're worth tens of thousands of pounds.

Rugby

The poor relation for investments – so perhaps holding greater potential – is rugby league and union.

Historic international rugby memorabilia can fetch the most money – a 1906 blazer worn in the first Springboks tour of Britain recently sold for £8,000.

Golf fanatics have managed to keep the price of related memorabilia high – partly because items such as winning medals and trophies are so rare to come by and also because it is a game that attracts players with money.

Early golf artifacts – such as a rare John Sharp feather ball from around 1850 – can fetch as much as £10,000 at a top auction. You'll find them for a lot cheaper in regional auction houses.

The above items might be rare and extremely valuable, but there are still thousands of other affordable pieces that will attract buyers and investors.

Sports memorabilia has a strong sentimental value and the trick is to pitch your Narconomic deals at the right time. Take Cardiff City FC and their recent trip to Wembley for their first FA Cup Final since 1927. It's fair to say that cup frenzy swept the Welsh fans with some of them even posting songs they'd written on YouTube! And if you were trading in old Cardiff memorabilia during those months leading up to the final you'd have made a killing. It's a typical, good example of how Narconomic's work. Nostalgia reigns supreme!

If you're interested in dealing in sports memorabilia try to target the smaller teams who are on "a ride", like Cardiff and Hull City in recent years, and Leeds United are probably a worthwhile punt for a longer-term investment too. At the moment the glory years seem a long way away, and there's probably not a huge market in Leeds related memorabilia, but it's a safe bet to assume that Leeds will one day make it back into the Premier League and, who knows, probably Europe and as a consequence fans will be clamouring for those old items you picked up for a song! Try to anticipate a trend, and if it's *your* team who are on a roll dig out those old programmes you might still have and sell them at a premium!

If you're interested in signatures of sports stars try to stick to the names in the list below and you won't go wrong, but try to source them outside of London in regional auction rooms. It's not unusual to make savings of up to 70%. The trick is to pick up a bargain and then sell it on at one of Bonhams, Christies, Sotheby's or Frasers' specialist sales, but be aware that for the most part sports stars don't mean big bucks.

Take a look at Mullocks Auctions and Dalkeith Auctions in the directory.

The only sports stars I deal in are:

Football

Bobby Moore
Gordon Banks
England 1966 World Cup Winning Team, full squad.

Sir Matt Busby
George Best
Diego Maradona
Pele.

Boxing

Muhammad Ali
George Foreman
Joe Frazier
Mike Tyson

Golf

Tiger Woods

Motor Racing

Lewis Hamilton



Lewis Hamilton, the youngest ever and first black Formula 1 racing driver.

The above list doesn't necessarily represent the most valuable signatures amongst their peers, with the exception of Tiger Woods, but they are all household names and of course legends in their field, consequently they are likely not only to hold their value but to ensure excellent long term returns.

Another interest of mine is old comedians especially the stars of the old black and white shorts from the 1920's and 30's. That is to say Laurel and Hardy, Charles Chaplin, Harold Lloyd to name but a few. These giants of cinema have held the value for many years and have become extremely desirable items. Again I would suggest you look outside of London because the disparity in the market is frankly ridiculous. I recently bought a Stan and Ollie for less than £200, which I sold at a London auction for over a £1,000.

Look out for:

Stan and Ollie
Buster Keaton
Charlie Chaplin
Harold Lloyd
The Marx Brothers



*Stan and Ollie, purchased online from rrauction.com for £330. Sold in the UK for £2000.
(Fraser's Index price £3500) Profit 600%.*



Legendary dancer Gene Kelly sold by mullucksauctions.co.uk for £35. (Fraser's price £500) Profit 1400%

Hollywood movie stars from a bygone are very collectible too, especially those who even today are immediately recognisable. I don't handle movie stars at all, which isn't to say there's not some humdingers out there, it's just not my field of interest. These are the ones who are most desirable, highly collectible and offer the best investment yields.

- James Cagney
- Gene Kelly
- Humphrey Bogart
- Marilyn Monroe
- Audrey Hepburn
- John Wayne

Other Markets

So far I've talked mostly about autographica because that's the area I specialise in. The main reasons for this is that it's a subject that interests me - after all - it's what caught my attention in the first place, and is where, in my opinion, the biggest profits are to be made.

No other Narconomic deal offers such fantastic returns, the disparity in the market really is unparalleled, but there are other TCA's that are definitely worth looking at, not just as instantly exploitable resources but as good investments too.

I will talk about a few of them here in case any of them appeal.

Postcards & Ephemera

Not so long ago you could pick up a pile of early postcards from junk shops and boot fairs around the country for next to nothing – literally for just a few pence. After you got them home and sorted through them, by creating little groups and sets, it was possible to sell them on again for hundreds of pounds. Today it's more difficult, but still possible to profit from this particular hobby - and not just postcards but all sorts of “ephemera”, which basically means throwaway items such as theatre tickets and magazines, cigarette cards, all sorts of stuff usually made of paper that wasn't expected to last more than a few days, and of course much of it didn't which is why such high prices are traded for certain items nowadays.

Limited supply and over demand!

Here's one ingenious way, even if I say so myself, to cash in.

I'd been wondering about how else to exploit the principles of Narconomics when I came up with the following idea, it was a bolt from the blue, but really it is a fantastic, simple idea, **virtually no overheads, hardly any outlay and percentage returns of several thousand percent!**

Okay we're not talking about buying a photo for fifty quid and selling it for £500, these numbers are more modest but it's still a great way to earn some money.

Purchase the item for £1 sell it for £30-£50 – that's a 4,000-5,000% mark up!

I got the idea at a boot sale one morning when I came across a box of old postcards of English cottages from the early 1900's. They were in various condition, good and bad, some had spot damage, water-marks or had just turned yellow, but whatever the state they were in they were unmistakably old and original, and more importantly had the addresses of the cottages on the back of the card.

Some of the information was sketchy to say the least, Rose Cottage, Poole, that sort of thing, but I hit upon the idea of buying all the cards, (£20 for sixty cards) and tracking down the cottages online using the Royal Mail online address finder, Google, www.192.com, and www.allies-computing.co.uk and various other search facilities.

I only spent a couple of evenings doing this but managed to track down thirty-seven full addresses for the cottages.

I then wrote a covering letter (one letter was used for all the cottages, just changing a few of the relevant pertinent details) outlining that I was a dealer in rare postcards and had stumbled across this antique picture of their home. I said I was planning on putting the card on eBay but did they want first refusal at £28? I also included a photocopy of the postcard. I purposely kept the price realistic so as not to frighten people off, and of course I supplied my address and phone number. I didn't go into payment methods or anything like that, I just kept it friendly and informal.

Within the next week twenty-five people got back to me saying they would love the card! I immediately called everyone, organized payment and delivery and made a cool £700, less about thirty quid costs! Absolute genius, even if I say so myself, and a perfect Narconomic deal.

Also look out for:

- Advertising trading cards,
- cigarette cards, bookmarks,
- tickets,
- catalogues,
- greeting cards,
- old newspapers,
- manuscripts,
- typescripts,
- letters etc,

Any printed matter that was not intended to be preserved or retained. The trick is to use your initiative whenever you find an item, *think outside the box* as it were – for instance if you discover an old get well card, or better still a handful of cards, sell them to your local chemist for their shop window. Always ask yourself this question: “*Who would buy this item in different circumstances?*”

General Memorabilia

Memorabilia are items that have a sentimental value due to their connection to a historical event, popular culture, entertainment or individuals. There is certainly a crossover with ephemera, in fact many items fall into the same category such as cigarette cards and publicity photographs etc, but for the most part memorabilia is merchandise which is manufactured to cash in on an event, a royal wedding, a movie, the cup final, anything you can think of really!

And just like ephemera there are lots of potential Narconomic deals to be had, more so in fact!

Because of the sentimental nature of memorabilia you'll usually find a collector who will take an item of particular interest off your hands. But remember to think laterally. For instance, say you were at a car boot sale and you paid a few pence for a stamp or a post card, or even a biscuit tin, with a cute picture of a child holding a teddy bear. The item is

only really worth what you paid for it, a few pence. Rather than targeting the relevant collectors (of stamps, postcards or tins), you would approach collectors of children's or teddy memorabilia.

The relevant collector would undoubtedly know the true value of the price, whereas the other collectors are unlikely to, but because it's theme is associated with their own interest sentiment plays a big part. Ok you might not sell the item for hundreds of pounds, but there's nothing to stop you making a quick profit.

Other very saleable memorabilia includes items related to Princess Diana, the royal family, transport, film and television, war and sport.



Charles and Diana Christmas card. Sold by Mullock's Auctions for £400. (Fraser's price £4,500). Profit 1000%.

Stamps

Alistair Sampson, writing in the *Daily Express*, recalled how his father's collection of stamps assembled during a long naval career sold at auction for £14,000. One stamp, a unique cover, fetched £1,000 but thirty years later sold at another auction for almost a million pounds!

But no one gets rich sticking to modern specimens like First Day Issues which seem to be appearing nowadays almost on a weekly basis! Once upon a time these issues were printed to mark a special occasion but not anymore, it seems, as the Post Office try to rake in even greater profits. **Most investors and dealers specialise in old and rare stamps, focusing on a particular period or theme.**



Philately – that’s stamp collecting – is known as the 'hobby of Kings'. George V was an avid collector, famous for spending hours a day with his beloved collection.



His 1904 purchase of the Mauritius two pence blue for £1,450 set a new record for a single stamp. The same Mauritius stamp today would cost over £550,000. A courtier asked him if he had seen that 'some damned fool had paid as much as £1,400 for one stamp'. 'Yes.' George replied, 'I was that damned fool.' Experts believe The Royal Philatelic Collection is now valued at £400m, making it the Queen's largest single private asset.

The collections of King Faruk of Egypt, Czar Nikolaus III of Russia, and King Carol II of Romania are also well documented. In 1937 King Carol, also known as 'the playboy King', purchased the Treskilling Yellow (pictured below), as mentioned earlier, for £5,000. King Carol left Romania soon after in 1940 for exile - in a train laden with Royal treasure.



The train contained paintings by Old Masters such as Titian, Rubens, and Rembrandt, reportedly hundreds of canvasses, jewels, and even the armour that had decorated the walls of the royal palaces, and of course his prized stamp collection. As the train neared the Yugoslavian border Romanian fascists fired at the Royal train but failed to stop it. The King and his mistress lay on the floor and narrowly escaped injury from the bullets. The Treskilling Yellow subsequently became the world's most expensive stamp.

Many of the world's wealthiest families store part of their wealth in a rare stamp portfolio. The DuPont's, Rothschild's and Bill Gross, the American bond guru and inflation expert, all have significant holdings of rare stamps. Bill Gross is estimated to have invested in excess of £50m in the past five years alone!

The stamp market represents a compelling form of alternative investment **providing sufficient due diligence is undertaken**. And a correctly assembled stamp portfolio can offer excellent returns.

Possibly the most compelling reason for investing in rare stamps is as an inflation hedge. During the last period of high inflation in the 1970s rare stamp prices rose over 600% in a decade. Unlike fixed income investments, the price of rare stamps rises in line with general economic growth and inflation as investors look for tangible assets in times of economic uncertainty.

Add to this an existing database of 30,000,000 stamp collectors worldwide underpinning your investment, plus an estimated 18,000,000 in the emerging China market, and you'll start to see the benefits of rare stamp investment.

But how do you build a sensible stamp investment portfolio? One of the safest ways is to join rare stamp investment programme offered by the likes of Stanley Gibbons. It might not be the cheapest way to get on board but Stanley Gibbons are recognised as the largest, most famous stamp dealer in the world. The Stanley Gibbons share price, listed on the

Alternative Investment Market on the London Stock Exchange, has shown steady increases from 18.5p to 280.5p in 7 years.

Interest in stamps has escalated in recent years and it's getting even bigger. Indeed ten per cent of their two million website hits come from the emerging Chinese market where it is one of few Western sites without censorship. Such a huge interest for a limited supply product offers the investor an excellent diversification from mainstream investments, which have been suffering of late.

I thought hard about investing in stamps, purchasing one of Stanley Gibbons introductory pre-built portfolios, but in the end I decided the yields weren't sufficient. I'm used to 400-1000% instant returns, not 60% over five years, but it's still a safe bet and better than the building society.

Having said that I learned a lot studying the stamp market finding out what's collectible and what isn't, and I made a conscious note to commit to memory those desirable – and realistically obtainable – stamps I might stumble across at boot sales and markets.

I limit my search to stamps featuring Queen Victoria between the years 1875-1885. I don't expect to come across those worth several thousands but the stamps worth between £50-£400 come up surprisingly often.

Here's my short list. Try to commit them to memory and make a point of checking old envelopes and albums whenever you come across any. You'll be surprised, I've found over £600 worth of stamps in the last 10 months alone – I didn't go searching for them, I just kept my eyes peeled.



Two Pence Red, used value £90/mint value £225



Four Pence Green, used value £175/mint value £425



Five Pence Blue, used value £100/mint value £500



One Shilling Green, used value £80/mint Value £475



Five Shillings Red, used value £200/mint value £700

Niche Collectors

An effective way to make Narconomic sales from more affordable stamps (or postcards, or anything for that matter) is to target niche collectors, especially those where sentiment plays a big part. People who collect children's or baby effects and memorabilia, toys and dolls, cuddly animals, Valentine's cards, romantic ephemera, that kind of thing.

There are numerous forums online to find potential clients including www.ucforums.com, www.dolltalk.com and <http://forums.collectors.com/> to name but a few, just put a search in Google - there are scores out there, just try to target a forum or collector's niche that corresponds indirectly with the item you're selling. Remember what I said about the biscuit tin and the child holding the teddy. See general memorabilia.

If you decide to start a stamp collection from scratch make sure you do your research first. There are literally hundreds of books and online resources available to get you started and if you're ever in Central London pop into Stanley Gibbons where there's a book, it seems, for every type of stamp, country, theme – everything!

A couple of pointers to get you started: although I'd advise against new stamps and highly publicised First Day Issues, this doesn't mean you should avoid them altogether. Printing errors and other anomalies can inflate cover prices by hundreds of thousands of pounds, making it a good idea to keep an eye open on this specialist field.

Focus on quality items, not schoolboy stamps in approvals books or albums which experts and stamp dealers have already plundered.

Look for stamps that are in good condition and also quite scarce.

Collect stamps with a common theme, such as country, period or value.

Keep a careful eye open for envelopes with stamps intact and clear, unusual postmarks.

Only let the experts value your finds. Stanley Gibbons has roadshows throughout the country where you can take your stamps for an impartial assessment of their worth.

Buyer's Club

I completely understand if there's a part of you that's apprehensive about spending larger sums on a signed photo or historical document or any TCA for that matter. Investing in anything can be a daunting proposition, but in order to achieve optimum measures of growth and profit one has to speculate to accumulate.

But there's another way to get involved as part of a TCA Buyer's Club. Buyer's clubs are becoming increasingly popular because people have realised that purchasing as a group can significantly improve your spending power.

So what is a TCA Buyer's Club? It's simply a group of people, often work mates or friends, who meet regularly and pool small amounts of cash to purchase collectibles.

Rather than go looking for a club that doesn't satisfy all your needs why not set one up yourself with a few friends. Make sure they all read this book. There is no set minimum number of people to get started but it probably makes sense to aim for around five to ten people.

Once you have found enough people you need to arrange a regular meeting. Most people meet once a month, usually in a local pub. You don't have to make things too formal but agree on a chairperson to keep a tight rein on things and a secretary who'll keep minutes.

You'll also need a treasurer who'll look after the buying and selling of goods. You then need to fix the monthly subscription and discuss the investment policy.

Your club also needs a constitution, the rules of which every member agrees upon and signs. Often banks want to see your constitution before they will open an account for you.

The club needs an account to deposit money, receive dividends and meet any running costs. You can have an account in the name of the club, but you need to nominate two or three people (usually the treasurer and another person) who can write cheques on behalf of the club. Members then set up a standing order to pay their monthly subscriptions into this account. You should also agree on a name early on.

Remember that being in a club should be fun so you should keep your monthly subscriptions small – a typical amount would be around £10 a month per member. Most people also wait until they have built up around £500 before they start to make any purchases. This has the added advantage of giving you time to research your TCA investments properly too. Make sure you put aside some money for administration and, perhaps, refreshments.

Decide on what your portfolio will be. Choose the order in which you will buy your desired items. When your portfolio is complete, sell it on for a profit or hang onto as a long-term investment. Incidentally, it might be wise to keep them in bank.

How to Sell for Huge Profits

When I started buying astronautica I was initially motivated by, well, sentiment – it was the chance to own something unique that appealed to my imagination. Since my first purchase I have handled literally hundreds of moonwalker photos, astronauts, cosmonauts and although the thrill has diminished I still love what I do, but the truth is nowadays I'm motivated mostly by the money I make from this.

My trip to the USA earlier this year was ostensibly to purchase several Apollo 11 sets and a couple of Moonwalker groups. My total outlay was over £8,000 but since I'd already secured buyers for each one of my purchases I wasn't too concerned especially since that represented almost £40,000 in UK sales of which £30,000 was profit. I estimated the amount of time I'd invested in those sales (excluding travel to the US and back) was approximately 17 hours! That's £30,000 for two days work – a million a year is easily obtainable, I'm close to that figure already and it's only September.

I got off to a good start with Mike and through him, and my own initiative got together a small client list of people interested in alternative investments.

I did this for the most part simply by talking to people. Initially friends and colleagues, people who knew and trusted me. What was important was that I didn't come over as a guy who wanted to make money, I was simply sharing my knowledge, offering an opportunity to them should they wish to take it. I think the main thing that appealed to everybody was that I wasn't obviously buying these items just to sell on, I was buying them for myself - for pleasure, the fact these fantastic, unique purchases were offering incredible returns was just a bonus.

What's good about friends of course is that it's a softly-softly approach. Of course there are always a few jokers who take the mickey but once you've got them to your house and you're chatting over a cup of tea, they quickly change their minds. Especially when you explain to them that the "*it's just an old photo*" they're holding is worth in excess of £1,000 on the open market.

Incidentally, whatever you buy, **ensure they are stored in acid free plastic sheets to protect them** you don't want people manhandling your precious commodities. By all means let them hold the item, it's important, but keep them safe from an involuntary *spitting out their drink* when you tell them how much it's worth!

Explain that although it's worth over £1,000 that's not what *you'd* sell it to them for you could let them have it for half that amount.

Let them know that you have "arrangements" with several sources worldwide and that you get them at this price because supply is currently satisfying demand. Point out that there's a disparity in the marketplace, investors pay more than collectors, but you're dealing in collectors prices. You're not, you're marking up about 500-800%, but that's okay, because your clients, friends, whoever, are still getting the item for half the Index price quoted by Fraser's.

If anyone asks how *you* found out about these TCA's just say you got talking to an Alternative Investment Broker at a party and it started from there. Don't tell them you bought the goods online otherwise they'll start doing what you're doing, and certainly never reveal your sources. It's not that the market can't accommodate more people like you and I, but if too many people in your immediate area are doing the same you risk losing potential sales due to the competition.

But by all means show them Fraser's website and the top 100 Index. Fraser's, part of Stanley Gibbons, are one of the most highly respected companies in the world who deal directly with some of the biggest investors from around the globe. They specialise in all kinds of letters, historical documents, photos and autographs.

The same applies to all TCA's. Always seek out the very highest prices realised for an item. Check auction results, catalogues, books, online stores, London prices etc. Print off a hard copy to show clients.

When your prospective client sees in black and white that the items you're selling are being quoted at a much greater price elsewhere it makes them more likely to buy. You might wonder why Fraser's are so much more expensive than my sources. There are various reasons for this, some of their pieces are spectacularly rare for one, but it has more to do with their client list. Think of it this way, Fortnum & Mason sell many of the same items that Tesco's stock, but their customers, for the most part, come from an entirely different demographic and are charged accordingly. Crazy, but there you have it. That's not to say everything Fraser's sell is top dollar, there are plenty of low-cost items mostly in the music and popular culture sections, but the big boys, the Uri Gagarin's, Fidel Castro's and Winston Churchill's of this world command serious money!

Make sure you point out to your clients that the items will continue to increase significantly in value. Remember, you're not dealing in here-today-gone-tomorrow "reality celebrities", you're dealing in historical figures, noteworthy individuals, legends whose names will live long into the future.

These signatures, these "squiggly lines" and old photos, historical documents, collectible books, records, paintings, prints, photographs, TCA's generally, perform better than property, annual yields in some cases can be as much as a 100-120% but for the most part signatures perform at around the 30-70% mark, compare that to the average yields of 6-8% for property, these TCA's, are performing 1200 times better! That's significant!

Do some research, go online and satisfy yourself that the prices I am talking about are absolutely genuine. Look at the companies in the directory at the back of this book. You'll see immediately that I've not made up any of the prices quoted I have listed them exactly as they appear - what I paid for them, and what I sold them for.

If anything, you might even pay lower prices than I've quoted. The dollar prices quoted in this book are at exchange rate of 1.63 to the pound. Always keep an eye on the exchange rate as it does fluctuate, and try to buy when the pound is at its best.

The pound has been really strong against the dollar for the last couple of years and hopefully it will remain so for the foreseeable future. It means that even better profits can be realised.

But don't be too alarmed if the dollar improves, even significantly, the disparity in the market is still so big we can afford a negative swing.

Without coming over too strong, give your prospective clients lots of good reasons why they should buy off you.

- TCA's are underpinned by huge, worldwide collector bases creating liquidity and interest in the market, estimated at over 3million for autographs and 30million for stamps.
- Emerging markets such as China, Russia, India and Brazil are further fuelling the demand.
- Uniqueness of pieces ensures constant media attention.
- They have a chance to own a unique piece of history.
- Friends and colleagues will be interested in the collection.
- Individuals who have foresight to predict investment in TCA's are the people who make the biggest profits.

When I decided I wanted to trade in astronautica I contacted just about everybody I knew. Of course not everybody leapt at the chance of handing over their money but it generated enough interest to give me the confidence to move forward. Two of my closest friends and a neighbour wanted to get involved but weren't willing to hand over a thousand pounds and I totally understood that.

I suggested we start off small, get on the first rung of the investment ladder, and to see how it goes. They were more than happy with that, after all they were still going to own a piece of history, a beautiful signed photo of one of the moonwalkers, they just weren't going to have the main man himself, Neil Armstrong, not at first, at any rate.

I didn't ask for any money up front because the signatures I planned to buy were pretty inexpensive. Apollo 14 astronaut Ed Mitchell at £26, and Apollo 16 astronaut Charlie Duke at £33.

I contacted my sources in the US and bought two of each totalling £135 including post and packaging.

When the images arrived I decided to get one of them framed just to see how it looked. It was spectacular! And for about £20 well worth the money! I realised at that moment that presentation is everything. Whenever you hand over items don't have them in a scraggy brown envelope, treat the goods with respect, show the client that they are valuable commodities, have a special file for them, or better still invest in a small leather portfolio.

When you meet the client make a show of it! Slowly open the portfolio gently take out the brilliant-white, cardboard backed envelope, and from the envelope slide out the clear, acid free plastic sleeve to reveal the photo. It serves two purposes, it shows that you respect the item you're dealing in and it sets a precedent to the client as to how he should handle the goods in future.

I sold the two Ed Mitchell's for £115 each, and a Charlie Duke again for £115 giving me a profit £210, not bad for half an hour's work. I purposely kept prices low initially to keep my buyers sweet, planning to factor in better profits should they continue with further purchases. I decided to hang onto the framed image as it was an excellent advertising display, something to show prospective clients, although I later sold it on eBay for £280.

When my friends and neighbour took possession of the items they were thrilled to bits, especially when I showed them they were being sold elsewhere for over £100 more than what they paid!

My neighbour left it at that, happy to own just one piece that still has pride of place in his living room. Both my two friends however wanted to continue, to get their hands on the signatures that really mattered and over the next few months I assembled all 12 moonwalkers for one of them and Apollo 11 for the other. I'd have got them sooner of course, but they wanted to spread their outgoings.

And that's how it really started. Nothing beats word of mouth. Because these items are so unique, so historically special they make fabulous talking points. When you own one of these items you can't help but tell other people, and before you know it friends and clients of yours are uttering the invaluable words "I know a guy..." doing your advertising for you!

You just have to get a couple of people on board to get you going.

And it's not just friends, colleagues and neighbours I'll talk to anyone who'll listen, whatever the situation is, parties, events, watching football. All I do is casually introduce a few pertinent facts, an interesting anecdote into the conversation and I'm on my way. I don't have the gift of the gab, I'm not a salesman, I'm just an ordinary bloke who's interested in and enjoys what he's doing. People see my enthusiasm and it's catching.

People like the idea of owning something of significant historical value. It's not plain old collecting autographs and stamps, postcards, books or ephemera, we're talking about Tangible Collectible Assets here, perishable commodities that can be worth many thousands of pounds, items that continue to be fantastic investment vehicles earning my clients, myself and you in due course amazing returns.

This is what I always tell my clients:

As soon as they buy one of these investments they have instant equity. They are already several hundred, and in some cases thousands of pounds in profit.

That's what makes it so damned attractive! Everybody wins! The dealer we bought our stocks from made a profit, we mark-up several hundred percent and make a huge profit, and

the client realises that if they were to sell the goods on immediately they'd make a profit too. Crazy but true!

Most of my earning comes via my client list. At any one time I've usually got between ten and twenty individuals who are looking to purchase all manner of material, mostly astronautica, but plenty of other stuff besides. Someone might ask for a signed 1st edition book, a particular stamp or some Royal Memorabilia for instance. I do a little research, usually online, find out what the Index or list price is, then source the item from a regional online auction room, or shop even, where you can bet your bottom dollar bill I'll find it for a hell of a lot cheaper than the list price. I then offer it to the client, generally splitting the difference.

Always keep your options open, be ready to purchase anything you're asked to. It's the same process whatever it is, Narconomics works by noting the most valuable list or Index price you can find, something in print or online that verifies your findings, usually in a London based gallery or saleroom, then sourcing the goods cheaper elsewhere, usually in the regions.

But if building a client list doesn't suit you there are other ways to sell the goods. Auction is one way depending on what it is you have to offer. Regarding astronautica complete sets such as Apollo 11, the 12 moonwalkers, individually crew signed photos, stand alone items and astronaut firsts etc. all do well.

The same applies with other areas of interest – political figures, civil rights activists, sporting firsts etc - try to assemble a set or look for a unique selling point.

Only sell these items – the better quality ones that is – through the top salerooms. That means Bonham's, Christies, Sotheby's, Stanley Gibbons and Frasers. Don't forget that Bonham's also hold specialist sales throughout the UK too, so if your TCA's would suit, say, a James Bond sale in Edinburgh then go with that.

The main thing is ensure you contact the relevant department, this is easy enough, just check on line or call them and explain what you have, they will put you through to the appropriate person. You'll need to take your items in to be valued and fill out the appropriate forms, and make sure you put a reserve on them, the lowest price you're willing to sell them for, and then stand back and wait. The fantastic thing with auction is you just never know. Depending on the mood a Lot can literally fly, and what you thought you might get £1,000 for can quite literally go for twice and three times that figure.

The bigger auction houses also have international salerooms so if you have items that appeal to a particular investment circle or collector you should target that saleroom with your goods. For example, Bonham's Dubai would be an ideal place to sell a collection of the eight Muslims who have so far traveled into space, Al-Saud, Faris, Mohmand, Aubakirov, Manarov, Sharipov, Musabayev, Ansari. (Incidentally, smoking related material also goes down well in the Middle East.). Or Hong Kong for China's new heroes the *Yhhangyuan*.

Frasers of London are an excellent place to sell if you have some choice lots. They specialise in autographica and historical documents and have regular online sales that attract international collectors and serious investors. Again, prices can literally fly!

Never sell your valuable items at a regional saleroom you will not receive the sort of sums you'd expect to get from a central London or international saleroom. Having said that, the occasional moonwalker does make an interesting lot. I've done this several times, put an Ed Mitchell or Alan Bean up for sale to see the response. If someone buys the item (you should break even at least, but don't expect to make a killing) I'll introduce myself and explain that I can get the other moonwalkers if they're interested. Sometimes they are sometimes they're not, but it costs you virtually nothing to try. Just make sure you put a reserve on the piece so you don't lose out. If it fails to sell you might have to pay a small handling fee.

The key is to have initiative. Opportunity is all around! Wherever I am, or rather places where I feel there may be potential customers lurking I usually leave a couple of my business cards. I don't mean I make special journeys I just drop a couple off when the situation arises. My favourite place – and I know this sounds a bit daft, but it's paid dividends – is the first class carriage on trains. Just walk through and pop a card on the odd chair or table. Don't make it too obvious, make it hard enough not to see immediately but easy enough to find in time. You don't want the cleaner throwing them away. And scribble a couple of lines on the back, like you've taken some notes: *770% growth in 10 years - call Monday*, that sort of thing, make it look like somebody made an inquiry but then went and lost your card. I've had numerous people call me out of the blue having found these "hot tips" – they genuinely feel they've stumbled across something exciting, of which they have of course! A bit sneaky? Perhaps, but maybe all marketing is!

I have also occasionally placed small classified ads in investment and money magazines, and on internet forums. Advertising can be costly so don't go mad, but alerting investors to your products or services can be a good way of getting your stuff out there, or help build a client list. Again, don't come over as a sales person, just give enough information to make a potential customer prick up their ears. Keep it short and sweet. For small ads I write something along these lines:

Alternative Investment Opportunity
Extremely rare, Apollo Moon Landing items.
Fully authenticated. Guaranteed consistent yields of over 800% in ten years!

Or

Alternative Investment Opportunity
Extremely rare, signed Fidel Castro Rally Poster.
Fully authenticated. Average annual yield 106%.

Online investment forums are better because they are generally free, try The Motley Fool (www.fool.com) and Raging Bull (www.ragingbull.com) to name two.

I'll generally write something like this:

Superb Investment Opportunity. Complete set of 12 moonwalkers. Signed photos, fully authenticated includes Neil Armstrong. US price lists at \$24,000 (£12,000) Offers in the region of £8,000.

Well, that's about it, I really hope you get inspired to buy and sell these TCA's, especially autographica where there are some truly incredible profits to be made.

I've written about what I know, but just to reiterate there are plenty of other opportunities out there, vinyl LPs, collectible books, old toys, whatever. Have a look in your own record collection if you have one, you might be surprised how much some of those records are worth now, especially in Europe and the Far East. When you think that American actor and singer David Hasslehoff is a huge star in Germany imagine what people are paying for The Beatles and Rolling Stones albums in Asia. I'm not talking about the priceless stuff here, but the albums you'll find in charity shops up and down the country.

Narcconomic deals are all around us, everywhere you look those scraps of paper, squiggly lines and bits of junk are worth something to someone. So next time you pick up an item from at a boot or jumble sale consider it for a moment. It might not be worth anything to you, but who might potentially like it, and what could you get them to pay?

Even my fifteen-year old son has got in on the action, helping out his little brother! The young 'un, like the rest of his class mates are collecting Dr Who cards, but there were a couple of cards that seemed to be eluding everyone. I remember having similar problem back in the '60's when I was collecting *Football Stars In Action*. I never did complete that set. I reckon, irrespective of what the card companies say, they hold back on a few to make the kids buy more packets in the quest to find them all! Well, maybe not, because my eldest simply went on line and bought the cards for a few pence each! Needless to say, a chip off the old block, my young son swapped those cards for a "fat profit" the following day at school! Now the older lad wants to get into something more lucrative, start them young is what I say.

And finally, here's my top twenty, a **hot list** of **must have signatures**. I've researched these names exhaustively over the last couple of years and you can be pretty certain you'll make substantial profits on any one of them if you source them properly. Added to that, they make fantastic long-term investments too.

- Neil Armstrong
- Buzz Aldrin
- Mike Collins

- The Twelve Moonwalkers

- Uri Gagarin
- Alexei Leonov

- Winston Churchill
- Benito Mussolini

- Charles Chaplin
- Stan Laurel & Oliver Hardy

- Barack Obama
- Martin Luther King
- Nelson Mandela

- Princess Diana

- Bobby Moore
- England 1966 World Cup Winning Team
- Pele
- Diego Maradona
- Muhammad Ali
- Lewis Hamilton

Best of luck to you and I wish you every success with your business.

Martin Fanshaw

Directory

I've broken this directory into two parts, Part One - Buying and Part Two - Selling.

Part One lists reputable individuals and organisations who sell space and sports merchandise, historical documents and ephemera at very competitive prices, further reading and resources.

Part Two identifies market places, organisations, salerooms and interested parties.

Part One - Buying

R&R Enterprises

5 Route 101A, Suite 5
Amherst, NH 03031
Tel +1 (603) 732-428
www.rrauction.com

Online auction site based in the United States dealing in all sorts of signatures and historical documents. Sales take place once a month and include around 1500 lots of US Presidents, military figures, astronauts, artists, novelists, movie stars, sports stars, notable and notorious personalities. Established in 1980, R&R are a highly respected company and are members of the National Auctioneers Association, the Universal Autograph Collector's Club and The Manuscript Society.

Farthest Reaches Inc.

4733 Torrance Blvd #963 –
Torrance, CA 90503- 4335
Tel: (310) 791-4800
www.farthestreaches.com

Farthest Reaches is owned and run by Steve Hankow a highly respected figure in the world of space collectibles who has direct contact with many astronauts. Established for around six years Farthest Reaches offers a vast selection of items for sale including signed photos, books, NASA paper, flown space artifacts, assorted memorabilia and various items from the personal collections of all the manned space programs including Mercury, Gemini, Apollo, Skylab and the Space Shuttle. They also sell material relating to the Russian program including Vostok, Voskhod and Soyuz, and is one of the few reliable sources of genuine Cosmonaut ephemera, notably signed photographs of Uri Gagarin, the first human in space, Alexei Leonov, the first human to “walk” in space, and Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman in space.

Hankow, in association with Nolan Simms, also regularly produces Space themed autograph shows, regarded worldwide as events against which all others are measured.

Astronaut Archives

Mr Gerry Montague
Brigantine, NJ 08203
USA
Tel: (215) 593-7257
www.astronautarchives.com
astronautarchive@aol.com

Run by Gerry Montague, a space enthusiast and respected collector for over 30 years. All autographs are guaranteed to be genuine and they carry a lifetime return policy with 100% money back guarantee. Astronaut Archives is one of the more competitive of sellers and prices are lower than their rivals, expect lots of good photographs and original lithos relating to the Mercury and Apollo programs plus a few cosmonauts. Montague also uses Astro-Auction to sell goods, his username is "Mintspace".

Novaspace Galleries

PO Box 37197
Tucson, AZ 85740
520-888-2424
www.novaspace.com
staff@novaspace.com

A highly respected company run by space artist Kim Poor. Novaspace have been around for quite a number of years and their reputation is second to none. Kim Poor set up Novaspace while travelling to art shows and fairs in Texas where he met Apollo 12 astronaut turned artist Alan Bean. Poor began to include Bean's limited edition prints in his mail order catalogues, and later in his gallery.

Poor's integrity impressed Bean, and he recommended him to Gene Cernan, another Apollo astronaut who was looking to sell some autographed memorabilia. The company grew from there. Since those early days eight moonwalkers (that's all the living moonwalkers at the time of writing) have attended special signing events organized by Poor. Novaspace also represent many of the other Apollo guys, Gemini and Mercury Astronauts as well as some of the Shuttle astronauts.

In addition to autographed material, Novaspace also sell limited edition prints and original space art by Apollo 11 and 12 Astronauts Michael Collins and Alan Bean. They also regularly sell the ultimate in space collectibles, artifacts that were both flown to the moon, those that remained in the Command Module, and items that were actually taken down to the lunar surface. Obtained directly from the astronauts themselves these items are extremely rare and typically comprise American flags, pendants, maps, notebooks, badges, reports and dehydrated food! Novaspace is a great place to start if you're nervous about buying online.

Their prices are a little more expensive than some but you can rest assured you are getting absolutely genuine material. A note mind, many of the moonwalker photos are printed on modern photographic paper, it's all exceptional quality but if like me you'd rather the older,

original NASA lithos then maybe there not for you, but I should add it doesn't affect the value of the signature.

Astro Auction

www.astro-auction.com

Email admin@astro-auction.com

Astro-Auction is a dedicated auction service set up by Novaspace for space related material. There are no vendors fees or buyer's premium you just pay for the price of the item and any postal charges. Don't confuse this site with eBay where any old Tom, Dick or Harry can sell stuff, there are strict guidelines as to who can sell merchandise at Astro-Auction and all sellers must apply for and receive approval before being allowed to post items for sale.

Sellers are investigated before being approved and only reputable dealers and collectors are accepted, all negative feedback on buyers and sellers is investigated. If the matter cannot be resolved, the buyer or seller may be removed from the list or blocked from placing new items for auction. Any item with questionable authenticity will be removed from auction until such authenticity can be reasonably proven.

Anyone can browse goods for sale but if you want to bid on something you have to register, which is a simple enough process.

I regularly buy from Astro-Auction and have never been disappointed, there's plenty of original older material to be found as well as some good bargains. There's probably around 300-400 lots at any one time comprising astronaut autographs, coins, medallions, flown items, covers and stamps, artwork and even, occasionally, meteorites!

According to their own stats only about 15% of items actually sell – I suspect this is because most of the collector's who use this site already have many of the items for sale. This is good news for you because it means there are plenty of good bargains to be had, and it's possible sometimes to make an offer.

In addition to bidding on single lots they also hold "Dutch auctions". These sales are when the seller has many of the same items to sell and wants the bidders to be able to bid on one or multiple items.

In the Dutch auction format, the bidders specify how many of the items they want to bid on as well as the amount they are willing to pay. When the auction ends, the bidders who bid the highest for the items will earn the right to purchase the items at the lowest successful bid made by one of the winning bidders.

For example: Peter has 20 unsigned lithos he wants to sell. He sets the starting bid at £50 per litho. Sue wants to buy 5 of the lithos and places a bid for 5 at £50 apiece. Mark is also interested in these lithos and places a bid for 15 of them at £50 apiece. Currently both Sue and Mark are bidding on separate items and a bid has been placed on all of the available lithos.

Now Ralph decides he wants 5 lithos. Since all of the lithos now have a bid placed on them, he must outbid the last bidder, which in this case was Mark. So he places a bid of

£60 each for 5 lithos. Now Mark is the highest bidder for only 10 of the original 15 he bid on.

If the auction ends with no more bids placed, Ralph would have a winning bid for 5 of the lithos, Mark would have a winning bid for 10 of the lithos, and Sue would have a winning bid for the remaining 5 lithos. The selling price of all 20 lithos is determined by the lowest winning bid price. So in this scenario, all 20 lithos would sell for £50 each.

They also include a quirky “Astronaut Garage Sale” where the astronauts themselves sell off personal merchandise and effects. A quick look just this second reveals that Mike Collins, Ron Evans, Jim McDivitt and Gene Cernan all have items for sale including an incredibly rare schematic for the Landing Module’s cooling system that was actually flown to the lunar surface. The item also includes a letter of authenticity signed by Cernan and a photograph of him holding the schematic.

Ed Mitchell

EDM

PO Box 540037

Lake Worth

FL 33454

www.edmitchellapollo14.com

cathy@edmitchellapollo14.com

Apollo 14 moonwalker Dr Edwin Mitchell’s dedicated site. A good selection of lithos and “red letter” NASA glossy’s available from the man himself. Mitchell will sign any of these images including his name, a short personalization and mission number for a fee of £26 per item, and if you’d like a longer dedication it’s an additional £2.60 for every ten words. He does state that dedication requests must be mindful of sincerity and dignity. There are several ways to pay including online credit card transactions, international shipping costs about £2.50 for photos.

Scott Carpenter

www.scottcarpenter.com

Online site dedicated to one of the original Mercury Seven astronauts Scott Carpenter who died in October 2013. Lots of good information and a limited number of special items for sale—mostly signed 10X8’s and posters, and his book *For Spacious Skies: The Uncommon Journey of a Mercury Astronaut*. Not the cheapest place to buy a Carpenter, but direct from the man himself.

Richard Gordon

www.dickgordon.com

Email: Linda@DickGordon.com

Online site run by Gemini and Apollo 12 astronaut Dick Gordon. All of the photos available are from the personal collection of Mr Gordon. Most of them have not been mass produced and are only available in signed limited quantities. Many are one of a kind and haven’t seen the light of day in years! All of the inscriptions and notations are guaranteed to be from his own hand. All photos are 8" x 10" and in black and white unless noted

otherwise. Mr Gordon isn't the most collectible of astronauts but many of the images are not available elsewhere.

Spaceflori.com

Lehenbuehlstr 66
Renningen 71272
Germany
Tel ++49 172 7328588
Email: contact@spaceflori.com
web: www.spaceflori.com

Based in Germany and run by Florian Noller, a collector for more than 18 years and president of the "Weltraum - Philatelie" space collector society. He currently serves as consultant to isitreal.com (see below) a website dedicated against autograph forgeries. Spaceflori has a good selection of photos, lithos and flown items relating to the Apollo, Mercury and Shuttle missions, plus a few cosmonauts. Prices vary either way in relation to other suppliers and it's always worth checking to see what they've got as you might find a good bargain.

Autografica

195a City Way
Rochester
Kent
ME1 2TJ
Tel. 01634 830062
www.autografica.co.uk

Autografica is a UK based online specialist autograph dealer and supplier of all sorts of authentic signed photos, ephemera and memorabilia. Established for over 18 years, the company is UACC Registered and is one of the best known and reliable names within the UK autographs market. Its founder, Garry King has appeared on many TV and Radio stations and is currently the UACC Ethics Board member for the UK. Lots of showbiz and music related memorabilia, but not a great range of Astronaut and Cosmonaut signatures although what they do have compare very favourably with US prices.

“Star Town”

Obtaining cosmonaut signatures from Russia at no cost!
All current and former cosmonauts have mailboxes at "Star Town". Here is the address of the training center.

(Insert cosmonaut's here)
Lyotchik Cosmonavt
Yuri Gagarin Training Centre
141 160 Zvyosdny Gorodok
Moskovskoi Oblasti
Pochta Lyotchikov Cosmonavtov
Russia

Mullock's Auctioneers

The Old Shippon
Wall-under-Hayward
Church Stretton
Shropshire SY6 7DS
Tel: 01694 771771
Web: www.mullocksauctions.co.uk

Specialists in sporting collectibles and memorabilia including historical documents, autographs etc.

Dominic Winter

Mallard House
Broadway Lane
Gloucester GL7 5UQ.
Tel: 01285 860006.
Web: www.dominicwinter.co.uk
info@dominicwinter.co.uk

Regular sales of printed books and maps, historical documents, ephemera.

Trafford Books

Trafford Books,
Unit 7 Astra Road
Astra Business Centre
Trafford Park
Manchester
M17 1SU
Tel: 01618 778818
www.traffordbooks.co.uk
george@traffordbooks.fsnet.co.uk

Regular auctions of types of paper collectables including autographs, Ephemera, Postcards and Cigarette Cards. In addition sales occasionally include good collections of Coins and Medals, plus Prints and original Artwork.

Dalkeith Auctions

Dalketh Hall
81 Old Christchurch Road
Bournemouth BH1.
Tel: 01202 292905.

<http://www.dalkeithauctionsales.co.uk/>
www.dalkeithcatalogue.com

Regular auctions of stamps, books, picture postcards, cigarette cards, photographs, coins, banknotes, autographs, toys, ephemera etc.

Fairs

Autographica

6 St Winifreds Rd,
Biggin Hill,
Kent, TN16 3HR
01959 573792

www.autographica.co.uk/

A UK based company who hold an annual event, usually at the Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow. In addition to US astronauts and occasionally cosmonauts there's a wide array of celebrities including actors and actresses from film and television. Autographica is not only a great place to assemble saleable material it's a fun day out as you mix with "Bond" girls and "Carry On" stars! There is an entrance fee of £10 per person and prices vary depending on the signee. Events take place over a couple of days. Please note, Autographica and Autografica are not the same company, note the different spellings.

Astronaut Scholarship Foundation

Astronaut Scholarship Foundation
Mail Code: ASF-1
Kennedy Space Center, FL 32899

Tel: +1-321-449-4876

www.astronautscholarship.org

The ASF is a charitable foundation set up by six of the surviving Mercury astronauts and the widow of the seventh astronaut the late Gus Grissom. The foundation raises money and awards 19 annual scholarships each worth to students in the US. Money is raised by other participating astronauts from the Apollo and Shuttle programs through events such as astronaut appearances, fund raising events and their online store. Prices are not always the most competitive but include some stunning images unavailable elsewhere.

Resources

Universal Autograph Collectors Club (UACC)

PO Box 1205
Welaka, FL 32193
www.uacc.org

A non-profit organisation dedicated to autograph collectors. Founded in 1965 The UACC is the largest organisation in the world with members in over 20 countries. It's a great source for information about all aspects of collecting and is the premiere organization for the promotion of the hobby itself. The saying, "knowledge is power" certainly applies here. Take advantage of the information they offer. It's worth its weight in gold. An excellent

website with loads of valuable information including signature studies, information on autopens and news. They also sell ephemera of all types.

www.collectspace.com
contact@collectspace.com

The number one online resource for collectors and space enthusiasts. Lots of valuable information here relating to dealers and suppliers and if you're ever suspicious of something it's worth searching their forum databases.

<http://acaf-forum.co.uk/forum/>

Autograph Collector's Against Fakes The ACAF website launched in July 2005. It was set up by a number of collectors who were becomingly increasingly frustrated at the amount of fake autographs that were being sold on the internet. Forum members and moderators offer help and advice to collectors on all aspects of the hobby, in addition to actively searching for fake autographs on auction sites and helping victims of the fakers obtain refunds.

www.isitreal.com

Set up in 2005 by a group of German and Swiss collectors, isitreal.com came about when one of them, Rolf Ramseier got his fingers burned with some signed Beatles memorabilia. At around the same time an associate of his was removed from eBay for warning buyers about potential autograph forgeries. Frustrated by eBay and by at the lack of helpful resources they decided to create a website dedicated to the merits or otherwise of collectible autographed material. The site - a great success - has grown considerably and covers a wide area of collecting including art, history, movies, music and science. They offer an opinion service, for a small fee (£8) have regular news updates, lively forums and a helpful reference library. The only down side is that's it's written in both English and German but some of the articles haven't been translated!

Online Collector's Forums

<http://www.theforumsite.com/forum/>

Lists lots of different areas of collecting, a great place to start to target potential buyers.

Otherwise try:

<http://forums.collectors.com/>
<http://www.ucforums.com>

Or simply put a search in Google.

EBAY

Although many reputable dealers sell their goods on Ebay there is just too much stuff out there that are forgeries, and bad forgeries at that. I'm referring particularly to signatures,

ephemera and historical documents where it's a simple matter of scribbling a few notes or an autograph 'in the style of'. The real tell tale sign is the relatively low asking prices for these goods. Don't get suckered. A genuine Neil Armstrong will *never* sell for a couple of hundred pounds.

Also, check the UACC's website, they have a Hall of Shame where they list individuals who have been shown to act irregularly, supply duff material or are just plain low-lives!

Recommended Reading

Collect Autographs – An Illustrated Guide to Collecting Autographs. Published by Stanley Gibbons.

First Man – The Life of Neil Armstrong, by James R. Hansen. The only authorised book about Armstrong. A little heavy on detail sometimes, but an incredible source of information. Lot's of great snippets to impress your clients!

The Two Sides of the Moon, by David Scott and Alexi Leonov. A fantastic book written by Apollo 15 astronaut Scott and first space walker Leonov. An easy, entertaining read covering the space race from Gagarin's historic flight to the moment US and USSR crews first shook hands in space marking the end of the Cold War silence. Lots of great incidents and interesting details and a fascinating insight into the two countries different approaches.

Moondust – In Search of the Men Who Fell To Earth, by Andrew Smith. A fabulous book with lots of great anecdotes. Smith sets out to interview all the remaining astronauts who walked on the moon, and to find out how their lives were changed forever by what happened. 'Where do you go after you've been to the moon?' In addition to this question that would prove hugely troubling to many of the returned astronauts, they also had to deal with the fantasies of faceless millions at their backs, for this was the first truly global media event.

Whatever you decide to trade in read as much as you can on the subject, make notes about interesting facts and figures that you can pass onto prospective buyers.

Stamps

www.regencystamps.com
email: info@regencysuperior.com

Regency-Superior is one of the US's Auctioneers specialising in the sale of all sorts of collectibles including stamps & postal history, coins, historical autographs & documents, signed baseballs & vintage sports cards and space memorabilia. They hold regular online sales.

There are dozens of stamp auctioneers, a comprehensive list can be found at the following address:

<http://www.stampdomain.com/auctionhouse.htm>

But I would tend to steer clear unless you're collecting. Most dealers know the value of things. Find valuable stamps in boot fairs and jumble sales. The same goes for all types of TCA's. Search your Yellow Pages or local newspaper for details of car boot sales and markets in your area.

Stanley Gibbons

<http://www.stanleygibbons.com>

Part Two - Selling

I really hope you endeavour to create a client list, starting at first with family and friends, colleagues and workmates before spreading your net as it were, but do some research first apply the principles set out in this book. Read the book again if it helps, share your knowledge, show your enthusiasm, impress them with facts and figures and make sure they understand the fabulous returns they can expect on their exciting investments. It's the easiest way to go about making a successful business out of this.

Don't forget, you don't actually have to buy any of the items before you sell them! Ensure you've made a sale and then buy them! Having said that it certainly helps to have something to show prospective clients, but you can download images from the assorted websites mentioned in this book. Create your own brochure to show people. Illustrate that you can get the same items being sold in the top galleries at a much more competitive price. Make sure also you print of Fraser's 100 Index to prove this point.

Or why not purchase one of the cheaper moonwalker signatures and get it framed like I did. It really hits home what you're selling, it's historical impact not to mention the incredible subject matter – it's a photo of someone walking on the moon for heaven's sake! Never reveal your sources.

But if you want to go down another route here's what I'd suggest.

Frasers

399 Strand

London WC2R 0LX

Tel: 020 7836 8444

Website: www.frasersautographs.com

sales@frasersautographs.com

The UK's market leader dealing directly with many investors around the globe. Sell complete sets like Apollo 11 and the moonwalkers etc via one of their regular online auctions. They will also buy directly from you but don't expect such good returns.

Bloomsbury Auctions

24 Maddox St,
London W1S 1QH.
Tel: 020 7495 9494.
Website: www.bloomsburyauctions.com

Sell books and historical documents, a good place to target collector's and investors alike.

University Archives

49 Richmondville Avenue
Westport CT 06880
www.universityarchives.com
Tel: 088 237 5692

UA run a consign and sell program where they will purchase your historical documents, autographs and fine art and then auction them. Here's how it works, they purchase your collection at an agreed price. The items are then put into an EAC auction. If the final settlement is greater than the purchase price made by University Archives you will receive an additional check for the difference, less their commission.

Auction Houses

All the leading auction galleries have specialist sales directly related to the type of goods you're selling. Regarding astronautica they are usually included in other collectible sales like exploration, aeronautica or military, for example, and they will occasionally have sales entirely dedicated to the subject.

Call the auction house describing the goods you have for sale to be put through to the right department.

Bonhams

Montpelier St,
Knightsbridge,
London SW7 1HH.
Tel: 020 7393 3900.
Website: www.bonhams.com

Christie's

85 Old Brompton Rd,
South Kensington,
London SW7 3LD.
Tel: 020 7930 6074.
Website: www.christies.com

Sotheby's

34-35 New Bond St
London W1A 2AA.
Tel: 020 7293 5000.
Website: www.sothebys.com

Don't forget all the above have salerooms around the world. Depending on what you are selling, it could make economic sense to place your items in an overseas sale, Chinese astronauts in Hong Kong, for instance.

International Auction Rooms

Bonhams & Butterfields

580 Madison Avenue
New York,
New York 10022
1 212 644 9001

Bonhams & Butterfields

7601 Sunset Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90046
1 323 850 7500

Bonhams & Butterfields

220 San Bruno Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94103
1 415 861 7500

Bonhams & Butterfields

Suite 1508
Two Pacific Place
Admiralty
Hong Kong
852 2918 4321

Sotheby's

New York
1334 York Avenue at 72nd St
New York 10021
Tel: 1 212 606-7000

Sotheby's

Hong Kong
Suites 3101-3106, 31/F, 1 Pacific Place
88 Queensway
Tel: +852 2524 8121
Fax: +852 2810 6238

Christies

Level 4
Precinct Building 5
Office 406
Dubai International Financial Centre
PO Box 506685

Dubai, UAE
Tel: +971 (0)4 425 5647
Fax: +971 (0)4 425 5639

Christies

22nd floor Alexandra House
18 Chater Road Central
Hong Kong
Tel: +852 2521 5396
Fax: +852 2845 2646

Christies

20 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY 10020
Tel: +1 212 636 2000
Fax: +1 212 636 2399

Christies

Steinwiesplatz
8032 Zürich
Tel: +41 (0)44 268 1010
Fax: +41 (0)44 268 1011

Christies

Asia House
4 Weizmann Street, 4th floor
Tel Aviv 64239
Tel: +972 (0)3 695 0695
Fax: +972 (0)3 695 2751

Stanley Gibbons

(London office & Shop)
399 Strand, London WC2R 0LX
Tel: 020 7836 8444

Probably the world's most famous seller of stamps. Hold regular online sales, only really worth using if you have more collectible items. Certainly use it if you're able to find some the stamps I've indicated you look out for.

Investment Forums

Another way of selling invest able items is through any one of the numerous investment forums on line. Don't worry about finding a site that corresponds specifically with items you're selling, investors are interested in diversification and will put their money behind anything they think will give them a return. And don't forget, it costs nothing to use these ads so write as many as you can. Don't rush your ad, take your time, make sure it includes words like "rare" and "antique", "historical item" "guaranteed", "authentic", "consistent

yields” etc. where appropriate. There are many forums but here are a few to get you started, search on Google for other sites.

The Motley Fool

www.fool.com/

Raging Bull

<http://ragingbull.com>

Talk Stock

<http://talkstock.com/>

Stockhouse

www.stockhouse.com

Magazines

Advertising can be costly so don't go mad, but if you feel inclined to spend a little on advertising alerting potential investors to your products or services, the following are worth looking at.

The Economist

Making Money

Private Eye

The Spectator

But don't forget, try not come over too heavy just give enough information to make a potential customer prick up their ears, and keep it short and sweet.

Appendix

More Narconomic-Friendly Markets

Throughout the manual, I've focussed on the signature and ephemera based products I've chosen to specialise in. In truth, there are dozens of markets where the Narconomic principles (purchase light, easy to transport products in one market where they're undervalued, and dispose of them in another where they're more highly valued) can be used to yield extraordinary profits.

Here is an additional (but by no means exhaustive) list of Narconomic-friendly markets...

- Motoring memorabilia
- Royal memorabilia
- Film memorabilia
- TV memorabilia
- Medals and awards
- Signed cheques
- Sports programmes
- Theatre programmes
- Photographs and prints
- Share certificates
- Cigarette cards
- Postcards
- Model cars
- Posters
- Trading cards
- Car brochures
- Comics
- Annuals
- Paintings

For each and every one of these, there are places to buy where demand and prices are relatively low, and other places to sell where demand and prices are relatively high.