

A better bartering system

New Canadian website a free online swap service that turns trash into treasures



He goes to SwapSity.com and registers.

1. Post Stuff

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While the recession is officially over in Canada, consumer spending still hasn't returned to postrecession levels. Concern about credit card debt and the stability of the job market has many Canadians looking for alternative ways to meet their needs.

Enter SwapSity, a free online barter service launched in Canada on March 22. SwapSity provides an eco-friendly and budgetconscious way to turn trash into treasures, instead of sending it to the garbage dump.

"Instead of sending perfectly good items to landfills, trade them and let someone else enjoy your castoffs," said SwapSity founder Marta Nowinska.

Bartering has been around since the beginning of civilization, but what makes Swap-Sity unique as an online service is that it is completely free and open to everyone.

"While business barter exchanges are widespread in Canada, bartering is not easily accessible to Canadian consumers," said Nowinska.

Everyone has something to barter. You can learn Japanese in return for Amazon gift certificates or arts-and-crafts supplies, trade an alto saxophone for patio furniture. Offer your services as a dogwalker, babysitter or administrative assistant and get something fabulous in return, or exchange the clutter in your basement or garage for something that you really need.

"Online swapping of unwanted possessions, free time or talents is a perfect solution for costconscious Canadian consumers seeking a more affordable way to acquire goods and services during these trying times," said Nowinska.

For those who don't have anvthing to trade, SwapSity even provides the option of trading goods for cash.

In order to make exchanges easier, SwapSity locates matches within a defined distance. As of the March 22 launch, SwapSity had two major urban centres -Toronto and Vancouver - already participating in the program. Nowinska says other cities will be added as soon as requests are received through the website.

One man's trash is another man's treasure

You can swap just about everything online, including gift certificates and tickets, computers, electronics,

toys, housing/rentals, **DVDs and clothes**

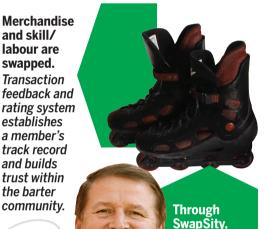
Bill normally charges \$30 an hour; figuring the job would take three hours, he estimates his time is worth

He then creates a wish list of what he wants in exchange for painting.

What can I swap? Items/skills Cash

Items/skills Items/skills Items/skills + cash Items/skills **Examples:** Cash **Textbooks** Cash **Grass mowing** Computer Repair **Used Games** Cottage Vacation Build a website Foreign language CDs + Cash

> **Rob** is looking for someone to paint his deck and notices on SwapSity that one of the items Bill is looking for is a pair of Rollerblades,



Rob and Bill negotiat<u>e</u> and agree on the trade. setting up a time and place to meet.



lessons

Benefits of bartering



Saves Money: Exchange goods and services in lieu of cash. Barter unwanted assets and extra time.



Curbs Consumerism: Instead of constantly shopping, try swapping.



Builds Relationships: Connect with other barter-

savvy swappers and help each other out by exchanging skills and services.

Recycles: Embrace a greener lifestyle and leave a smaller environmental footprint by recycling old treasures, cutting down on waste and getting maximum utility out of unwanted

possessions Spring cleaning: Get rid of that extra TV that sits unwatched, books you've already read. DVDs that are just gathering dust or boxes of old toys.

Forbidden treasures

SwapSity prohibits users from posting any items that are:

- Stolen, counterfeit or fraudulent
- Offensive, obscene, abusive, indecent or defamatory
- · Infringing on any copyright, patent, trademark, trade secret or any other proprietary right
- Not in control or legal possession of the swapper
- · Illegal, unauthorized, questionable or may breach any applicable laws
- Dangerous or hazardous
- Coupons for any illegal or banned items

Examples of illegal items:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Animals

which he has.

- Artifacts
- Used cosmetics
- · Drugs/medical paraphernalia
- Used earrings
- Escort services

- Firearms/weapons/ knives/ammo
- Food
- · Human parts/ organs
- · Lottery tickets
- Pesticides
- Pornography
- · Real estate