

Real-time Online Auction System

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Introduction

Medoc's auction system allows buyers to participate in an auction based at an auction house, using the Internet. The system works in real-time and allows online buyers to bid at the same time as buyers on the auction house floor. During an auction, live sound and video is streamed to the online buyer's PC, from the auction house.

The system is browser based and operates on a standard PC. In order to receive video streaming the user will need Quick Time 6.5, this can be downloaded free from the Internet.

The colour scheme of the system can be altered to include corporate colours and logos. The system has been designed using a series of templates which can be modified to match the layout of existing corporate websites.

Before using the system online buyers have to pre-register with the auction house and they are assigned a secure login.

Features

- Browser Based
- Real-time Bidding
- Live Sound and Video Streaming
- Secure-login
- Message Sending (individual or group)
- Credit Limit Setting
- Reporting

The Online Auction Process

The participants in the online auction process are:

The Auctioneer - Conducts the auction at the auction house and can see the bidding projected onto a plasma screen on the auction floor.

The Rostrum Clerk - Controls online auctions (further details at the bottom of the page).

Floor Bidders - Bidding from the auction house floor.

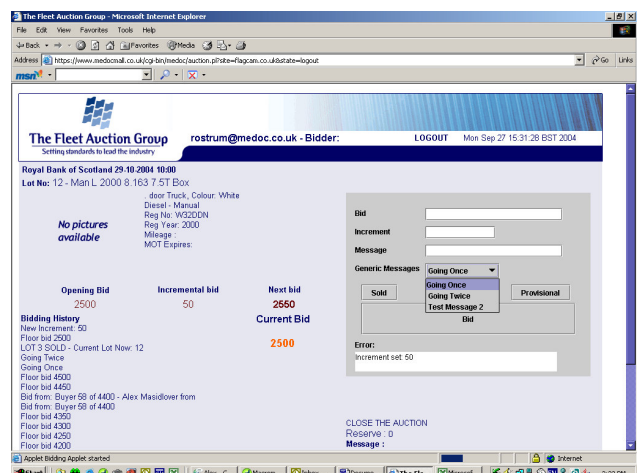
Online Bidders - Bidding from another location using the auction house website.

Rostrum Clerk

During the live auction the Rostrum Clerk sets the opening bid values, amends bid increments and closes the auction. The Rostrum Clerks screen can be viewed on the right.

All floor bids are entered into the system, by the Rostrum Clerk, ensuring that online bidders are kept up-to-date.

In addition, the Rostrum Clerk, is able to transmit messages to online buyers. These can be to all online buyers or an individual buyer. The Rostrum Clerk can send generic messages such as 'going once' or create new ones.



Catalogue Screen

Buyers can view online the items to be auctioned. The screen below shows typical details of the items to be sold.

The screenshot shows the 'The Fleet Auction Group' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, ABOUT US, SERVICES, ACCOUNTS, PRESS CENTRE, CONTACT, and FLAGCAM. The current date is 27 September 2004. The main content area is titled 'CATALOGUE' and displays a list of vehicles for auction. On the right side, there are dropdown menus for 'Lots per Page' (with options 5, 10, 15, or 20) and 'Sort By' (with options for lot number or item name). The main table shows a list of vehicles, with the first lot selected. The detailed view for Lot 1 - Renault Laguna 1.9 Expression DCi a/c, s/r is shown on the left, including a description: '5 door H/Back, Colour: Green Metallic Diesel - Manual Reg No: PE51EZR Reg Year: 2001 Mileage: V MOT Expires:'. The 'Item Image' field is currently empty, displaying 'No pictures available'. The 'Vehicles in Auction' list on the right includes: Lot 1 - Renault Laguna 1.9 Expression DCi a/c, s/r; Lot 2 - Renault Master T35D LWB Diesel - Manual; Lot 3 - Iveco-Ford Cargo 75 E 15 7.5 T Box; Lot 12 - Man L 2000 8.163 7.5T Box; Lot 13 - DAF Truck 45 150 TI 7.5T Box Unit.

The catalogue shows the Lots listed on the right side of the screen. Clicking on a Lot displays more detailed information on the left side of the screen. The buyer can change how many Lots are displayed on one page and can sort by either Lot number or item name. Clicking on the 'Item Image' will bring up a separate screen showing up to four different views of the item.

To create the online catalogue the auction house can either enter the information manually or by importing a 'csv' (comma separated value) file. Once the information is online, the Lots can be modified or even removed. The screen below shows the add/modify catalogue entry.

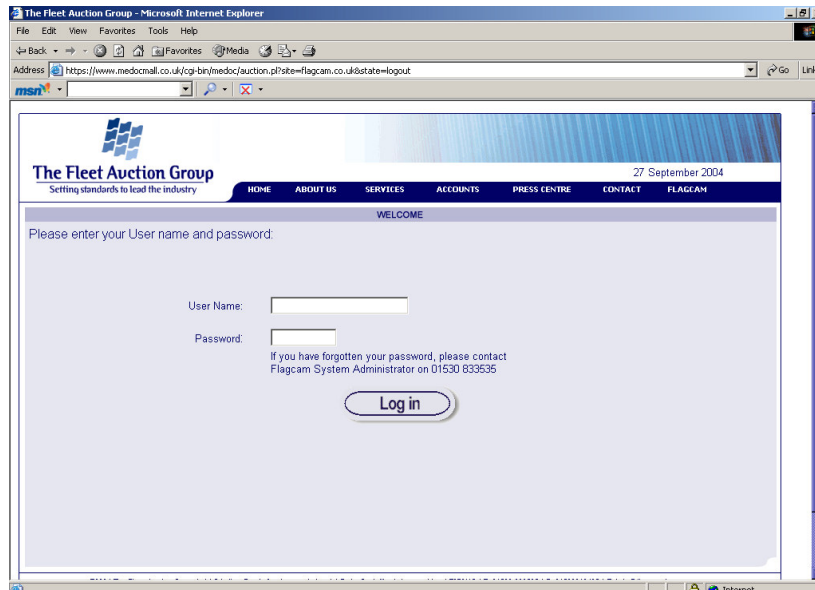
The screenshot shows the 'Add / Modify Catalogue Entry' form on the website. The form includes fields for 'Sale No' (set to 'Royal Bank of Scotland'), 'Lot No' (set to '22'), and 'Vehicle Type' (set to 'Ford Ranger 2.5 Diesel Pick Up'). The 'Description' field is populated with 'Pickup, Colour: White Base Diesel - Manual Reg No: X4730CX Reg Year: 2000 Mileage: V'. There are input fields for 'CAPCLEAN' (3175), 'CAPAVERAGE' (3175), and 'Reserve Price' (3725). At the bottom, there is an 'Add / Modify' button and a 'Back To Catalogue' link.

Online Bidding

Before a buyer can bid online they must register. Using the back-office system, the auction house, assigns the buyer a username and password. In addition the auction house sets the buyer a credit limit and enters their contact details.

Screen A below shows the buyers log-in. Once the buyer has logged in they are directed to screen B, which shows forthcoming auctions. Clicking on a forthcoming auction will take the buyer to the catalogue for that auction.

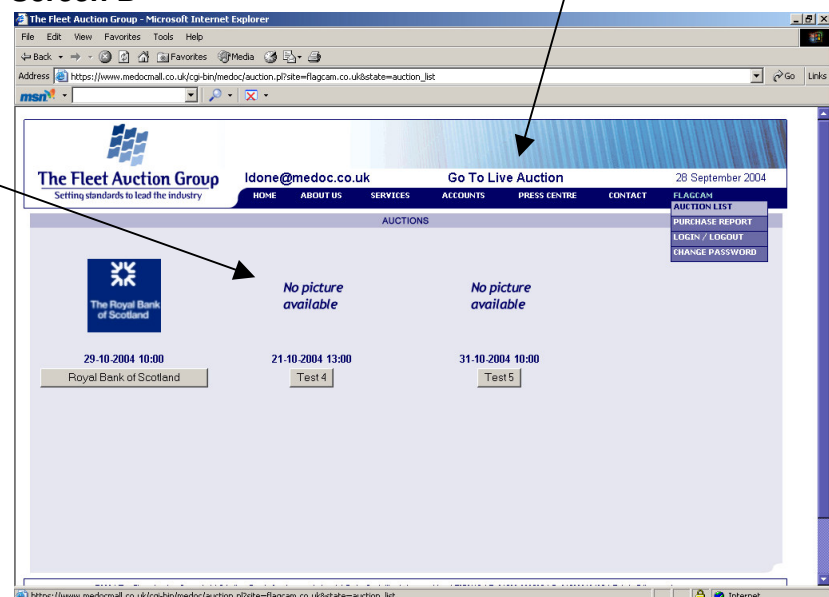
Screen A



“Go To Live Auction”
Only appears when live
auction is taking place

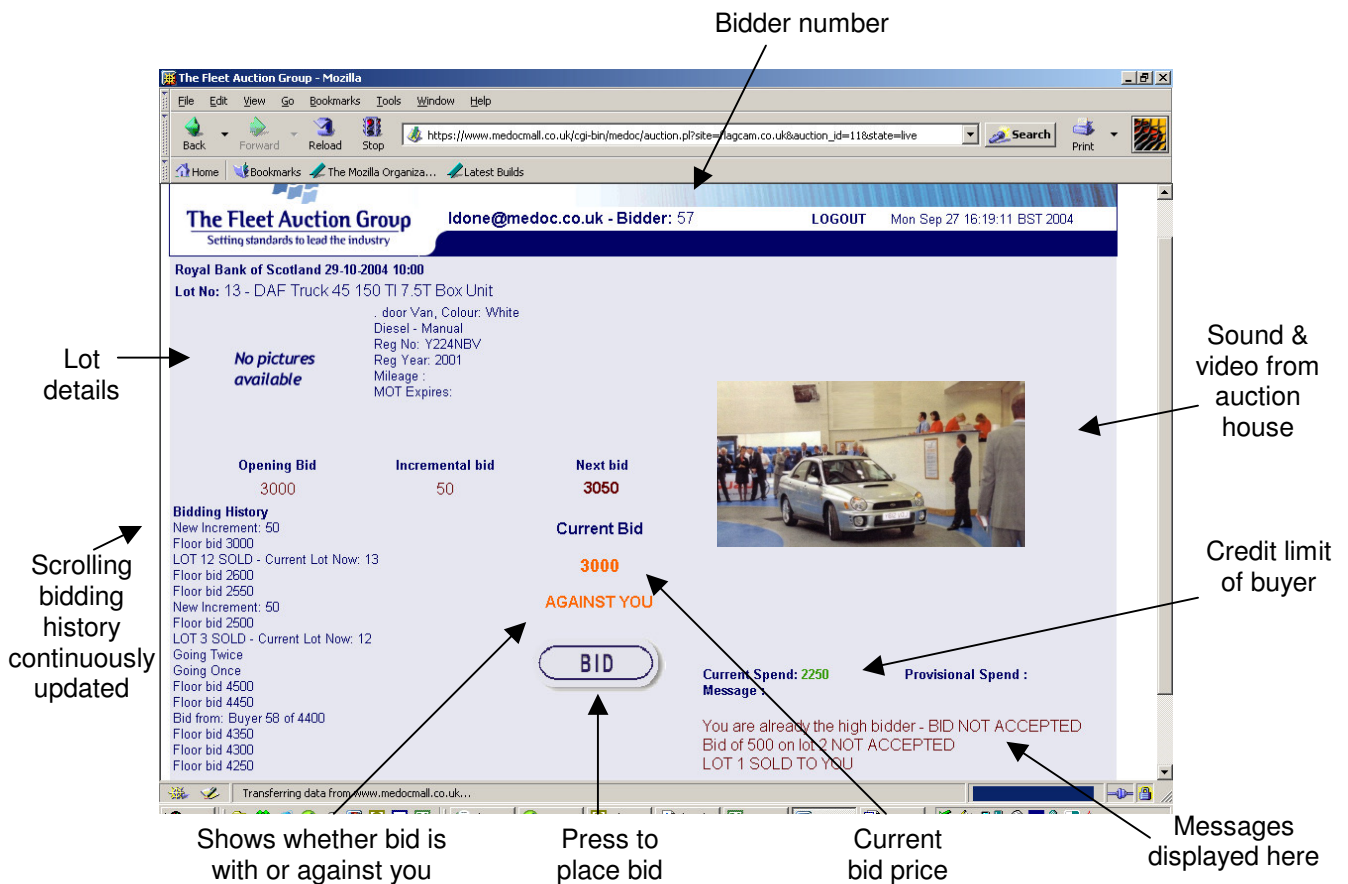
Screen B

Forthcoming
Auctions



If an auction is currently taking place a message is displayed at the top of the screen saying 'Go To Live Auction'. Clicking on this link will take the buyer directly to the bidding screen. The system automatically assigns the buyer a bidder number. The bidding screen can be viewed on the next page.

The Bidding Screen



During a live auction the bidding history continuously scrolls down the left side of the screen. On the right-hand side, of the screen, video footage from the auction is shown. In addition, the online buyer, will be able to hear sound from the auction.

To place a bid the buyer hits the 'Bid' button. If this bid is accepted the 'against you' message changes to 'with you'.

When the online buyer wins a Lot a message will be displayed saying 'Lot n SOLD TO YOU'. The system automatically sends the buyer a purchase confirmation email. The email gives details of the auction house and details of the Lot that the buyer has won.

Reporting

Two reports are currently available for the system:

Purchase Confirmation Report provides the details of the vehicles purchased by each buyer this report is also available to a buyer to obtain a printout of the vehicles purchased by his company.

Auction Report provides details of the sales during the auction.

For further information or a demonstration please contact the Medoc sales team on 0115 986 8786.
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