

Scan Trading

This is probably not a brand new idea, but I never really considered it until Loren Moore happened to bring it up in a recent discussion. Scan trading is where you send scans of the covers you are proposing to trade so that your trader can pick and choose which ones he actually wants before you send them. And then he, of course, reciprocates. It has its advantages and disadvantages.

The disadvantages first: Obviously, you can't do scan trading unless you have a scanner and are on the internet, so not all your traders wouldn't be able to do this. Also, this is a much more 'intense' form of trading. You have to *really* search, sort, and identify those covers which your trader wants. It's much easier to simply throw 15 or so 'random' covers in your trader's want areas and send the trade out. Finally, (and this is the one that may eliminate *me*), it's time consuming to do all the scanning (and keep in mind that I already do a lot of cover scanning for the various bulletins) (although, I should note that even as I write this, I'm in the middle of a scan trade with a Girlie collector).

The advantages: The big advantage is that both you and your trader eventually end up with covers that you both actually want—no dupes, no covers out of want areas. no one dissatisfied with the trade (because you've both already OK'ed all the covers before they're sent). Also, you've both saved on postage because unwanted covers are not being sent all over the country. Additionally, you're not both faced with the problem of later unloading those unwanted covers elsewhere. Moreover, with scans, you get to *see* the covers, enabling you to discern color and text variations that you wouldn't ordinarily be able to, even if your trader had sent you text descriptions of the covers he had available to trade. Plus, if you're trading listed covers (as in Girlies), you wouldn't need scans at all, because you'd simply be swapping catalog #s. But that doesn't work if one of you doesn't go by the listing. Finally, by insuring that you're only sending covers that your trader wants, you end up with happier...and longer lasting... traders, not to mention. Thus, scan trading normally offers a much more efficient way of trading.

Tips: Remember that such scans are going to be uploaded and downloaded, and the bigger the file sizes the longer the sending and receiving time involved. You don't want to overload your trader's computer by sending him a bunch of scans that are + meg each. Be sure and do your scans at about 100-150 dpi to insure small file sizes.

Also, I find that it's much easier on my side of things if my trader sends an individual scan of each cover rather than, say, one scan of eight covers. That way, I can simply copy the scans I'm interested in, send them back to him as attachments, and simply say, "I want these!" If I say, "I want scans 1, 5, 8, and 11," that puts a burden on my trader to remember, or keep a record of, which scan was which cover. Or, similarly, I could take those scans I want, put them on a word processor page(s) and send *that* back to him as one .pdf attachment. And, in case you're thinking that individual scans are a lot more trouble, I've found that I can scan 8 covers at once, but if I space them correctly my scanner will still scan them individually rather than giving me one big scan.

And here's one that may be just a personal quirk of mine (but it *does* drive me nuts!), if you're going to scan a cover, do it right! Don't scan something askew, upside down, blurred, or that has a lot of empty space around it. I get scans all the time where someone has sent me a scan of a cover, but what they've scanned and sent is a whole 8 1/2" x 11" page...with *a* cover somewhere on it...thus making the file size at least 8x bigger than it had to be...and insuring that if I need to do anything with that scan, first I'll have to crop it down to the actual cover.

And always remember...*Technology: it makes your life easier!*.....when it works!