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One Short Story, Three Very Important Lessons

By Joe Chapuis

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I buy a lot of books online. So many, in fact, that I built my own website (Booku.com) which searches the big online stores and locates the best prices for me. It's nothing fancy, but it does the trick.

The other day, I received an inquiry from someone representing another online book retailer, requesting that I add their store to my roster. So I checked them out.

My first impression was, "Ah, yes, I remember them". I had been there before but had departed after several seconds, without venturing past the home page. I couldn't remember why. I investigated, and here's what I discovered this time:

On the top left, there's a button that says "Save on Christian Books, Music, and Bibles". The top right says something about "Desecration". I also noticed the word "FaithPoint" mentioned a few times.

After a quick view of the site I jumped to this conclusion: It's a bookstore specializing in Christian books and religious products. Perfect, if only I had a hankering for, let's say, an audio version of the Bible on CD.

But, upon further investigation, I discovered something fantastic:

They actually had a great inventory of all kinds of books – not just religious titles. New books, used books, and hard-to-find

One Short Story, Three Very Important Lessons

books. (Who would have known? Why did they hide it? Did they even KNOW they were hiding it?) But, here's the kicker...

Every title I searched was at least 10% cheaper than could be found at Amazon.com (you get the extra discount when you purchase a \$5 membership – but I think it's worth it.) In addition, they had titles I had previously searched at Amazon, but couldn't find. They even offered something I have yet to see online: the ability to order individual issues of magazines (not just subscriptions).

I decided to go shopping.

After filling up my cart with five magazines and a wee tiny book, I was a bit surprised to see the total price considerably higher than I expected. When I got to the bottom of the list, I saw the shipping charge for UPS ground service (3–7 business days – ugh) was almost ten bucks (\$3.25 plus \$.99 per item). For what? A few magazines and a book? These items would probably fit in a USPS flat rate envelope for three and change.

At about this time, I could hear the voices in my head (no, not THOSE voices) screaming: "Abandon cart! Abandon cart!"

Which is just what I did.

This isn't just a silly little story about me being a cheapskate. There's more. If you sell anything online that has to be shipped, pay close attention here...

"Shipping And Handling Charges Deter 63 Percent Of Consumers >From Buying Online..."

"...Survey reveals that 73 percent of consumers evaluate the total price of products, including S&H, before making an online purchase."

"...Companies that are profiting on S&H run the risk of increasing distrust among consumers."

"New research indicates that weight–based shipping and handling costs will minimize merchants' and consumers' risks"

[Source: Jupiter Media Metrix Press Release – go read it:
<http://www.jup.com/company/pressrelease.jsp?doc=pr010611>]

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Moral of the story (Get it? "moral" – Christian book store, ah forget it...)

"Don't judge a book its cover." (sorry, couldn't resist)
Or...

"What you're selling and what the prospect thinks you're selling are often two different things." Or...

"The customer isn't stupid. If you're using shipping and handling charges as a mini profit center for your online biz, you're not fooling anyone." Or...

Enough. I think you get the picture.

Please Note: I am not implying that this company has

intentionally created a S/H profit center or is trying to milk their customers. Perhaps they just need to take a closer look at their S/H system (similar to CDnow.com – see press release above).

Maybe you do, too.

PS – The store is Booksamillion.com. It's a nice-looking site with great prices and a huge selection. I expect I'll give them a try in the near future. (I'll just be sure to order really heavy books and get my money's worth.)

Wishing you much success...

Joe Chapuis is a self-employed internetbusiness consultant and online publisher who swears he'llnever work for someone else again. His free report: *The 10 Commandments of Online Success*TM and free email newsletter will show you how to get "amazing results online, fast." [Subscribe Here » » »](#)
<http://RequiredReading.com>

Does The Title Reflect The Story?

By Nick Vernon

Short Story Writing Tips -

We all have different tastes in what we like to read. Some have a particular taste for horror, while others prefer romance or fantasy or crime stories, etc. My favourite genre in short stories is horror, so

One Short Story, Three Very Important Lessons

once the title grabs my attention, I will enthusiastically read the story.

You may want to leave your readers in no doubt of the type of story you have written. That's fine. You want to grab all the fans out there and/or recruit new readers into the genre you are so fond of writing.

So, how do you select a title that reflects your story?

Should the title always reflect the story?

Not always. But your title must have some sort of connection with your story.

Is There A Connection Between Your Title And Your Story?

If you choose not to have the title reflect the story that's fine too. But there should be some relevance between them.

If, for instance, your story is about a man walking on the moon, then it wouldn't make sense to title it, 'Walking on Mars.'

If your story is an uplifting tale about two characters finding love, then your title isn't going to mention death, unless of course one of the characters' die.

At first your title may not give away the nature of your story. But once having read the story, the reader will understand the connection. Let me give you a few examples...

'The Fire In The Sky'

This can be the title of a story in which an airplane explodes in midair or a story about a meteorite on its way to earth, etc.

'An Angel Amongst Us'

Can be the title of a story about a person with extraordinary kindness or about an angel that leaves the heavenly realm to reside on earth, etc.

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You can be ambiguous in your title if you wish. Your title doesn't always have to reflect your story. Having more than one possible meaning intrigues the reader but remember...

There has to be a connection between your title and your story.

Besides his passion for writing, Nick Vernon runs an online gift site where you will find gift information, articles and readers' funny stories. Visit

## One Short Story, Three Very Important Lessons

Does The Title Reflect The Story?

Have You Settled On First Choice When Choosing A Title?

Learn Golf Techniques Without Leaving Your Home

Creative Writing Tips – Have You Established Your Main Character At The Start?

Desperately Seeking the Truth

Blogging Made Easy

The Alphabet of Birds

The First and Second Adam

HIV/Aids Healed by the Power of God

How To Overcome Dandruff



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