



## Alibris Used Book Sales Soar with A/B Testing

Alibris connects people who love books, music, and movies to thousands of independent sellers from around the world. The company employs proprietary technology and advanced logistics to offer more than 50 million used, new, and out-of-print books from more than 10,000 sellers. Alibris is a rapidly growing business that has strategic partnerships with the best and largest players in the bookselling industry.



### Challenge

Alibris is constantly seeking to improve its customer experience and make [www.alibris.com](http://www.alibris.com) the easiest place to buy rare and used books. The web design team questioned why only a small percentage of customers were using its *Narrow Your Results* search tool, which helps customers find books based on descriptions such as used, signed, or first edition. The team wanted to determine if changing the placement would increase usage, enabling more customers to benefit from this quick means of zeroing in on a particular book.

### Solution

Instead of relying on subjective evaluations, Alibris leveraged Coremetrics A/B testing and real estate reporting to quantify the impact of placing the *Narrow Your Results* option more prominently on the site. Alibris used site promotions tags on the links to compare the original placement with the new placement. By measuring the number of clicks, visitors, orders, and sales attributed to each link, Alibris found that the new placement performed substantially better. A/B testing provided a fast and easy means of determining the value of the change.

### 500% More Clicks, 400% More Sales

Placing the option in a more prominent position dramatically affected both usage and sales. Usage increased more than 500 percent

while sales surged more than 400 percent after the change, as more Alibris customers were exposed to the option.

Today, a much larger number of casual users take advantage of the *Narrow your results* tool, and the option accounts for a more representative mix of book sales. For example, while every category of books saw large increases in sales because of the increased traffic, some book types such as dustcover and softcover books saw particularly strong sales. Previously, the small percentage of people who used the tool bought mostly hardcover books. The more prominent placement provides a broader range of buyers with additional navigation capabilities that simplify buying on the site.

### Additional Benefits

Coremetrics reporting also uncovered the need to refine the search messaging to provide more relevant results. In some cases, customers were incorrectly using the tool to generate new searches rather than refine existing ones. A change to the search descriptions and then further tracking enabled Alibris to reduce the number of incorrect searches.

Moreover, with Coremetrics reporting, Alibris can give independent booksellers more visibility into customer demand by providing them with detailed information on how customers are using the site and how booksellers can leverage this information to help increase their sales.

***“Continuous testing is the lifeblood of online sales. You can’t survive without it, and you can’t do it without reliable web analytics. With Coremetrics, we can prototype site enhancements quickly and receive immediate market feedback on what impacts sales.”***

—COO  
Alibris

To learn more about Coremetrics or to schedule a demo, please call 1.866.493.2673 or visit [coremetrics.com](http://coremetrics.com).

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