Customer-Focused Thesauri

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Outline

- Introduction to thesauri
- Keyword search default trend
- User behavior and possible user expectations
- Finding the thesaurus/subject search
- Types of subjects
- Subjects for refining searches
- Keyword vs. thesaurus subject search comparison example demo
Introduction to Thesauri

- Thesaurus: A type of controlled vocabulary (authoritative list of terms), having:
  1. An approved preferred term for each concept, and synonyms/variants/nonpreferred terms redirecting to the preferred term name
    - To support consistent indexing and high precision and recall in retrieval
  2. Structured relationships between preferred terms, both hierarchical and associative/related.
    - To support browsing and finding the preferred subject


- The same used in both indexing and retrieval.

- Support both print and online information retrieval.
Indexers of database records can browse or search a thesaurus, with cross-references to other terms:

- Broader terms
- Narrower terms
- Related terms (See also)
- See/Seen from (use preferred term)
Introduction to Thesauri

Thesaurus Benefits

A thesaurus gathers synonyms, acronyms, variant spellings, etc.

- Documents not missed due to use of different words (e.g. **Automobiles**, instead of **Cars**)
- Users do not need to guess the spelling of unusual or foreign names (e.g. **Muammar Gaddafi**)

A search restricted on the thesaurus retrieves concepts not just words.

- Documents excluded for mere text-string matches (e.g. **monitors** for computers, not the verb “observes”)

Keyword Search Default Trend

- Subscription periodical/reference databases offer both Subject thesaurus and keyword search.
- User interfaces present keyword search as default; thesaurus access is in Advanced Search or other less obvious place.
- Mimics familiar simple Google search experience.
- Previously (before Google’s existence), thesaurus search or browse was the default.

Examples of simple search box and default keyword search
Welcome to Inspire Indiana's Virtual Library! To get started, begin your search in the box above.

Testing & Education Reference Center

Whether it's preparing admission materials or getting a heads-up on preparatory tests, the Testing & Education Reference Center (TERC) is INSPIRE's online tool designed to help students — from high school to graduate school to specialty school and beyond — prepare to make their further education decisions easier. Click to begin!
ProQuest Central

This database serves as the central resource for researchers at all levels. Covering more than 160 subjects areas, ProQuest Central is the largest aggregated database of periodical content. This award-winning online reference resource features a highly-respected, diversified mix of content including scholarly journals, trade publications, magazines, books, newspapers, reports and videos.

- More information
- View title list

Subject coverage
- Business and economics
- Health and medical
- Social sciences
- Science

Included databases
- ABI/INFORM Complete
- Accounting & Tax
- Banking Information Source
- Canadian Newsstand Complete
DISCOVER A COMPREHENSIVE COLLECTION OF BUSINESS, TRADE, AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Search...

Basic Search

SUBJECT GUIDE SEARCH

PUBLICATION SEARCH

TOPIC FINDER

Use the Topic Finder to discover the context of your search term and uncover hidden connections.

TOP SEARCHES

- Business Innovation
- Business Strategy
- Microfinance
- Real Estate
- Social Marketing

Business Collection contains 112,259,991 articles and was last updated as recently as March 14, 2018.
User Behavior and Possible Expectations

- Users tend to use the default search.
- Users may not understand what a “Thesaurus” is.
- Users may expect the availability of “Subjects” in library databases:
  - OPACs offer Subject search.
  - Subscription databases are supposed to be “better” than the web and Google search.
- Users may be familiar with faceted subjects in ecommerce sites.
- Different users (students, researchers, professionals, nonprofessionals) may have different levels of interest in searching Subjects.
Where to Find Subjects

No default standard location for Subjects in subscription database user interface Could be:

- On the advanced search page
- From the top menu
- Drop-down next to the search box
- Subject Guide (not on menu; not default)

And also after getting search results:

- In the margin of search results, to limit the results
- In the margin of a selected record, to show its indexed Subjects
Subjects not accessible on the default start page, only on the Advanced Search page.
Subjects or Thesaurus accessible from the top menu
Subjects also accessible on default start page via “Subject Guide Search”
Subject Guide Search

security/

- Security systems industry
- Security guards
- Security management
- Security services industry
- Security devices
- Security measures
- Security classification (Government documents)
- Security consultants
- Security Pacific Corp.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Terms</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Security devices</td>
<td>38100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subdivisions +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related subjects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barracuda Security Devices</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barracuda Security Devices Barracuda Security Device (Computer supply)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data security devices</td>
<td>21365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subdivisions +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related subjects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locks (Security devices)</td>
<td>3809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subdivisions +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related subjects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Terms</td>
<td>Show Related Subjects By</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alarms</td>
<td>Narrower Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-theft devices</td>
<td>Narrower Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data security devices</td>
<td>Narrower Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handcuffs</td>
<td>Narrower Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intruder detection equipment</td>
<td>Narrower Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locks (Security devices)</td>
<td>Narrower Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motion detectors</td>
<td>Narrower Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safes</td>
<td>Narrower Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>Broader Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retinal scanners</td>
<td>Related Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security measures</td>
<td>Related Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security systems industry</td>
<td>Related Term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Also, if matching a *USE* cross-reference in the thesaurus, the cross-reference is displayed as “Also Try.”
Sub-types of Subjects

- In addition to the subject thesaurus, controlled lists of names/proper nouns might also be available.
- These may appear as sub-types of Subjects.
Sub-types of Subjects

Gale InfoTrac Advanced Search
Sub-types of Subjects

ProQuest Advanced Search
Subjects are not just for initial searching but for refining and discovering

- **Refining**: Subjects common in search result are listed on search result set margin
- **Discovering**: Subjects for a specific record are indicated, to allow exploring the Subjects


Subjects: CAPITAL punishment; CRIMINAL law; PUNISHMENT in crime deterrence; CRUELTY; CRIMINAL investigation; DECISION theory

Academic Journal

PDF Full Text  Save PDF to Cloud (288KB)

3. Deterrence and the death penalty: Why the statistics should be ignored.


Subjects: Punishment in crime deterrence; Capital punishment; Murder - Law & Legislation; Statistics; National Research Council (U.S.); Nagin, Daniel

Academic Journal

PDF Full Text  Save PDF to Cloud (851KB)


Subjects: CAPITAL punishment; CRIMINAL law; PUNISHMENT; EXECUTIONS & executioners; HOMICIDE; CRIMINOLOGY

Academic Journal

PDF Full Text  Save PDF to Cloud (439KB)
Gale InfoTrac Search Results

Magazines (3,776)

Search Terms: Basic Search ("Internet of things")

Citation: ARTICLE
NO BATTERIES INCLUDED: New forms of energy harvesting and low-powered sensors promise to eliminate batteries and enable the Internet of Things
Amit Katwala.
Professional Engineering Magazine.
Link to CDL Materials Catalog ILL My Library OpenURL Link

Citation: BRIEF ARTICLE
INTERNET OF THINGS IS 'COMING OF AGE'
Amit Katwala.
Professional Engineering Magazine.
Link to CDL Materials Catalog ILL My Library OpenURL Link

Limit Search by:
- Full Text
- Contains Images

Subjects
- Internet of things (724)
- Software industry (197)
- Semiconductor industry (120)
NO BATTERIES INCLUDED: New forms of energy harvesting and low-powered sensors promise to eliminate batteries and enable the Internet of Things

Amit Katwala


Source Citation  (MLA 8th Edition)

Gale Document Number: GALEJ514405340

**RELATED RESOURCES**


Global AI Market in Agriculture... *PR Newswire.* (Mar. 9, 2018) Word Count: 924.

**Related Subjects**

Electric power generation
Internet of things
Renewable energy
Sensors
Comparing results of basic (keyword) and subject searches

Demo from Gale Academic OneFile
Conclusions

- Customer-focused thesauri are those that are made available in multiple places (not just advanced search).
- Subscription database have the same UI for all customers, despite different customer needs.
- If not used initially in search, Subjects are effective in limiting searches or providing discovery.
- Subjects combined with second-level subdivisions can provide effective topic refinement.
- Cross-product searches
  - reduce the availability of multiple Subject/name types and
  - can introduce inconsistencies from third-party subjects or thesauri
Questions/Contact

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