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

Basic Search  Advanced Search  Publications  Browse  About

|| Full text  Peer reviewed

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.

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

Included databases
- ABI/INFORM Complete
- Accounting & Tax
- Banking Information Source
- Canadian Newsstand Complete

Want to Learn More?
Try one of these options:
- Find out more about our new design.
- Search the online Help.
- Discover answers to common questions at ProQuest's Product Support Center.
- Contact Support if you need further assistance.

Search tip
By default, we will look for documents with all the terms entered.
Use "quotation marks" to search for exact phrases.
Separate terms with OR to find any of the words entered.
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
Advanced Search

Look Up Citation

AND ▼

AND ▼

Add a row | Remove a row | Include medical synonyms □

Search options ▼ 0 Recent searches

Limit to: □ Full text
Publication date: ▼ All dates
Updated: ▼ All dates

Subject:

Company/organization:

Person:

Location:

Look up Subjects
Look up Companies/organizations
Look up People
Look up Locations

More options
Accession number — AN
Classification — CC
Product classification — PRCC

Company/organization — ORG
Identifier (keyword) — IF
Location — LOC
Person — PER

Subject ▼

Field codes ▼ Search tips

All fields + text
All fields (no full text) — ALL
Abstract — AB
Author — AU
Document text — TX
Document title — TI
Alternate title — OTI
Publication title — PUB

Company/organization — ORG
Identifier (keyword) — IF
Location — LOC
Person — PER

Subject ▼

diabetes NEAR/3 treatment: NEAR/n looks for documents that contain two search terms within a specified number of words.
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.
### Refine Results

**limit to:**
- Full Text
- Peer-Reviewed Journals

<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>Subdivisions +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related subjects</td>
<td></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>Antitheft 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 for Refining Search Results

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

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


Subjects: CAPITAL punishment; CRIMINAL law; PUNISHMENT; EXECUTIONS & executioners; HOMICIDE; CRIMINOLOGY
NO BATTERIES INCLUDED: New forms of energy harvesting and low-powered sensors promise to eliminate batteries and enable the Internet of Things

Amit Katwala


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**RELATED RESOURCES**

**Studies Conducted at Zhongyi Power**

**Global AI Market in Agriculture**

**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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