

Seeing is believing: Here are the top three reasons I love Reaxys

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Last year this time, I met the Reaxys product team and learned about this new chemistry information product. Prior to that meeting, I had already received several recommendations from my researchers and students about Reaxys. However, I was very skeptical. Why?

Researchers today demand user-friendly search interfaces

For me, the issue of CrossFire Commander, an Elsevier-provided chemistry product that USC Libraries licensed before licensing Reaxys, was never its content, but its interface and accessibility. As a former organic chemist, I used CrossFire Commander very often, and the more I used it, the more I hoped it could be more user-friendly.

As a science librarian teaching chemistry information to the Google generation, I have to admit that often I've felt powerless to attract users to CrossFire Commander, even when dealing with users clearly aware that it offers trusted content essential to their research and study. With the increase of high-quality chemical resources available on the Web, users today demand better and more user-friendly search interfaces as well as more powerful search features and analytical tools on top of the content. Otherwise, they will move away from subscription-based chemical resources regardless of how useful their content is, or how much institutions or libraries have paid for them.

Reaxys gets kudos at USC

In response to our users' research needs, in particular our chemistry researchers' demand for access to trusted content provided via highly regarded chemistry information databases, the USC Libraries became one of the early adopters subscribing to Reaxys. Now, after almost one year of searching and using Reaxys, my users and I just love it.

Here are my top three reasons why I love Reaxys.

1. *The Web-based information search suite provides access to integrated and unified information from three trustworthy, well-regarded chemistry information databases.* Getting information from a client-based (software-based) database is not convenient for most users, and, to some users, it is not "online" searching at all. I love Reaxys because it offers Web-based, unlimited access. With proxy server protection, my users can access it anytime and anywhere. There will be no software installations or upgrades, computer freezing or crashes, or technical questions relating to any such occurrences, anymore. Yeah!
2. *The intuitive and user-friendly search interface offers many versatile analytical tools that help users get targeted results.* Reaxys offers users easy-to-use, comprehensive and in-depth information search capabilities within one universal platform.
3. *The streamlined information search design (e.g., the "synthesis planner" special feature) helps users find what they want more quickly.* We imagine and work on streamlining many things in our life, so why can't we streamline our information search for optimum results? Having a need, knowing a source, searching it and analyzing results, and finding exactly what we want — to some degree, this is exactly what Reaxys offers chemists. Especially noteworthy is Reaxys' Synthesis Planner, which integrates reactions and substances, and provides literature search results, within one interface. Taking advantage of this feature can help users develop better search synthesis strategies.

Seeing is believing

As do my users, I welcome Reaxys to the chemistry information world. If you haven't tried Reaxys, please give it a try. I hope, and I know, you will like it as well. To see a lot of reasons why you too will love it, please visit my Reaxys review at www.istl.org/09-summer/electronic.html.

Importantly, I also hope Reaxys will keep improving through user feedback, which comes from users' search and use experience.

So, let's Reaxys! Happy searching, everyone! **LC**

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🌐 www.usc.edu/libraries

Leading US chemistry grad schools are licensing Reaxys

The University of Southern California, where 1994 Nobel Prize in Chemistry winner George Olah holds the positions of Distinguished Professor of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering and Materials Science and Donald P. and Katherine B. Loker Chair in Organic Chemistry, was the first university to license Reaxys.

Since its beta launch in October 2008 and its launch in January 2009, six of the top 10 graduate schools in chemistry in the US have licensed Reaxys.

The six leading US graduate schools in chemistry that have licensed Reaxys are:

- Harvard University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Northwestern University
- Scripps Research Institute
- Stanford University
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The source of the list of the top 10 graduate schools in chemistry is the 2008 *U.S. News & World Report*.

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