

Collexis' Reviewer Finder Takes Nothing for Granted

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Collexis' new grant management tools show an innovative way to add value to content metadata, as well as providing publishing workflow tools.

Important Details: Semantic search provider [Collexis](#) last month [announced](#) the formal release of its Reviewer Finder application, which "is the first product version of Collexis tools that leading research institutions use to assign reviewers to grants". The software is aimed at streamlining the grant application process, by allowing potential reviewers of a scientific project rapidly to be identified, together with potential conflicts of interest. It does this using Collexis' semantic search technology, which profiles the subject of the grant application and looks for matches with subject profiles of research articles. By analysing the authorship of matching articles, the software can identify relevant subject matter experts as candidate reviewers. The software comes preloaded with the profiles of 1.8 million experts, obtained essentially by harvesting PubMed's article metadata and leveraging Collexis' BioMed Experts application (see Insights 6 August 2008, [Elsevier Survey: Utility is Key to Social Media Applications](#)). The value proposition is that the software can save people who manage grant application the hours of manual, multiple (and mainly) PubMed searches that it would otherwise take to identify subject matter experts appropriate to a given research project. It can also intelligently group and filter results to streamline the process of identification. So, for example, the software might identify a senior researcher as a possible reviewer, but also suggest junior colleagues who might be less busy and therefore more receptive to performing peer review activities. Results can be filtered by geography, historical depth ("go back as far as year x") and users' own networks of contacts can be added. The software can automatically identify co-author and institutional conflicts of interest.

The software has already been tested by the US National Institutes of Health and the UK's Wellcome Trust. It is now being rolled out as a product and currently being "deployed selectively [within the NIH](#), several large publishing partners, and other grant-funding agencies". The Grant Finder will form one of a suite of planned [grant management products](#).

The identification of experts to acts as reviewers is, of course, core to the workflow of primary content publishers too, and to this end Collexis offers a publisher's version of the tool. It is already well down the path of testing the market for a solution which will fully integrate with publishers' manuscript management systems.

Implications: Collexis is making a first move in an area that, in Outsell's view, will become increasingly important to the scholarly communications community. Its application strikes at the heart of funders' workflow, taking the "too much information" generated by first generation web technologies and adding value by providing insight. In this case, the grant manager's productivity is increased by obviating the need for laborious (and error prone) keyword-based search.

Looking towards the business model, larger customers can buy subscriptions while

smaller ones are charged on a per-grant or per-manuscript basis. Note, too, the free raw material. Whilst software companies require up-front investment to develop their expertise and engineering, in this case the result is an alchemy which turns the base metal of article metadata (something most primary publishers consider a by-product of their core process) into the gold of subscription-based revenue via a wholly automated process.

Of course, offerings such as [Elsevier's Scopus](#) and [Thomson Reuters' Web of Science](#) products seek to extract value from article metadata. However, in our view Collexis has moved further from the core of scholarly content than these other offerings. Instead of looking towards to the metrics of scholarly communication, Collexis has opened up a potentially lucrative channel into the funder market by measuring the research process itself. In a world where quantifying ROI is becoming increasingly important, tools that can help with the effective management of the significant sums of money involved in funding research are compelling. For example, Collexis claim to be "analyzing over \$20 billion in grant funds annually in the life sciences alone," with "penetration within the grant management business segment to significantly grow in 2009".

With more grant management applications in the pipeline, Collexis remains, in our view, one to watch.

Links to Outsell profiles of companies mentioned: [Collexis Holdings, Inc.](#), [Elsevier](#), [Thomson Reuters - Scientific Business](#)

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