LexisNexis Academic is a database that is well-known internationally by law professionals as one of the best sources for business and legal research. With more than 10,000 academic sources, it is also useful when you need to find information on issues in the news. Most of the sources are available full text.

**Easy Search**

You may find that searches available on the main screen, called the *Easy Search*, are a quick way to get information. The page is divided into six different sections, four of which (news, legal information, company information, and people search) have search boxes. The *Combined Search* can include cross listings from the different categories, and the *Hot Topic Links* are intended to help a browsing researcher peruse recent issues in the world headlines.

Search results are listed in a concise format. They are returned in reverse chronological order with the most recently published articles at the top of the page, but you can change the order with the drop box at the top left side of the page called *Sort*. You may find that a relevance sort works better. The blue text indicates the title of the document. Shown below is a newspaper article. The line after the title begins with the name of the publication, place and date of publication, type of document, page number, and the number of words in the document. The author, if included, is last.

Click on the document title to see the full text. The full text can be printed, emailed, downloaded (which will be saved in a Word document) exported to RefWorks, or the persistent link can be copied through the tool bar on the right.

**Advanced Search**

Once researchers become more familiar with *Lexis Nexis* they are more inclined to use the Advanced Search and other subject-specific tools. The link to the Advanced Search is located at the far top left corner of the main page and the navigation bar on the left side serves specialized information needs.

When using the Advanced Search, an unusually large search box is available for keyword searching. Researchers are encouraged to think of narrow terms so that the results list is not too large to look through. Researchers may key in Boolean operators (*and*, *or*, or *not*) between keywords. Some other operators unique to *Lexis Nexis* include:

- As a connector between two keywords, “w/#” indicates that the two words must occur within three words of each other in the document. You can use any number you like (“hearing w/3 Clinton” means that hearing and Clinton appear within three words of each other);
- “atleast#” followed by a number indicates that the keyword appears that many number of times “atleast10 (Clinton)”;  
- Keywords can also be manipulated with the truncation character “!” that turns your characters into a root word. For instance, “trunc!” could be searched as “truncated,” or “truncation,”;
- The wildcard character in Lexis Nexis is the “*” and you can replace letters within a word with it like a blank tile in Scrabble: “wild**” could be “wildly” or “wilder.”
Click on the radio button for *Natural Language* if you prefer not to employ these operators and connectors. Specifying the date can be helpful in some searches. Searching by the index term can be a more direct way to access all of the information needed on a certain topic. To access these, just click on the underlined index words. They cover variant names (such as handgun or revolver), geographical places, and also words with multiple meanings. For instance, using the Company Index, search for “Burger King” to find the index terms shown in the example below. Check off the terms you would like to include in the search. You may find that the index terms can help either broaden or narrow your search or improve results by providing variants that you may not have thought of.

*Select Source* is a good way to qualify what type of information you would like to find. Click on the drop box for your options to appear. The search box *By Name* is a way to search by a publication name, such as *Newsweek* or *The New York Times*.

**Company Information**

Really interesting business information can be accessed exclusively through *Lexis Nexis*. Start at the left navigation bar on the main page—you can return to the main page by clicking on the banner at the top left—and click on *Companies* to see the subcategories. Clicking any of the *Dossier* subcategories will change the search screen completely; only business information will be located. A new global navigation bar (shown at right) offers information for companies, executives, industry profiles, and the possibility to compare and keep lists of companies.

The dossier for a company provides key business and financial data as well as current events, intellectual property, or litigation. Dossiers for an industry indicate growth or market data, and dossiers for an executive provide biographical and compensation data. *Compare Companies* allows a user to compare up to five different companies’ balance sheets. *Compare Companies* is also the best search when you need to find an unknown company when you have a set of criteria, such as the NAICS code or an estimation of sales revenue.
Back at the *Lexis Nexis* home page, the *Companies* button also has *SEC Filings* for corporations and *Company Profiles*. The *Company Profiles* is an excellent way to understand if a corporation is successful. If you keep *All Company Information* selected, you will get a report with over 70 different sources pooled together. *SEC Filings* are the forms registered from the company with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including the 10-Q (quarterly reports), 8-K (important events), and annual reports.

**Legal Information**

From the *Lexis Nexis* main page, click on the button in the left navigation bar called *US Legal*. Ten different subcategories serve researchers’ information needs for law. You can find the actual litigation under *Federal and State Cases*, or under *Landmark Cases*, which is a good place to browse for a legal topic.

*Shepard’s citations*, another one of the subcategories, is a service that researchers should look at to be sure that the court decision they are interested in is “good law” (bad law may have been overruled, reversed or diminished and is no longer cited as a legal precedent). Also included is judicial history so that researchers learn about when that case has been referenced and about later cases that cite the original. The citation format must be entered correctly in order to get a result; for example “349 U.S. 294” is Brown vs. The Board of Education. You must enter the exact legal citation, including the periods for a valid citation.

To find court opinions, search *Federal and State Cases*. The *Supreme Court Briefs* subcategory is where researchers find the arguments of the parties who are pursuing/defending their case; it outlines the facts and point of view of each party.

Searching the *Federal/State Statutes, Codes & Regulations* will cover the laws written by state congresses/Congress, the state constitution/Constitution, and the state registers/Federal Register. It answers the question, what is the law and how is it enforced by state/federal agencies in statutes?

For secondary sources on legal matters, use *Law Reviews* to search by citation, author or topic. Searching here is indispensable so that researchers understand the law or litigation more clearly and what issues surround it.

**Accessing Lexis Nexis from Outside the Carlow Network**

If you would like to access *Lexis Nexis* from a computer not connected to the Carlow network, connect to [http://library.carlow.edu](http://library.carlow.edu) and click on the *Off Campus Access* link located on the right hand side of the page. Log into the system using your Carlow Active Directory username and password (the same username and password that you use to log into lab computers). Additional instructions are available on the off campus web page to help you access library databases from off campus.

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