

ABSTRACT

Thieme eCommunicationScience (eComSci), which launches in January 2017, is a new resource for students and faculty in Audiology, Speech Language Pathology, and Communication Sciences programs. eComSci includes a collection of Thieme e-books, images, videos, audio clips and clinical cases. This review explores the main features of eComSci, along with the navigation and searching features of this new Thieme resource.

KEYWORDS: Thieme, eCommunicationScience, eComSci, Audiology, Speech Language Pathology, Communication Disorders, Communication Sciences

INTRODUCTION

On January 1, 2017, Thieme Medical Publishers, Inc. will launch the new eCommunicationScience (eComSci) platform for students and faculty in Audiology, Speech Language Pathology, and Communication Sciences. As of November 2016, eComSci provides access to 38 e-books, 6,500+ images, 113 videos, 46 audio clips, and 166 cases.¹

eComSci's e-book collection includes textbooks and reference books in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology. According to Thieme, eComSci's e-books are frequently used by professors in American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) accredited programs for Masters and Ph.D. level courses. eComSci's images and videos, which are dedicated to Audiology and Speech Language Pathology, are accessible within e-books and can also be searched separately. Images can be downloaded for use during lectures as well as within teaching materials. eComSci's interactive case studies provide real-life examples of adult and pediatric cases with review questions and answers for each case.²

DESCRIPTION OF MAIN FEATURES

eComSci's e-book collection contains over 16,000 pages of reference material from related Thieme texts. eComSci users conduct keyword or phrase searches within each e-book or throughout the entire e-book collection.² E-books can be viewed in two modes: HTML viewer mode and image viewer mode. HTML viewer mode allows users to access hyperlinks to related content and image viewer mode provides viewers with scanned PDF images from the printed book.

Currently, printing differs between HTML viewer and image viewer modes. HTML viewer mode allows for printing of entire chapters at one time. However, image viewer mode only allows for individual printing of each page. Therefore, HTML viewer mode is more useful for printing than image viewer mode at this time.

eComSci also contains 166 clinical cases that are designed for classroom study and discussion.² The program divided the cases into four cases categories, including Adult, Audiology, Pediatric, and Speech-Language Pathology. Cases can be independently browsed by clicking on each category heading or searched using keywords. Individual case information is divided into multiple tabs, such as Introduction, Clinical History and Description, Clinical Testing, Questions for the Reader, Recommended Treatment, Outcome, and Suggested Reading. The tabs vary depending upon the specific content of each case.

eComSci's images and videos are linked to corresponding e-books. Videos are captioned and can be enlarged to full-screen mode. When a video link is clicked, a user is presented with a short description of the video's content and a link to the corresponding e-book. Videos cannot be downloaded for use outside of the eComSci platform. However, images can be searched independently or downloaded from within e-books or cases.

E-Journals searching from within eComSci provides full-text searching for two journals (*Seminars in Hearing* and *Seminars in Speech and Language*) and PubMed. E-Journals search results include links to articles at the abstract level in Thieme's journal database. Users must have institutional access or personal credentials to access the full text of the articles.³ PubMed search results within the e-journals search interface provide links to article entries within the PubMed database.

NAVIGATION

eComSci's navigation is relatively user-friendly. Each section of eComSci is accessible via tabs at the top of the search screen, which include Home, E-books, Cases, Images & Videos, and

E-Journals. The home page contains the basic search box, and the advanced search link is located directly below the basic search box. The home page also includes a News & Events feed that features recent items related to Audiology, Speech Language Pathology, and Communication Sciences, as well as a featured image from the platform's collection.

Viewers browse e-books by categories, by author last name or through a basic keyword or phrase search. Cases can be browsed by topic or users can sort the complete list of cases by author, relevancy score, title, or year.

Images and videos can be browsed by clicking on the corresponding tab and clicking on the "Go" button next to the empty basic search box. Users can then browse by selecting "show videos," "show images," or "show all." To download an image, a user must click on the image to view the high-resolution version of the image. Next, the user must click on the folder icon in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. The image will download within a Microsoft PowerPoint slide. The PowerPoint slide includes the image with corresponding copyright information and description information in the notes field.

SEARCHING

eComSci's basic search supports simple keyword or phrase searches. Boolean operators and complex search strings are not supported, which limits the platform's usefulness for researchers with multifaceted search strategies. Phrase searching using quotation marks is recognized within the basic search feature.

The advanced search allows searches to be limited to cases, images and videos, PubMed journals, and integrated searches. Books are searched by default within the advanced search.

Like the basic search, the advanced search does not provide additional search capabilities to support complex search strategies.

FAQ/HELP PAGES

Thieme eComSci's "Welcome and General Help" page can be accessed at <https://ecomsci.thieme.com/app/static/help>. This page includes general information on how to navigate through eComSci's e-books, cases, images & videos, and journals.⁴

PRICING

Thieme's sales representatives provide quotes for eComSci's institutional annual license for schools with Audiology, Speech Language Pathology, and Communication Sciences programs. Institutional access is authenticated by IP address range.³

CONCLUSION

Academic libraries that support Audiology, Speech Language Pathology or Communication Sciences programs will be well-served by adding Thieme eCommunicationScience to their offerings. Library users should find the ability to download images for noncommercial use to be particularly valuable. eComSci's current interface is straightforward and user-friendly, which leaves room for Thieme to add additional features as the platform evolves.

¹ "Brand New ECommunicationScience Content for November." *Thieme Medical Publishers, Inc.*, accessed November 30, 2016,

<http://thiemepublishers.cmail2.com/t/ViewEmail/r/AF67C9BFE5EF7D8B2540EF23F30FEDED/C6DE676C352E23E34E9AB52EF5D51DA2>.

² Thieme Medical Publishers, Inc., "Thieme eCommunicationScience." Brochure, 2016.

³ "Licensing Information," *Thieme Verlagsgruppe*, accessed November 30, 2016, <https://www.thieme.de/en/thieme-connect/licensing-information-18987.htm>.

⁴ "Welcome and General Help," *Thieme Medical Publishers, Inc.*, accessed December 4, 2016, <https://ecomsci.thieme.com/app/static/help>.