

Why R&D Organizations Are Moving from ISIS to ISENTRIS

The number of scientists using the Symyx ISENTRIS® system recently exceeded 10,000, as the pace of R&D organizations moving from ISIS to ISENTRIS picks up. The ISENTRIS 3.1 and Symyx Direct 6.2 releases in the latter half of 2008 provided the catalyst for many organizations to make the switch. These key product milestones delivered the final missing pieces of functionality necessary for ISENTRIS to replace and surpass ISIS technology. They also provided four compelling reasons for customers to move from ISIS to the much improved ISENTRIS system.

Added value of ISENTRIS

Learning from ISIS, Symyx has made significant progress in improving scientists' day-to-day efficiency with ISENTRIS. Scientists are eager to leverage new ISENTRIS capabilities, including:

- Self-service SAR tables that enable scientists to drag-and-drop fields into flexible tables supporting images, structures, list logic, sorting, and conditional formatting (Figure 1)
- The ISENTRIS reaction planner for building retrosynthetic reaction plans in minutes rather than hours
- An alert service that automatically informs scientists researching given molecules if related data are known and lets scientists drill down to the data
- The metabolic biotransformation pathway explorer that enables scientists to investigate possible biodegradation pathways and toxic intermediates in minutes
- Integration with TIBCO Spotfire® software, permitting scientists to visualize data in Spotfire and return the filtered results to ISENTRIS for further research and reporting
- The history tree that captures workflow and search strategies so that scientists can save, share, and re-run search strategies to get the latest results for reporting (Figure 2)
- Flexible reporting capabilities to PDF, HTML, Word, and PowerPoint that require no IT support to set up

Another incentive to switch to ISENTRIS are useful "add-in" capabilities offered by Symyx Consulting. For example, the new Discovery Team Space in ISENTRIS fosters collaboration among scientists and project groups. From within ISENTRIS, scientists can easily share reports, histories, lists, and queries and notify each other of useful items and reports. Discovery Team Space presents scientists with a useful dashboard of activities and reports pertinent to their daily tasks.

New projects requiring ISENTRIS capabilities

Changing R&D business requirements force supporting scientific applications to evolve, and many customers are adopting ISENTRIS to support new, custom informatics projects. That's because ISENTRIS—unlike ISIS—is built on modern, standard development technologies that scale to meet demand. By leveraging openly available components and non-proprietary development skills, ISENTRIS enables application developers to create custom applications more rapidly than is possible with ISIS. ISENTRIS increases the life expectancy of critical new products or projects for the foreseeable future.

Removal of ISIS limitations

ISENTRIS overcomes several limitations of ISIS, especially as the volume, depth, breadth, and diversity of ISIS databases have encountered limitations.

A key limitation of ISIS is the static nature of scientific views, in particular forms and Hviews. One Symyx customer has over 6,000 Hviews plus multiple supporting forms to access each Hview. In this environment, scientists can wait one to two weeks for updated views and forms. Isestris surmounts this challenge by providing dynamic data sources that automatically build views based on a scientist's profile and the questions being asked. Furthermore, Isestris supports drag-and-drop SAR tables enabling scientists to build their own forms and make decisions on-the-fly. With Isestris, scientists get fast, real-time access to information formatted as they need to see it.

ISIS also has trouble querying data deep in a database (three or more hierarchies down). With ISIS, searches several levels deep in a database of one million structures can take over 20 minutes. The same search in Isestris takes just seconds (Figure 3). This means scientists working in Isestris can ask questions they could not even contemplate before—and Isestris administrators no longer need to create and manage special views to enable high-performance, deep querying into databases.

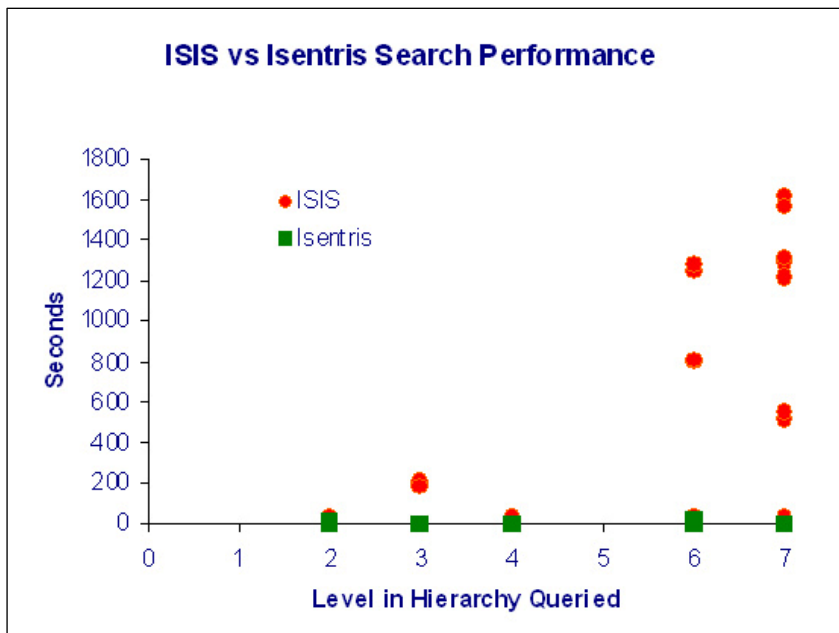
Improved research IT support

Moving from ISIS to Isestris minimizes the risk of ISIS administrative knowledge drain, reduces the overall resource burden from ISIS, and enables improved IT response times for scientists. Research IT resources have supported ISIS for nearly 20 years, during which time organizations have built up huge volumes of Hviews and private language code in ISIS applications. Not only has the resource investment for ISIS been large, but employees with critical expertise have changed jobs, leaving scientists in the lurch with unsupported applications and Hviews. Isestris uses modern programming and user interfaces for managing and configuring the research environment. The support effort and knowledge required by Isestris is considerably lower than that associated with ISIS.

Making the transition

R&D organizations can transition from ISIS to Isestris at a pace that meets their business needs. Phased migrations using a combination of ISIS and Isestris applications are helping customers preserve the integrity of their information and minimize disruption for the scientist. Symyx Consulting has extensive experience transitioning customers from ISIS to Isestris and offers both standard and custom implementation packages to support the upgrade.

For more information: www.symyx.com/isistransition or sales@symyx.com



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