CASE STUDY

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Federico Aletti, Postdoctoral Research Fellow At The Politecnico Di Milano

Embase is the fastest way to find all the key papers

SUMMARY

Federico Aletti does research in the cardiovascular field, primarily analyzing the systems responsible for regulating blood pressure. He explains how Embase lets him find papers faster than other research solutions.

ELSEVIER

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3 THINGS YOU LIKE ABOUT EMBASE

1. The key terms functionality of Emtree

2. The ability to combine searches effectively

3. The ease of use of the advanced search options

How long have you been with the department of bioengineering at Politecnico di Milano?

I've been a postdoctoral fellow for 3 years, but I've been doing research for 7 years in total. I did both my Ph.D. and postdoctoral training at the Politecnico di Milano. I also spent some time as a visiting scholar at Michigan State University during my Ph.D. and post-doctorate studies.

What is the focus of your work?

My field of investigation is the mathematical modeling of blood pressure control. I apply recently published methods to data obtained by my collaborators in new experiments or I propose new mathematical approaches to better interpret data and experiments. I also mentor students. I use the literature to help give them assignments. Another thing I do with the literature is keep track of clinical collaborators, engineering collaborators, or physiologists to look at the possibility of doing research together or to discuss the results of my analysis with them.

What inspires and motivates you?

I like the cardiovascular field very much. The current trend in this field is to find the relationships between things that happen at a molecular level, something that is more or less written in our DNA, to explain what happens in our systems, like blood pressure or our heart rate. My main motivation is to be able to do a truly multiscale analysis of the cardiovascular system. I'm attracted to the idea that I can just concentrate on one small element that helps build a wall against cardiovascular disease. I'm also inspired by knowledge itself.

What keeps you awake at night?

Waiting for research to get accepted for publication. That includes responding to reviewers who might not understand the reasons behind my work or recognize its quality. Writing grants can also be stressful, because we still need to get the money in!

How does Embase support you?

I normally have to do data analysis, and to do that I need to go through the literature a lot. Databases like Embase minimize the time I waste searching for papers and literature. We have an institutional subscription to Embase, and I also have a personal profile so that I can access it anywhere, which is very useful. I use Embase as my primary search engine for searching for specific terms. If I input specific terms in Google Scholar or PubMed, it's not as effective as with Embase, because of the taxonomy of Emtree. Emtree really helps me because if I find an interesting paper, I can review similar papers through the terms of the entry. Compared to the way of searching in other tools, it's much easier. I'll usually start with a very general term and then go through a process of trying to get closer and closer to my target. First, I search for a word in Embase, and find about 10,000 papers. Then I can go through the terms to narrow my search. Once I've found a paper that I like, I keep going through the terms and the results become much more centered on the things I'm looking for. The other search engines won't let you do that.

Would you recommend Embase to your colleagues?

Absolutely. I think Embase is the fastest way to find all the key papers. That's really the main reason! It takes way less time to find all the key papers that were published in a specific area.