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Preface

Now more than ever, heterogeneous catalysis benefits from powerful theoretical modeling and sophisticated spectroscopic tools to understand how structure influences surface reactivity and selectivity. Some of these characterization and modeling techniques were either unavailable or impractical a mere decade ago. The trend in heterogeneous catalysis has been to de-emphasize the trial-and-error aspects of our research (most notably, the impressive growth in popularity of combinatorial catalysis is due to the fact that it makes trial-and-error a relatively "painless" exercise), and to focus on the understanding of surface structure. In addition to the obvious fundamental merit of this approach, the phrase "catalysis by molecular design" is no longer a futuristic cliché. In this issue of Catalysis Today, the reader will reinforce the notion that modern catalysis papers are almost invariably structure-activity oriented.

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