Comparison of Select Reference Management Tools

UMDNJ — UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY OF NEW JERSEY

University Libraries

Author: Yingting Zhang, MLS, AHIP, Information & Education Librarian
UMDNJ - Robert Wood Johnson Library of the Health Sciences

MLA'11 Annual Meeting & Exhibition, May 13 – 18, 2011, Minneapolis, MN

There are a number of reference management tools available. In order for users to decide which tool is best for their needs, it is important to know each tool's strengths and weaknesses. This poster compares four reference management tools, one of which is licensed by the UMDNJ University Libraries and the other three are open source and freely available. They were chosen based on their functionality, ease of use, availability to library users and popularity. These four tools are: EndNote / EndNote Web, Zotero, Connotea, and Mendeley,

EndNote EndNote Web

zotero

Connotea

MENDELEY

EndNote Desktop
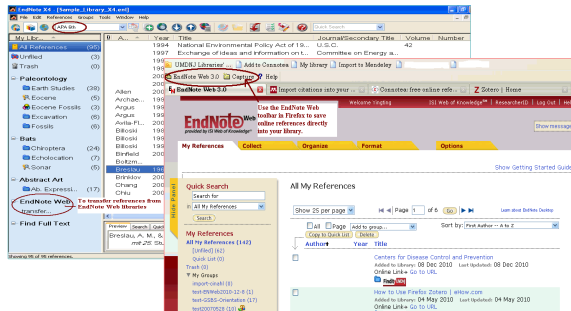
- http://www.endnote.com. Owned by Thomson Reuters.
- Not free. Users need to subscribe individually or have a group license.
- Available for both Windows and Mac. Latest version is X4.0.2.
- Collect, store and organize references from online resources either individually or by a batch via importing from databases or searching directly. Sources can be created from PDFs.
- Attach PDF files, images, charts and tables to references and store the original files in an accompanying data folder.
- Find full text articles or URLs for sources locally or remotely.
- Organize references in sets and groups.
- Create formatted bibliographies easily in any style.
- Using Word or a similar word processor, find and cite references into your paper using the CWYW feature. Users can quickly and easily switch reference styles.
- Customize styles, filters and connections files.
- The initial learning curve is higher.

EndNote Web

- A supplement to EndNote desktop program. Institutional users need to register on campus at http://myendnoteweb.com and access anywhere as long as there is an internet connection.
- Collect, store, & organize references. Store up to 10,000 records.
- Capture web pages but with limited bibliographic information by clicking the Capture button in the browser. ☐ EndNote Web 3.0 ☐ Capture
- Use CWYW in a word processor to cite references into a paper.
- Transfer references to and from EndNote Desktop.
- Share references with selected people; can't share them publicly.
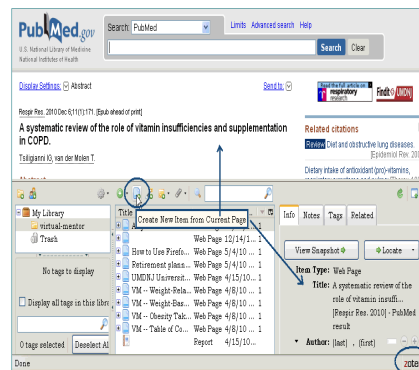
Zotero

- http://www.zotero.org/.
- Developed by George Mason University in 2006.
- The latest version is v. 2.1.6. (as of 5/5/11)
- Free add-on to Firefox with [zotero]

  located in the lower right corner of the browser.
- Collect, manage, cite, and share research sources privately or publicly.
- Capture web pages and references from databases; references can be edited; records can be created from PDFs.
- Zotero 2.0 supports online syncing, so data can be accessed on any computer with an internet connection as long as a Zotero account was created.
- Attach PDFs, documents, and images, to references; add notes and tags in references.
- Drag and drop references into a paper in Word or OpenOffice.
- Journal term lists are not available.
- Data de-duplication function is not found.
- Limited number of pre-defined styles available to choose from for citing references in a paper.
- It does not work across all browsers.

Connotea
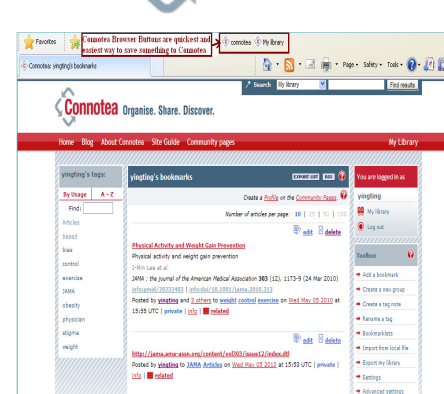
- http://www.connotea.org.
- Developed by Nature Publishing Group in 2004, designed for researchers, clinicians, & scientists.
- Free online reference management tool. Located in the "Cloud" Connotea can be accessed anywhere with an internet connection.
- Users can add a web source including PDFs and bibliographic information by clicking the "Add to Connotea" browser button (see below) created when first signed up. Keywords or tags for that source are assigned by users. [Add to Connotea]
- Can also add an article by using the Connotea Add Form (the manual way) - enter the URL, tags and a description to save the article
- References can be private, public, or shared with other selected researchers.
- Possible to export references to EndNote and other reference management tools or import a batch of references from EndNote to Connotea.
- OpenURL links can be enabled at Advanced Settings. DOI can be recognized.
- Does not support creation of bibliographies .
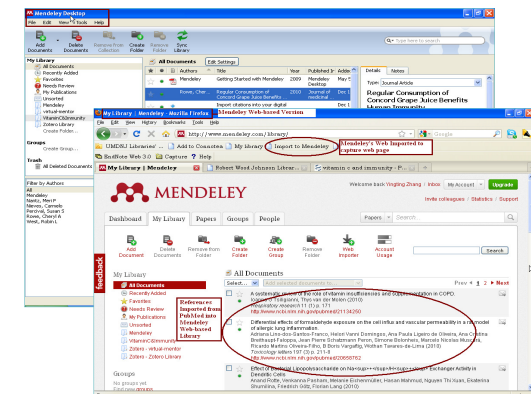
Mendeley Desktop

- www.mendeley.com. Developed by Mendeley in 2008.
- Latest version is 0.9.9.2 for Windows XP + as of 5/8/11.
- Like EndNote, Mendeley has 2 platforms: desktop & web. Also compatible with iPhone
- It's free and cross-platform, but it is a proprietary product. The features offered now are free.
- Collect references from online databases and organize them by folders.
- Manage PDF files – importing, indexing, storing, organizing, searching, and reading PDF files.
- Notes about an article can be saved, searched and shared.
- Support CSL-based citation formatting.
- Cite while you write interface is not as user friendly as desired.

Mendeley Web

- Can be accessed anywhere with an internet connection.
- Free with 1 GB web space and 5 private groups.
- Can import an article or capture bibliographic data from a web page using the Web Importer [Import to Mendeley]
- Possible to share references with colleagues via shared and public collections.