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Cite Your Sources Auto-Magically: Helping Students Choose a Citation Management Tool

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NUTRITION INFORMATION

This recipe for the Cite Your Sources Auto-Magically workshop is designed as a sampler of citation management tools. The workshop enables students, researchers, and faculty to preview four of the most popular choices currently out there: RefWorks, EndNote, Mendeley, and Zotero.

At Florida International University, the new workshop originated from both student and faculty frequently asked questions as well as feedback at our pre-existing citation management workshops. It was also prompted by the possibility of the university ending the sitewide subscription to RefWorks, the longest-running option for those in need of citation management assistance. After discussing what our students and faculty wanted, we decided to add three additional course offerings, providing a taste of each citation management tool. Similar comparisons and descriptions can be found in the literature, also providing an overview of each citation management tool (Kern & Hensley, 2011; Voss, 2019).

The workshop directly and objectively compares these tools without prescribing one to use, which can be a challenge because students often ask librarians to make the choice for them. This recipe provides an outline for designing a citation sampler workshop, including planning, outcomes, guidelines, and best practices.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By following this recipe for a citation manager overview workshop, readers can expect the following:

1. Learn how to set up their own workshop.
2. Understand the best features to highlight.
3. Set expectations on how much to cover.

Attendees, in turn, can expect the following:

1. Learn about different citation management tools.
2. Identify critical features that will help them choose an appropriate tool for their needs.
3. Obtain additional resources for continued learning on their tool of choice.

NUMBER SERVED


This workshop serves approximately 30 attendees in person, depending on classroom seating capacity. The workshop may be simulcast online to provide a synchronous viewing option, and the recording may be posted later for asynchronous viewers, thereby serving a potentially limitless number of remote attendees.

COOKING TIME

Prepare the workshop several weeks in advance of the first session by deciding on the essential features to discuss (e.g., bibliography creation, online sharing). Factor in additional time to create slides or brief videos as necessary (see figure 1 for example). The session itself is approximately an hour long.

DIETARY GUIDELINES

This recipe demonstrates in practice the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*—specifically, Scholarship as Conversation and Information Has Value. At-



Cite Your Sources Automagically
Choose the Reference Manager that's Right for You

Figure 1. Title slide from workshop
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tendees will be able to cite the contributing work of others in their own information production as well as contribute to a scholarly conversation at the appropriate level (ACRL, 2016). Regarding the concept Information Has Value, learners will have the tools to give credit to the original ideas of others through proper attribution and citation (ACRL, 2016).

INGREDIENTS & EQUIPMENT

- Presentation slides
 - Glossary with definitions of key terms (e.g., citation, metadata)
 - Pros and cons for each citation management tool
 - Highlights of each tool's major features
- Embedded prerecorded video demonstrations of each tool
- Teleconferencing and video
 - Live teleconferencing session for synchronous viewing
 - Video recording for asynchronous viewing
 - Hosting platform for video upload
- Library guide (Roth, 2020)
 - Comparison table of the tools highlighted at the workshop
 - Sections devoted to each tool

PREPARATION
One week prior to the first workshop, gather the presenters to rehearse the session for

both flow and content. Invite library staff to serve as a test audience. Consequently, presenters practice the session content while providing an educational opportunity for colleagues. Presenters may use valuable feedback from the test audience to alter the session content accordingly.

COOKING METHOD
This method covers four citation managers (RefWorks, EndNote, Mendeley, and Zotero) in the order our team typically presents them, but it may be adapted to suit the needs of any library instruction program. The session includes the following sections:

- 1. Introduction.** Welcome attendees and introduce presenter(s). (5 minutes)
- 2. "What is a reference manager?"** Explain what citation management tools are, why they are useful, and what they all have in common regardless of the particular choice. Introduce the tools. (10 minutes)
- 3. Selection criteria.** Describe the criteria that attendees should consider when choosing a tool, including cost, interface, online accessibility, and other points. (5 minutes)
- 4. RefWorks.** Present on RefWorks, covering the "especially good for" features, pros, and cons, with a brief live or pre-recorded demonstration of RefWorks in action. (10 minutes)
- 5. EndNote.** Present on EndNote, covering the "especially good for" features, pros, and cons, with a brief live or pre-recorded demonstration of EndNote in action. (10 minutes)

6. **Mendeley.** Present on Mendeley, covering the “especially good for” features, pros, and cons, with a brief live or pre-recorded demonstration of Mendeley in action. (10 minutes)
7. **Zotero.** Present on Zotero, covering the “especially good for” features, pros, and cons, with a brief live or pre-recorded demonstration of Zotero in action. (10 minutes)
8. **Conclusion.** Thank the attendees for coming and provide a link to the LibGuide with the comparison table as well as the presenters’ contact information. (5 minutes)

9. **Q&A.** Following the session, stay behind for questions to assist attendees one-on-one. (variable)

ALLERGY WARNING

It is important to manage attendees’ expectations of what information the workshop will provide. Attendees mistakenly may expect detailed demonstrations of the various tools. Presenters should take care to indicate on all promotional materials (see figure 2), as well as the start of the session, that the workshop will explore each tool only briefly, as the point is to compare the options.

CLEAN-UP

Following the initial workshop, the team met once more to discuss their perceived reception of the workshop. Based on feedback received from attendees’ evaluation forms and the presenters’ own impressions, the subsequent workshop was modified.

While we cannot predict the future, we can predict citation management tools will come and go, and we are ready to adjust our menu accordingly to meet the evolving tastes of our university community.

CHEF’S NOTE

In our library, each presenter has unique citation manager experience and expertise. Consequently, the team leveraged the presenters’ individual strengths when distributing presentation responsibilities.

As a new workshop, we wanted to market the session to the entire university community, including students, faculty, and staff, to reach a variety of attendees. Each of these community members expressed interest in the different citation management tools, and we wanted to provide them with highlights of each tool to encourage them to attend future workshops. Thus, the sampler workshop also serves as an advertisement for the individual workshops provided each semester.

Our promotion included an announcement on a LibGuide for graduate students, created and maintained by one of the instructors (Brenenson, 2020). Announcements were also



Figure 2. Marketing slide
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sent to all graduate students at the university via the University Graduate School (figure 2). In addition, all librarians, both on the presenter team and outside of it, were encouraged to spread word of the workshop at appropriate opportunities, such as class sessions and consultations.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Brenenson, S. (2020). *Graduate studies*.

Retrieved June 15, 2020, from <https://library.fiu.edu/gradstudies>

Roth, R. (2020). *Citation managers comparison*. Retrieved June 15, 2020, from <https://libguides.medlib.fiu.edu/citation>

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Voss, S. (2019). Resource review. *Ear and Hearing*, 40(6), 1481. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1097/AUD.0000000000000790>