

Comparison of organizing and collaboration features in five common citation management tools

Zotero, Mendeley, RefWorks, EndNote (Desktop and Web versions) are five common citation management tools among UBC graduate students and faculty members, from a survey in 2011. These citation management tools provide the four basic functions including *Capture, Organize, Cite* and *Share* references. All these tools have almost similar features in capturing (adding) and citing functions, but the major differences are in organizing and sharing (collaboration) functions. Therefore, in this article, we compare these five citation management tools in terms of organizing and sharing/collaboration functions in Table 1 and Table 2, respectively.

Table 1. Collaboration features in citation management tools

	Zotero	Mendeley	RefWorks	Endnote Desktop	EndNote Web
Price	Free (costs for upgraded storage)	Free (costs for upgraded storage & private groups)	\$100 (for UBC student is free)	\$299 (\$100 student version)	2 year subscription included for EndNote users and not publicly accessible
Free space	300 MB (2 GB ~\$1.67/month)	2 GB (\$4.99 /month ~ 2GB)	100MB	1 GB online space on EndNote web	500 MB personal & 500 MB shared
PDF annotation and reader	No (plug ins)	Yes	No	Yes	No
Snapshot	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
Retrieve PDF citation data	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Full text PDF search	Yes (should be activated)	Yes	No	Yes	No
Mobile	3 rd party provider for android and iPhone	iPhones and iPads and 3 rd party providers for Android	mobile-optimized sites	mobile-optimized sites	mobile-optimized sites

Table 2. Major organizing features in citation management tools

	Zotero	Mendeley	RefWorks	EndNote Desktop	EndNote Web
Personal profile¹	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Private group²	Unlimited (groups & members)	Only one group with max 3 members (a plane of one group of 5 members \$49 /month)	Unlimited (simultaneous editing of an account) Share folders and/or database via RefShare	Unlimited group using EndNote Web	Share EndNote Web account with other EndNote Web users
Public group³	Unlimited	Unlimited	No (but the URLs are sharable)	No	No
Note taking and annotation on shared references⁴	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Social network (follower & following lists)⁵	Yes	Yes (has a like button)	No	No	No
Collaboration newsfeed⁶	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Group page and discussion forum⁷	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

- 1) **Personal Profile:** In your profile you can write about your academic background, publications, and your research interests. You can also search and see others’ profile and add them to your contact list or send them a message. Almost it is like a basic version of Facebook profile for your academic stuffs and connections. The personal profile usually can be customized based on your preferences in the setting section.
- 2) **Private group:** This feature lets you to share your references with specific people such as your supervisor and colleagues and the references in a private group are not publicly accessible.
- 3) **Public group:** You can create a library publicly accessible for everyone under your name.
- 4) **Note taking and annotation on shared references:** This feature allows you to annotate your references on the shared references.
- 5) **Follower & Following lists:** You can follow some researchers in your following list or you can be followed by others for any post and update.
- 6) **Collaboration newsfeed:** If you are a member of a public or private group and you want to be informed for any update in those groups by email or embedded message, newsfeed feature would be the answer for you.
- 7) **Group page and discussion forum:** This feature provides an independent webpage and forum for a group where people can discuss and have conversations in the form of posted messages.