

BEGINNING CITATION MANAGEMENT FOR PRACTITIONERS: CITING



Last issue, we looked at five overarching considerations related to taming information so that it doesn't become overwhelming. Managing information includes the responsibility to cite it, so let's begin a look at citation management programs by starting with citations.

There are more than a dozen free software programs designed to collect citation information, annotate citations to be meaningful to you and manage your PDFs. If you are associated with Texas A&M or another university, you may have access to additional resources and training; check with your local librarian.

Sometimes, though, all you want or need to do is create citations for a paper or presentation. You don't necessarily want or need a full program if a free, on-demand solution will suffice for the task at hand. These tools are useful if you do not want to save citation information about the article and simply need to cite works for a paper or presentation. There is a lot of free assistance related to creating citations. I emphasize assistance because citations can only be as accurate and complete as the information provided. Regardless of the method you use to create citations, always proofread them against the official citation style you've chosen because styles change and update.

What are the simplest free ways to create citations?

For ease of reading, I only refer to articles (citing articles, saving articles, etc.), but this also could refer to other resource for-



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mats like book chapters, books, theses, conference papers, webpages, etc.


- Google Scholar generates citations in five major styles (APA, MLA, Chicago, Harvard and Vancouver) and downloadable information for three citation management programs (EndNote, RefWorks and RefMan) and the BibTeX format, which can be imported into others. Look online for the article you want to cite and use the Google Scholar Button (see *Texas Veterinarian*, vol. 79 no. 3, p. 50). The citation information is available by clicking the 'i' icon next to the article information displayed by the Google Scholar Button, a web browser extension that is currently available for the Safari, Chrome, Firefox or Opera browsers.
- Many journals online provide a link to save or cite. See any article in the *Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine*, [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1939-1676](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1939-1676), as an example. Look for the cite/save citation link.
- There are also easy-to-find, similarly

functioning and free-to-use online citation generators. In fact, many have been purchased by a single company, Chegg, an online student services company. Chegg holdings include EasyBib, Bibme, CitationMachine, RefME and Cite This for Me. These are all "free-mium" products, meaning you can view ads and freely use some features or pay a premium to use additional features and see no ads.

Why cite?

Practically, we cite so that someone later can find the information we found and presented. Pragmatically, we cite to provide evidence to support what we are saying. Morally and sometimes legally, we cite to credit those who created or own the information we are using.

When should you, as a practitioner, cite?

The most obvious time to cite is in an article or academic paper, but many practitioners don't write these. Does that mean practitioners don't need to cite? Of course not. Most obviously, anytime you are communicating a detail that someone may want to verify or locate later is a time to think about citing. Certainly, practitioners give presentations and continuing education (CE). But citations also can help you to retrace your own steps later, whether you need to retrace your logic or find a specific factor reference. I can't express how many times over the years I've been asked by practitioners to search for the source of something from a conference presentation or CE when there was no citation or it was woefully inadequate. The restrictions from the print-only era that led us to super short citations no longer hold. Do yourself a favor—cite often and fully. 

Do you need a full copy of an article? A literature search? Economic facts and figures about veterinary practice? Animal owner demographics and spending patterns? Texas veterinarians may contact the Medical Sciences Library at Texas A&M University for assistance at no cost for reference service, literature searching and copies of articles, chapters and conference papers from our collection. Details can be found at <http://tamu.libguides.com/txvetalum>.