

The free, web-based EndNote Basic offers a new collaborative edge whilst remaining a true reference management tool

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The public response to Elsevier's takeover of Mendeley prompted Thomson Reuters to release an enhanced, free version of their referencing management tool, EndNote Basic. Paul Horsler examines the new features. While certainly not a tool for sharing PDFs, the web-based platform can be accessed remotely and allows for wider group collaboration and reference sharing.



Endnote has two versions, Endnote and **Endnote Basic**. The latter, and the topic of this post, was formerly branded as Endnote Web, the free web-based referencing software from Thomson Reuters. Prior to this rebranding, there were three distinct levels of Endnote Web account: (one can even say that there still is)

- A free one via Thomson Reuters which had very limited features
- One via Web of Knowledge, which provided those at subscribing institutions with some enhanced features
- An Endnote Web account that was linked to a version of the Endnote Desktop software. This provided even more features

Endnote Basic now provides users with the ability to store 50,000 references, 2GB of file storage, 21 bibliographic styles, 5 online search connectors, and 9 import filters. With Endnote Basic it is possible to create groups which you can share with others. Groups can be created on the basis of either read or read/write. Whilst references can be shared within a group, PDF attachments cannot due to licensing. This has long been Thomson Reuters' position on the matter. Simply put, Endnote Basic has very few of the community sharing aspects of Mendeley.

There is however, a slightly enhanced level of Endnote Basic account which is available to subscribers to Web of Knowledge. When Endnote Basic recognises a user as having access to Web of Knowledge, it automatically upgrades the account. This enables the user to access the institution's chosen styles, connectors and import filters. It is at this point that the community aspect of the Thomson Reuters' product suite begins to come into play with the links between Researcher ID and Web of Knowledge. Further information on Researcher ID can be found [here](#).

Pick the right tool for the right job is certainly something to consider when it comes to choosing which software to use for managing your references. For me this means Endnote as it offers all of the functionality that I require such as the ability to add references types and amend reference styles on my own without having to contact the supplier. This has been especially useful for my doctoral research, which I'm doing part-time whilst working full-time. My full-time job includes amongst other things, training people to use Endnote and solving problems relating to it. Despite being an avid fan of Endnote, I am not against other reference management software packages (even if I do have a loathing for [Zotero](#)). Each to their own, I say, as people need to choose the software that does what they need it to do. Endnote Basic is essentially a reference management tool rather than a community, unlike [Mendeley](#), and this is where the power of the Endnote product will continue to be for the foreseeable future.

I could not finish without saying a quick word about the desktop version and how it works with the web version. It is possible to link the desktop version to the web version. This allows users to synchronise their libraries and increase their online storage space to 5GB for free. This facility is valid for 2 years from the date of linking the account. In addition there is the recently released Endnote app for the iPad. This synchronises with the web version and allows you to take your library with you. It is a fairly easy to use app but there is still a bit of work to be done with the PDF viewing facility.

Note: This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of the Impact of Social Science blog, nor of the London School of Economics.

About the Author

Paul Horsler is an academic support librarian for LSE Library Services and a part-time research student with the Department for International History. His research focuses on British public opinion at a local level in the lead up to the Second World War. He is a heavy user of the desktop version of Endnote, as well as being one of the LSE's 3 Endnote trainers, and could not imagine undertaking his research without it.

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