

## Review of Pro-Cite 3 for Windows

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"What has been once published is spoken of as known and it is too often forgotten that rediscovery in the library may be a more difficult and uncertain process than the first discovery in the laboratory". (Lord Rayleigh, 1884, quoted by Bartlett, 1967).<sup>1</sup>

This statement may be applied to reference filing systems as well—how much time have you spent looking for a lost reference or a lost reprint? Over 50 reference management or bibliography formatting software packages are available on the market to cope with just this problem.<sup>2</sup> ProCite version 3 for Windows is the newest in the line of the ProCite bibliographic management packages. Previous DOS/Windows and Macintosh versions of ProCite have been extensively reviewed and/or compared to similar packages.<sup>3–8</sup> ProCite along with its companion software BiblioLink-II has changed ownership a few times over the years and is now owned by Research Information Systems, a subsidiary of the Institute for Scientific Information. It survives as a flexible package on all platforms for collecting and indexing literature search results or drawers of reprints.

Applying various checklists for the evaluation of such packages<sup>9–11</sup> shows that ProCite ranks as a versatile, powerful package for fulfilling the dream of reference organization and the integration of citations into the preparation of manuscripts. Cibbarelli's Surveys gave ProCite version 2 an overall rank of 7.2 out of a possible 10.<sup>12</sup> I found that many of the criticisms of the package noted in this review have been remedied in the new Windows version.

ProCite provides fill-in-the-blank workforms (templates) for 30 different types of references—from letters to movies, and if you have a need for a customized blank workform, it can be easily created by copying and modifying a similar one. The workforms are based on ANSI Standard Z39.29-1977, allowing for both print and nonprint entries. An authority list is automatically created during entry of the author's name(s), source (e.g., journal title), and keyword fields. You can maintain these authority lists separately for each database or have one "external" list that can be used while in any of the databases. Once you have entered the data, it is in the list, and you never have to type it in again. The package allows for a virtually unlimited number of records with each containing up to 32 000 characters in each of the 45 variable-length fields. It is unfortunate that the fields for language and medium are not saved as authority lists, although global editing of marked records can be used to fill these fields in one step. The shortcut keystrokes work nicely once you have tired of using the mouse.

It is far easier to import the results of a database search—for example, from Chemical Abstracts or Medline or Biological Abstracts—than to type all the citations in one at a time, a labor-intensive task. ProCite's companion package called BiblioLink-II facilitates this process, converting saved, downloaded references into the ProCite readable format. This package makes easy work of importing

references from online dial-up or Internet databases as well as CD-ROM databases. With some tweaking, just about any tagged field output can be transferred. Specifically, databases from Dialog (Knight-Ridder), CD Plus (Ovid), MELVYL (University of California databases), SilverPlatter, MEDLARS (National Library of Medicine databases), STN International, and UMI (e.g., Dissertation Abstracts) are known to transfer well. Duplicate records can be found and deleted after the transfer of the records. Records from other bibliographic management software packages or older versions of ProCite can also be imported or converted.

Once the database is created, finding a record is easy and fast. Searching can be limited to a certain field, Boolean "ands, ors, and nots" can be applied to the search request, and truncation of words or phrases can be used. The authority list searches of author, title (source), or keyword fields perform the fastest since they are preindexed. Full text searching is slower in large databases but not at all frustrating. The "search and find" part of this software is very powerful and easy to use.

Printing the bibliography is another straightforward fill-in-the-blank exercise. You can sort by any criteria you wish. There are seven predefined sorts, but you can customize the output in any way desired. With respect to styles, there are 30 predefined output styles and the capability to modify or create your own. So if your article was not accepted by the *Candian Journal of Chemistry*, you can simply change the output style (in a matter of seconds!) to that of an American Chemical Society journal. This is quite satisfying—if you have ever had to retype a bibliography in another format—with just a few mouse strokes in ProCite you can redisplay and reprint in any style. All of the major styles are predefined, from APA Format to Chicago Manual of Style to MLA to Vancouver Style. Simple.

But the real utility of these bibliographic management packages is the ability to link the citations to the manuscript. At the present time, ProCite has this "cite-while-you-write" capability with Microsoft Word for Windows. The interface with WordPerfect for Windows is under development. In preparing this article, I used WordPerfect and had to copy the in-text citations one at a time from ProCite to the Windows clipboard and then paste each into the manuscript. Tedious, but it did work smoothly.

A new and innovative add-on is the ProCite Internet Enabler: a combination of NetCite and BookWhere? Pro. This special software allows users to search the Internet, download the records, and index and catalog the search results utilizing the ANSI Z39.50 databases. The ad for this enhancement states that it will automatically capture URL and title information from a web page and store this as a citation in ProCite. NetCite is included in any purchase of the newer ProCite versions.

As a final note, it is essential to have a good manual and good technical support from the producers of the product.

The ProCite for Windows manual is very clear overall. Any problems I had were quickly handled via electronic mail or telephone.

ProCite users have been able to join a listserv (set up by Mark T. Day at Indiana University in April of 1992) to discuss the products and share experiences. After lurking on this listserv, I found some very useful tips and answers to problems and learned that ProCite can handle Chinese/Japanese language citations using a bridge program! The company itself (RIS) has an informative web site with the capability of answering electronic mail questions as well as an 800 telephone number. The technical support staff are extremely helpful and patient.

ProCite is available for Macintosh, DOS, and Windows (yes, Windows 95!) and can be networked. RIS offers government pricing, educational discounts, site licenses, and demonstration packages. Check out this software if you are looking for a powerful, able-to-handle-most-anything bibliographic reference package. Highly recommended for Windows Users.

## REFERENCES AND NOTES

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- (13) ProCite, v.3 for Windows (\$345), BiblioLink-II (\$195), and Book-Where?Pro (\$99) are available from Research Information Systems, 2355 Camino Vida Roble, Carlsbad, CA 92009-1572. Phone: 619-438-5326; 1-800-722-1227. Electronic mail = sales@ris.risinc.com. WWW address is <http://www.procite.com/>.

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