# THE USE OF A LITERATURE MANAGEMENT DATABASE COMPUTER PROGRAMME

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Academic staff in university teaching departments have many demands on their time. If the academic wishes to remain up-to-date, the exponential growth of published scientific literature in all fields, but especially the biomedical sciences, places an extra premium on this scarce time resource. Paper or manual reference retrieval systems, although reasonably effective for small literature databases, rapidly become cumbersome as the size of the database grows.

In recent years a number of commercial computer-based reference management programmes have become available. This lecture/demonstation illustrated the usefulness of one of these; Reference Manager (Research Information Systems Inc, Carlsbad, California, USA).

The demonstration illustrated how references may be entered via the keyboard or by importing from a large commercial database such as CAB-Silver Platter to create a discipline-tailored personal database of up to 65 000 references. The creation of subsidiary databases, transfer files or bibliographies by simple boolean search routines was also demonstrated.

One of the more attactive features of the programme is the ability to create a bibliography interactively while composing a document or manuscript using the "splicer" facility and running the programme in resident mode (calling it up when required by using a "hot-key" function). This bibliography as well as the citation appearance in the manuscript, can be formatted to any one of some 160 biomedical journal styles or to any style, created by the user, to suit any other journal's requirements. Other useful functions include the ability to update the keywords for each reference in a database retrospectively, based on keywords introduced subsequent to the capture of the reference.

An interesting possibility mooted by the author was the potential for co-operation between the marketers of such a PC-based programme and an organisation such as the Commonwealth Agriculture Bureaux (CABI) to produce a reference management programme backed by a compact disc based database.