

A medical writer's must-have software

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Abstract

This article provides a list of software useful to medical writers according to the booklet 'The WRITE tool for the job' compiled by Emma Hitt. Software categories include: word processors; reference managers; PDF readers; project planning and mind mapping; backup; file transfer; time tracking and invoicing; speech recognition and transcription; medical dictionaries, grammar and spell-checker; rest break; imaging; and anti-virus and internet security.

Keywords: Software, Operating system, Compatibility

Medical writing strays far away from the other artistic genres of writing, and a simple pen and paper may not suffice. A variety of software is available to help. In the booklet 'The WRITE tool for the job', Emma Hitt¹ compiled the 'collective wisdom of writers'. The full booklet contains detailed comments from medical writers about software they find useful. Below is a summary of the categories, software packages, and their compatibility with different operating systems (Table 1).

Conflicts of interest and disclaimers

All of the proprietary software mentioned in this article has not been authorised, sponsored, or otherwise approved by the respective product companies.

Reference

1. Hitt E. The WRITE tool for the job. 2013. Available from: <http://www.hittmedicalwriting.com/hmw/>.

Author information

Shirin Ghodke is a research scientist with a strong interest in a medical writing career. She currently volunteers for

Table 1: A list of the preferred software used by medical writers

Software category	Software	Compatibility
Word processor	Microsoft Office®	W, M
	Open Office	W, M, L
	Scrivener®	W, M, L
Reference managers	Endnote®	W, M and Web
	Reference Manager®	W
	Mendeley® (free)	W, M, L
	Zotero (free)	W, M, L
PDF readers	Adobe Acrobat®	W, M
	Foxit Reader® (free)	W
	Bluebeam® Revu®	W, M
	Skim (free)	M
Project planning and mind mapping	MindManager	W, M
	Docear (free)	W, M, L
	Evernote®	W, M
Backup	Carbonite™	W, M
	Crashplan	W, M, L
	Dropbox (free)	Online
File transfer	Filezilla® (free)	W, M, L
	Dropbox®	Online
Time tracking and invoicing	TraxTime	W
	QuickBooks®	W, M
	WorkingPoint	Online
	Freshbooks	Online
Speech recognition and transcription	ExpressScribe (free)	W, M, L
	Dragon Naturally speaking	W, M
Medical dictionaries, grammar and spellchecker	Stedman's Plus	W, M
	medical spellchecker	
	Taber's Medical Dictionary	Online
	WhiteSmoke Writer™	W, M
Rest break	Workrave (free)	W, L
	Workpace®	W
Imaging	Adobe Photoshop®	W, M
	Adobe Illustrator®	W, M
	GIMP (free)	W, M, L
Anti-virus and internet security	Norton™ Antivirus	W, M
	Sophos® Antivirus	W, M, L
	Avast! Antivirus (free)	W, M
	AVG Antivirus (free)	W, M

Abbreviations: W, Windows®; M, Mac OS®; L, Linux®.

the European Medical Writers Association's journal 'Medical Writing' as an Associate Editor.