Biggerplate

Annual Report 2018

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Welcome to our 2018 Annual Report!

Introduction

For the last 5 years, our Annual Report has been published with the aim of giving you a unique insight into the current state of the mind mapping world according to Biggerplate.com and our global member community.

I'm delighted to welcome you to this 5th edition, and I hope you will find the contents helpful and informative, regardless of whether you are new to mind mapping, an experienced expert, a software developer, or someone who accidentally downloaded this report...

The report aims to provide a snapshot of the mind mapping sector, based on insights shared by over 1,000 mind map users who took part in our Annual Survey, which ran from late February to the end of March 2018. The results provide insight into what and how people are mind mapping, including a new in-depth view of how they rate their favourite software across a number of mind map specific indicators. You can read more about the new 'Software Scorecards' in the relevant section in the report, but the over-arching goal is to provide better insight for people and organisations who might be new to mind mapping, and trying to understand the various strengths of the different software and app products in the market.

As always, we encourage you to consider this report as a starting point for discussion, exploration, and innovation, rather than any sort of fixed conclusion. We invite your feedback and questions via our social media channels, or by email if you prefer.

Thank you to everyone who took part in our global survey this year, and please share these results with your network!

Liam Hughes
Founder: Biggerplate.com

Biggerplate.com/LiamHughes

Table of Contents

Biggerplate: 2017 Review

Website Traffic & Trends

New Members

Following a record breaking year in 2016, we saw a slight drop in the number of new members joining Biggerplate in 2017.

25,411

New members in 2017!

While the number of new members is marginally lower than the previous year, it is worth noting that 2016 represented a huge leap (55%) in new member registrations (see chart below) that was driven by a number of exciting software integrations. We're happy to have pretty much maintained this higher level of registrations in 2017.

Fake Accounts

One reason for the slightly lower new member figure in 2017 is the fact that we were able to take a much more pro-active approach to identifying and deleting fake or spam accounts registered on Biggerplate than ever before.

As part of an increasing effort to protect our members from the annoyance (and potential harm) of fake account registrations, we deleted several thousand accounts in 2017. This means the headline figure for new members may be lower, but we feel it is now a more accurate figure than ever before, and more closely reflects the realities of our community. As always, our interest is in the real community members we serve, rather than misleading vanity metrics!

Biggerplate.com: New Members (5 Years)
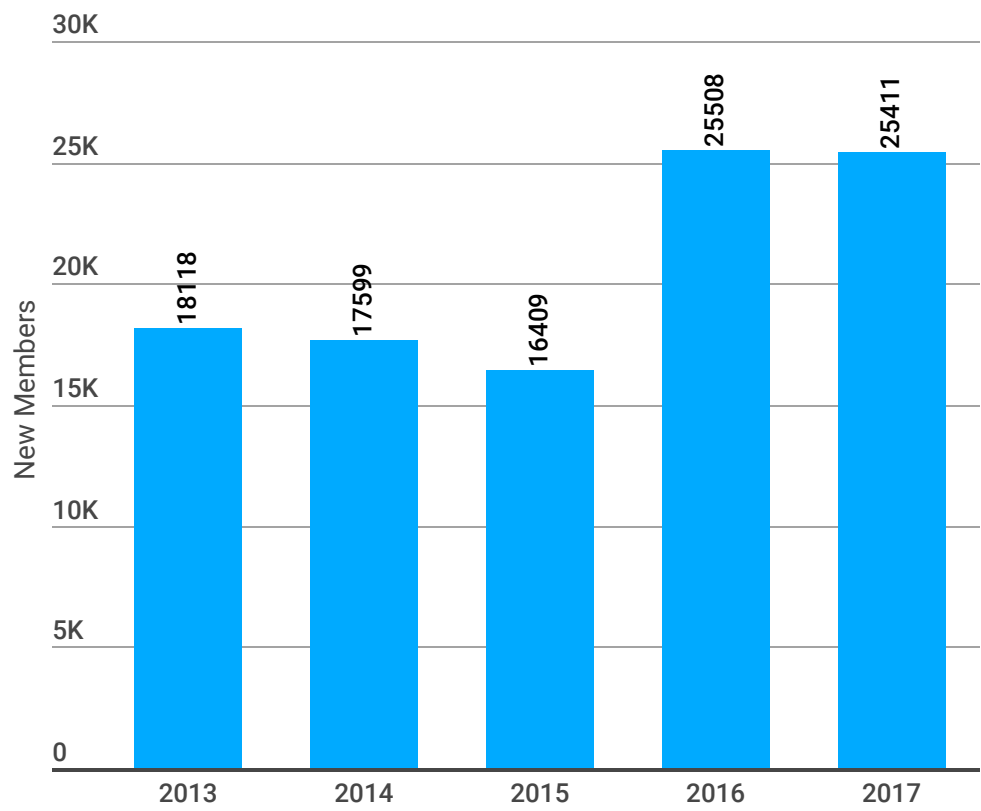
(Figures for previous years may differ from earlier reports due to continuous efforts to remove historic fake/spam accounts from Biggerplate)

MindManager Enterprise

The mind mapping software made for business

When a few individuals in an organization are able to capture, organize and share critical information more effectively, it can transform a process, a project, and even a department.

When whole teams are doing those things – together – it can transform an entire business.

MindManager Enterprise empowers teams of five or more with all the benefits of the single-user MindManager product, plus a uniquely powerful set of tools specifically designed to:

- Create alignment
- Foster collaboration
- Supercharge productivity
- Drive ideas and projects forward

It also allows procurement and IT departments to equip both MindManager users and the entire organization in a way that is:

- Streamlined
- Supported
- Cost-effective

ekso BIONICS

"We needed a solution that helped us shine a light on potential issues and then map an execution path. MindManager helps us choose the best design direction to balance safety, design, and schedule risks."

Karl Gudmundsson, VP of Marketing at Ekso Bionics

To learn more about how MindManager Enterprise can help your team succeed, visit **www.mindjet.com** or request a live demo at **www.mindjet.com/seeMME**.

Biggerplate: 2017 Review

Website Traffic & Trends

Website Visits

Visits to Biggerplate.com were down slightly (-2.61%) in 2017 compared to 2016, but over-all, we were happy with traffic to the website remaining pretty consistent with the previous year.

A key factor in growing traffic to the website in the future is the need to optimise the site for search engines that increasingly favour mobile-friendly web design. We therefore reduced (or stopped) a number of activities in 2017 in order to focus our limited resources on converting the entire Biggerplate website into a new mobile-friendly design. This project is nearly completed, and traffic to Biggerplate in the first four months of 2018 was up by more than 5% compared to 2017, so the results of our hard work in 2017 are starting to show!

Top 5 Countries over 5 years
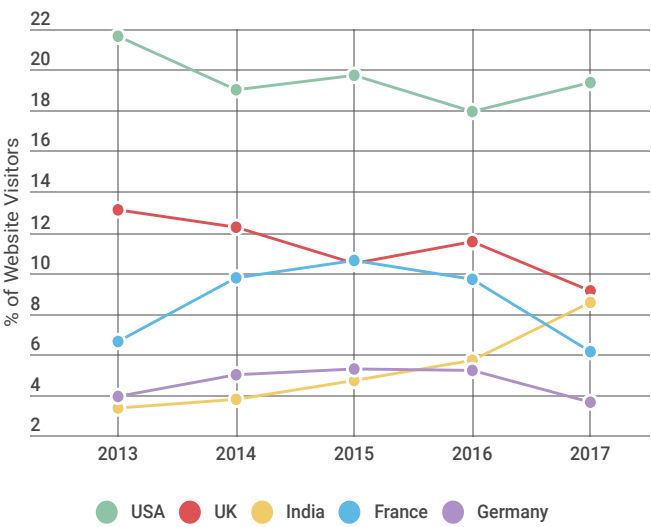
In terms of geographical spread, we continue to benefit from a highly diverse community of website visitors, and 2017 saw a large increase in web traffic and new members from India, which was hugely exciting to see!

Top 10 Countries for Website Visits 2017

simplemind
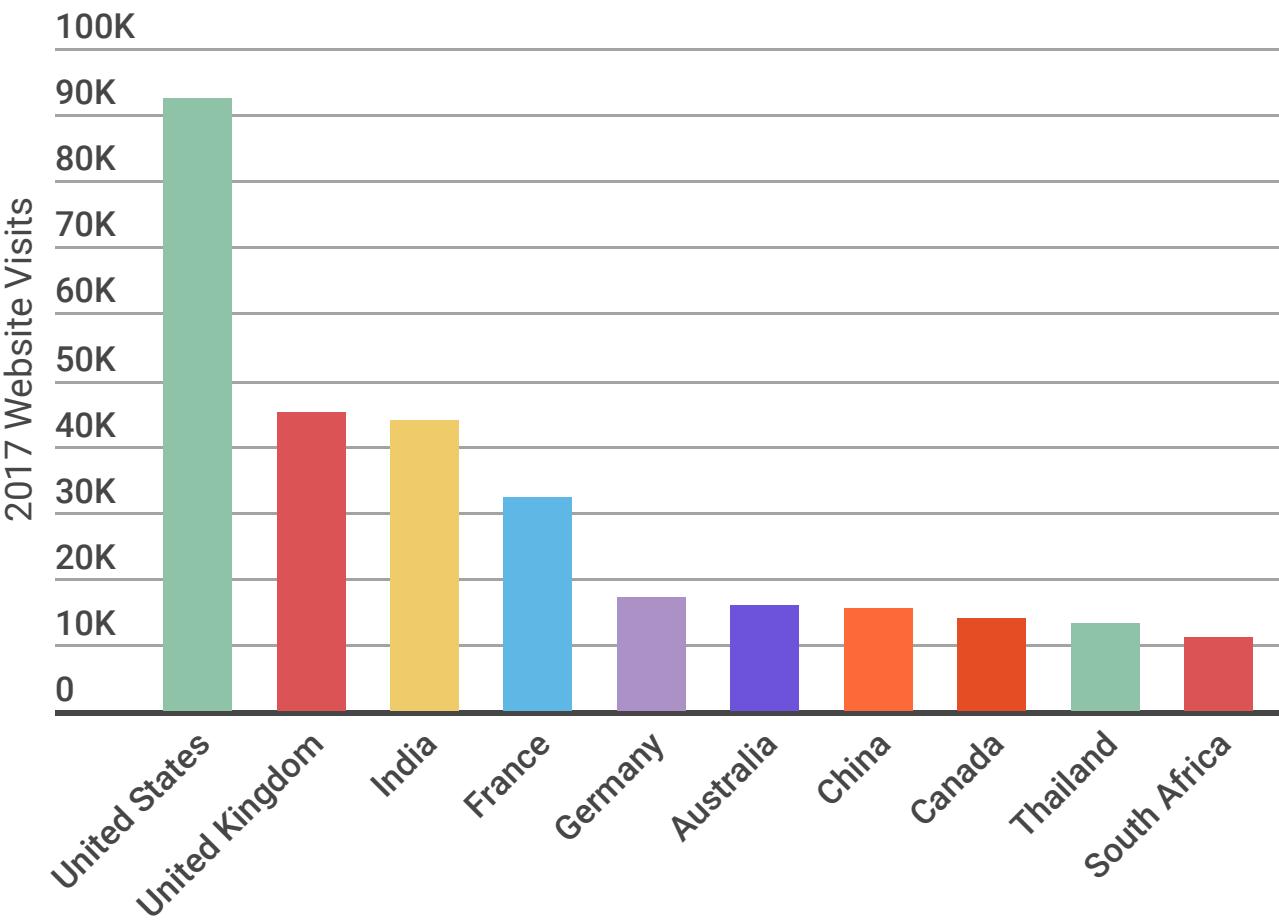
Organize your thoughts, remember more & create new ideas

Number 1 in the App Store for a reason...

Try it free   See our pricing

Biggerplate: 2018 Priorities

Strategic Priorities

Over the course of 2018, Biggerplate will be focusing on the following 3 priority areas:

1. Tutorials

As we continue to strengthen our focus on providing the trio of mind map Templates, Tutorials and Training, we will be particularly focused on the Tutorials component in 2018, which breaks down into two component parts:

The first part focuses on the creation of numerous short, stand-alone, software-specific how-to videos that will show people how to perform specific actions within their chosen mind mapping software (e.g. "How to add a hyperlink using software X"). These Tutorials will be available to view for free on our website, and on our YouTube channel.

The second part of the project is focused on the creation of more comprehensive software courses, that will help users to understand how different features within mind mapping software can be used in different practical business settings (e.g. Better Meetings, Improved Productivity). These software-specific modular courses are accessed through a Business Club subscription ($29.99/year), and will be continually developed and added to over 2018.

2. Consumer Guidance

In response to an ever-growing number of requests for help from individuals and organisations who are trying to understand the different mind mapping software options available to them, we have made consumer guidance a key priority in 2018. You can see the first outputs of this project in the Software Scorecards that feature later in this report.

We believe we are in a unique position to help people better understand the differences and relative strengths of the different mind mapping products in the market today (and in the future). Biggerplate does not make or sell mind mapping software, but we have the benefit of a large and informed community of mind mappers who can provide the key information about what their favourite software is good for (and not so good for). As you can see by the Software Scorecards featured here in the report, our goal is not to declare a 'best' software, but simply to provide a more complete set of comparable indicators that helps people compile a software shortlist that fits with what they actually need.

In addition, we hope that this improved information will enable to more accurately compare like-for-like products in future. We too often hear people comparing products that should not really be considered in the same category of mind mapping software, and as such, the comparisons are often inaccurate and unhelpful. A powerful paid product should not be called 'expensive' just because you're comparing it to a much less powerful free product. Similarly, a browser-based tool could not be expected to provide all of the same power features as a feature rich desktop product. We hope that by gathering and sharing product insights from real mind map users, we can not only help people to make more informed (and better suited) software/app choices for their needs, but also overcome the continual frustration we feel when we see 'best of' lists written by people who have no working knowledge of what a mind mapping product could or should be able to do!

3. Translation

A key deliverable of our 2017 website rebuilding project was an architecture that would enable us to more easily, and continuously translate the structure of Biggerplate into multiple languages. Having built the architecture to enable this in 2017, we have now begun the process of implementing translation on the website in 2018, with help from many amazing members of our global community, who have helped us get started with French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Russian, Polish, Dutch and Italian already!

The process is (out of necessity) a slow and gradual one, but it is excitingly underway, and a key area of focus for us in 2018!

iMindQ.

The most valuable yet affordable mapping software!
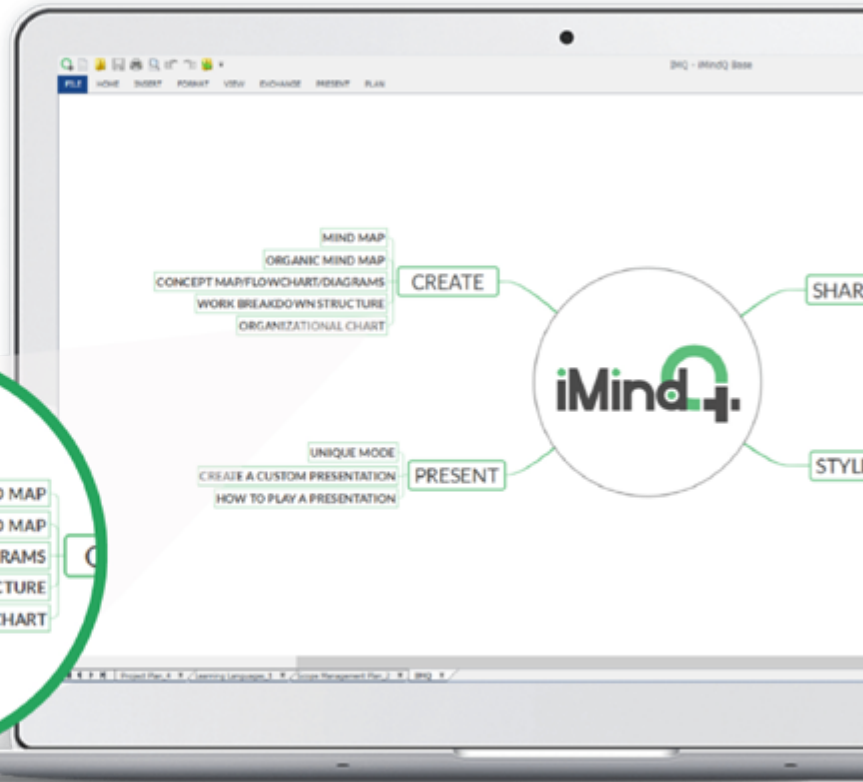
Dynamic and exciting software tool for visual thinking, brainstorming, planning and organizing ideas.

iMindQ

Top 5 Reasons to Choose iMindQ

Flexible whiteboard space and interactive HTML5 mind maps

Concept maps & flowcharts

Remarkable one click presentations

MS Office, SharePoint and Research Panel integration

Compatible with FreeMind, XMind and Mind Manager maps

Discount Code

IMQ30%OFF

www.imindq.com

2018 Annual Survey: Participant Profile
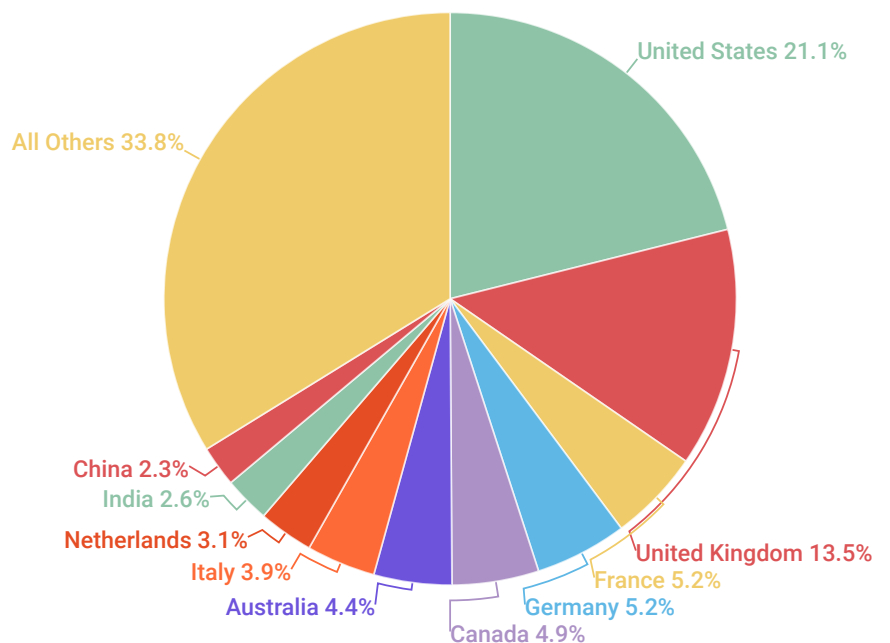
Participant Countries

The 2018 survey results are based on answers and data from **1,075 participants** from 83 different countries around the world (in blue below) and represents our biggest ever survey response!

As expected there is a heavy slant in the survey population based on the biggest segments of the Biggerplate community...

Participants from the USA were our largest survey segment with 21.1% of the participants, followed by the UK (13.5%), then France and Germany with 5.2% of the participants each.

We were pleased to see growing participation from both India and China this year, each representing more than 2% of participants.

United States 21.1%
All Others 33.8%
China 2.3%
India 2.6%
Netherlands 3.1%
Italy 3.9%
Australia 4.4%
Canada 4.9%
Germany 5.2%
France 5.2%
United Kingdom 13.5%

2018 Annual Survey: Participant Profile

Gender

We see just 16% female participation in our 2018 survey, out of over 1,000 participants.

16%

Female survey participants
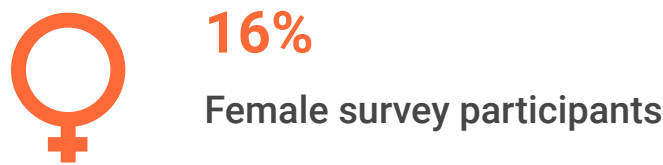
This follows a 5 year pattern, when we have only ever reached a maximum of 21% Female participation in our Annual Survey (in 2015). Conversely, Biggerplate website analytics (provided by Google) suggests that 55% of our website visitors in 2017 were female, yet we continue to see this low representation of women in our Annual Survey.

Job Titles

The word cloud below shows the most common words entered when we asked for participant job titles. Clearly senior level roles stand out here, and this logically aligns with the age profile (see right) to suggest that mind mapping is a key tool for those in higher level management roles in business.

Exciting to see student and teacher featured in the word cloud too, reflecting our highest ever participation by individuals in education.

Age

The age profile of our survey participants was broken out into more categories than ever before, and the result is (hopefully) a much more accurate view of the age composition of the mapping community:

Age	% of Survey Participants
19 or younger	1%
20-29	6%
30-39	13%
40-49	24%
50-59	29%
60-69	22%
70-79	6%
80+	1%
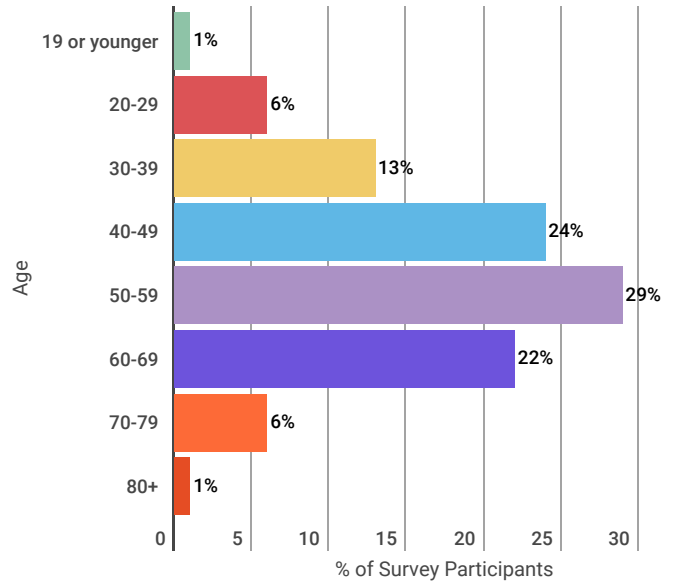
Members vs Non-Members

The number of non-members participating in the survey this year was fantastic, and over 40% of participants were from outside of the established Biggerplate community.
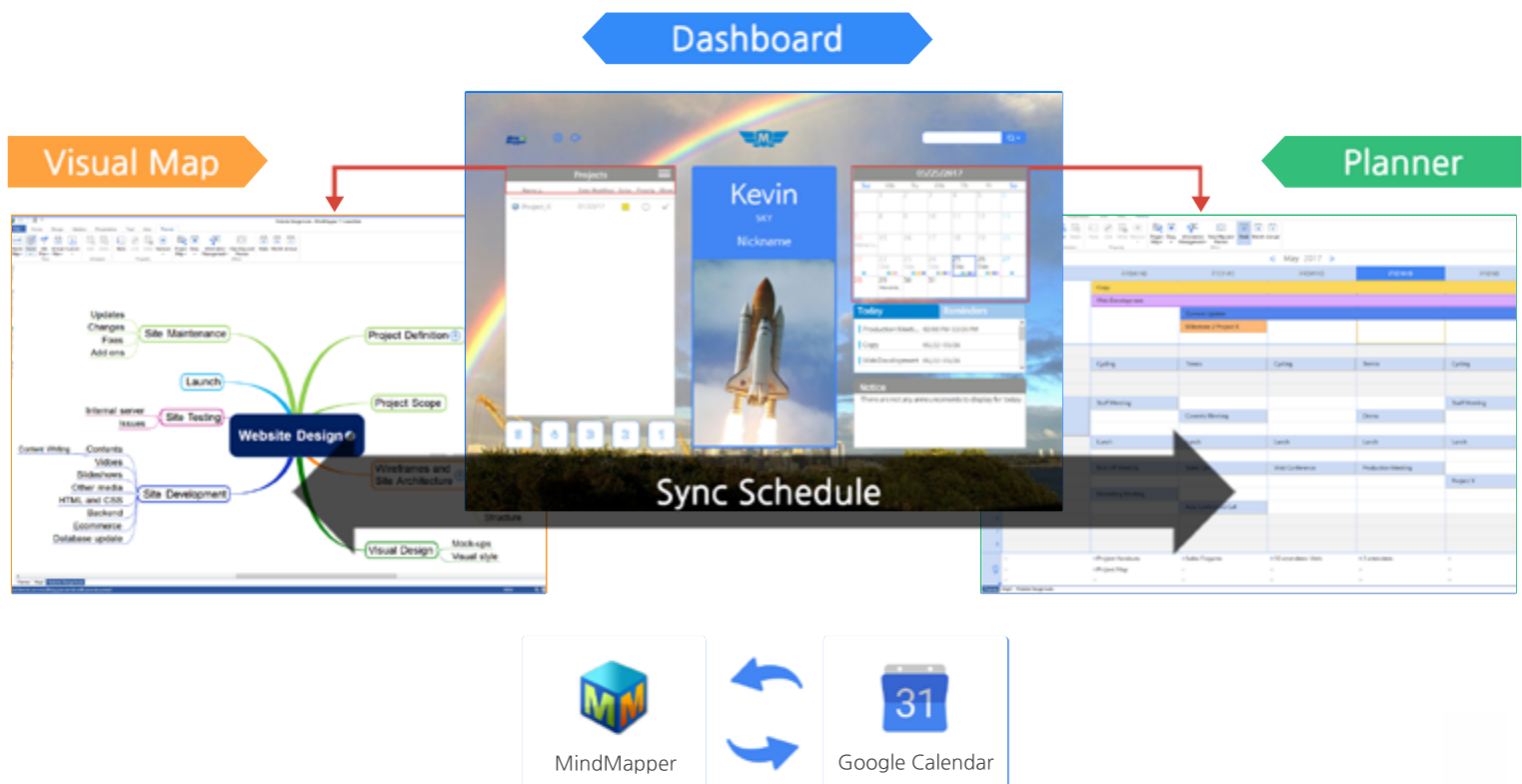
Help from our software partners and survey sponsors is invaluable in reaching people beyond our own community, and we owe them all a huge thank you for enabling us to gather perspectives from a wider range of mind map users than ever before!
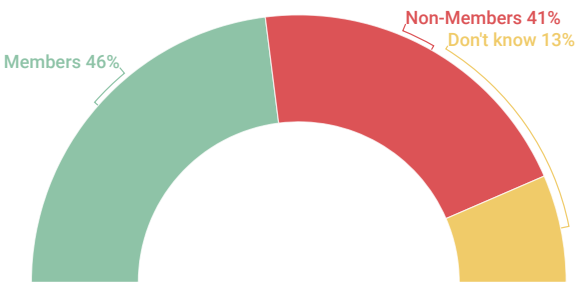
Members 46%   Non-Members 41%   Don't know 13%

2018 Annual Survey: Participant Profile

Industries

Participants in the 2018 survey came from a wide range of industries, with a particularly strong showing for the eduction sector this year.

The top 10 industries represented in the survey are shown below:

21% - Education

17% - Telecoms & Technology

9% - Business Support & Logistics

8% - Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals

6% - Manufacturing

5% - Nonprofit

5% - Finance

4% - Government

3% - Advertising & Marketing

3% - Construction

3% - Utilities, Energy, Extraction

For the first time ever Education tops the list of industries, reflecting a trend that we have been seeing in the Biggerplate member registrations over the last 12-18 months. While we cannot explain it (yet), we are seeing a growing number of registrations from individuals with school, college, and university email addresses. We hope to drive this trend further by developing more specific resources (tutorials, training etc) for education institutions in 2018, particularly focused on helping Teachers understand how mind maps could be used in the classroom.

Organisation Size

As shown below, we see a high number (40%) of individuals/micro businesses represented in the survey, but also a significant number (11%) from very large organisations of more than 10,000 people. Certainly big name companies can help lend credibility to both the technique and the tools, but we must pay attention and show the impact that these tools are having on much smaller businesses, as this is a story that many more people will relate to.
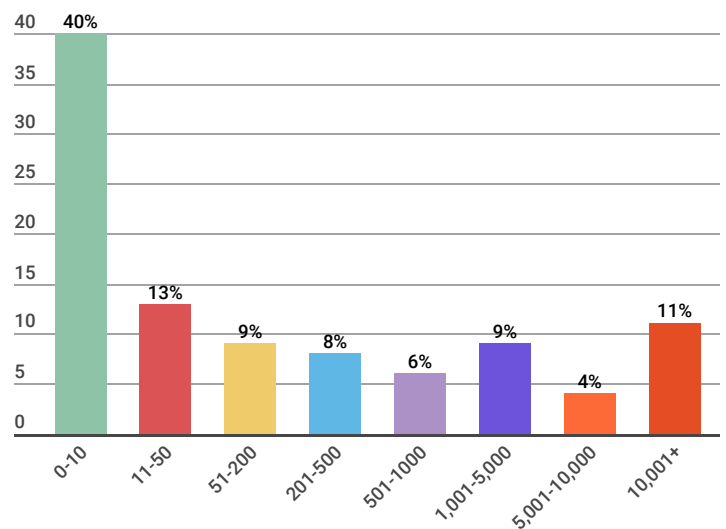
Mind Mapping Adoption

We asked participants to indicate how wide-spread they thought mind mapping was within their organisation, and here's what they said...

2018 Annual Survey: Mind Maps in Action

How to grow adoption?

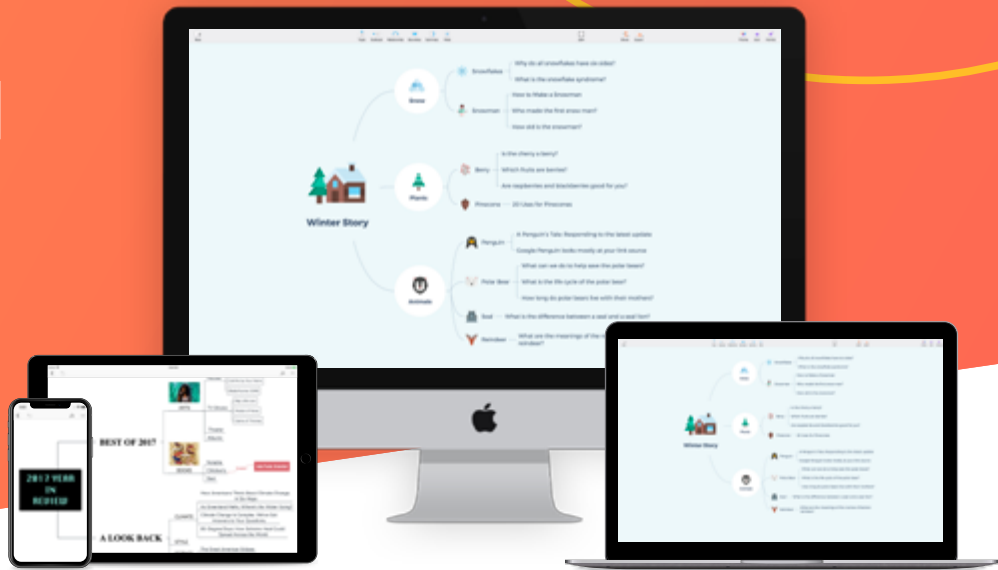We asked participants an open question about how mind mapping adoption could be improved, and the following word cloud is based on analysis of their answers, and shows the most important words based on how often or prominently they featured in the answers collected.

Training is the biggest thread running through the open answers, and other prominent words in the cloud suggest any training needs to be effective at demonstrating the **benefits** of the tools and software in business and education.

The visibility of **templates** and **examples** speaks to the Biggerplate.com mission, as we believe the most effective way to help people understand the potential uses of mind mapping is to show them how others in similar roles have used the tools and techniques in their daily working and/or studying. Other keywords may suggest a need to focus in on demonstrating practical use cases such as **projects**, **meetings**, and **presentations**.

It might be easy to assume that the words **price** and **cheaper** in the word cloud relate to software pricing, but when **training** is so prominent in the graphic, perhaps providers of training should be questioning whether their pricing is a driver or a barrier to wider mind mapping adoption...

Mind Mapping with Purpose

Visualise and connect information to achieve your best
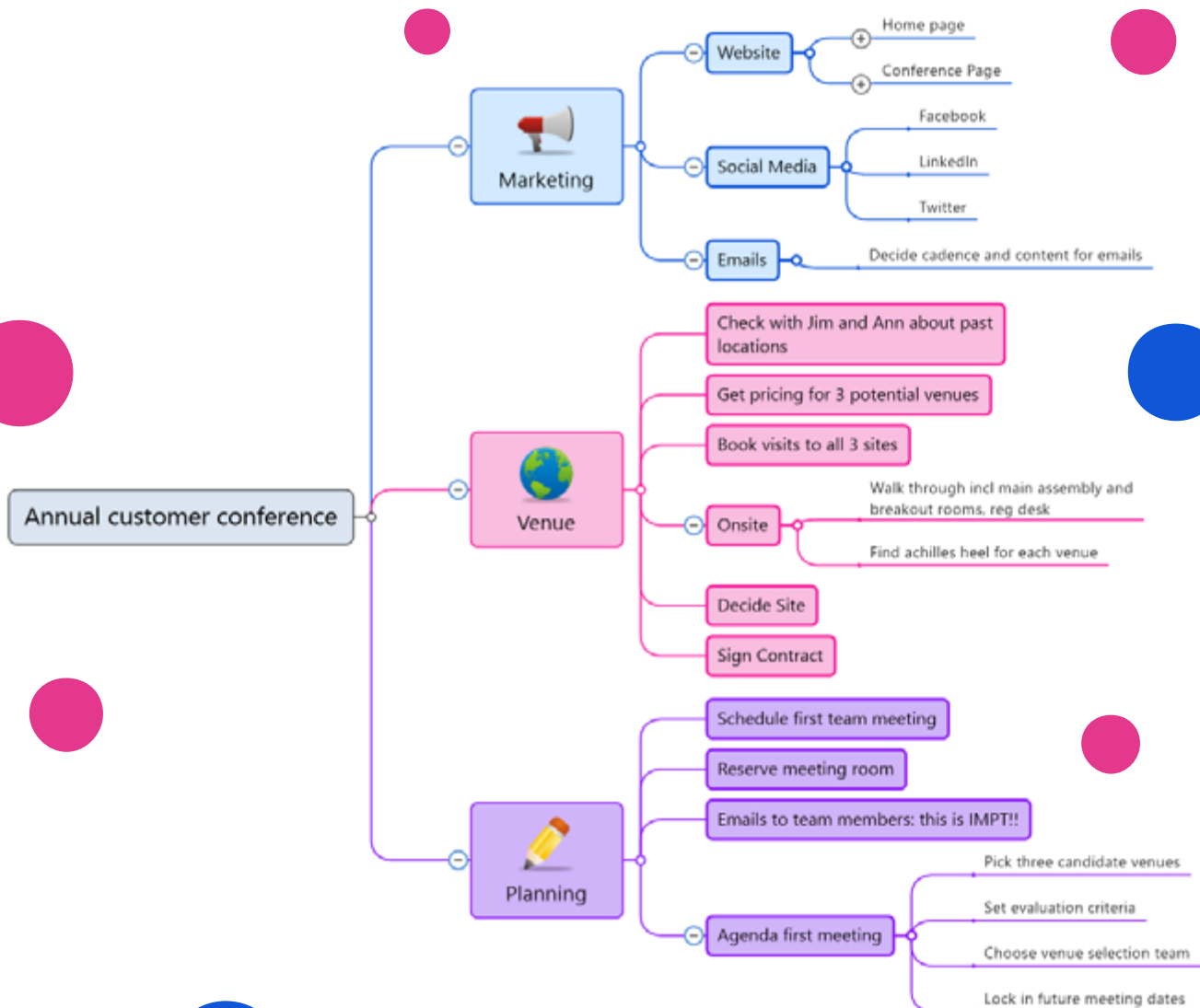
Mind Mapping | Project Management | Solution Finder

MindGenius 2018

mindgenius.com

2018 Annual Survey: Mind Maps in Action

Mapping Frequency

We asked participants how often they normally use mind mapping. The answers (shown below) indicate unequivocally that once understood and adopted, mind mapping becomes an absolutely fundamental working tool that is used extremely frequently, with 56% saying they use mind mapping either every day, or almost every day!

Very Rarely 6%
Once/Twice Per Month 14%
Almost Every Day 30%
Once Per Week 24%
Every Day 26%
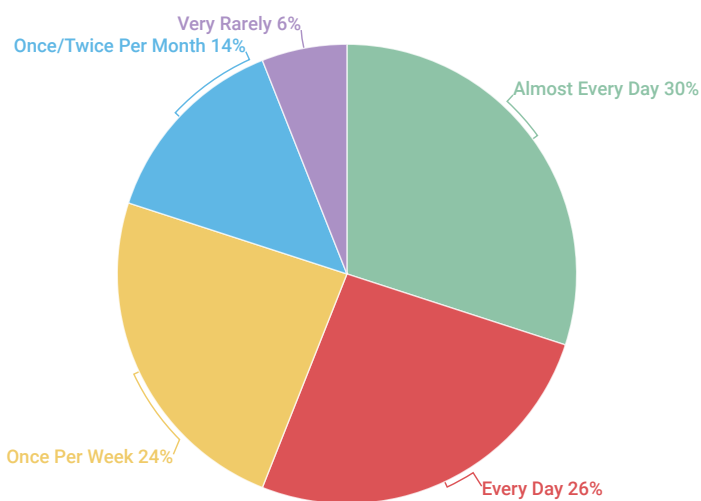
Collaborative Mapping

Mind mapping is often promoted as a collaborative tool/technique, so we asked our survey participants whether they had been mapping individually, with others, both, or neither within the last week (shown below)

The indication is that mapping is more often done individually, but there is a significant % of mapping with others. Perhaps this reflects the normal balance of individual vs collaborative working that most people experience at work/school in general?

Neither 10%
Both 17%
With Others 4%
By Myself 69%
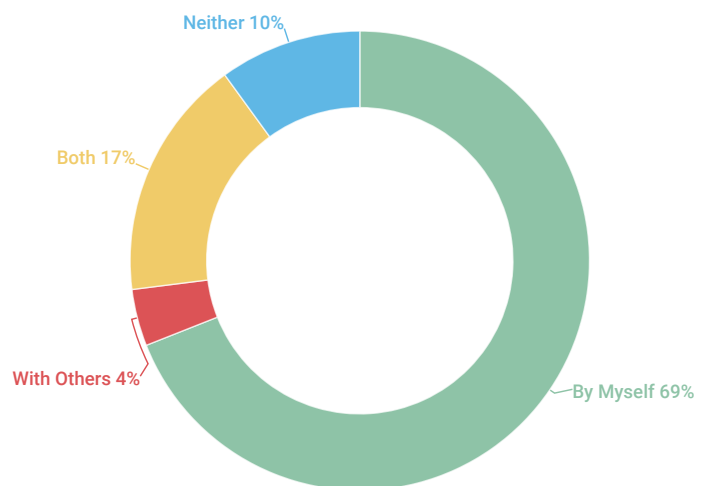
Mapping Benefits

Our survey participants were asked to explain the benefits of mind mapping in just three words, and their resulting answers have been aggregated into the word cloud below.

The message jumping out of the word cloud (and hence the participant answers) is the usefulness of mind mapping to **visually organise ideas** and **thoughts**... something that most people familiar with mind mapping will likely recognise as a key benefit.

In addition, the graphic suggests outcome benefits around **clarity** and **understanding**, something that we're all in search of in our working and learning!

2018 Annual Survey: Mind Maps in Action

Mind Map Uses (closed)

The chart on the right shows the percentage of survey participants that said they had used mind mapping within the last week for any of the tasks listed. In this question, we provided the options, and so participants were selecting from our pre-defined (closed) list.

The fact that Brainstorming is so far out in front may not surprise many people, as mapping has long been touted as the perfect tool for brainstorming processes.

Note taking in second place is likely to reflect our highest ever participation by individuals from the education sector, including a high number of self-identified students.

The 2nd and 4th placed tasks hint at the important role that mind mapping can play in different 'Planning' contexts, and this is something that is clearly echoed below in the word cloud showing the prominent words from the 'open' answers to the question "what do you use mind maps for?"

Task	Percentage
Brainstorming	78%
Note taking	59%
Planning and/or making presentations	55%
Business and strategic planning	53%
Knowledge management	52%
Project management	50%
Planning/writing documents	49%
Research and information gathering	46%
Studying	42%
Training and educating others	40%
Planning and/or managing a meeting	35%

Mind Map Uses (open)

The word cloud on the right shows the most prominent words used when we asked participants an open question about what they used mind mapping for.

Again, Brainstorming comes out strong, but the prominence of Planning, Project, and Organizing actually hints at another strength of mind maps, which is to turn unstructured 'brainstorming' information into more tangible and organised plans that can then be put into projects and action.

2018 Annual Survey: Tools & Technology

Preferred Methods

With our biggest ever survey population, we have a great insight into what tools people are using for mind mapping, and the results are shown below when we asked **"what do you use for mind mapping?"** and enabled participants to select all that applied...

What do you use for mind mapping?
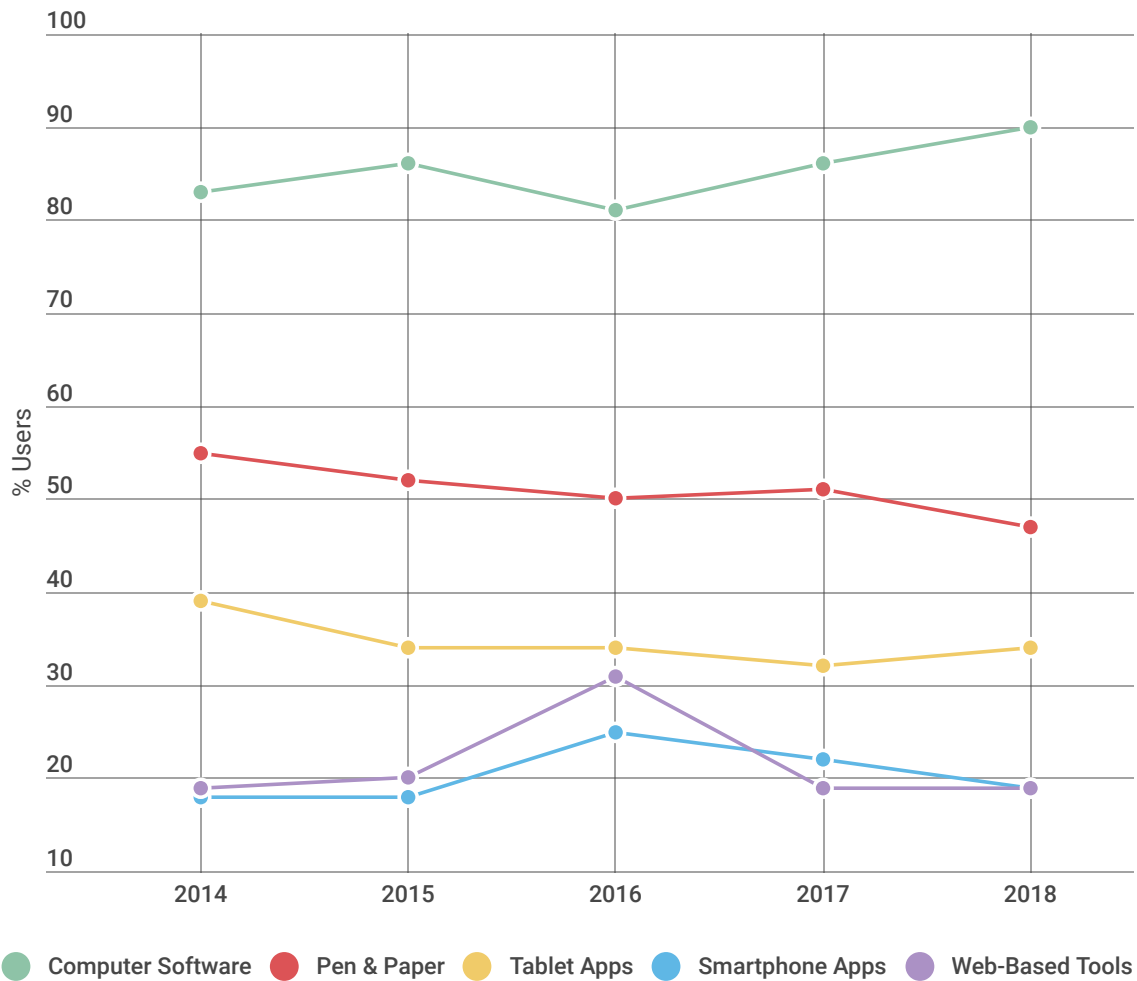
With 5 years of data, the most notable trend above is the apparent reduction in the percentage of participants using pen and paper mind mapping, which has fallen from 55% in 2014 down to 47% in 2018, perhaps reflecting the growing adoption of technology in every aspect of daily life.

Also of interest is a continued decline in the percentage of smartphone mind mappers since 2016. Is this a temporary decline, or does it suggest a peak in 2016 which has been followed by a growing recognition that the surface area offered by most phones does not lend itself to a visual approach like mind mapping? Only time will tell!

Finally, the apparently low adoption of web-based mind mapping tools (less than 20% of participants) seems to run counter to the wider technology narrative suggesting everything is (or should be) online. Would these kind of stats encourage a traditional desktop software developer to invest in online mapping capabilities? Again, we'll have to wait and see...!

2018 Annual Survey: Tools & Technology

Devices & Operating Systems

While there are other systems and devices in operation, the mind mapping world more often than not boils down to Windows vs Mac, and Apple vs Android comparisons at present. We therefore asked participants which devices/operating systems they typically used in a given week, and provided the option to select all that apply:

Device	%
Windows Computer	72%
Mac Computer	41%
iPhone	49%
Android Phone	34%
iPad	46%
Android Tablet	13%
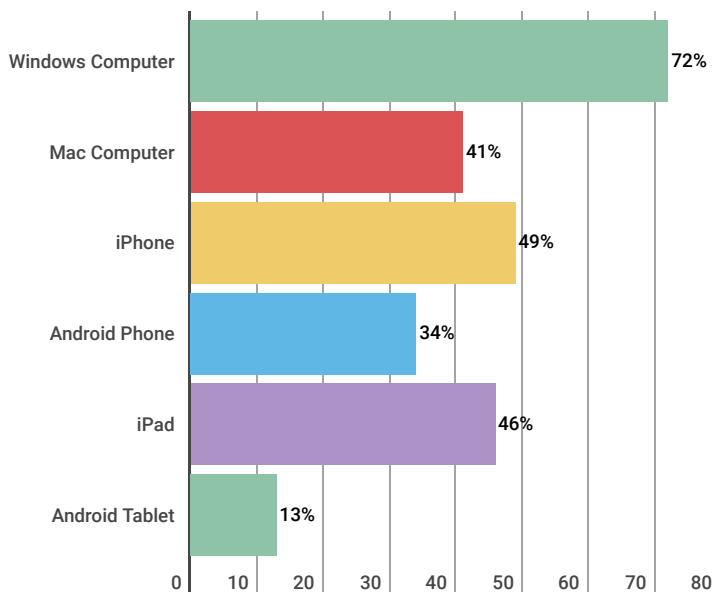
The Windows population continues to dominate when it comes to computers, most likely reflecting the wider market share of Windows vs Mac products. The historic Windows bias of some of the earliest mind mapping software may have also had a formative influence on the Windows nature of the mind mapping community.

Apple dominates the Tablet and Smartphone space among our survey participants, suggesting mind mapping apps in the Apple app store will remain in demand, while those who push for Android versions of their favourite mind mapping software may be disappointed to see that the above statistics will not make for a compelling business case for developers with limited resources.

Multiple Mapping Tools

A key revelation in the Annual Survey *last* year was the fact that 31% of participants were using more than one mind mapping software, suggesting to us that a number of people felt that no single product was yet catering for all of their requirements.

We were therefore interested to see if the 2017 result was a one off, or a consistent pattern, and as can be seen from the chart below, it seems there is now clear evidence (over two years of surveying) that a significant proportion (29% in 2018) are using more than one mind mapping application.

Using more than one software?

Yes 29%

No 71%
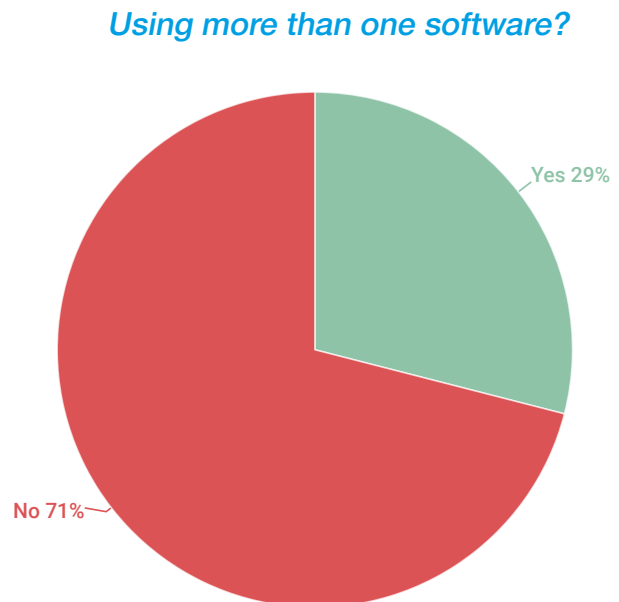
The reliance on a *combination* of mind mapping products (rather than a single application) among approximately 30% of the mind mapping community raises a number of interesting questions about why there is such a need, and which feature and function combinations make this necessary. No doubt the device and operating system considerations on the left of this page may also play a factor, as people look for software/app combinations that are cross compatible between devices and platforms, perhaps reflecting things as simple as "home vs work" computer preferences.

More to be learned in this area for sure!

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

Background

A key priority area for Biggerplate in 2018 (and beyond) is the provision of more helpful and insightful guidance about the many different mind mapping software products in the market.

Over the last 2-3 years, as our profile has grown, we have seen an increasing number of individuals and organisations asking us for advice in choosing mind mapping software, or at the very least, asking us to suggest a useful shortlist of options to explore based on their needs.

As a software-neutral organisation that does not make or sell software, we feel we are well placed to provide this help, based on our own analysis and experience of the product options, combined with (more important) feedback from our informed member community.

Introducing the Software Scorecard

With all of the above in mind, this year we are excited to introduce 'Software Scorecards' to our Annual Report, and our website in general.

The scorecards reflect 10 key indicators (chosen by Biggerplate) that we feel represent the key factors and functionality that we are most often asked about, and which most mapping products are likely to provide in some form. The 10 chosen indicators were subject to much debate, and may be developed further in the future, but at present, we feel they are a good selection that will help an uninformed consumer understand the relative strengths and weaknesses of different products, as well as what functionality simply is or is not provided by any particular product.

Our 2018 survey asked participants to select their favourite mind mapping software/app, and then review that software based on a rating (between 1-5) for each of the ten indicators. Participants could only provide ratings for one software product (their preferred tool), and in this report, you can see the average ratings achieved by each product, for each of the 10 indicators.

What we're NOT doing

You'll hopefully notice a few things that we are NOT doing as part of this process...

We're NOT... Naming a BEST

Our software developer friends work hard, and do great stuff. Our aim in this process is to help highlight their respective strengths, and support them all by helping consumers to make more valid comparisons between like-for-like offerings in order to find mind mapping software they love.

For Biggerplate (or anyone else) to declare en masse what software is 'best' for anyone else is unrealistic, and (we believe) unhelpful. Instead, we are aiming to simply set out feedback gathered from real mind map users, and leave the interpretation up to everyone else!

(To all our software developer friends... we love you all the same)

We're NOT... Comparing Software

The following pages do not make any direct or side-by-side comparisons between products. This is partly related to the above point, and partly because there is significant disparity in the number of participant reviews gathered for each software.

While some products had over 100 participant responses, some were much lower, and so the variation is great. Is a 3.8 rating from 100 people better than a 4.0 rating from 10 people? Once again, we're leaving that judgement to others, and alongside every indicator rating, we have simply shown how many ratings were provided, so that you can better judge for yourself.

We're NOT... Including Everyone

If a software received less than 5 participant reviews, then we have not included it here, as we feel the volume of data is simply too low to be meaningful.

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

The 10 Indicators

We asked our survey participants to rate their favourite software for each of the following indicators based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being excellent, and 1 being very poor.

The 10 indicators are as follows:

1. Easy to use

2. Value for money

3. Customer service & support

4. Project & task management

5. Brainstorming & creative thinking

6. Collaboration with others

7. Research & information gathering

8. Presentations

9. Compatibility/integration with other tools

10. Working across platforms/devices

PLUS: Likelihood to Recommend

In addition to the 10 indicators above, we also asked participants to rank on a scale of 1-10 how likely they would be to recommend their chosen mind mapping product to others, with 10 being extremely likely, and 1 being extremely unlikely to recommend. This result is also shown on the following software pages, along with the total number of participants who answered.

(Ratings like this can often be called a Net Promoter Score (or NPS), but that is super-jargon that means nothing to lots of people, so we've tried to keep it simple!)

The Software

To be included in the following analysis, a software product had to be selected as a favourite by a minimum of 5 participants.

Included

The software products that met the 5 participant criteria, and which are shown on the following pages are (in alphabetical order):

ConceptDraw
Freemind
iMindMap
iMindQ
iThoughts
MindGenius
MindManager
MindMapper
MindMeister
MindMup
MindNode
MindView
SimpleMind
TheBrain
XMind

Not Included

Products that were listed by Biggerplate in the survey (or mentioned by participants) but did not meet the 5 participant criteria are as follows:

Barvas
C-Maps
Co-Mapping
Coggle
Curio
GoConqr
Edraw MindMaster
Freeplane
Inspiration

Mind Doodle
Mindly
MindMaple
Mindomo
Novamind
SmartDraw
ThinkWise
Visio

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

ConceptDraw

Introduction

A very small sample size here reflects one of the least visible mind mapping software communities online, despite the fact that Concept-Draw MindMap is long-established in the mind mapping sector.

Key Strengths

Strong scores for Ease-of-use and Brainstorming (4.4) reflect a strong core product, complimented by positive ratings for project/task management (4.2) and presentations (4.4).

Although the sample size is small, the likelihood to recommend score comes in at a respectable 7.8 out of 10.

Areas for improvement

Collaboration (3.4) and Compatibility (3.4) indicators are relatively low here, but little additional information was provided by the small number of survey participants who rated this product as their favourite, so it is not immediately clear what they might like to see improved.

More ConceptDraw user participation in future surveys is likely to give us a more accurate and meaningful set of indicators, but this scorecard roughly reflects what we would expect based on our experience.

Learn more about ConceptDraw

Likelihood to Recommend:

7.8
(5 Ratings)

0   10
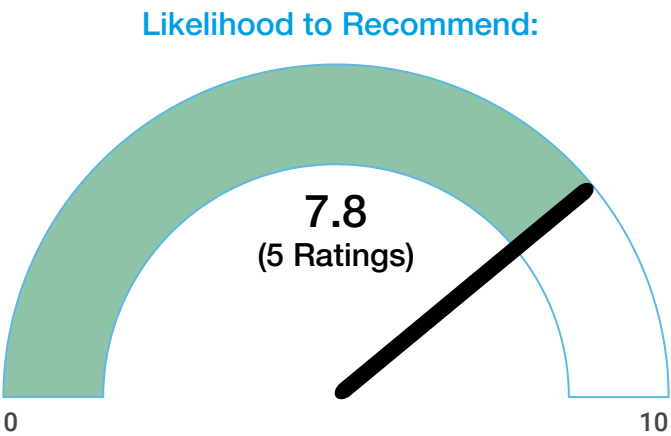
Easy to use
(5 Ratings)

4.4

Value for money
(5 Ratings)

3.8

Customer service & support
(5 Ratings)

4.2

Project & task management
(5 Ratings)

4.2

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(5 Ratings)

4.4

Collaboration with others
(5 Ratings)

3.4

Research & information gathering
(5 Ratings)

3.8

Presentations
(5 Ratings)

4.4

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(5 Ratings)

3.4

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(5 Ratings)

3.8

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

Freemind

Introduction

Despite a slow development pace in recent years, the open source Freemind product still hold a significant user base within the mind mapping community, often acting as a first step into for people searching online for 'free' mind mapping software.

Key Strengths

The 'free' in Freemind is reflected in the high value for money score (4.5), and overall, the open feedback provided by users suggested that they understood the limitations of the free tool, but felt it was "good enough", as reflected in the fair, but unspectacular scores for Ease-of-use (3.8) and Brainstorming (3.8) etc.

Areas for improvement

Freemind scores were low for a number of indicators in the scorecard, with collaboration, compatibility, and working across devices all hovering around 3 out of 5. We feel the product is likely to age poorly over the coming years unless there is a fresh injection of open source energy to take it forward. With a strong selection of superior free software options now available, it is unlikely that 'free' alone will be enough to sustain this product forever. However, we suspect it will continue to be a first step for many people searching for first mind mapping tools for some time to come yet.

[Learn more about Freemind](#)

Likelihood to Recommend:

6.8
(17 Ratings)

0   10
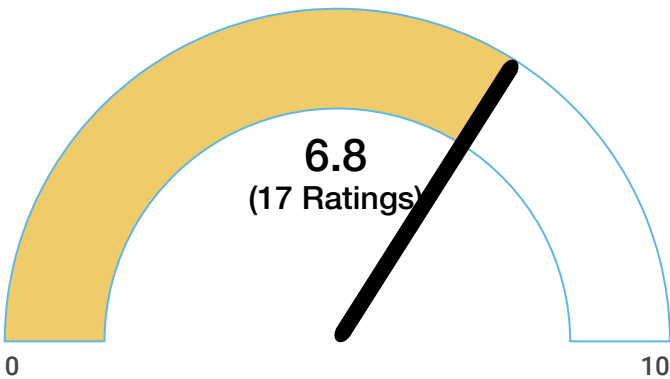
Easy to use
(17 Ratings)

3.8

Value for money
(17 Ratings)

4.5

Customer service & support
(17 Ratings)

3.1

Project & task management
(17 Ratings)

3.1

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(17 Ratings)

3.8

Collaboration with others
(17 Ratings)

3.0

Research & information gathering
(16 Ratings)

3.5

Presentations
(17 Ratings)

3.5

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(17 Ratings)

2.9

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(17 Ratings)

3.1

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

iMindMap

Introduction

With excellent participation from iMindMap users in the survey, this scorecard is a fantastic insight into the strengths of this product.

Key Strengths

iMindMap rates highly for brainstorming & creative thinking (4.5) which should please a development team that puts a lot of emphasis on this type of functionality.

Users indicate that the software is easy to use (4.4) and also ranks well for presentation functionality (4.0) and for research/information gathering (4.0), reflecting the strong all-round mind mapping tool that has developed in a number of innovative ways over consecutive years.

Areas for Improvement

Compatibility with other tools (3.4) is the lowest score, which surprised us since the softwar includes extensive abilities to import other mind mapping file formats. A number of participants suggest/request improvement/addition of Microsoft Office product integrations.

Working across devices/platforms is also a lower scoring indicator for iMindMap (3.6), with a number of users mentioning Android applications and/or online/cloud based options as areas for improvement.

[Learn more about iMindMap](#)

Likelihood to Recommend:

8.3
(500 Ratings)

0   10
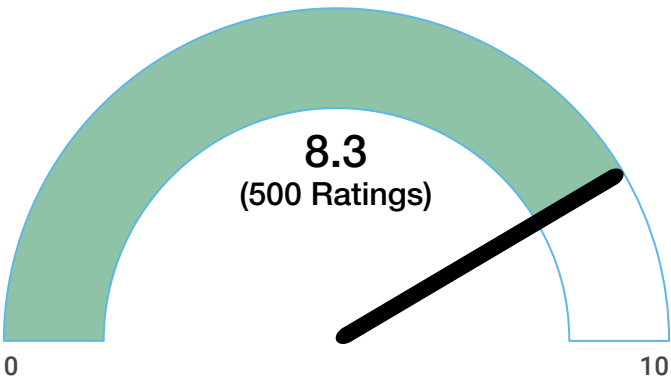
Easy to use
(500 Ratings)
4.4

Value for money
(498 Ratings)
3.8

Customer service & support
(491 Ratings)
3.9

Project & task management
(491 Ratings)
3.8

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(495 Ratings)
4.5
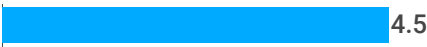
Collaboration with others
(476 Ratings)
3.6

Research & information gathering
(484 Ratings)
4.0

Presentations
(492 Ratings)
4.0
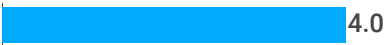
Compatibility/integration with other tools
(490 Ratings)
3.4

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(491 Ratings)
3.6

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

iMindQ

Introduction

While perhaps lacking the brand profile of some other products in the market, iMindQ (formerly Dropmind) has developed into a very well rounded product suite over a number of years.

Key Strengths

With relatively good participation in the survey this year, particularly from their home nation of Macedonia, iMindQ users praise the customer service (4.6), and research functionality (4.6) most highly, with value for money (4.5), creative thinking (4.5) and presentations (4.5) following close behind.

iMindQ also achieves one of the highest software scores for working across platforms/devices (4.2), which reflects a comprehensive product suite offering Windows, Mac, iOS, Android, and Online solutions.

A very strong Likelihood to Recommend score (9.1) will hopefully help this innovative product suite to gain some of the additional recognition it deserves in 2018!

Areas for improvement

Participants suggested simplification of design and menus might be beneficial, and a few mention a desire for more/better icons and image options within the product.

[Learn more about iMindQ](#)

Likelihood to Recommend:

9.1
(31 Ratings)

0   10
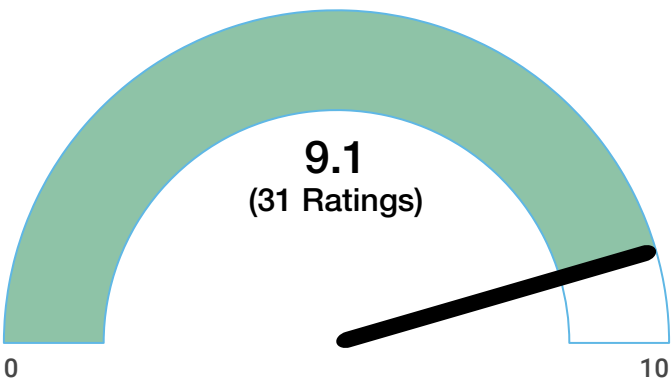
Easy to use
(31 Ratings)

4.4

Value for money
(31 Ratings)

4.5

Customer service & support
(31 Ratings)

4.6

Project & task management
(31 Ratings)

4.4

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(31 Ratings)

4.5

Collaboration with others
(30 Ratings)

4.1

Research & information gathering
(30 Ratings)

4.6

Presentations
(31 Ratings)

4.5

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(31 Ratings)

4.2

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(31 Ratings)

4.2

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

iThoughts

Introduction

A fantastic small/independent developer success story, iThoughts continues to garner praise for continuous product development, and recently moved into the Windows environment having previously been iOS and Mac only.

Key Strengths

iThoughts rates extremely well for value for money (4.8) and it is undoubtedly one of the most competitively priced applications options available. Users also rate it highly for brainstorming/creative thinking (4.7) and ease-of-use (4.6), while scores for research (4.4), and compatibility with other tools (4.4) are also strong.

A very positive Likelihood to Recommend score (9.1), from a significant sample size is a very strong endorsement of the iThoughts product.

Areas for improvement

Collaboration comes up both in the scoring (3.5), and in the open feedback from participants, who are perhaps now hoping to move their 'i' thoughts into group thoughts and work collaboratively in an online environment.

Integration/export to other (non-mapping) tools was also mentioned by a few participants when asked what areas they might like to see improved, but details are somewhat absent.

[Learn more about iThoughts](#)

Likelihood to Recommend:

9.1
(54 Ratings)

0   10
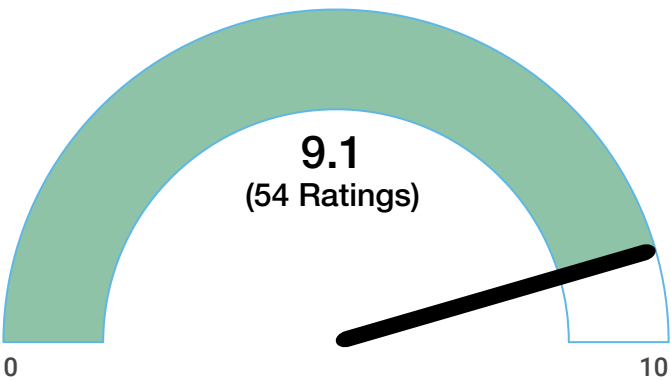
Easy to use
(53 Ratings)

4.6

Value for money
(52 Ratings)

4.8

Customer service & support
(53 Ratings)

4.3

Project & task management
(51 Ratings)

4.2

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(53 Ratings)

4.7

Collaboration with others
(51 Ratings)

3.5

Research & information gathering
(52 Ratings)

4.4

Presentations
(51 Ratings)

4.0

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(53 Ratings)

4.4

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(51 Ratings)

4.3

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

MindGenius

Introduction

After a quiet couple of years, MindGenius burst back into life this year with the release of a new version shortly after the close of the Annual Survey. Participation by a strong and loyal user base ensures that the MindGenius scorecard is strong across the board, with an excellent Likelihood to Recommend score of 9.3.

Key Strengths

Easy to use (4.6), value for money (4.6), creative thinking (4.6) are the highest of a strong set of indicator scores for MindGenius, with customer service (4.5), project/task management (4.5) among a number of indicators following close behind.

Areas for improvement

Working across devices (3.6) is the area for improvement identified by users both in the scores, and in the open feedback, where the absence of mobile applications for MindGenius is a factor.

Collaboration with others (4.0) is also a lower score (though still very respectable) and the open feedback suggests the lack of an online version is behind this scoring. The impressive online Barvas product (from MindGenius) may go some way to addressing these requirements for some users.

Learn more about MindGenius

Likelihood to Recommend:

9.3
(44 Ratings)

0   10

Easy to use
(44 Ratings)

4.6

Value for money
(44 Ratings)

4.6

Customer service & support
(44 Ratings)

4.5

Project & task management
(43 Ratings)

4.5

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(44 Ratings)

4.6

Collaboration with others
(41 Ratings)

4.0

Research & information gathering
(41 Ratings)

4.5

Presentations
(41 Ratings)

4.5

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(44 Ratings)

4.0

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(42 Ratings)

3.6

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

MindManager

Introduction

Visibly re-energised since acquisition by Corel in 2016, the MindManager product has had a productive couple of years development, with some exciting new improvements including an excellent HTML 5 export capability, and much-awaited updates to the Mac product.

Key Strengths

Users rated MindManager highly for ease-of-use (4.5) which is particularly impressive for one of the most feature-rich mapping applications available. Participants also rate MindManager highly for brainstorming and creative thinking (4.5), while project and task management (4.4) follows close behind, which we would expect from a product that is historically strong in this area.

Areas for improvement

Working across multiple platforms/devices appears to be the key area for improvement for MindManager (3.5), and this reflects feedback about current mobile offerings.

Collaboration with others (3.7) is also a lower scoring indicator for MindManager, and the open feedback indicates a desire for online collaborative mapping options, something that MindManager has explored in the past.

Learn more about MindManager

Likelihood to Recommend:

8.6
(190 Ratings)

0   10

Easy to use
(190 Ratings)

4.5

Value for money
(189 Ratings)

3.9

Customer service & support
(186 Ratings)

3.8

Project & task management
(188 Ratings)

4.4

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(189 Ratings)

4.5

Collaboration with others
(183 Ratings)

3.7

Research & information gathering
(185 Ratings)

4.3

Presentations
(187 Ratings)

3.9

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(190 Ratings)

3.8

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(183 Ratings)

3.5

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

MindMapper

Introduction

One of the smallest samples for a software with just 7 ratings, this scorecard perhaps needs greater participation to provide a more credible picture of the MindMapper application from SimTech, but nonetheless hints at some of the key strengths and shortcomings users see in the product offering at present.

Key Strengths

This small number of users clearly identified project and task management (4.9) as the strong point of this software, combined that with a very strong ease-of-use score (4.9).

Brainstorming (4.7), research/info gathering (4.7) are also scored highly here, indicating a strong core mind mapping product.

Areas for improvement

Working across devices (3.1) rates relatively poorly for MindMapper, despite the presence of both Android and iOS apps to complement the core Windows software. The small sample size means there is little additional feedback to explain this particular score.
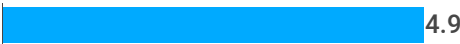
Compatibility with other tools (4.0) is also a lower score, and open feedback hints at better import/export of other mind map formats, in addition to further integrations with MS Office.

[Learn more about MindMapper](#)

Likelihood to Recommend:

9.7
(7 Ratings)

0   10

Easy to use
(7 Ratings)

4.9

Value for money
(7 Ratings)

4.6
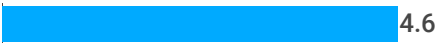
Customer service & support
(7 Ratings)

4.4

Project & task management
(7 Ratings)

4.9

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(7 Ratings)

4.7

Collaboration with others
(7 Ratings)

4.1

Research & information gathering
(7 Ratings)

4.7

Presentations
(7 Ratings)

4.6

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(7 Ratings)

4.0

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(7 Ratings)

3.1

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

MindMeister

Introduction

MindMeister may have suffered the most from low user participation in the survey this year, with a set of indicators that do not quite line up with the product experience and user feedback that we are generally aware of. Greater user participation next year would certainly be desirable given the size of the MindMeister user community, and the fact that MindMeister is still one of only a handful of online mind mapping tools in the market today.

Key Strengths

Brainstorming and creative thinking (4.5) is the highest indicator for MindMeister, and complemented by a strong ease-of-use score (4.3).

Another positive score is project and task management (4.3) which may speak to integration capabilities with Meistertask, Zapier and more.

Areas for improvement

Compatibility with other tools (3.4) is the lowest scoring indicator for MindMeister, but the open feedback does not provide much insight into why this score is this low.

Likewise, the collaboration (3.9) score is confusingly low considering MindMeister is one of very few products offering real-time online collaboration on mind maps.

Learn more about MindMeister

Likelihood to Recommend:

8.1
(15 Ratings)

0   10

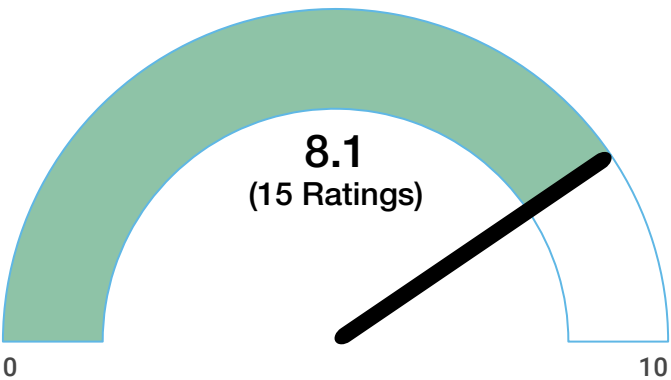**Easy to use**
(15 Ratings)

4.3

Value for money
(15 Ratings)

4.2

Customer service & support
(14 Ratings)

4.0

Project & task management
(15 Ratings)

4.3

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(15 Ratings)

4.5

Collaboration with others
(15 Ratings)

3.9

Research & information gathering
(15 Ratings)

4.3

Presentations
(15 Ratings)

3.9

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(15 Ratings)

3.4

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(15 Ratings)

4.0

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

MindMup

Introduction

Despite being among the smallest participating groups, it is good to see MindMup users participating in the annual survey this year to provide a baseline scorecard that can hopefully be developed further next year to provide insight into another of the online-only mapping tools.

Key Strengths

Easy to use (4.5) is a high score for MindMup that we would expect to see, with 'frictionless' being a key part of the product pitch for this online product.

Value for money (4.4) is another higher score for MindMup, most likely reflecting a 'Freemium' pricing model that is still highly competitive even when opting for a paid plan.

Areas for improvement

Compatibility with other tools (3.3) is the lowest indicator score, and may be referencing current import/export functionality within MindMup.

Despite offering collaborative editing of maps, the collaboration score (3.5) is also relatively low, but with little supporting information in the open feedback to suggest why.

Learn more about MindMup
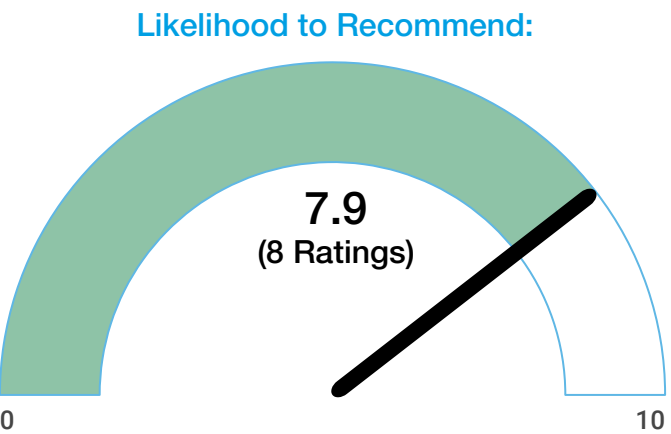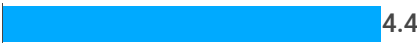
Likelihood to Recommend:

7.9
(8 Ratings)

0   10

Easy to use
(8 Ratings)

4.5

Value for money
(8 Ratings)

4.4

Customer service & support
(8 Ratings)

3.4

Project & task management
(8 Ratings)

3.8

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(8 Ratings)

4.3

Collaboration with others
(8 Ratings)

3.5

Research & information gathering
(8 Ratings)

4.0

Presentations
(8 Ratings)

3.6

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(8 Ratings)

3.3

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(8 Ratings)

3.5

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

MindNode

Introduction

A popular tool among the Mac mind mappers, this small sample size may not tell the full story for MindNode, and we'll need greater participation from users in future to give a more informative scorecard for this well regarded product.

Key Strengths

Easy to use (4.6) is the highest scoring indicator for MindNode, with brainstorming (4.3) also ranking well.

Value for money (4.1) and customer service (4.1) as a combination of strong ratings speaks highly of both the product and the team from Austria.

Areas for improvement

A relatively low score for project/task management (2.9) is not supplemented by much additional information in the open feedback, so it is hard to know exactly what users might want to see here.

Scores for compatibility (3.4) and collaboration (3.2) are also relatively low, and may reflect the Mac/iOS only focus of the MindNode product.

[Learn more about MindNode](#)

Likelihood to Recommend:

8.0
(10 Ratings)

0   10
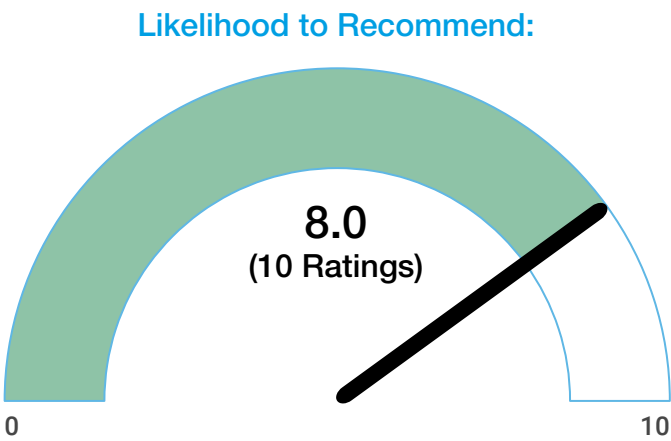
Easy to use
(10 Ratings)

4.6

Value for money
(10 Ratings)

4.1

Customer service & support
(10 Ratings)

4.1

Project & task management
(9 Ratings)

2.9

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(9 Ratings)

4.3

Collaboration with others
(9 Ratings)

3.2

Research & information gathering
(10 Ratings)

3.6

Presentations
(9 Ratings)

3.4

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(10 Ratings)

3.4

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(10 Ratings)

3.9

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

MindView

Introduction

A strong mind mapping product with a relatively invisible user community, we were pleased to attract even this small number of MindView user perspectives to the 2018 survey, but greater participation would be needed to provide more credible indicator scores over time.

Key Strengths

Compatibility with other tools (4.8) rates very highly among this small user group, most likely reflecting a strong interface between MindView and Microsoft Office products.

Project & task management (4.6) is another high performing indicator for MindView, reflecting a well established reputation for this product among project managers.

Areas for improvement

The lowest indicator here is value for money (4.0) which probably reflects the fact that MindView is at the higher end of the pricing spectrum for mind mapping software.
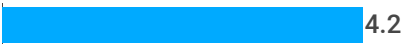
Customer service (4.1) is another of the lower scores that may merit further attention for a product charging a premium price, although it is still a relatively positive score in itself.

[Learn more about MindView](#)
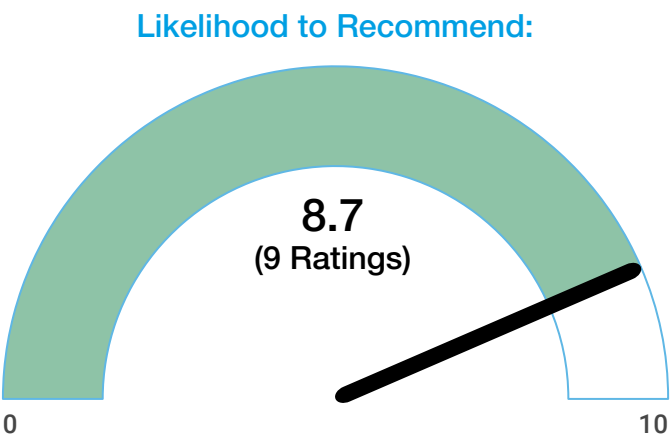
Likelihood to Recommend:

8.7
(9 Ratings)

0   10

Easy to use
(9 Ratings)
4.2

Value for money
(9 Ratings)
4.0

Customer service & support
(9 Ratings)
4.1

Project & task management
(9 Ratings)
4.6

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(9 Ratings)
4.4

Collaboration with others
(8 Ratings)
4.1

Research & information gathering
(9 Ratings)
4.4

Presentations
(8 Ratings)
4.1

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(9 Ratings)
4.8

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(9 Ratings)
4.1

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

SimpleMind

Introduction

The newest addition to the list of supported software formats at Biggerplate.com, this is another of the small/independent developer success stories that has emerged out of the world of mobile app development. Despite the small number of survey participants, we feel these scores are a fair representation of the current SimpleMind product suite, and an invaluable benchmark.

Key Strengths

The only 5 score in the entire survey, SimpleMind is considered exceptional value for money (5.0) by participants.

The application also rates highly for brainstorming and creative thinking (4.9), while ease of use (4.4) and working across devices (4.2) speak to some of the established product strengths that we have seen ourselves.

Areas for improvement

A relatively low score for collaboration (3.1) perhaps reflects the lack of an online product, which is no small undertaking for a development team to try and tackle!

Compatibility with other tools (3.0) is a more easily addressed area for improvement, particularly importing other map formats.

Learn more about SimpleMind
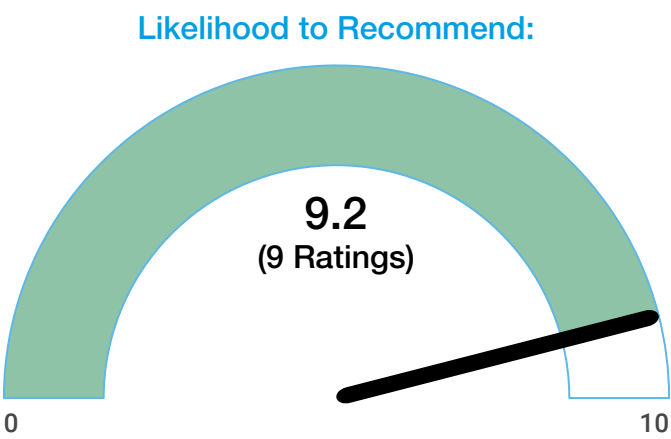
Likelihood to Recommend:

9.2
(9 Ratings)

0   10

Easy to use
(9 Ratings)

4.4

Value for money
(9 Ratings)

5.0

Customer service & support
(9 Ratings)

4.4

Project & task management
(8 Ratings)

4.0

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(9 Ratings)

4.9

Collaboration with others
(8 Ratings)

3.1

Research & information gathering
(8 Ratings)

4.6

Presentations
(9 Ratings)

3.8

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(9 Ratings)

3.0

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(9 Ratings)

4.2

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

TheBrain

Introduction

An application that has might be considered as slightly outside of the world of pure "mind mapping", TheBrain has featured consistently in our survey data over the last 5 years, and should therefore be considered as a tool for consideration here, although the participant group was another relatively small one.

Key Strengths

Rated highly for research and information gathering (4.5), along with brainstorming (4.4) TheBrain offers a unique take on mind mapping, and is often praised as a powerful tool for knowledge management.

Working across devices (4.4) is another positive score for TheBrain, reflecting a product suite covering desktop, cloud, iOS, and Android usage.

Areas for improvement

Collaboration with others (3.4) and compatibility (3.5) are among the lowest scores for TheBrain and this may reflect desire among mind mappers for better integration/import/export with other mind mapping tools and file formats.
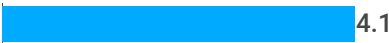
Learn more about TheBrain

Likelihood to Recommend:

8.8
(8 Ratings)

0   10

Easy to use
(8 Ratings)

4.0

Value for money
(8 Ratings)

4.1

Customer service & support
(8 Ratings)

4.3

Project & task management
(8 Ratings)

3.6

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(8 Ratings)

4.4

Collaboration with others
(8 Ratings)

3.4

Research & information gathering
(8 Ratings)

4.5

Presentations
(8 Ratings)

3.6

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(8 Ratings)

3.5

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(8 Ratings)

4.4

2018 Annual Survey: Software Scorecards

XMind

Introduction

With a very large user base that is particularly strong in China and Asia more broadly, it is possible that participation by XMind users in the annual survey was hampered by the English language survey, but nonetheless, we have a very healthy sample size to provide insight into the XMind product.

Key Strengths

Users have always praised XMind for simplicity, and the easy-to-use rating (4.3) reinforces this strength in the product.

Brainstorming and creative thinking (4.2) is also another of the higher indicators for XMind, followed by a value for money score (4.1) that we would have expected to be slightly higher.

Areas for improvement

Working across platforms/devices (3.3) comes out as the lowest score for XMind, and the open feedback suggests mobile apps as the key area needing improvement. The relatively recent loss of XMind Cloud service is also cited as a factor here.

Compatibility/integration with other tools (3.4) is also among the lower scores, with open feedback suggesting a wish for improved import/export options, as well as will storage options.
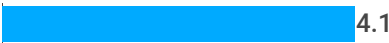
Learn more about XMind

Likelihood to Recommend:

8.1
(68 Ratings)

0   10
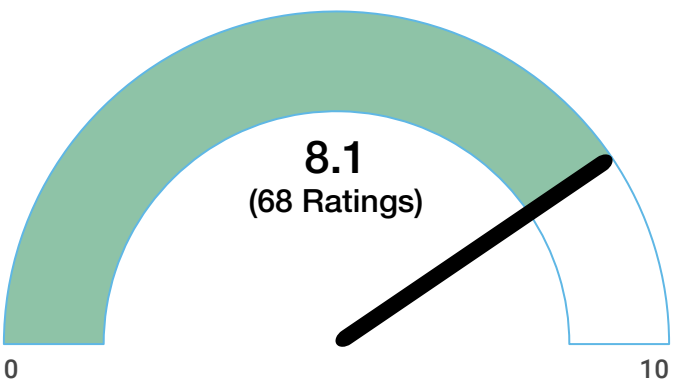
Easy to use
(68 Ratings)
4.3

Value for money
(68 Ratings)
4.1

Customer service & support
(67 Ratings)
3.6

Project & task management
(67 Ratings)
3.8

Brainstorming & creative thinking
(67 Ratings)
4.2

Collaboration with others
(65 Ratings)
3.5

Research & information gathering
(65 Ratings)
4.0

Presentations
(66 Ratings)
3.7

Compatibility/integration with other tools
(68 Ratings)
3.4

Working across multiple platforms/devices
(68 Ratings)
3.3

2018 Annual Report

Conclusions

Attempting to write a conclusion that wraps up the extensive range and depth of information gathered in the annual survey and represented in this report is a challenge that I dread every year, and have not yet figured out how to avoid!

It goes without saying that I hope you have found some (or maybe all) of this report interesting and potentially useful in some way. The challenge here is always to try and be comprehensive while avoiding overkill, and provide summary information rather than in-depth analysis of every single item. I hope we have achieved the right balance this year!

The survey and report presented particular challenges this year as we attempted to get to grips with the newly introduced Software Scorecard, which not only forms a significant part of the report, but also a key part of our strategy in 2018 to provide better (and balanced), consumer guidance in relation to mind mapping software. By placing the emphasis on what you the user has said, I hope we can avoid offending/annoying anyone, whilst also providing invaluable insight for anyone considering taking first steps into the exciting world of mind mapping tools and techniques.

In broader terms, I believe the mind mapping sector is in the healthiest state it has been for a number of years. We have seen some interesting new products entering the space in 2017 and 2018 (so far), in addition to some real innovation and impetus from some of the more established players in the market. Combined with a growing macro trend towards more visual working, and I remain confident that Biggerplate, our software partners, and (most importantly) our community members are well placed to benefit from growing acceptance and adoption of these approaches, and better technological solutions than ever before.

Next Steps

Our intention this year is to try and dive deeper into certain results and data from the survey, and publish a number of 'deep dive' blog posts over the coming months that will explore some of the data and insights further than is possible in this report. This will also (hopefully) provide a great opportunity for readers and survey participants to leave comments and perspectives to help develop the discussion further.

If you have any perspectives about the survey or the results, then please feel free to contact us directly to explore further. We always welcome feedback from our members, and the survey has evolved significantly over 5 years in direct response to requests, suggestions, and constructive criticism that we have received each year! Don't be shy...!

Thank You

Finally, I must once again extend thanks on behalf of my team to all those who participated in the annual survey, our software partners for their sponsorship and support in reaching our widest ever survey audience, and anyone reading this report who has somehow made it to this final page!

Liam Hughes
Founder: Biggerplate

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