



Annual Mind Map Report 2015

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#BPAR15

Welcome to the Biggerplate Annual Mind Map Report 2015!

To Biggerplate members and mind mappers around the world, I'd like to start by wishing you a very happy new year, and welcoming you to our Annual Mind Map Report 2015!

First and foremost, I'd like to apologise for the picture of me greeting you to the right... it's not my fault... they made me do it. I wanted a picture of a puppy on a skateboard...

The Annual Mind Map Report is now firmly established as our way of kicking off the new year, and is something that we greatly enjoy putting together. Not only do we get a fantastic insight into how people around the world are using mind mapping in their daily lives, but we also get wonderful feedback and a HUGE number of new innovation ideas in the process from members of our community. It provides a great kick-start to the year, and we have already incorporated several ideas into our development plans for 2015!

The report itself draws upon data and statistics gathered over the year at Biggerplate.com, and combines these with the results of our Annual Mind Map Survey that took place at the end of 2014. Over 1,000 people participated in the survey, which is an increase of over 300 on the previous year (when the project was first launched). The result is an unrivalled insight into the mind mapping world, and one that we are delighted to be sharing with you!

If you have any questions, comments, or ideas in response to what you read here, we'd love for you to share them with us through our social media channels, and we hope this will stimulate further discussion about the results.

If you're using Twitter, please include the tag **#BPAR15** to help us (and others) engage with your thoughts and ideas.

[Twitter.com/Biggerplate](https://twitter.com/Biggerplate)
[Facebook.com/Biggerplate](https://facebook.com/Biggerplate)



As we launch ourselves into 2015, it's fair to say that this year will be critical and extremely exciting for Biggerplate, as we take steps to grow our community and map library on a scale that is well beyond the current rates. If we are truly serious about becoming 'The Home of Mind Mapping', the time has come for us to tackle some of our biggest technical and resource challenges, and that's what we intend to do.

We are confident in taking on these challenges for one simple reason: the support, encouragement, and goodwill that we receive from members of our community from all over the world.

I thank you all for your continued support and encouragement, and wish you all the best for a fantastic 2015... it's going to be a good one!

Liam Hughes
Founder: Biggerplate.com

[Twitter.com/BiggerplateLiam](https://twitter.com/BiggerplateLiam)

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Biggerplate: 2014 Review

Overview

There was a lot happening at Biggerplate in 2014, and we continued to move forward with a number of key projects in both the online and offline worlds. Here are a few headlines from our 2014 review...

Biggerplate Publisher

From consumers to contributors...

Perhaps the most important development of 2014 was the first phase in the creation of our a new three-tiered membership system. Over the course of 2015, we will be building three different membership types on Biggerplate, simply known as Free, Plus, and Publisher.

In 2014 the first step in this process was the creation of a new system intended to encourage more users to contribute maps to the library, rather than simply consuming maps created by others (which has long been the dominant behaviour on the site). From May 2014, we introduced a download limit of 5 maps per month for all newly registered accounts. When a user reaches their monthly download limit, they are now presented with two options:

Upload or Upgrade

The Upload option enables a user to lift their download limit for the remainder of the month, simply by uploading one map of their own onto the library! It is a very simple way for us to try and shift the behaviour of more people from being map consumers, to being map contributors, and has already proven effective, with the number of map uploads per month increasing steadily since the introduction of the new system!

In reality, 5 maps per month is more than most users need (the average user downloads 4 maps per month), but the system is simply intended to remind those who take lot from the library that it would be beneficial if they also contributed something back!

If users prefer not to upload a map to the library in return for unlimited downloads, then they can opt to upgrade their account to a Biggerplate Plus membership instead for \$19.99 per year, which gives them unlimited map downloads, and will soon provide additional account benefits as part of the larger Publisher project.

We've been very pleased with the results so far, and the number of new maps and first time sharers has increased significantly since the introduction of the Upload or Upgrade system, with minimal disruption caused to existing members and those who have long supported Biggerplate! It's the first building block in a large project, but something we're very excited about!

Learn more about the new system by watching this video from Biggerplate Founder Liam Hughes speaking at Biggerplate Unplugged in Berlin:

[> Watch Video](#)



biggerplate UNPLUGGED

In 2014, Biggerplate broke more new ground in the mind mapping world, as we took our Biggerplate Unplugged series across the Atlantic for the first time and welcomed over 80 mind mappers to a sell-out conference in the wonderful city of San Francisco in March!

In October, we followed this up with a fantastic event in Germany, where we welcomed attendees from 10 different countries for #BPUN in Berlin!

We learned a huge amount from both events, and had a great time in the process. By the looks of things... so did our conference guests!

Thank you to all those who joined us in San Francisco and Berlin for making these events such a huge success, and for sharing your energy, enthusiasm and insights with us!

Join us in London on 19 March 2015 as Biggerplate Unplugged returns to where it all began for the first time in two years..!

[>Information and Tickets](#)

Biggerplate: 2014 Review

Web Traffic & Trends

Traffic to Biggerplate.com in 2014 was up by 7.68% compared to 2013, and visitors to our site came from 226 different countries! The following table shows the top 10 regional traffic sources over the last three years, and what percentage(%) of our total site traffic each region represents.

	2012		2013		2014	
1		United States 21.93%		United States 21.67%		United States 19.03%
2		United Kingdom 15.60%		United Kingdom 13.11%		United Kingdom 12.28%
3		France 4.68%		France 6.66%		France 9.74%
4		Australia 4.13%		Australia 3.94%		Germany 4.98%
5		Germany 3.83%		Germany 3.92%		Australia 3.82%
6		India 3.79%		Netherlands 3.72%		India 3.77%
7		Canada 3.79%		Canada 3.58%		Canada 3.40%
8		Netherlands 2.90%		India 3.35%		Netherlands 2.88%
9		Malaysia 1.97%		Belgium 2.12%		Belgium 2.43%
10		Italy 1.61%		Malaysia 1.89%		Malaysia 1.88%

Biggerplate: 2014 Review

Web Traffic & Trends

While the continued dominance of the US and UK at the top of the chart is perhaps unsurprising given that Biggerplate is currently an English language website, what's interesting to see is the continued growth of other regional traffic, and in particular, traffic from France...

The #BPUN Effect?

One possible (and positive) trend suggested by the table above is the impact that a Biggerplate Unplugged (#BPUN) conference may have on traffic and engagement from host regions.

In 2013, the conference was hosted in Utrecht in the Netherlands, and we saw the region jump up two places, with Belgium (highly accessible to/from the Netherlands) also moving into the Top 10 for the first time.



Likewise in 2014, we see Germany overtaking Australia for the first time and moving into 4th place, coinciding neatly with Biggerplate Unplugged being hosted for the first time in the wonderful city of Berlin.

The #BPUN effect is not about web traffic coinciding with the event itself, but (we think) more likely the result of us building and strengthening relationships with local mind mappers before, during, and after the events.

There is no doubt that the relationships we have in host regions have multiplied and strengthened with every conference we have hosted, and we believe this is likely to be somewhat driving the traffic trends, as people perhaps feel more connected with the site and the community having participated in the mind map conference.

For details of future Biggerplate Unplugged events, please visit Biggerplate.com/Events

Ooh la la... Biggerplate en France!

The continued presence of France in third place over the three year period does not in fact tell the whole story... nor does the fact that this region now accounts for 5% more of our total site traffic than it did in 2012...

The really exciting trend is actually in the fact that traffic from France was **57%** higher in 2014 than the previous year! What's more, French traffic in 2013 was already 73% higher than in 2012... mon dieu!

It's therefore no surprise that France is a key part of our strategic planning for 2015, and a region that all mind mapping organisations should be giving increasing attention to in our opinion.

Are you a French mind mapper? You can now follow Biggerplate in French on Twitter: [Twitter.com/Biggerplate_Fr](https://twitter.com/Biggerplate_Fr)

+7.68%
Total traffic increase on
Biggerplate.com in 2014
compared to 2013!

Biggerplate: 2015 and beyond...

Biggerplate Events Strategy

Did you know... in 2012 there was no such thing as a mind mapping conference...?

In 2015, Biggerplate Unplugged has become firmly established as *the* must-attend conference for mind mappers around the world, having visited 5 great global cities in just two years since launching in 2013!

We have learned a great deal through the #BPUN series so far, and we are now looking to build upon the success of the series by developing an even more ambitious and far-reaching portfolio of events for mind mappers around the world!

Here's an outline of what we're planning:

Biggerplate Unplugged: Annual Cycle

Biggerplate Unplugged will now become an annual, once a year conference, starting this year with the London event (March 19th), which will be followed by events in New York in 2016, and Brussels in 2017. Further details for each event will now be released approximately one year in advance.

Having worked hard to establish the #BPUN conference in the minds of mappers through a busy two year launch schedule, the switch to an annual cycle will not only allow us to be more ambitious with each event, but also provide our community with a more predictable conference calendar, which will help to further grow the fantastic attendance at these flagship events!

Biggerplate Unplugged: London

March 2015

Biggerplate Unplugged: New York

March 2016

Biggerplate Unplugged: Brussels

March 2017

Smaller, Regional Events

We have learned from the last two years that not everyone can make our conference events, either due to cost, time, or pure logistics. We also know that in regions where our community and network are less developed, it is simply impossible for us to justify the expense and time required to host a full Biggerplate Unplugged conference. However, we believe it is vital that these regional mind mapping communities have opportunities to connect and collaborate in person through Biggerplate events, so we're working on another plan!

Moving Biggerplate Unplugged to an annual cycle will mean we now have more time and resources available for the creation of several smaller, shorter, regional mind mapping events throughout the year, and around the world!

The regional events series will be launched and explained in greater detail at the upcoming #BPUN conference in London, but the overall aim is to provide more regular opportunities for you to connect with the Biggerplate team and other mind mappers in your region through small, informal, and interactive events that will bring further focus to the exploration and understanding of mind mapping as the missing link in business and education!

Extensive Google Hangout Schedule

The final piece in our events strategy is the continuation and expansion of our Google Hangout series, which provides a great (free) mechanism for mappers from around the world to connect through real-time video calls hosted by Biggerplate using Google+

After much experimentation in 2014, you can expect to see a great selection of online hangouts scheduled in 2015 to cover a huge range of mind mapping related topics!

Biggerplate.com/Events

Biggerplate: 2015 and beyond...

Software Integrations

This year will see Biggerplate tackling some of our biggest technical challenges in order to link up with some of our software partners to create a fully integrated upload and download function within many of the world's leading mind mapping applications!

With most of the groundwork for this being completed in 2014, mind mappers can look forward to seeing Biggerplate appearing in your favourite mind mapping software or mobile app very soon. This new functionality will allow you to share maps directly from your device to our mind map library, and also dynamically browse and download content from the library, all from the comfort of your application!

This development will not only give many more mind map software users instant access to the content and resources available at Biggerplate, but will also help drive growth in the map library and community itself, as discovering and sharing content on Biggerplate becomes far easier!

We are already fortunate to work very closely with the world's leading mind map software companies, and we look forward to launching some fantastic integrations and collaborative projects with our software partners through the course of 2015!

Our integration projects are a key component in helping us achieve our aim of becoming the global home of mind mapping, and we hope that by the end of 2015, that claim will be even more valid than it is today! With a small (but neatly formed team) and limited resources, this will certainly represent a significant stretch for Biggerplate, but we believe it's absolutely essential if we are to create a truly connected mind mapping community, and a clearly defined central hub for all things mind mapping at Biggerplate.com!

Off to work we go...!

"It's vital that Biggerplate continues to innovate, and continues to bring an independent energy to the mind mapping world. It's what we're here for, and it's what people expect!"

***Liam Hughes
Founder: Biggerplate.com***



A Whole New Level of Collaboration

MindMeister's latest update brings the long awaited comments and votes feature to your mind map editor.

One of the greatest things about MindMeister is its collaboration engine, which lets you mind map with others in real-time. It's the best way to brainstorm in a team setting and quickly collect ideas for a new project.

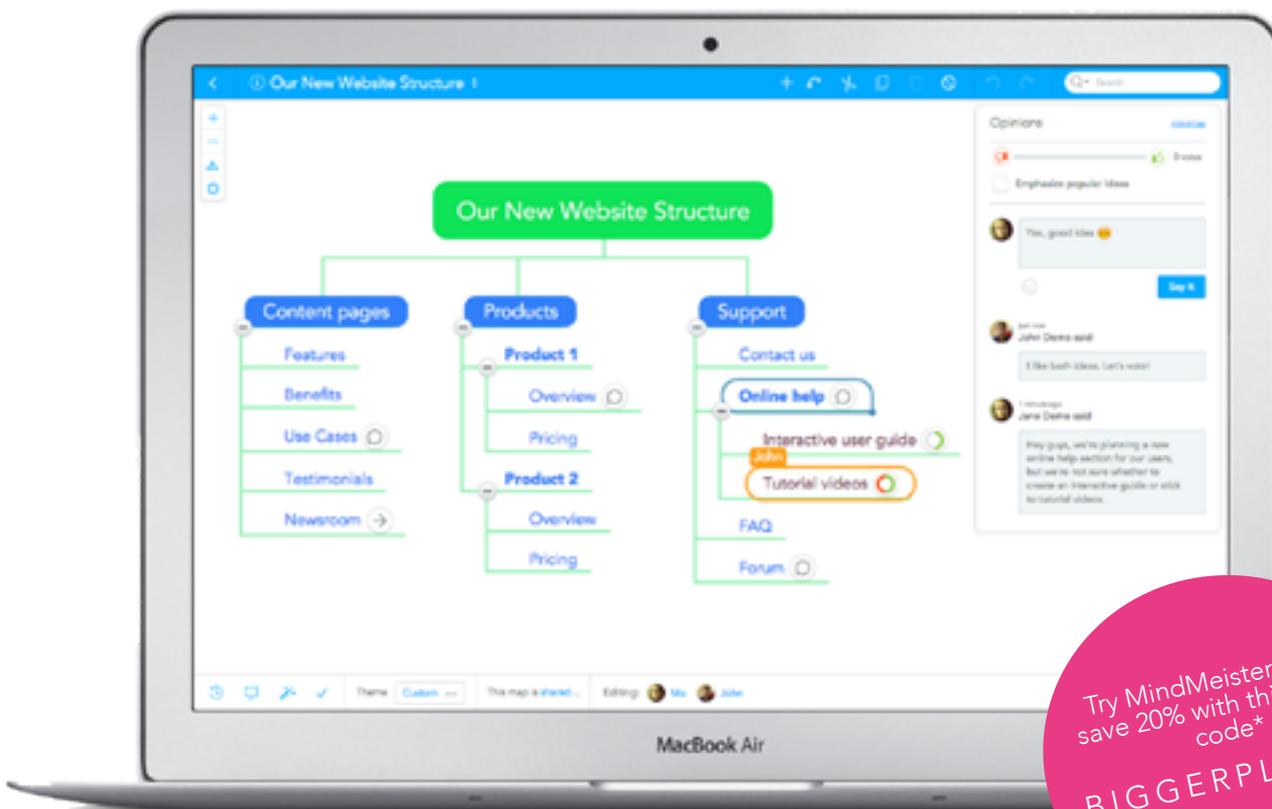
But, what if you're not just brainstorming for a project — what if the mind map itself is the project? What if you need a

outline or blueprint you can refer back to, like a business plan or a website structure? In that case, the last thing you want are the differing ideas and opinions of your teammates cluttering up the canvas and scrambling your whole map structure. And you certainly don't want people to edit or remove other team members' ideas without asking first.

So, what's the solution?

With MindMeister's new comments & votes feature, you can collect everyone's opinion and have entire discussions about individual topics, all without ever making alterations to the actual content of your mind map.

"It's like collaborating in Google Docs, but visual!"



Try MindMeister now & save 20% with this promo code*
BIGGERPLATE14
www.mindmeister.com

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

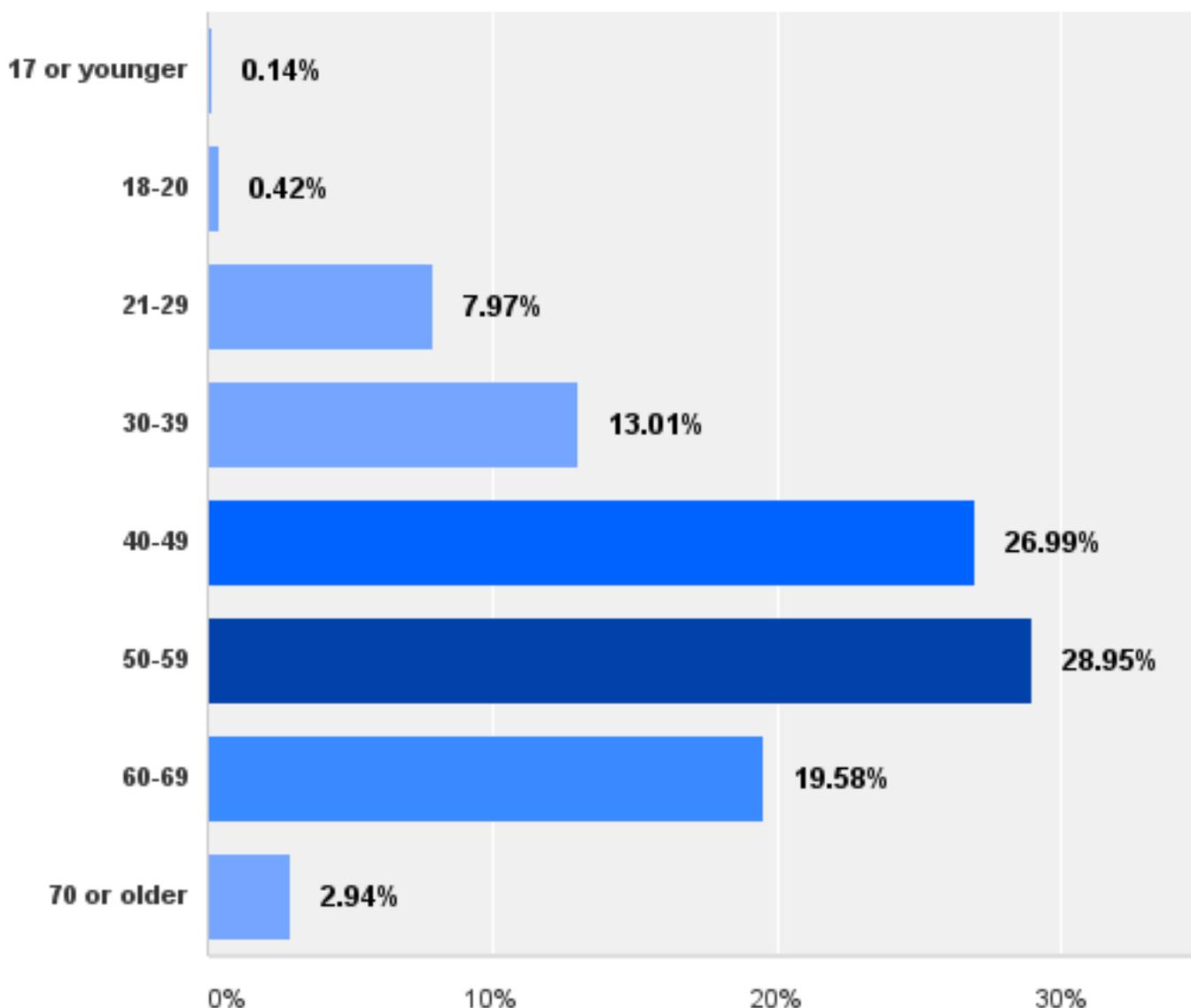
Overview

In just its second year, the Annual Mind Map survey attracted over 1,000 people participants who shared their perspectives on the use and application of mind mapping around the world. The survey provides an unrivalled view of the global mind mapping arena at the end of 2014, and builds on the information and insights gathered in the first survey results gathered in 2013.

Participant Profile: Age

As previous results have shown, it seems the typical age profile of a mind mapper sits somewhere between the ages of 40 and 59 years old. As was also shown in the 2014 report, more than 50% of the survey participants are in the 40-59 bracket, and once again, we see a low number of participants aged under 30.

Q. Which of the following includes your age?

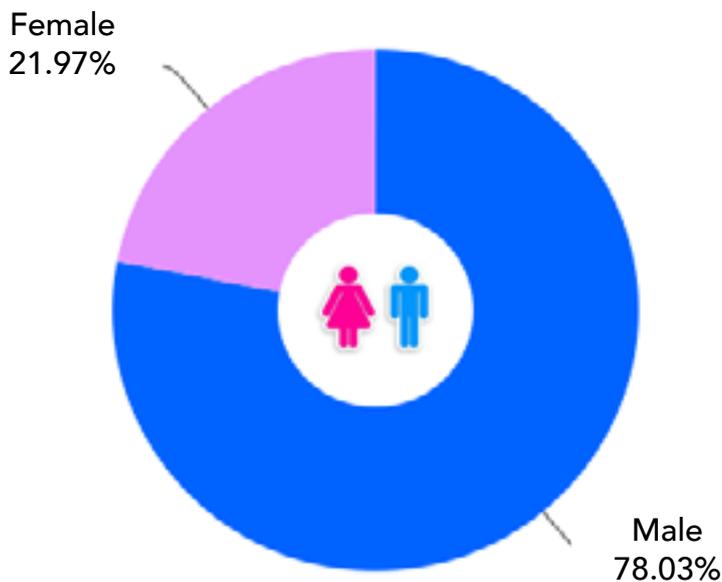


Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Participant Profile: Male & Female

One of the most surprising statistics to come out of the report last year was a ratio of exactly 80% men to 20% women in our participant profile, which was a far bigger difference than expected.

Our expert panel had a range of views as to why this may be the case, but all were interested to explore whether this represents a true picture of the mind mapping community. It was therefore with great interest that we looked at the results this year, which show more or less the same picture; a mind mapping community heavily dominated by men.



As we discussed last year, these statistics are not something to be overly concerned about, but certainly do merit some consideration.

With two years of statistics showing the same (approximate) 80:20 split, this surely indicates that this is in fact an accurate picture of the gender split among mind mappers at present.

So... the question remains why?

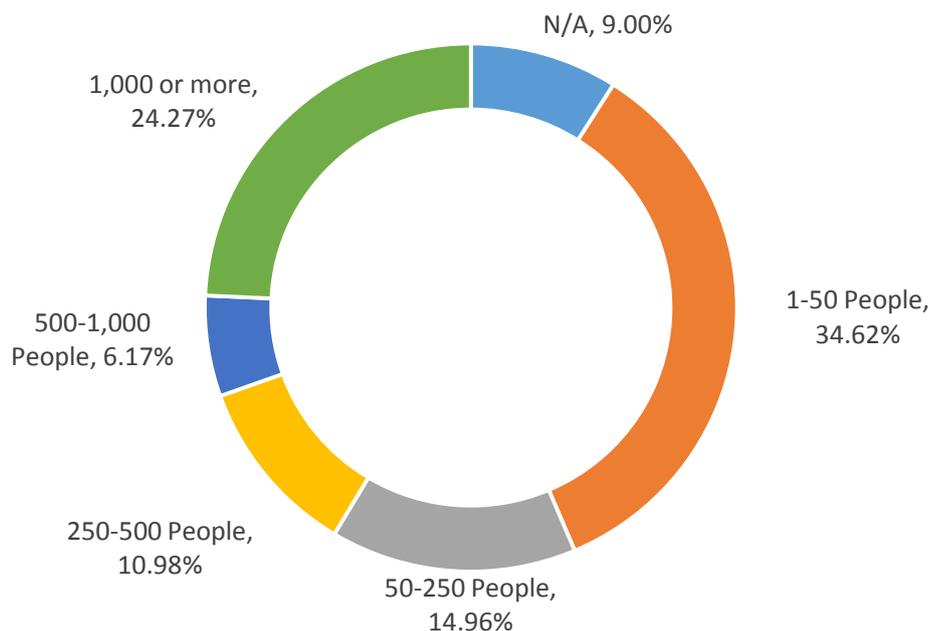
*Do you have any views on this question? If so, share them on Twitter using the tag **#BPAR15***

Participant Profile: Organisation Size

This year we asked participants to tell us the (approximate) size of their organisation in terms of the number of people working there.

The chart to the right illustrates a very wide range of organisation sizes participating in the survey, which (we hope) results in a highly useful cross-section of perspectives.

Next year, we hope to develop more insight into the specific types of organisation and industry using mind maps, but this is a good starting point!



Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Participant Profile: Jobs

At Biggerplate, we believe mind mapping is the missing link and the must have tool for workers in business and education. To show that this is the case, we must learn more about where mind mapping fits... which jobs, which processes, and which tasks are most suited to mind mapping. As part of this process, we asked our survey participants to tell us their job titles, to help us understand what type of jobs might be most relevant for mind mapping.

The following word cloud shows which words were used most often in the job titles provided:



Most striking is the prominence of the word **'Manager'** above all others, which not only represents a title in its own right, but was also used as an attachment to several other words, such as 'Project' and 'Marketing'.

The outcome suggests that mind mapping is a tool used extensively by people in management roles, and this is something that will surely give weight to the view that mapping can (and should) be considered an essential tool for modern business. The message seems clear: If you work in a management capacity in an organisation of any size, mind mapping is a tool you should explore.

The prominence of **'Project'** also gives some interesting indications about the use of mapping, and gives validation to software developers who have positioned their tools in relation to Project Management for some time.

We're also interested in the prominence of **'consultant'**, as we are constantly seeing more examples of how mind mapping is being used as a facilitation tool by consultants who are often trying to capture and represent multiple perspectives before developing their solutions. Perhaps this is an area of mind mapping use that needs to be investigated and showcased more?

"The message is clear: If you work in a management capacity in an organisation of any size, mind mapping is a tool you should explore."

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Participant Profile: Conclusions

The overall profile of participants in this year's survey should prove both encouraging and challenging to any individual or organisation working in the mind mapping sector.

The mix of organisation sizes, and the presence of many individuals from larger organisations will surely give encouragement to those software developers and companies who are looking to develop mind mapping products and solutions for large or enterprise level businesses.

Equally exciting (in our opinion) is the presence of so many small organisations, as we have long held the view that mind mapping software is an essential tool for small business owners and entrepreneurs, and perhaps the number of smaller organisations represented in the survey suggests there may be some traction here.

Further cause for encouragement is the prominence of 'manager' in the participant job titles, suggesting that mind mapping is being used by key figures within organisations who may have the necessary credibility and influence to spread the tools and approach further within their teams and among their peers.

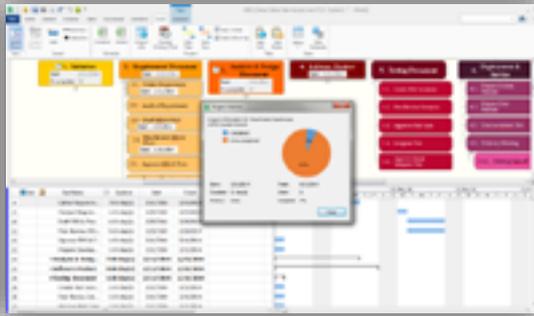
The challenges are fairly clear, but certainly not cause for alarm: The survey is once again dominated by male perspectives, and once again the under 40s are somewhat under-represented. While this situation is not necessarily an issue in itself, we believe a broader, and more balanced perspective in terms of ages and genders would be extremely useful, and is something we should be seeking out.

We know there are huge numbers of women and a large number of under 40s using mind mapping, and clearly the challenge for Biggerplate and our partners is to encourage and enable more of these mappers to participate in the survey and share their perspectives!



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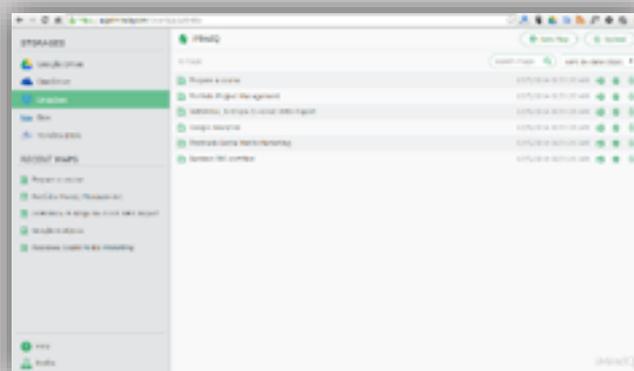
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How to reach us:

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mind Maps in Action: Overview

In this section, we try to understand and illustrate how and where people are using mind mapping in their lives.

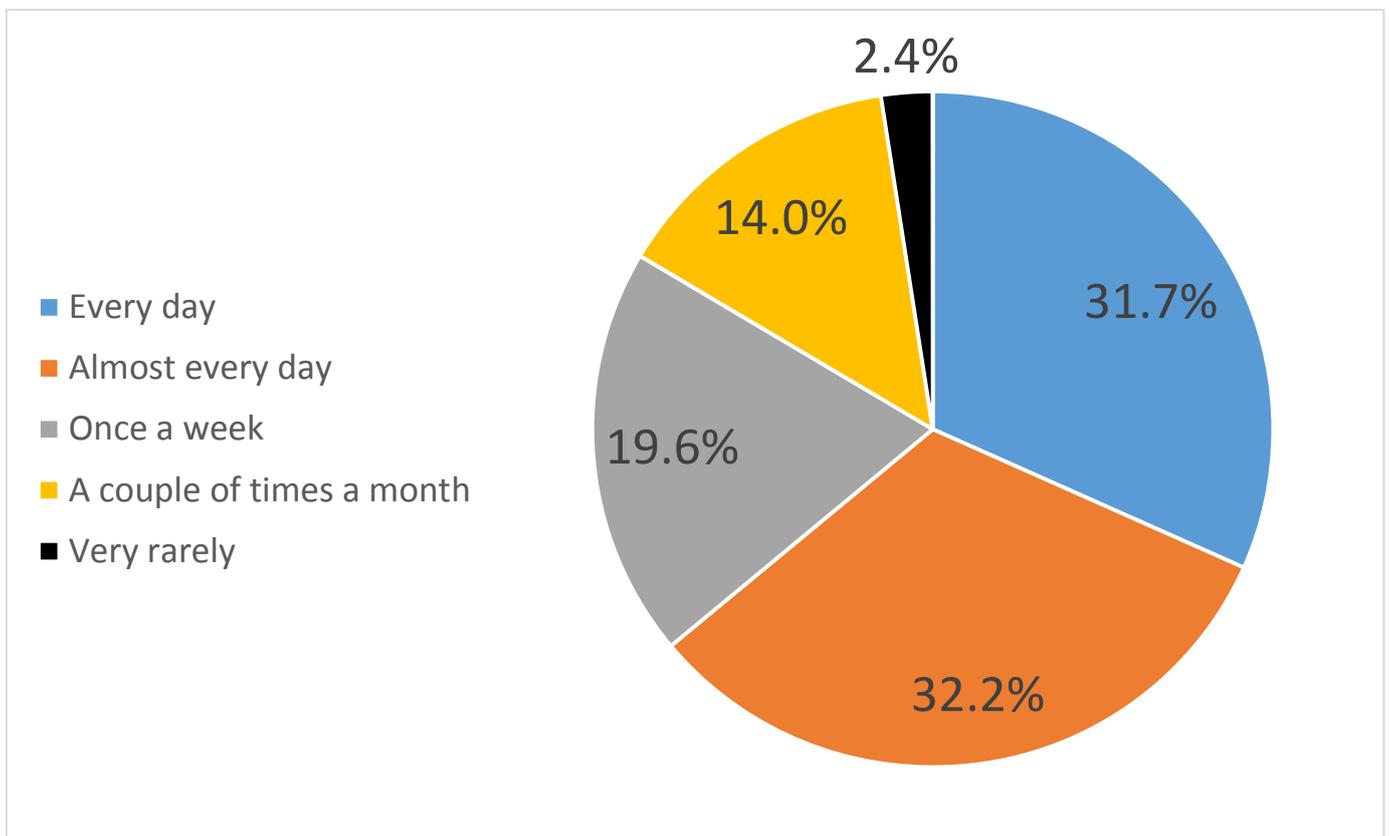
Before getting immersed in the tools and technology of mapping, we think it is vital to first understand the contexts in which people are mapping, and explore *why* people choose to use mind mapping in certain contexts, or to perform certain tasks.

Mind Maps in Action: Frequency

We know from meeting many mind mappers over the years that for many people, mind mapping becomes an indispensable tool in their daily working, but we wanted to put some evidence behind this, so we asked people how often they were mapping...

The results from the survey shows that over **60%** of participants use mind mapping every day, or almost every day!

Q. How often do you use mind mapping?



63% of participants use mind mapping every day, or almost every day!

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mind Maps in Action: Tasks

If so many people are using mind mapping every day or almost every day, then the next key question is what are they using it for?

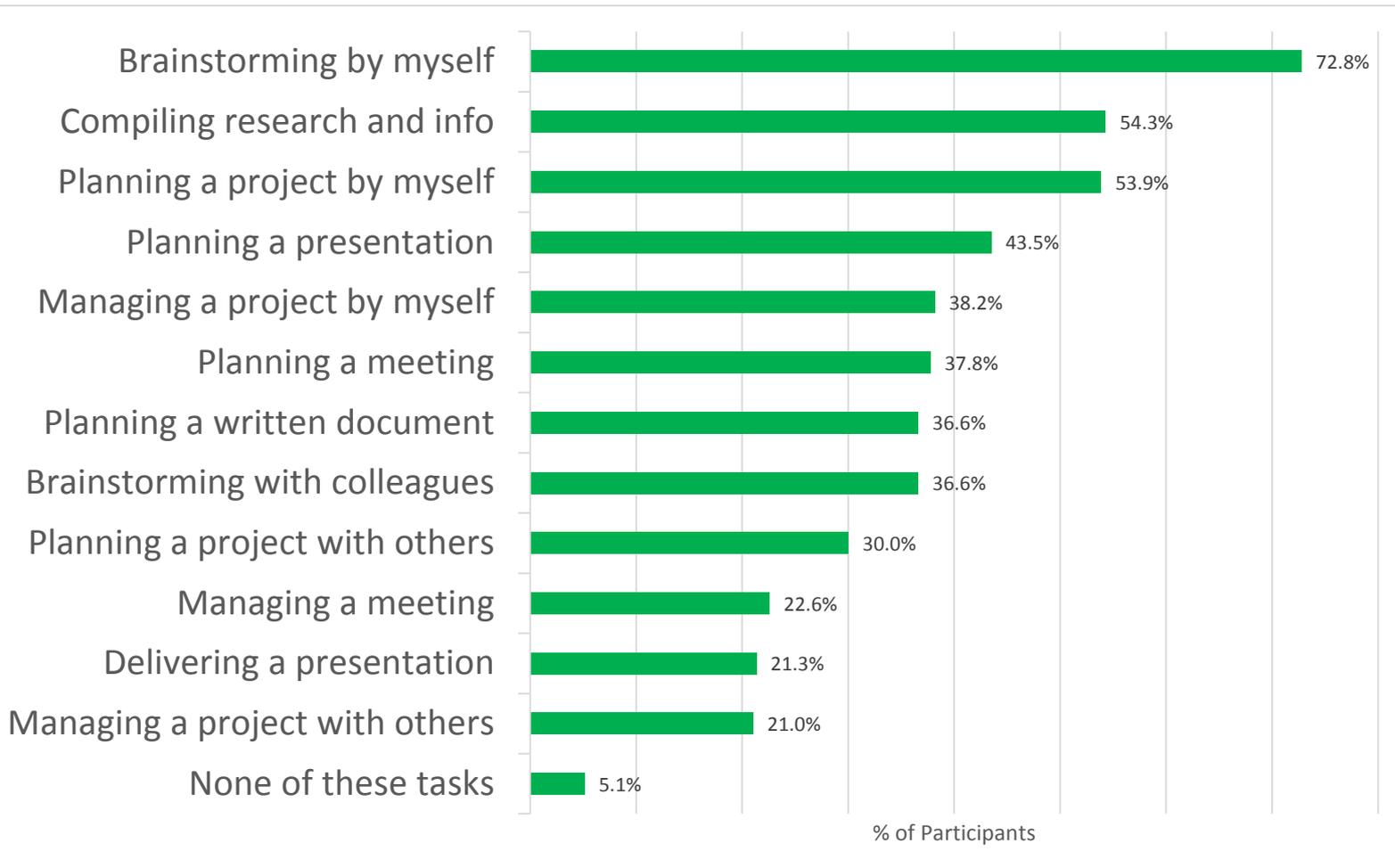
We asked our participants two questions to help us understand more about the type of tasks or processes being tackled with mind mapping software.

The first question asked participants to choose which of the following tasks they had used mind mapping software for within the last week. The results are shown in the chart below.

The chart shows 'Brainstorming by myself' as the leading use for mind map software, a repeat of last year's result, and surely an important signal about the use of mapping.

As with the 2014 results, there is a strong bias towards solo tasks (things done 'by myself'), but there is also a large number (**36%**) who say they have used mapping for brainstorming with colleagues within the last week - a hugely encouraging statistic for those who champion the use of mind maps as a collaborative tool and process!

Q. Within the last week, have you used mind mapping software for any of the following tasks?



Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mind Maps in Action: Tasks

Our second task-based question asked participants to write (in their own words) the top 3 tasks that they use mind mapping software for at work, and the following word cloud shows the top 20 most used words in the answers provided...

Q. Which 3 tasks do you most use mind mapping software for at work?



For us, the prominence of 'planning' is further validation of the notion that mind mapping is the missing link in many common tasks and processes. Put simply, we increasingly believe the 'missing link' is planning!

How many times have we listened to poorly planned presentations, sat in poorly planned meetings, or read poorly planned proposals or plans?

We are increasingly convinced that the 'missing link' is the *up front* work required to organise ideas and information into a coherent and structured plan that can form the basis of a proposal, meeting, event, presentation, or pretty much anything!

We believe that mind mapping software is 100% the right tool for this process, regardless of what the required outputs are (powerpoint slides, word documents, project plans etc).

Far too often, people are starting their work in the format of the required output, and hoping/assuming it will help them with the planning part too. This is simply incorrect.

If we consider the other words in the cloud above, the picture becomes clear: mind mapping software is the ideal tool for researching, compiling, and organising ideas and information that can form the basis of a clear and well-structured plan.

The planning process is the missing link we see in organisations every day, and that's where we think mind mapping fits!

Go tell your friends... we've cracked it.

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mind Maps in Action: Conclusions

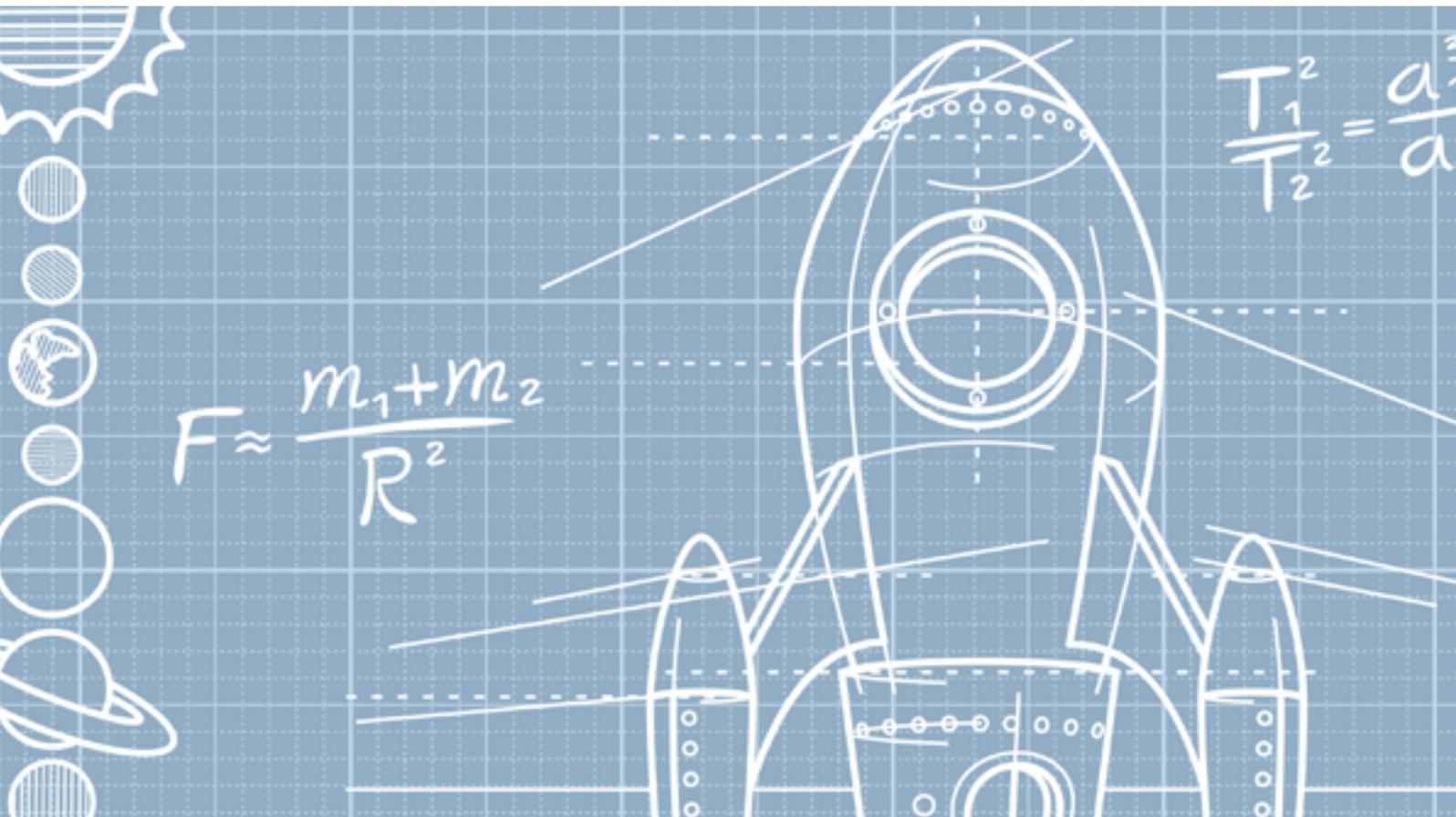
The results shown in the previous few pages have had quite an impact on us at Biggerplate, because it built upon a key idea that has been embedded within our work over the last couple of years; that mind mapping software is the missing link in business and education.

Liam from Biggerplate spoke at length at #BPUN San Francisco about mind mapping as the missing link, but what becomes clear from the last few pages is that the missing link may simply be 'planning'!

When you combine the information collated over the previous pages, an over-arching theme seems to be the organisation of ideas and information to provide greater clarity and focus. In essence, you've got the foundations of a plan! This is not to say of course that mind mapping is *only* useful for planning exercises. Certainly not. But in terms of how we 'pitch' mind mapping to the uninitiated, perhaps we should be placing greater emphasis on the role mapping can play in this particular area, seeing as over 1,000 mind mappers are sending a clear signal that this is where they use it, and where they feel the benefits.

We're certainly going to look further into the role of mind mapping in early stage planning, and the particular contexts in which the approach is perhaps most useful. We'll be sharing more information as we learn more...!

This calls for a plan...





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“ XMind shines as a mind mapping tool that doesn't get in the way as the ideas come flooding out of your head.

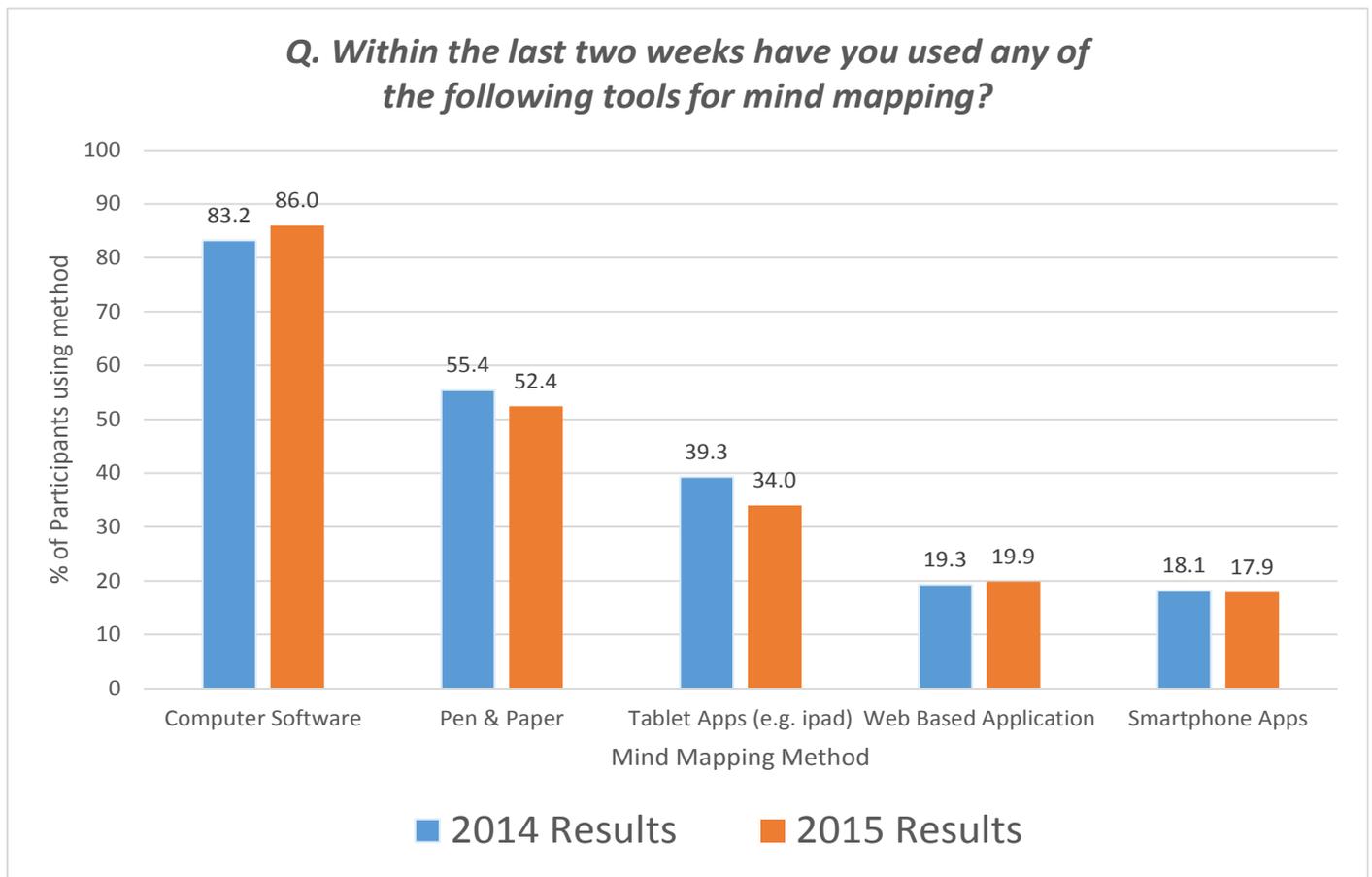
Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mind Mapping Tools: Overview

A central goal of our annual survey and report is to understand how people around the world are mind mapping, and which tools and approaches are proving most useful/popular.

As wider technology trends continue to have an impact on the mind mapping world, it will be increasingly important that mind mapping organisations not only keep up with the speed of innovation, but also choose the most relevant areas and technologies to invest in for the future, based on the needs of users.

The following table shows which mind mapping tools/methods people are using, and compares the 2014 and 2015 report results...



The first notable comparison between the 2014 and 2015 results is that use of 'Computer Software' for mind mapping has **increased by 2.8%**, suggesting there is still a strong preference and demand for installed software on laptop and desktop computers. We can also observe a **3% decrease** in the use of 'pen & paper' mind mapping among the survey participants, perhaps reflecting an overall move away from traditional methods towards software use.

Are you surprised by any of these results?
Share your views on Twitter using the tag **#BPAR15**

[Twitter.com/Biggerplate](https://twitter.com/Biggerplate)

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mind Mapping Tools: Tablet & Mobile Mapping

We were particularly interested in the results for 'Tablet Apps', which showed a **5% decrease** in the use of mind mapping apps on tablet devices such as the iPad.

This result is somewhat surprising given the seemingly unstoppable growth and adoption of tablet devices in both business and education. Furthermore, we also see a small (0.2%) decrease in the use of mind mapping apps on smartphones.

These results seem somewhat contrary to what the wider press might lead us to believe... largely that tablets and smartphones are all we'll need for our work and personal lives in the near future!

Our results suggest that people may not be using these devices for mind mapping as much as we may have expected, but do not (yet) tell us why this might be the case. Certainly there is no shortage of quality mind mapping apps for these devices, so how can we explain the apparent decline in the use of apps on tablets and (to a lesser extent) smartphones?

Perhaps there may be some link to the participant profile we uncovered earlier (40-60 year old males in management roles), and the type of work being done? There may also be a link to the perception (right or wrong) that tablet apps (mind mapping or otherwise) are not always able to provide the same power and functionality as fully-fledged desktop software?



Clearly there is no shortage of quality mind mapping apps for tablet devices, so how do we explain an apparent decline in use?

Share your views on Twitter using the tag #BPAR15

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

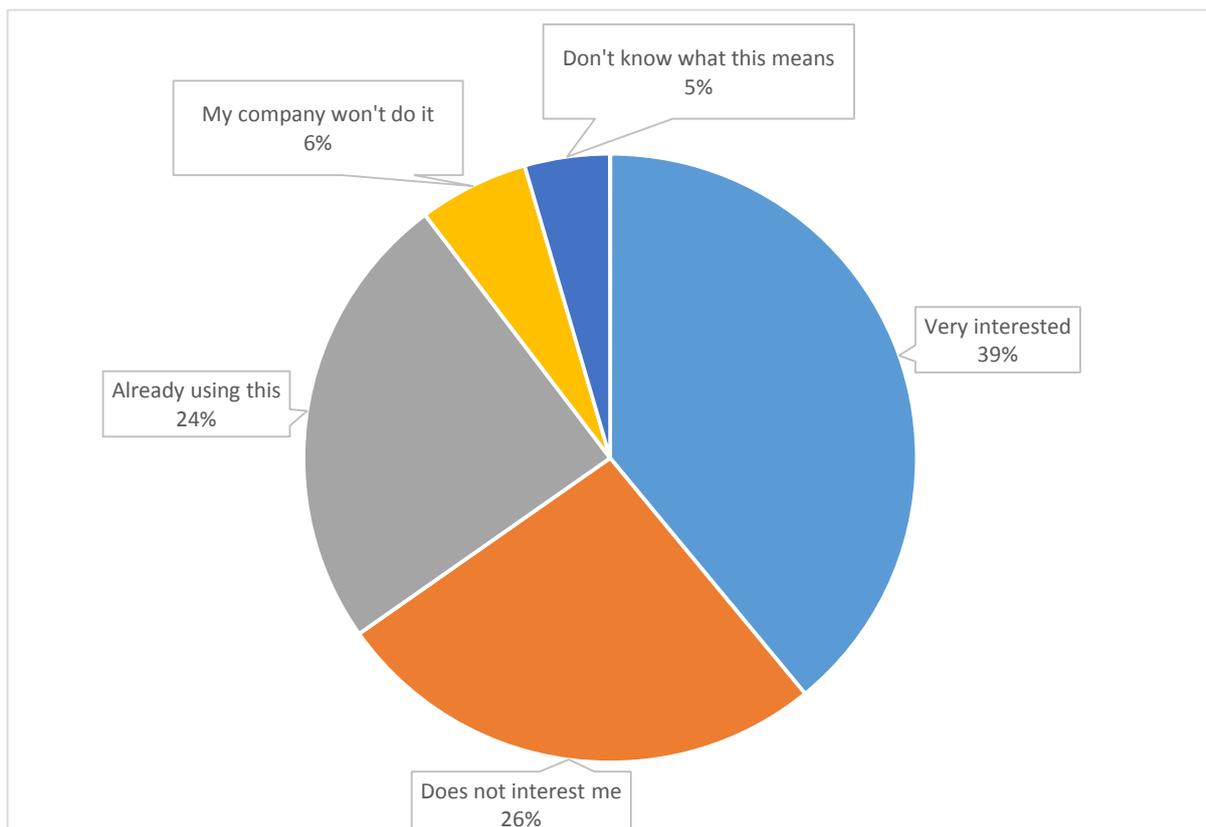
Mind Mapping Tools: The Cloud

We were all bombarded on a daily basis in 2014 with people and businesses telling us that everything and anything should now be based in, on, or somewhere in the vicinity of 'the cloud'...

While there remains a great deal of misunderstanding about what (or where) the cloud actually is, it's certainly a wider trend that is having an impact on the mind mapping world, and is something that merits attention in this report and in general.

The earlier graph on page 15 shows only a marginal **0.6% increase** in the number of participants using web-based mind mapping applications that could broadly be considered part of 'the cloud' ecosystem. While this increase in itself may not be that compelling, when we asked participants if they were interested in 'cloud-based mind mapping applications', the results indicate high interest levels (**39%**) and a significant number (**24%**) of people already using this type of mind mapping tool. With much misunderstanding and hesitancy around the cloud, it will be interesting to see if this interest translates into greater adoption in the coming years.

Q. How interested are you in the use of cloud-based mind mapping applications?



Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mind Mapping Tools: Mind Mapper's Choice

At Biggerplate we get asked the same question many times each year:

"Which is the best mind mapping software?"

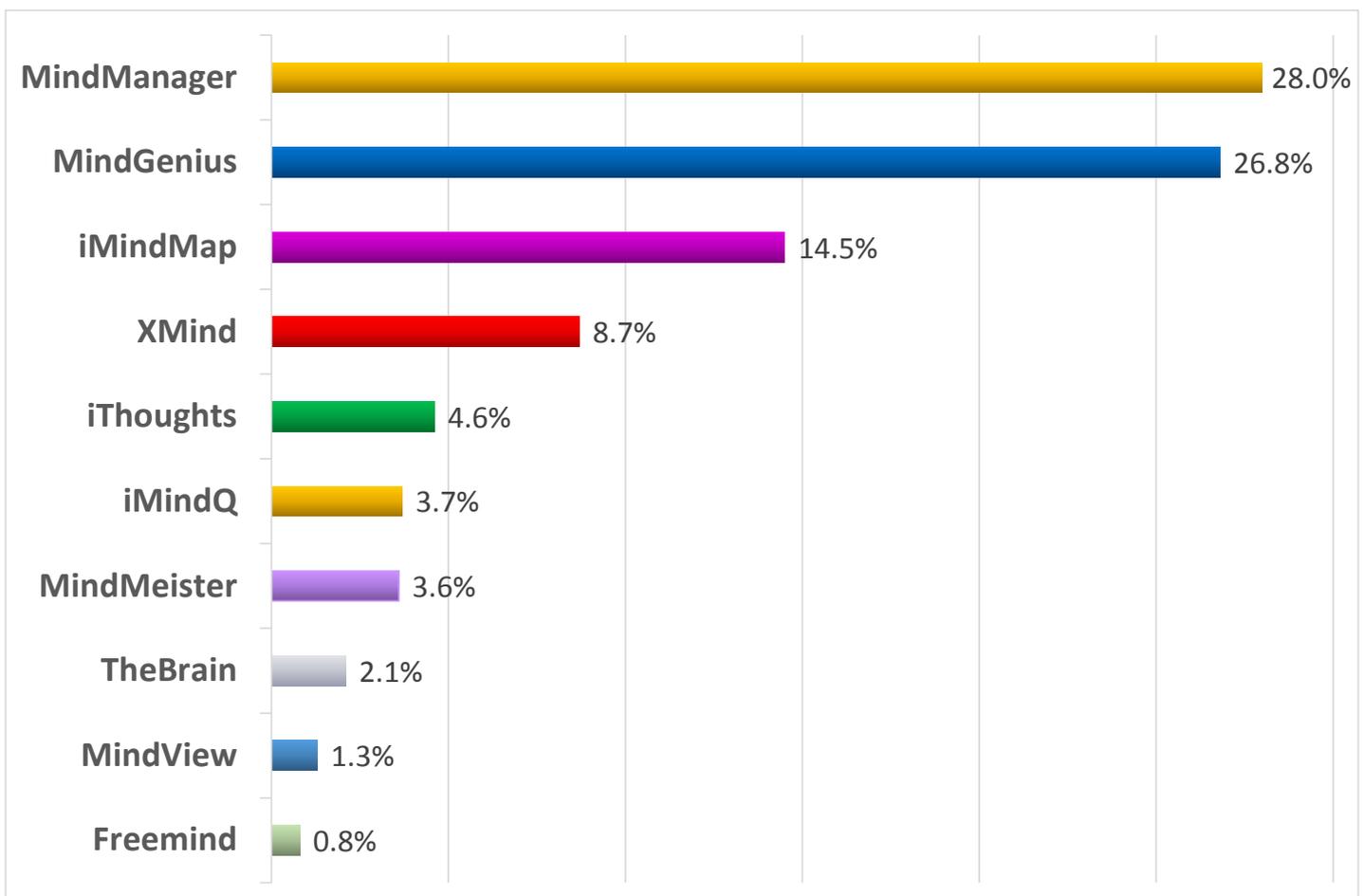
We believe the answer to the question depends entirely on what you want to do with the software, and we rarely (if ever) give a single answer. However, we feel it's increasingly important to provide some information about which software options are most highly rated by members of our community, and also give recognition to those software developers who continue to provide the best possible product for their users.

We therefore asked our Annual Survey participants to select their favourite mind mapping software from a large (but not exhaustive) selection of choices, and the TOP 10 results are shared here.

With over 1,000 people participating in the survey this year, we think this is the best possible indicator of which software products are most highly rated by people who really use them.

We have labelled this Top 10 list the 'Mind Mapper's Choice' for 2015, and have great pleasure in sharing the results with you here!

Biggerplate.com Mind Mapper's Choice 2015



Mind Mapper's Choice Top 10: Showing percentage of votes received by each of the Top 10

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mind Mapping Tools: Mind Mapper's Choice

We would also like to congratulate all those who made the Top 10 this year! It should be seen as a strong endorsement of these products by the mind mapping community!

1st Place. Congratulations to **Mindjet** for securing 1st place in the 2015 voting with their **MindManager** product, following their previous 1st place finish in the 2014 rankings. It seems Mindjet continues to set the pace in the eyes of the mind mapping community, but it's perhaps worth noting that the margin between 1st and 2nd place this year was just 1.2%, compared to 11.9% last year, perhaps something for the San Francisco outfit to consider as they look ahead in 2015!

2nd Place. **MindGenius** makes a strong step up from 3rd place in 2014 to achieve 2nd place this year, obtaining **26.8%** of the vote and pushing 1st place Mindjet right to the wire! It's a fantastic result for the team from Scotland as they continue to build steadily on their highly regarded product and a strong customer base in both business and education.

3rd Place. **iMindMap** from the **ThinkBuzan** organisation puts in another strong performance this year, but slips slightly in the voting from 2nd to 3rd place. Nothing that will slow down the Cardiff-based team however, as they continue to push software boundaries in pursuit of more creative and natural mind mapping processes and tools!

4th Place. Users of the ever-popular **XMind** software have this year come out to vote and moved the team from Hong-Kong up from 5th last year to 4th place in 2015, with **8.7%** of the total votes! With an extremely capable free version available, and additional features unlocked through upgrades, XMind has established itself as a real contender to more established developers, with an innovative business model that continues to aid widespread adoption.

5th Place. Another hugely impressive placing for UK-based **iThoughts** which continues to garner huge praise for continued innovation in the field of iPad mind mapping from a highly loyal user base around the world.

6th Place. The **iMindQ** (formerly Dropmind) team from Macedonia will be delighted to see their excellent product move into 6th place this year, up from 8th place last year, with **3.7%** of the votes. Keep an eye on this relatively new entrant as they look to further develop their product across platforms and devices in 2015!

7th Place. Browser-based collaborative software **MindMeister** comes in at 7th place this year with **3.6%** of the vote. Look out for the arrival of this fantastic software on the Biggerplate mind map library in early 2015 as we team up with the innovative team based in Munich and Vienna!

8th Place. A new entry into the Top 10 this year is Los Angeles-based software **TheBrain** which challenges concepts of what mind maps can look like with a highly innovative 3D interface that was demonstrated amazingly at the Biggerplate Unplugged conference in San Francisco in early 2014.

9th Place. Another new entrant to the Top 10 is **MindView** from **Matchware** who made their way into the top 10 for the first time this year with 1.3% of the total vote. We'll be taking a closer look at this well-regraded product in 2015, and look forward to seeing what they have planned for the year ahead.

10th Place. A great result and testament to the world of open-source software development in 10th place this year is **Freemind** which continues to provide thousands of people around the world with the opportunity to take their first steps with mind map software completely free!

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mind Mapping Tools: Conclusions

Understanding the tools that people are currently using for mind mapping is extremely important in enabling the mapping community to innovate in ways that are relevant to the end user, and we must be mindful of what the community is telling us in the results gathered here.

Those involved in the world of apps, websites, software, and technology in general are highly susceptible to assuming the rest of the world is as excited about new technology as they are, and just as quick to adopt it. The reality is quite different.

While those on the front line of mind mapping software and app development might like to look forward, the reality is that they are forced to continually (and simultaneously) look backward too, in efforts to educate and accommodate legacy users and those who are less inclined to jump on the latest technology. It's a tough balancing act, and one that end users should be mindful of. We can all be a little demanding sometimes in asking software teams to continually innovate, whilst also asking them to keep our favourite tools, features and functions just the way we like them!

In the mind mapping sector, we are fortunate to have a user community that is engaged and happy to give feedback. We also have software and app developers who work hard to balance the demands of new technologies, legacy users, new customers, and their own strategic goals. We believe the Mind Mapper's Choice list is a strong endorsement of the organisations that did this best in 2014, and while it should not be considered exhaustive or final, it hopefully provides a strong indication of the tools that were rated most highly by mind mappers at the end of 2014.



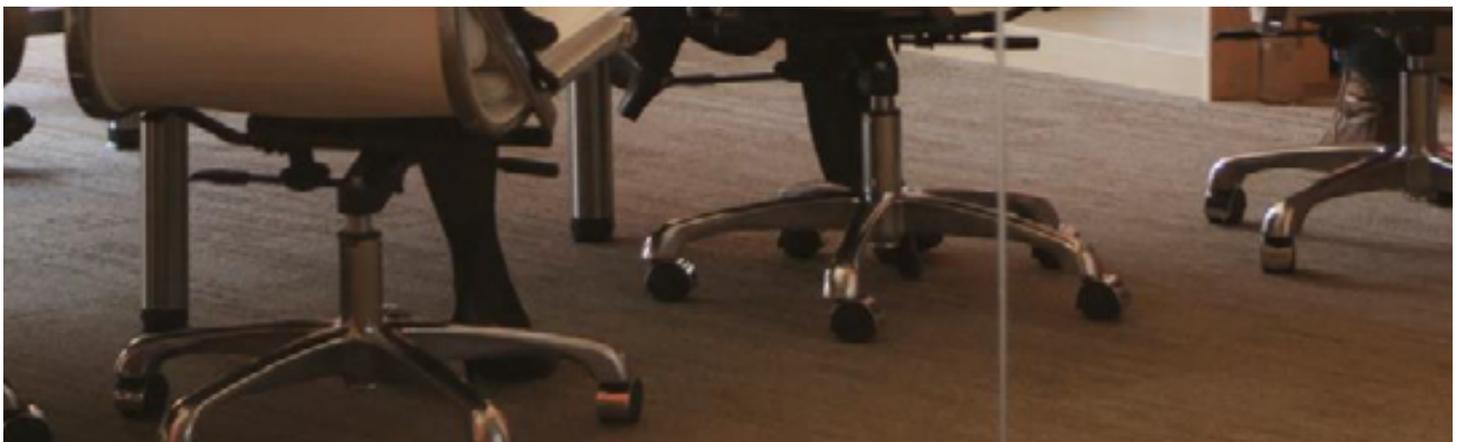
*Time to mind map.
Choose your tools wisely.*



“Associates embraced MindGenius as a collaboration and productivity tool”

Doug Grindle, PMO Director, Milliken & Co.

[Read the case study](#)



Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mapping the Future: Barriers to Adoption

We found this section of the survey perhaps the most interesting, and some of the answers were extremely thought provoking, and indicative of where we (Biggerplate) and the wider mind mapping community may need to focus if we are to see mind mapping adopted by a wider population.

We have tried to extract and outline some of the key themes that emerged from this section of the survey:

Awareness, Understanding, Knowledge

These three words came up in many answers, and clearly reflects a strong sentiment among the participants that we (collectively) have not reached and educated enough people yet.

It's perhaps useful to view these three words as a progression, whereby people move from awareness ("I've heard of this thing called mind mapping"), to understanding ("I understand how mind mapping works"), to knowledge ("I know how to apply mind mapping in my own work/learning").

Clearly there is a lot of work to do in order to improve the effectiveness at each stage. How do we make more people aware of mind mapping to begin with, how do we help them understand how to do it, and how do we help people to apply it in their own world?

In response to this outcome from the survey, we have decided to make "Awareness, Understanding, and Knowledge" the focus of an interactive discussion session at the forthcoming Biggerplate Unplugged conference in London, and will also be running an interactive webinar on the subject shortly.

For details please visit Biggerplate.com/Events

Education, Education, Education...

The message coming out loud and clear from participants around the world is that we cannot achieve widespread adoption of mind mapping unless there is a coherent and consistent effort to introduce the process into schools.

This is a sentiment that has been echoed at every single Biggerplate Unplugged conference over the last two years, and is a view that we share at Biggerplate. While we know there are indeed teachers and schools that use mind mapping, they are undoubtedly in the minority. It's clearly critical that we get the mind mapping process introduced and integrated into education at school and university level.

Our own view is that teachers are the key, and we are extremely interested to hear from any teachers who are already using mind mapping in the classroom, and also any teachers who would like to start. We are hoping to launch a new initiative for teachers in 2015 that we hope will make a significant impact on this education mission, and we encourage anyone who shares this interest to get in touch with us!

Viewed as childish and unprofessional

This is a perspective and frustration that many participants alluded to in their answers, and we think it is strongly linked to the understanding and knowledge concepts addressed previously.

One aim of this report is to provide more tangible evidence that mind mapping *is* and can be considered a serious, professional tool, and hopefully the evidence highlighted here about the use of mapping by people in management roles is in itself a useful antidote to the naive view that some still hold about mind mapping being for kids.

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mapping the Future: Barriers to Adoption

Software Cost

There were many mentions of software cost and price within the answers, and some related thoughts about the challenges (and potential complications) associated with licensing.

This is a hard one to review, because our own view is that the mind mapping arena now benefits from the availability of numerous capable software applications at a wide range of price points, including some excellent free options. This means people can shop around, and perhaps this needs to be encouraged and made easier. However, it's vital that people know what they want to get out of mind mapping software, so that they can ensure they understand the difference between a premium-priced heavyweight, and a piece of lightweight free software.

Often we see evidence that people's expectations can be somewhat detached from reality - with people wanting heavyweight functions for lightweight price, or being frustrated at paying premium price renewal fees when they only use a few basic features of a heavyweight product!

We know there are more factors at play, and the issues of licensing, subscriptions, renewals, and upgrades get even messier when buying for large organisations, but we believe there is room for improvement through the provision of better consumer guidance... something we are already working on at Biggerplate, as evidenced by the Mind Mapper's Choice list within this report!

Training

No doubt linked to the previous sentiments regarding awareness, understanding and knowledge - we were surprised to see a high number of participants who felt a lack of training was a barrier to more widespread adoption of mind mapping.

This one surprised us, because despite being a long-term provider of training services, we have never really seen a huge demand for the service. While training has certainly been a consistent part of the Biggerplate business for many years, we have never quite viewed it as a booming opportunity. Whether some of the other training providers around the world have a different view is obviously something that would be interesting to learn.

Overall, we have long-viewed the world of mind map training as a difficult one for a potential buyer to engage with, due to the huge variation in pricing you see from a simple online search, and the relative difficulty in assessing the quality and value of the training organisations by any consistent means. We think a potential buyer of training could get quite confused quite quickly, and perhaps this is something that all those in the training arena need to consider as they look to develop and grow their businesses to service what might be a greater market demand than we currently realise!

P.s. In case you are looking for training, take a look here:

[> Biggerplate Training Services](#)
[> Global Trainer Directory](#)

MindManager®

2014 was another exciting year for Mindjet. We launched MindManager Enterprise, as well as the most powerful version of MindManager yet, MindManager 15 for Windows. With enhanced project management features, an improved user experience and 64-bit compatibility, MindManager 15 for Windows is the most flexible and easy-to-use mind mapping software available. This release sees new features, enhancements and improved usability that help you to further boost your productivity, whether you're creating a business plan, developing a new website or simply planning a holiday.

As 2015 gets well under-way we look forward to another exciting year and we thank all of our loyal users for their continued support and dedication. Stay tuned for more exciting news and updates throughout 2015!

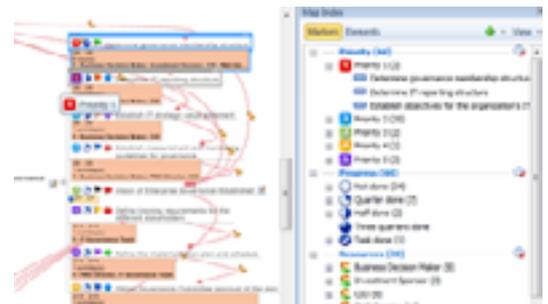
Find out more at mindjet.com

MindManager PLUS

MindManager PLUS is the perfect partner for your MindManager desktop applications. This subscription-based service gives you access to all MindManager features as soon as they are released and is the only way to get “take-it-anywhere” web access for your files and maps.

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- Ensure stakeholder alignment on goals and priorities
- Turn disorganised information into a centralised resource
- Gain and maintain alignment on goals, priorities and schedules

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"It's just fantastic to be able to visualise a project and to very easily help people identify what needs to be done and who's responsible. Mindjet is making me much more effective in the communication of information."

Brian Meyers, Project Manager

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mapping the Future: Innovation

Mind mappers are by their very nature a forward-thinking, and creative bunch, and so it seemed like a good idea to ask for their collective ideas for innovation in mind mapping.

There are simply too many ideas to include in the report, and quite frankly, we need to come up with a clever way of making all the ideas visible to the wider community. We'll get to work on that, but in the meantime, here is an overview of some of the common themes, and some of our favourite ideas, with some of the original answers included:

Features and Functions...

"Flowcharting functions"

"Help Videos Integrated in Product"

"Text recognition in images"

"Improve functionality in Project planning/Gantt"

"Include math and science formulas"

"A simple to use and powerful calc solution"

"Voice activated mapping"

Integrations...

"Better integration with apps like Evernote, Outlook etc."

"Closer compatibility with Prezi"

"Integration with Dragon Naturally Speaking"

"Better exportation formats into Word/PowerPoint for example"

"Audio, Video integration in Mind Maps i.e. like ThingLink on Tablets and Desktops"

"Integrations with available web apps like Trello or Google Calendar"

"A brainstorm mode integrated to Post-it Plus"

"Integrating Tasks from a MindMap to a dedicated To Do app supporting GTD"

Platforms and Devices...

"Parity between Apple & Microsoft products"

"Use digital pens or to be able to draw maps on a touch screen"

"Something that allows me to translate my pencil-and-paper maps to digital"

"Digitizing of Hand Drawn Mind Maps"

"App that turns whiteboard maps into editable, digital mind maps"

"Ability to capture a hand drawn MindMap and translate it into digital format. Easy!!"

"Windows 8 apps"

Common/Universal File Format...

"A common file format or at least ability to exchange files"

"Universal standard format"

"Ability to exchange mind maps between mind mapping applications."

"Standardized file format"

"Universal conversion from any mind mapping software format to a single common readable and editable format."

"Common file format protocol so maps can be freely shared irrespective of preferred mapping tool"

Global Mind Map Survey 2014

Mapping the Future: Innovation

Sharing...

"More sharing capabilities (viewers instead not just fixed images)"

"Better printing options"

3-D Mapping...

"3-D mapping would be cool"

"Ability to move beyond tree structure and use 3-D"

"3D mind mapping in virtual worlds"

"3 Dimensional/layered Maps"

"3D organisation of thoughts and materials, using Oculus rift or visualisation software"

Predictive Mapping...

"When I put down a word for a concept, it would be nice to see suggestions for ideas that would precede or follow"

Others

"Holographic mind mapping!"

"Gesture mapping"

"Ability to screen record (with audio recording) within the app"

"Neural/synapse interface, so that you don't have to type"

"American Sign Language feature"

It's clear that there is no shortage of ideas for what might be done next with mind mapping, and many users will be delighted to know that some of the ideas listed on these pages (even some of the slightly far-out ones) are already being worked on by some of our clever software friends!

However exciting the innovation possibilities may be, we must remind ourselves of the barriers to adoption that have also been identified. If the mind map community can collectively address some of these barriers, then it will surely provide ever more fuel for innovation in the mind mapping sector as more individuals and organisations are drawn to the arena.

Which innovation idea gets you most excited? Share your views and ideas with us using the #BPAR15 tag!

2015 Annual Report

Concluding Remarks

If you made it this far, then we're impressed. But also a little worried... don't you have work to do?

We hope the Annual Mind Map Report 2015 has proven to be of use and of interest to you in part or in whole. This project is still a work in progress, and even as this report was compiled, there was much debate over what to include or exclude, and what would make for the best balance of content. I hope myself and the team have got it vaguely right, but we will of course be listening to any feedback!

Reflecting on the combined information and perspectives compiled here, we remain extremely positive and optimistic about what lies ahead in 2015 for all those who are involved in the mind mapping sector, whether you are a software developer, a mind map user, a training provider, or indeed, ourselves! The convergence of improving technology and a better connected community is bringing an energy and momentum to mind mapping that is truly exciting, and (most importantly) is already starting to chip away at some of those 'barriers to adoption' whilst enabling some of the desired innovations outlined by our survey participants.

We believe the collective power of the mind mapping community is enormous, and growing all the time. Collectively we are more than capable of pushing mind mapping into the mainstream conscious. It is only a matter of time.

In the meantime... enjoy being ahead of the curve. The rest will catch on eventually!



A puppy on a Skateboard

(I always get my way)

Have a great 2015!
Liam and the Biggerplate Team

www.Biggerplate.com