

# Biggerplate

Annual Report 2017



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# Welcome to our Annual Report 2017!

**It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Biggerplate Annual Report 2017!**

The aim of our Annual Report is three-fold:

Firstly; to provide our members with an overview of the progress, projects and priorities at Biggerplate.com, both in the year just finished, and the year ahead.

Secondly; share key insights from our global survey (concluded in January 2017). The survey aims to 'take the temperature' of the mind mapping community, and helps us consider the current state of the mind mapping sector, and what the future may hold!

Thirdly; provide a conversation starter for members of our community, and the wider world of mind mapping. We propose no definitive answers or explanations here, but instead try to share some interesting data, and the occasional reflection!

Since launching back in 2013 this report has continually evolved and (hopefully) improved. This year the evolution continues, with a particular focus on making the report easier to digest! We have worked hard to reduce the amount of text, and increase the number of simple graphics, stats and facts that you can view and share more easily. I hope you find this latest iteration to your liking!

Thank you to all those who completed the survey and shared their perspectives with us. This feedback is truly invaluable for our business, and has also been instrumental in shaping the plans and ideas of our software partners too.

In broader terms, I'd also like to thank all of the Biggerplate community members who helped to make 2016 our most exciting and successful year ever! Your continuing support, energy, and enthusiasm are what drives Biggerplate onward and upward, and we could not do it without you.

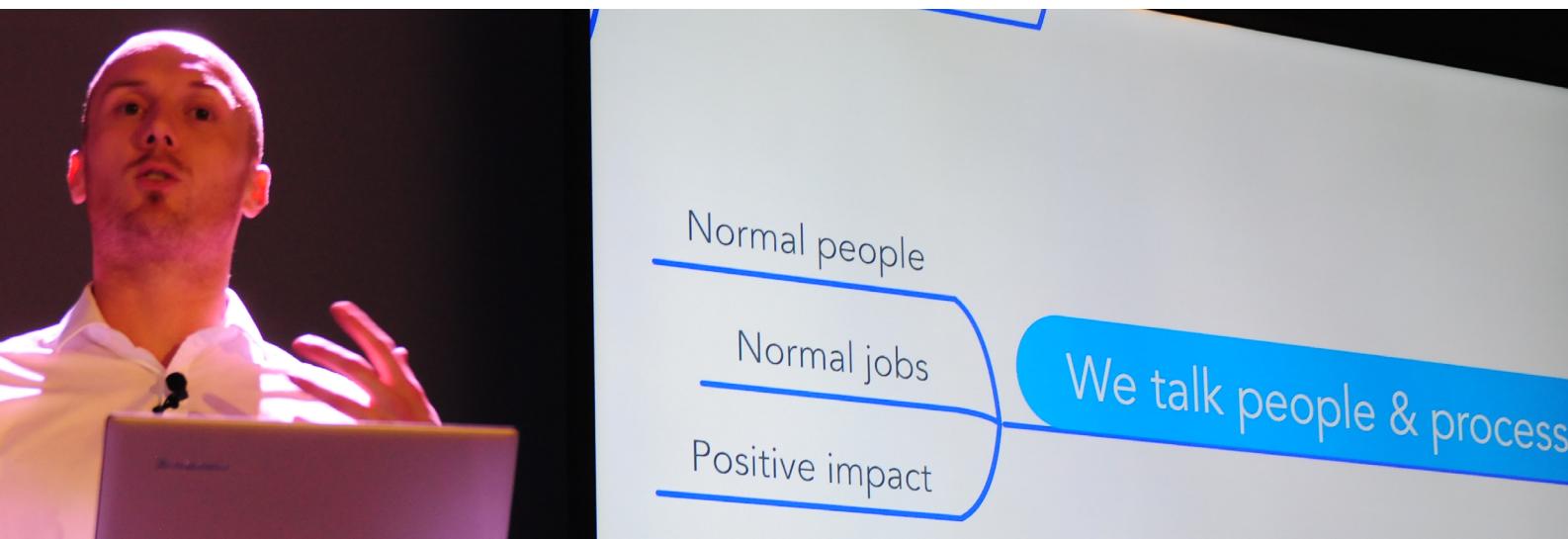
Finally, this report provides a rare opportunity for me to publicly thank the Biggerplate team for their hard work in 2016, and the energy that I know they will bring in 2017. In order of Biggerplate longevity, my thanks go to Graham, Nick, Barney, Rob, Ruth, and Dan for their individual and collective brilliance!

2017 will be a MASSIVE year for the Biggerplate community as we strive to reach our goal of becoming the best source of mind mapping content, learning, and community in the world. It is a pleasure to have you with us on the journey!

Best wishes  
Liam Hughes  
Founder: Biggerplate.com



@BiggerplateLiam



# Biggerplate Annual Report 2017

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# Biggerplate Review

## 2016 Web Traffic & Trends

### Visitors & New Members

2016 was a record-breaking year for Biggerplate.com, with both our website traffic and member community growth hitting new highs!

With more than 25,000 new members joining the community in 2016, and over half a million visits to the website, we have set ourselves some exciting new benchmarks to improve upon in 2017!

A warm welcome to all those (25,000+) new members: it's great to have you with us at the home of mind mapping!

*Want to help the community grow further? Here are 3 easy steps...*

1. Share 1 mind map on Biggerplate.com
2. Tweet and share it on Facebook
3. Repeat...



# 25,607 New Members!



# 55% Increase

New member registrations in 2016 compared to 2015



+19%

Increase in visits to  
Biggerplate.com



23

Number of times we tried "switch it off and on again" to solve major tech issues...



+22%

Increase in unique visitors to  
Biggerplate.com



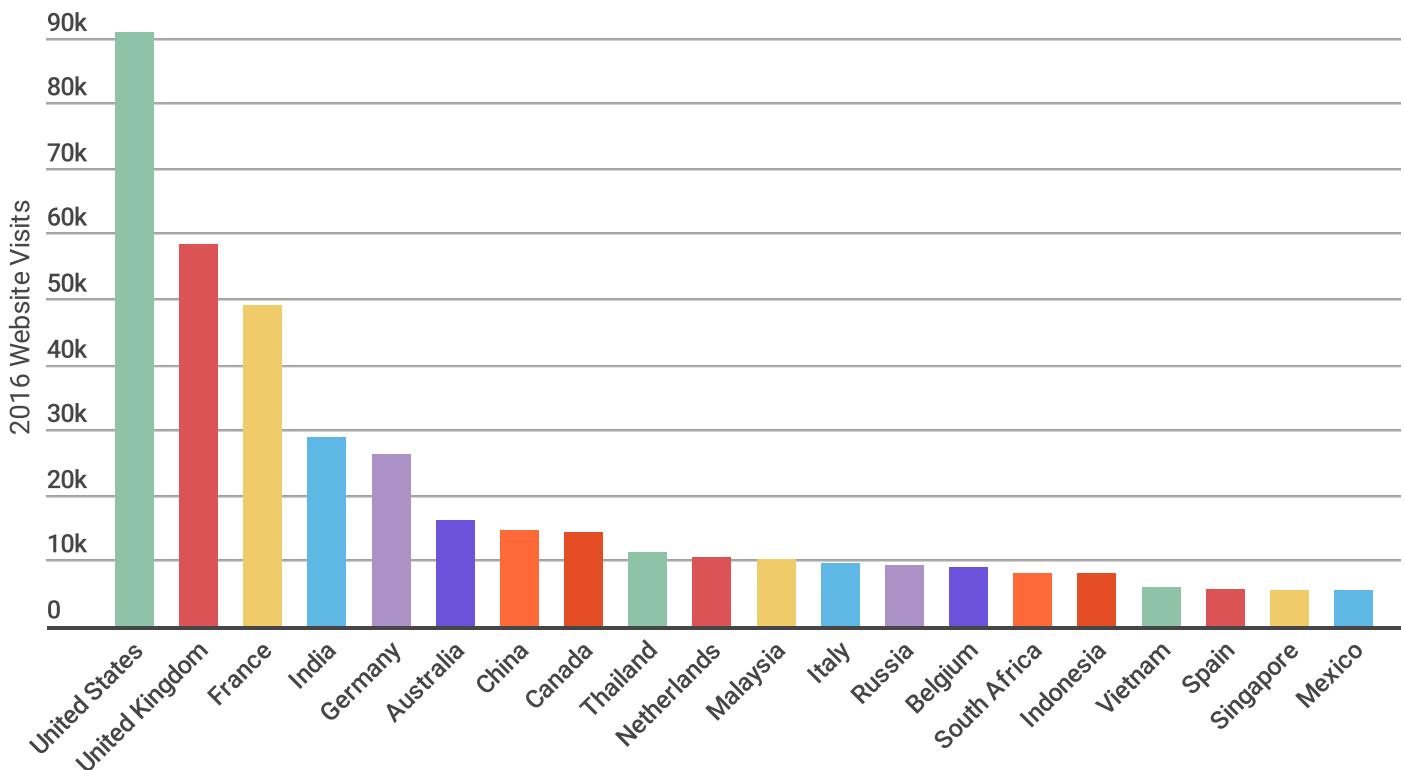
4

Number of crockery shoppers confused by our website...

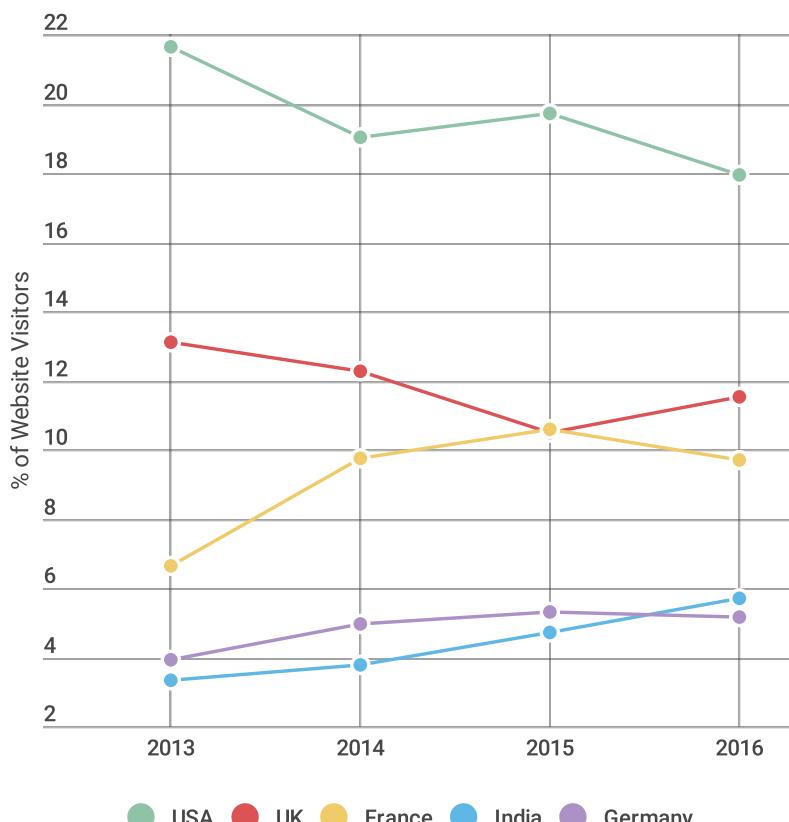
# Biggerplate Review

## 2016 Web Traffic & Trends

### Top 20 Countries for Website Visits



### Top 5 Country Trends



We can see the truly global nature of the Biggerplate website audience, and while 5 countries (see left) provide more than 50% of the total website traffic, the rapid growth rate in website visits from regions like China and others will surely challenge those percentages over the next year or so, even as absolute traffic from each region (hopefully) continues to grow.

The overall view is very positive, with headline growth of 19% in website traffic in 2016 compared to 2015!

+322%

Growth in Chinese visits to Biggerplate.com  
(2016 vs 2015)



26%

Website visitors using Apple iPhone!



## Collaborative, creative and intuitive mind mapping

This year mind mappers were mostly engaged with creative brainstorming sessions, creation of enticing presentations, project planning and team collaboration. iMindQ has refreshed the logo, published a new website and released the FREE iMindQ Online application.

Looking forward to another great year!



### Main benefits and features:

- Build mind maps from your PowerPoint presentations.
- Create mind maps, concept maps, flowcharts, WBS and organizational charts.
- Integration with MS Office tools (Word, Excel, Project, Outlook and PowerPoint) and SharePoint.
- Create, share, edit and save interactive HTML mind maps in any browser.
- Compatibility with FreeMind, XMind and MindManager® map formats.

Special promo code with 25% discount

**BIG2017**

\*valid until 01.05.2017

# Biggerplate Review

## 2016/2017 Key Projects

### Biggerplate Business Club

2016 saw the launch of the [Biggerplate Business Club](#); a new upgrade option for members who want to maximise the adoption and effectiveness of mind mapping in their businesses.

At the heart of the Business Club is a schedule of live webinars featuring guest speakers from our community who demonstrate and explore the use of mind mapping tools and techniques in a variety of business contexts. Business Club members can join these webinars live to pose questions to the speakers, and can also view the recorded content on-demand afterwards.

The Business Club focuses on "practitioner-led learning" within the community, so that both new and experienced mind mappers can see how these techniques are being applied by other people in practical day-to-day working scenarios.

In 2017 the Business Club will be at the heart of planning and development at Biggerplate. Business Club members can therefore expect to see significant improvements and many additional benefits developing over the course of the next year!

[Join the Business Club today  
for just \\$29 per year!](#)



### Live Webinars

Join regular live webinars featuring guest speakers and business use cases from around the world



### ON-Demand Learning

Access an extensive library of on-demand recordings and practitioner-led tutorials



### Curated Map Lists

Save time searching, and take advantage of curated map lists created by the Biggerplate team



### Special Offers

Benefit from exclusive discounts and special offers from Biggerplate and our partners



### Private Facebook Group

Join the conversation with other Business Club members in our private Facebook group



**Biggerplate**  
Business Club (Beta)

# Using mind maps to drive your business?

**Join the club.  
(Goggles optional)**



[Learn more about the Business Club](#)

# Biggerplate Review

## 2016/2017 Key Projects

### Biggerplate Unplugged

Biggerplate Unplugged returned to the United States in 2016, with a fantastic event in New York!

The conference featured an amazing line-up of speakers and a strong focus on practical learning and applications related to mind mapping, reflecting the "practitioner-led learning" ethos that is emerging as a key driver for Biggerplate in both our online and offline activities!

[View Photos and Videos from Biggerplate Unplugged 2016](#)



### Biggerplate Unplugged: The Next Era

After 7 events in 4 years, Biggerplate Unplugged will take a year off in 2017 to rest and recover ahead of an exciting new era starting in 2018!

The event has achieved a huge amount in 4 years, and firmly established itself as a key reference point within the mind mapping community. Having achieved what we originally set out to do with the conference, we now feel the time is right to pause, review and reset the format, focus and function of Biggerplate Unplugged for the next phase of our business and community development.

We're excited to share our plans for the future of Biggerplate Unplugged, and will have further information on these plans later in 2017!

# Biggerplate Review

## 2016/2017 Key Projects

### Biggerplate Mind Mapping Meetups

Building on the success of our Brunch Club community meetings over the last 2 years, we are excited to launch the next evolution of member events aimed at helping our community to connect and collaborate more easily, more regularly and more locally!

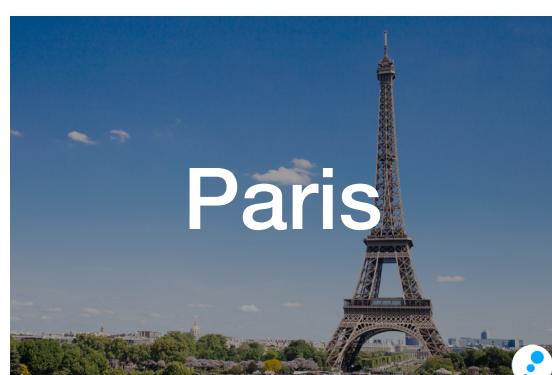
Using the popular Meetup.com platform, this new initiative aims to encourage networking and knowledge sharing within regional mind mapping communities, by giving our members the means to self-organise small events/meetings in their local region.

Currently running as a trial in 5 cities, this project aims to help our community members create and grow local chapters of mind mappers, supported by the team at Biggerplate!

With expansion of the trial planned in the first half of 2017, be sure to check if your city has been added to the system!

*More Meetup cities coming in 2017!*

[Check here to see if your city has been added!](#)



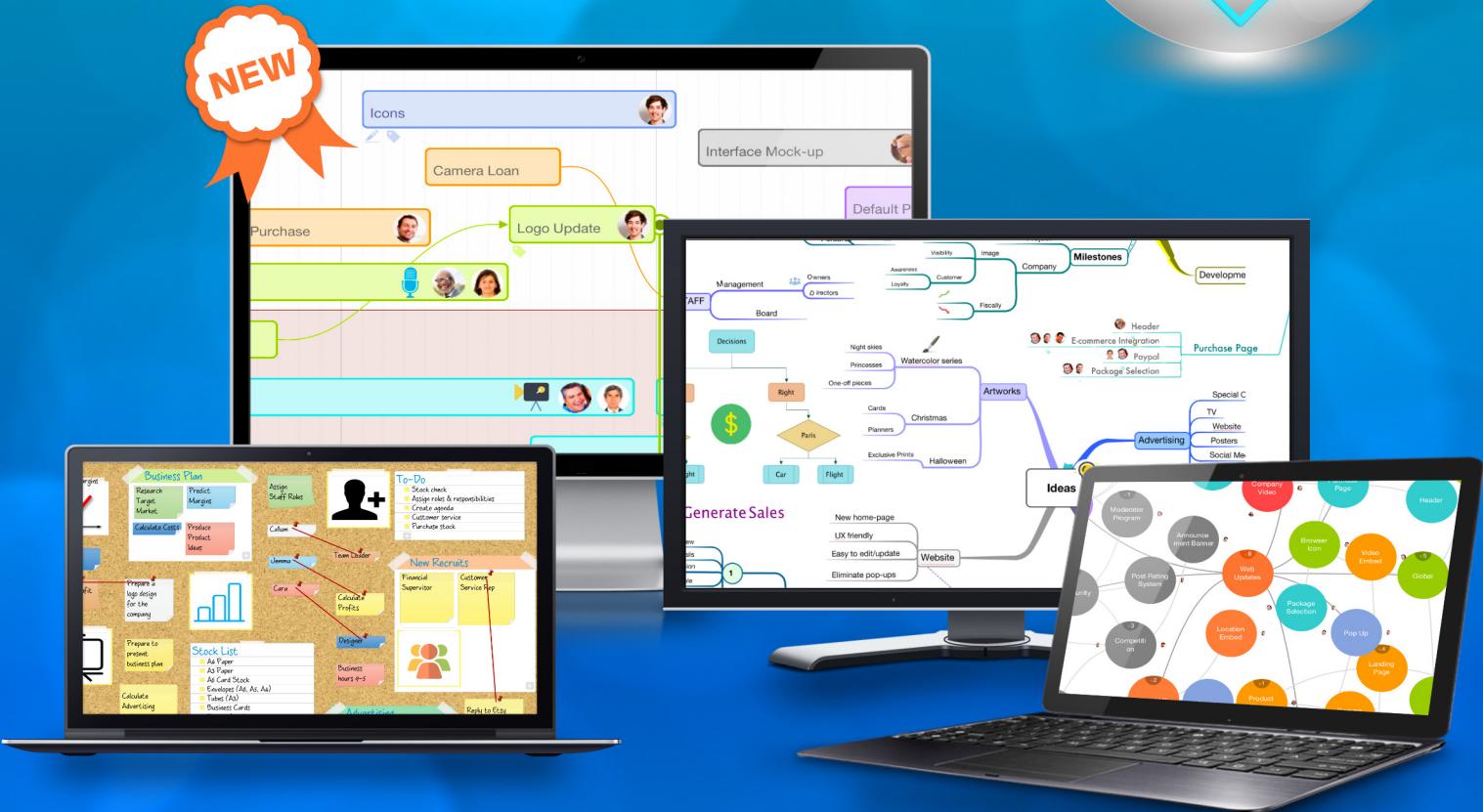


# iMindMap 10

*The only tool recommended by Tony Buzan,  
inventor of Mind Mapping.*

iMindMap 10 is your ultimate creative digital thinking space. It's the first all-in-one Mind Mapping, brainstorming and project planning software. iMindMap 10 offers the flexibility of five workspaces – Fast Capture, Brainstorm, Mind Map, Time Map and Presentation View – giving you the freedom to work the way you want, to achieve your goals.

**DOWNLOAD  
FREE TRIAL  
TODAY**



- Generate creative ideas without limits
- Present your thoughts with impact and clarity
- Brainstorm productively alone or with others
- Visual timeline project planning

**"iMindMap 10 is my favourite and most useful thinking tool. It has served as a "brain assistance tool" for me since 2010 in daily living and in continuing my professional interests creatively. "** - George Huba, PhD, former CEO The Measurement Group

To find out more visit  
[imindmap.com](http://imindmap.com)

# Global Survey 2017

## Participant Profile

### Participant Countries

Another great year of participation in the Annual Survey from our community members and mind mappers around the world, with more than 900 complete responses from 79 different countries (shown below in blue)!



### Survey Participants by Country:



**911**

Completed survey entries!



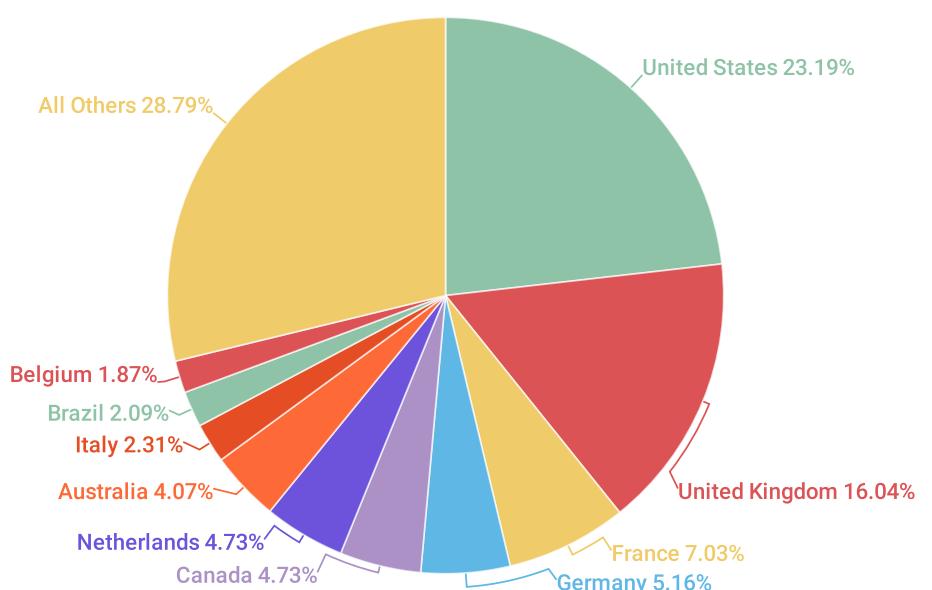
**79**

Countries represented!



**2**

Participants from Aruba  
that made us feel jealous...



# Global Survey 2017

## Participant Profile

### Gender

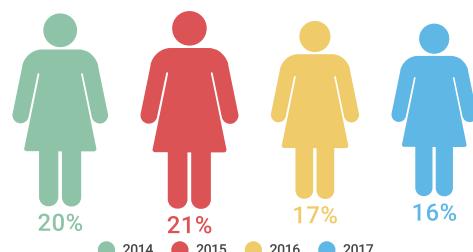
The gender profile for the survey participants has been pretty consistent since the start of this project in 2013, with males making up by far the greatest proportion of the survey population each year.



The continuing low participation of females remains, and in fact 2017 saw the lowest female participation in 4 years (see right).

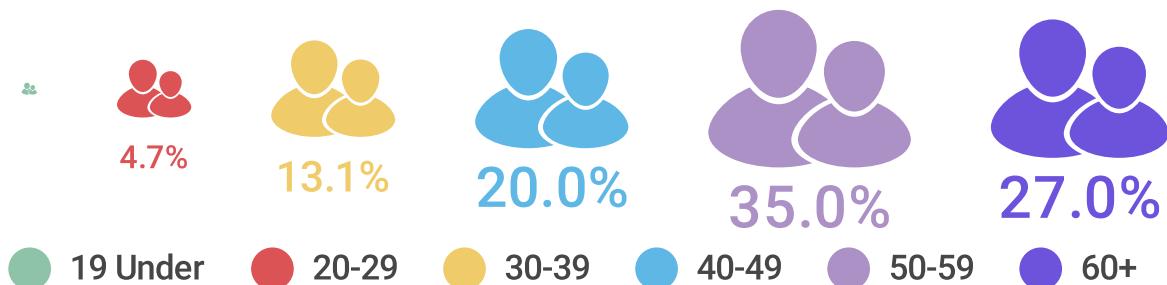
We are reassured by the fact that our website analytics suggests a 50/50 split between men/women, but the questions remain around why we continually struggle to increase female engagement with the Annual Survey!

*Female survey participation over 4 years:*



### Age

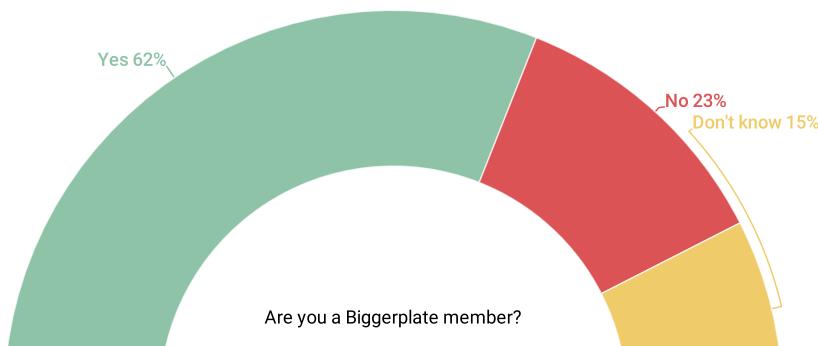
The age profile of survey participants remains relatively similar to previous years, and suggests the large majority of our community members are in the 40+ age ranges:



### Members vs Non-Members

Encouraging to see that our annual survey continues to reach a healthy proportion of mind mappers who are not (yet) members of our community (23%), largely thanks to our existing members helping to share the survey within their networks.

There also seems to be a significant proportion (15%) of people who can't quite remember whether they joined us or not... we'll try not to take it personally...!



*Don't remember if you've joined us already?*

*Don't be embarrassed... we all forget things sometimes.*

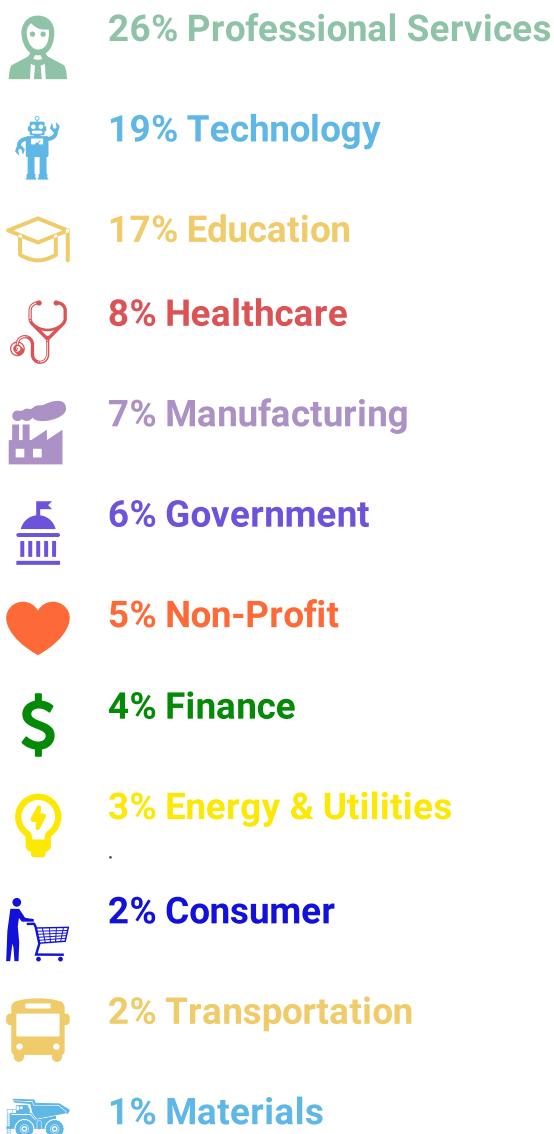
*Come visit us today and we'll help you figure it out!*



# Global Survey 2017

## Participant Profile

### Sectors, Roles, Organisational Adoption

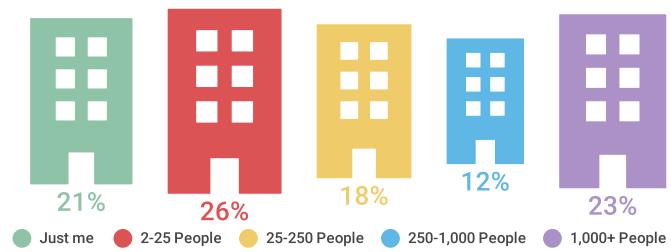


The participant profile data should be encouraging for everyone involved in mind mapping.

The top 2 sectors show mind maps being used at the forefront of a modern economy increasingly based on services and technology.

The job and age data shows people in senior roles, and in businesses of various sizes, supporting our view that mind maps are an essential management tool for the modern era.

24% felt that mind maps were "not at all widespread" in their organisation, which suggests a huge opportunity for those who can identify organisations where these small groups or 'lone mappers' exist, and focus on broadening adoption by engaging and supporting that initial user/group. It seems a more logical starting point than continuously trying to engage and promote mind mapping tools to new organisations with zero familiarity!



"How many people are there in your organisation?"



22%

Very widespread



24%

Not at all widespread

"How widespread is mind mapping in your organisation?"



# A Decade of Collaborative Online Mind Mapping

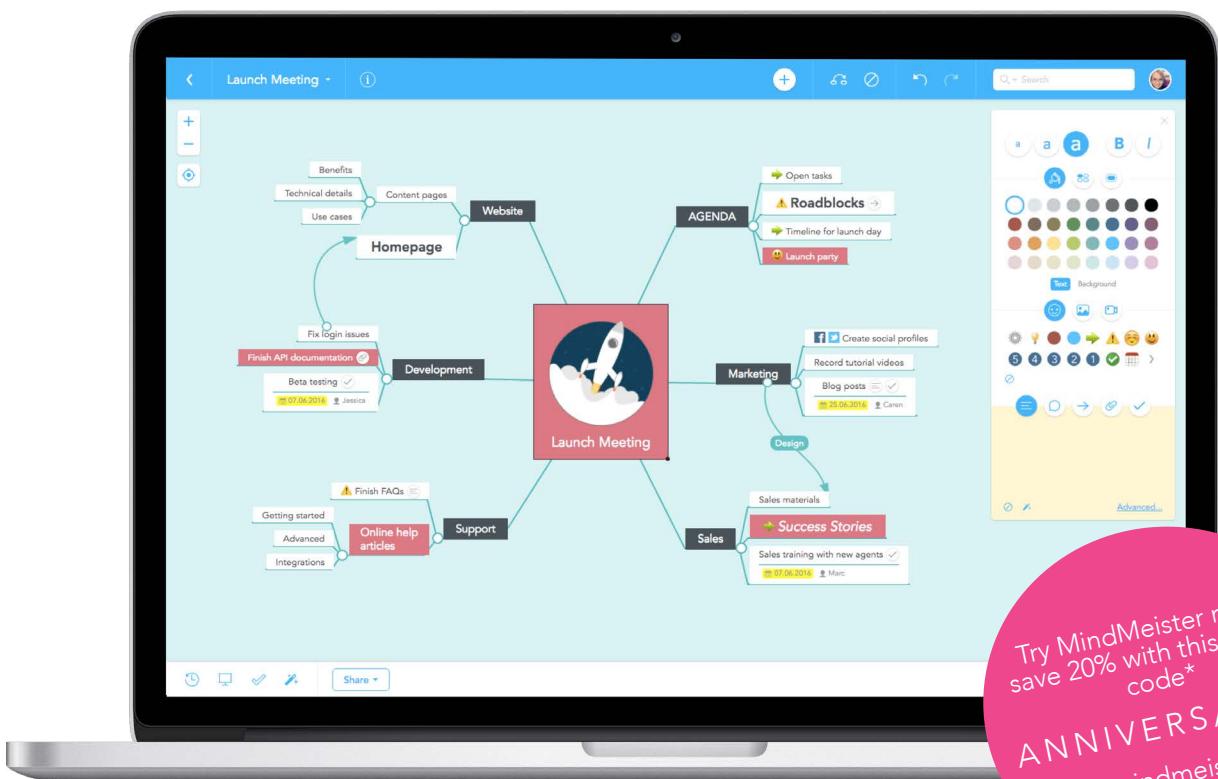
This February MindMeister celebrates its 10-year anniversary. Here's what the future holds for us.

When [MindMeister](#) launched as a private beta in February 2007, it was the first completely web-based mind mapping tool on the market. Today, the tool is used by more than 6 million people from all over the world. Entrepreneurs, creatives, consultants, teachers and students all benefit from the intuitive user interface and multitude of powerful fea-

tures, which enable them to go way beyond the classical brainstorming.

**The reason for MindMeister's success?** "We're as committed to enhancing MindMeister's technology and user experience as we were during our first year on the market," says co-founder Michael Hollauf. "If anything, we've grown more enthusiastic

as time passed and we saw that people really loved this tool. 2017 will bring a number of really cool updates that will make MindMeister even more enjoyable to work with. Look out for beautiful new map themes, better integrations, and an exciting new format for our mobile users!"



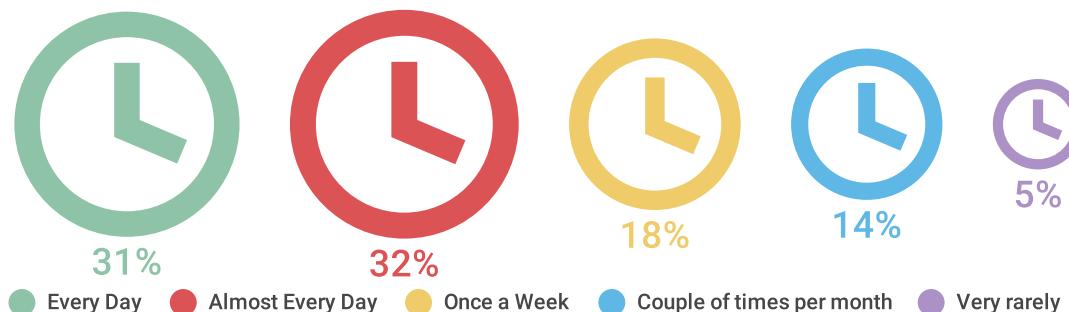
Try MindMeister now & save 20% with this promo code\*  
**ANNIVERSARY10**  
[www.mindmeister.com](http://www.mindmeister.com)

# Global Survey 2017

## Mind Maps in Action

As in previous years, the survey data suggests that once adopted, mind mapping becomes an essential tool, used very frequently, by a high proportion of people. In total, 63% say they use mind mapping every day, or almost every day!

*"How often do you use mind mapping?"*



While mind mapping is often marketed as a collaborative tool (and is indeed great for teams) the overwhelming evidence is that most mind mappers are using the tools more often in an individual capacity than in group settings (see right).

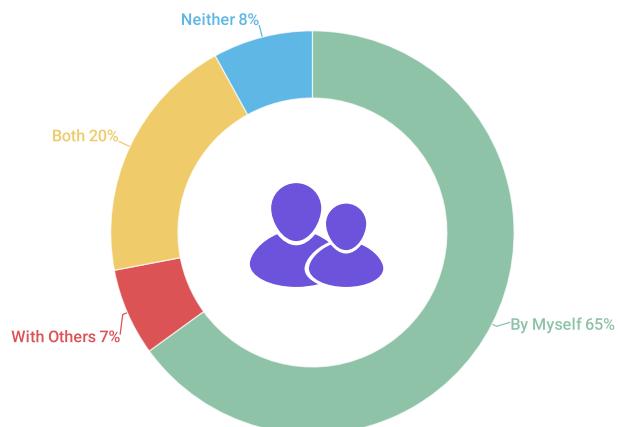
At first, this may seem to contradict one of the dominant narratives around mind mapping being a collaborative tool, but it is important to note that 20% of participants say they have been using mapping for BOTH individual and group working. Clearly the collaborative aspect exists, but perhaps it is (or has been) over-stated as a primary use of mind mapping compared to personal use?

In terms of the benefits people felt from mind mapping (in individual and/or groups) the over-arching response theme is around the ability ORGANISE IDEAS (see right).

The 3 word answers provided by participants suggests the mind map schematic helps to STRUCTURE THOUGHTS. And the VISUAL format helps to provide greater CLARITY for THINKING.

We couldn't agree more... well said. In 3 words.

*"Who have you been mind mapping with over the last week?"*



*"Can you describe how mind mapping helps you, in just 3 words?"  
(Most common words)*



# Global Survey 2017

## Mind Maps in Action

At Biggerplate we want to know "where mind mapping fits" in the daily habits of people in business, education and in general. We asked our survey participants to let us know!

**"What 1 task do you use mind mapping for the most?"**  
*(Most common words)*



## Projects & Planning

Both PROJECTS and PLANNING jump off the graphic above, showing the most used words when participants were asked what tasks they use mind mapping for.

This year we asked participants whether they had used mind maps for project planning and/or management within the last 10 days, and whether they had formal project management training and/or qualifications. The combined results (see below) support 2 trends that we have anecdotally seen and heard over several years.



65%

Participants who used mind mapping to plan and/or manage projects within last 10 days.



69%

Participants with no formal project management training or qualifications.

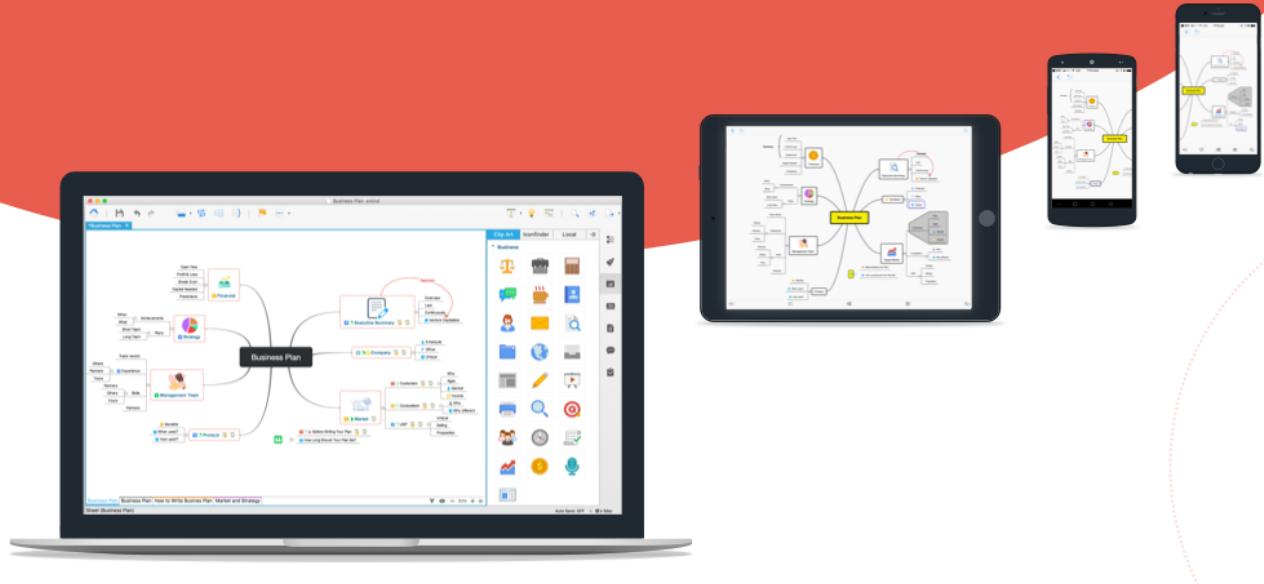
1. People in a variety of non 'project manager' roles are expected to manage projects in their daily work, and most do so without having any specific project management training. They are not 'project managers' in the traditional sense, but simply people who happen to manage projects.

2. Mind mapping is adopted by these people as a "lightweight" project management tool because they do not need/want the power and complexity of full-blown project management tools (like MS Project, VISIO etc) that a professional Project Manager may rely on.

This suggests (to us) that mind mapping should NOT be positioned as an alternative or replacement to the traditional PM tools, but instead as an easy to use "lightweight project management tool for the rest of us".



# The Most Popular Mind Mapping Tool on the Planet



XMind is a great open-source mind mapping tool that lets you clarify thinking, boost productivity and be more creative. Millions of people are already using XMind for brainstorming, planning, idea organization, project management and other creative tasks. Excellent teams like Rovio (Angry Birds) are also using XMind Pro.

## What Makes XMind Different?



### *Brainstorming*

All thoughts flow into your map.



### *Slide-based Presentation*

Ease your show with XMind.



### *Gantt View*

Use Gantt chart in mind maps.



### *XMind Cloud*

Sync files across multiple Mac/PCs.



### *60,000+ Pretty Icons*

Make a more intuitive mind map.



### *Working with Office/PDF*

Communication is simple and easy.

# Global Survey 2017

## Mind Maps in Action

### Brainstorming

Mind mapping has a long (but sometimes misunderstood) association with brainstorming, and this year we asked our survey participants to tell us if they use mind mapping for brainstorming, and (if so), what have they been brainstorming, and how did mind mapping help...



**69%**

Participants use mind maps for Brainstorming

#### "What have you been brainstorming?" (random selection of answers!)



"New product feature, without any requirements"  
Software Architect, United Kingdom



"Facilitating a strategy discussion with a client"  
Strategy Designer, Egypt



"Ideas for writing scientific papers"  
Veterinarian, Australia



"To define the Scope of a Project"  
Program Manager, South Africa



"Used at a staff meeting to capture team thoughts"  
Finance Manager, Canada



"Business development - entering new markets."  
Principal Consultant, Australia

**69%**

Participants use mind maps for Brainstorming

#### "How does mind mapping help?" (random selection of other answers!)



"Captured collective knowledge/ideas in the room"  
Company Director, United Kingdom



"Bigger picture and understanding of systems"  
HSEQ Advisor Senior, South Africa



"By making a coherent presentation of new  
information"  
Teacher Trainer, Uruguay



"I allows me to see relationships, and connections"  
Project Manager, United States



"To get an overview of possibilities and consequences"  
Company Direct, Netherlands



"Oblige me to organise information to get a better  
understanding of the situation"  
Sales Manager, France

Our own experience and the answers provided by participants suggests the following steps are greatly enabled and/or supported by mind mapping during brainstorming processes:

#### 1. CAPTURE

The ability to capture a wide range of ideas quickly, in one place, is an essential strength and benefit of mind mapping software.

#### 2. ORGANISE

Easily moving information around, grouping parts together, and structuring the information helps to improve clarity and understanding.

#### 3. PRIORITYSE

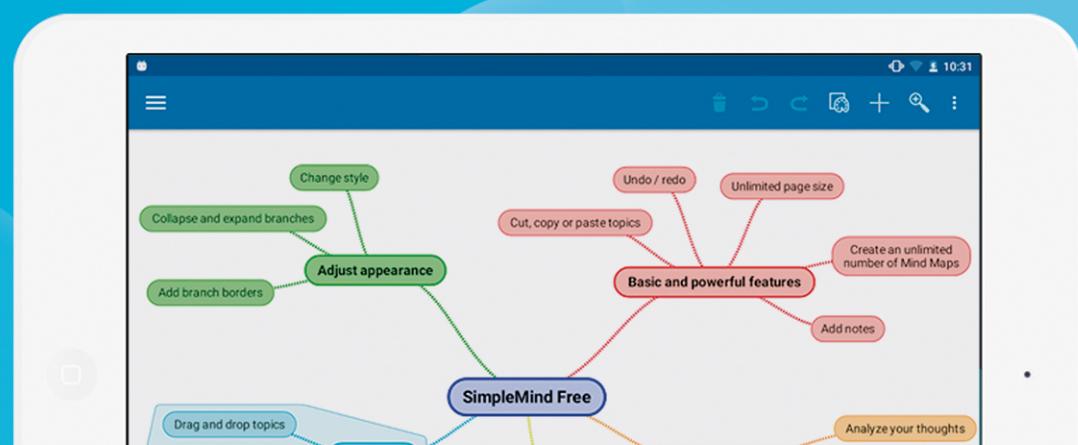
With a clear visual representation of the information and how it fits together, identifying key areas and priorities is far easier.

#### 4. PLAN

Breaking big concepts down into component parts helps to arrive at manageable actions and next steps. Easy navigation between the big picture view and details helps to ensure actions align with the priority areas identified.

# SimpleMind™ is the world leader in cross platform Mind Mapping tools

*More than 7 million users worldwide*



**Deloitte.**



Ready to show your ideas to the world?

Try it free!

See our pricing

<http://www.simplemind.eu/biggerplate2017>

# Global Survey 2017

## Tools & Technology

We see an interesting 4 year decline in participants using tablet apps according to the data below, while the more traditional "computer software" usage continues to hold steadily above 80%.

Web-based tools drop back to 2015 levels, which seems to contradict the generally *increasing* acceptance and adoption that we are seeing/hearing in our events and client work.

Smartphone app usage is slightly down this year compared to last, but remains up overall when viewed over the 4 year period.



76%

Participants using Windows Computer (laptop or desktop)



38%

Participants using Mac Computer (laptop or desktop)



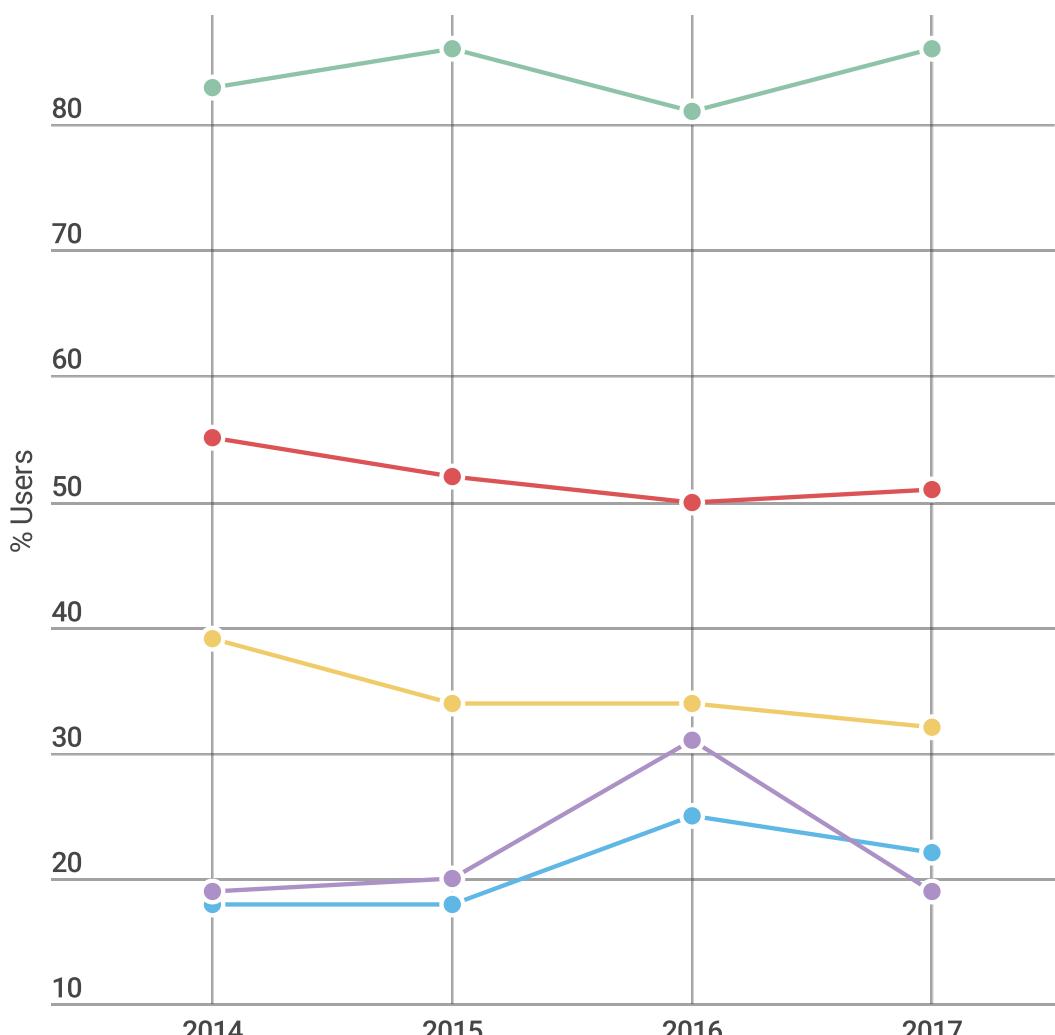
17%

Participants using both Windows & Mac (laptop or desktop)

*"In a normal week, which of the following do you use for mind mapping?"*

● Computer Software   ● Pen & Paper   ● Tablet Apps

● Smartphone Apps   ● Web-Based Tools



# Global Survey 2017

## Tools & Technology

### Multi-tool Mapping

Over a number of years, we noticed that some people (in our workshops/events/community) seemed to be using (and potentially paying for) more than 1 mind mapping software tool at any given time. This year we asked our survey participants about it, and the data tells the story:



31%

**Percentage of participants using more than one mind mapping software!**

This is a MUCH higher percentage than we expected from this question, and the data suggests that many people feel that no single tool is currently satisfying all of the requirements they have for a mind mapping application. We asked participants to elaborate further...

*"Why do you need more than one mind mapping application?"*



### Visuals/Appearance

It seems that some users need or want a different style or appearance of mind map for different situations, and no single software is covering all of the aesthetic needs at present. They are therefore choosing their software use (and combo) based on what the mind map needs to look like...



### Platforms/Device

Whether it's because you're a PC at work and Mac at home, or because you want to easily move maps between your iPad and your laptop... it seems many users still do not feel that there is one application that truly sits comfortably and consistently across all platforms and devices, which means they need a combination in order to work where and how they want.



### Sharing/Collaboration

Several participants mention difficulties in sharing maps with others (colleagues, clients etc) who use different mind map software, which may not be compatible with their own. The result? Multiple software applications are needed in order to create maps in the correct format for others!

A number of users also mention collaborative features (or lack of) as another reason why they may choose to combine certain tools, if for example their favourite desktop tool lacks a web-based option for working collaboratively with their team.



Choice Of 1 Million+  
Mind Mappers

# Transform Your ideas Into Mind Maps

 DOWNLOAD FOR  
**FREE**



## Mind Vector

Mind Vector is an easy to use collaborative mind mapping app. You can create & share mind maps, workflows, and use different views to visualize your data in many ways.

[www.mindvectorweb.com](http://www.mindvectorweb.com)

Use it on iOS, Web and Android with one time payment of \$9.99.

Use Coupon Code

**BIGGERPLATE2017**

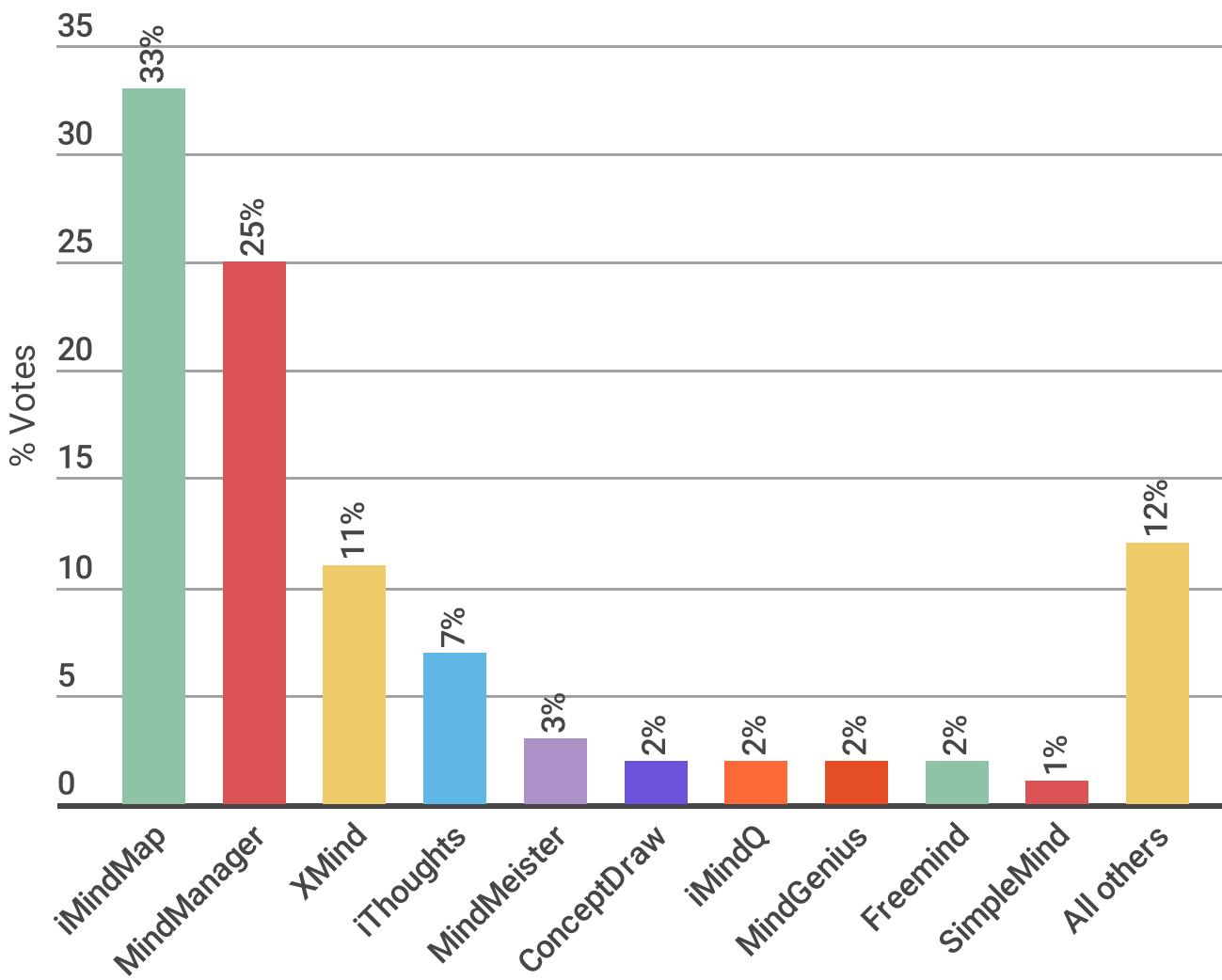
and get **30% Off** on macOS App.

# Global Survey 2017

## Tools & Technology

### Mind Mapper's Choice 2017

We asked participants to vote for their favourite mind mapping software, and the results are in:



### Mind Mapper's Choice 2017: iMindMap

Huge congratulations to the team at iMindMap who have been voted Mind Mapper's Choice for the second year running!

Not only have the team from Cardiff secured the top spot once again, but they also increased their margin from 26% to 33% of the total votes from the mind mapping community!

Participants praised the software for its ease of use, flexibility, creativity, and visual impact, among many other things. We could not agree more, and congratulate Chris Griffiths and his



team for another fantastic year of growth and continued product innovation (including an amazing integration with the Biggerplate mind map library!).

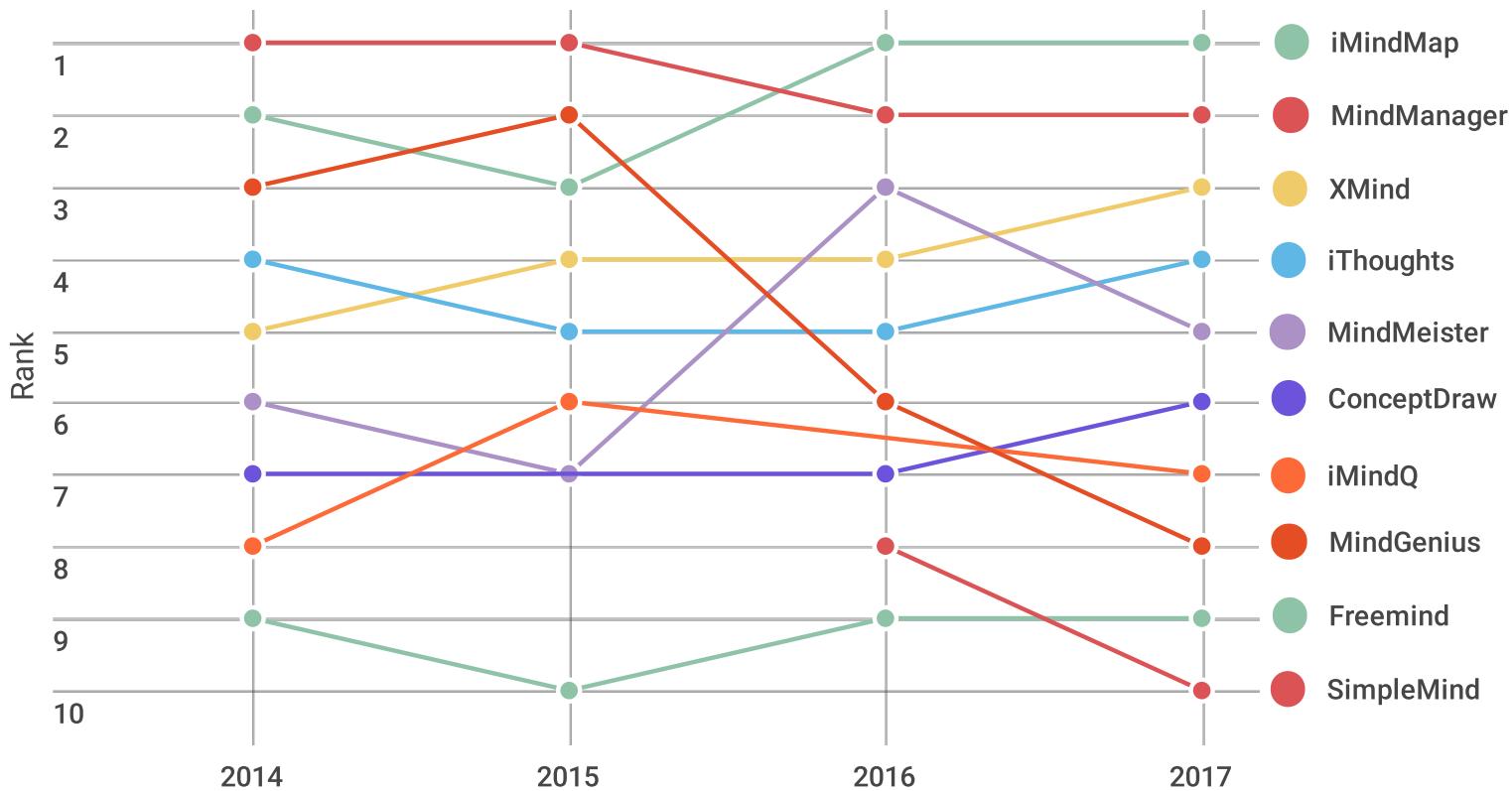
Well done to iMindMap, we look forward to seeing what you come up with in 2017!

[Learn more about iMindMap](#)

# Global Survey 2017

## Tools & Technology

### Mind Mapper's Choice: 4 Year Rankings



#### 1. iMindMap

Claiming the top spot for the second year running, is the hugely impressive iMindMap!

This represents a continuation of successful rankings for iMindMap, having featured in the Top 3 every year since 2014.

#### 2. MindManager

Maintaining incredible consistency in the top 2 positions over the 4 year period, MindManager holds 2nd place in 2017, with 25% of the vote (up from 23% in 2016).

Acquired by Corel in 2016, it will be interesting to see what lies ahead for the MindManager product in 2017, but it's safe to say there is an extremely solid position from which the new owners can build and develop into the next era for this highly rated application.

#### 3. XMind

Continuing a 4 year climb up the annual rankings, and gaining ground in vote %, XMind takes 3rd place for the first time this year, and huge congratulations go to the team from Hong Kong for breaking into that Top 3!

With the launch of XMind cloud in 2016 providing online editing and accessibility between devices, we expect XMind to continue challenging upwards in 2017.

#### 4. iThoughts

Back up to 4th place this year is iThoughts, with 7% of the votes!

We expect the newly launched Windows version of this application to act as a disruptive influence in 2017, and help build upon the already strong following for this application among the Mac/iOS community.

# Global Survey 2017

## Tools & Technology

### Mind Mapper's Choice: 4 Year Rankings

#### 5. MindMeister

Dropping to 5th place after an all-time high of 3rd place last year, MindMeister may have suffered in the voting this year among a survey population that shows much lower engagement with online tools (seen in the Tools & Technology section earlier).

However, our experience in events, meetings, webinars and other activities in 2016 suggests that MindMeister is one of the most highly regarded applications available, and one that seems certain to occupy at least a Top 5 place for the foreseeable future.

#### 6. ConceptDraw

Despite being one of the least active/visible user groups and software formats on Biggerplate, ConceptDraw has maintained a consistent place in the Top 10 for four years in a row, and even moves up one place in the rankings this year!

This suggests a strong core user group remains, despite the absence of mobile apps and web capabilities seemingly demanded by many of our survey participants!

#### 7. iMindQ

Back in the Top 10 after missing out in 2016, iMindQ has continued to bring innovation and additions to their product mix, and now provide Windows, Mac, iOS and Android applications alongside a strong web-based offering.

Based on this impressive product mix, we would expect to see iMindQ move further up the rankings over the next 2-3 years based on their ability to cater for increasing consumer demand for cross-platform, access-anywhere mind mapping.

#### 8. MindGenius

Continuing to drop from their all time high 2nd place finish in 2015, MindGenius could be considered to be 'in transition' at this time, and perhaps suffers in the voting as a result; going from 26% of the 2015 vote to just 2% this year.

An unsuccessful crowdfunding campaign in 2016, and an ongoing rebranding/re-positioning of their product offering means we should perhaps expect a year or two of quiet change in the MindGenius world before judging whether this long-standing application can move back up the rankings.

#### 9. Freemind

The Freemind phenomenon shows no signs of declining, and the open-source offering retains a Top 10 place for the 4th year running!

The application itself is certainly showing its age, and the pace of development has slowed significantly over a number of years. While there may be better free software options out there to try, the 1.2m downloads of Freemind in 2016 alone shows that 'FREE' remains a compelling primary driver for consumers, and Freemind remains a highly active entry point for many people who are new to mind mapping.

#### 10. SimpleMind

SimpleMind drops two places this year, but the team from the Netherlands should be pleased to retain their place in the Top 10 having entered for the first time only last year, and held off a number of other applications this year!

Another developer working hard to successfully bridge the Windows/Mac/iOS/Android interface, we would expect to see SimpleMind in the Top 10 again next year, and potentially moving up a couple of places too!



# Biggerplate Annual Report 2017

## Conclusion

While for many people 2016 has been sulkily consigned to history as "the worst year ever", at Biggerplate we will look back on it with some fondness.

Sure, the outside world may have been making questionable political choices and beloved celebrities seemed to be departing this earth faster than you could say "ground control to Major Tom, take your protein pills and put your helmet on", but in the world of Biggerplate, 2016 was really quite a winner.

Our community grew to new heights, and faster than ever before on a monthly basis. More importantly, we have been able to engage and learn from more of these members than ever before, through an innovative mix of accessible online channels and offline activities.

A number of mind mapping software providers made great use of our API system to deliver innovative integration options for their users, enabling direct upload and/or download of mind maps to/from the Biggerplate library, thereby widening access to the amazing content that has been shared on Biggerplate by our community.

We made fundamental improvements to our commercial sustainability through the introduction of the Business Club, and had some great success in further expanding our training and facilitation services. We worked with a number of great organisations, met some wonderful people, engaged with amazing projects, and worked in some fantastic locations around the world!

So... all in all, 2017 has quite a lot to live up to!

However, perhaps the best thing about 2016 overall, was that it was almost entirely focused on foundation-building for the *next 3-4 years*. In fact, the majority of what we did in 2016 (both visibly and behind the scenes) was actually focused on setting ourselves up for the *next era* at Biggerplate, from 2017 to 2020...

The data from the Annual Survey this year, and the trends we see over the previous few years clearly illustrate that nothing is constant, and (just like the wider world), the mind mapping world is evolving, and the needs and expectations of mind map users and our members are evolving too.

It is essential that Biggerplate, software providers, and the mind mapping community therefore remain actively engaged in an open and ongoing dialogue, so that we can all keep up with what's happening, and plan for what's coming. Projects like our Annual Survey are essential for this, and our efforts to respond to feedback gathered in previous years has served us (and others) very well in adapting to change.

Much of our work in 2016 was focused on putting foundations in place for the next 4 years. Now in 2017, you can expect to see a great deal of development based upon those foundations, and (hopefully) an accelerated evolution of the Biggerplate community in a huge number of very exciting areas!

While it is impossible to know exactly where the mind mapping sector will collectively be by 2020, we believe our work in 2016 has given us the best possible chance of ensuring that we will be at the forefront of the sector in this next era and this will allow us to play a key role in shaping the overall direction for mind mapping with help and guidance from our community.

The next era in our journey (or "Biggerplate 3.0" as we call it) begins in 2017, and we invite you to join us to make it the most successful era yet for Biggerplate community members, and the mind mapping world overall!

Thank you for your continuing support and engagement, we look forward to exploring the next era with you all!

The Biggerplate Team

