

Mind Map Software

Happy 2008! With the new year a lot of people turn to reviewing their goals. I was recently doing the same, and I like to [[mind map]] mine. I looked at various software to use on my mac to create and edit mind maps, and thought I would share some with you.

Mind mapping software has come a long way since I last looked into it. Overall I was impressed with the direction and progress this sector has taken. I am a visual person and I like to plan visually, using various approaches.

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Starting with the free software, there is FreeMind. This is written in Java. I did not play with this too much though.

I downloaded an evaluation copy of MindManager, which has both mac and pc versions.

Next, I tried out NovaMind Pro, which has some interesting animations. It also interfaces with Merlin, their project planning software. I could see how that could be useful.

Of course, after that I looked at XMIND 2008, which is good, with just a few concerns about stability and some minor issues with printing. Their tech support was very friendly.

I also tried out iMindMap, by Tony Buzan, the inventor of mind mapping. It had some interesting curvy branches I liked.

Out of the last four, I liked XMIND the best, but it had some issues to be resolved before I would be ready to purchase. So I looked at my next option.

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I already owned a copy of OmniGraffle, and for a modest fee I was able to upgrade to the newest version. This is more a general drawing program, that can also do mind maps and org charts. You can open a drawer to the side of the main window and enter in outline view while it builds the chart in the main window. After that you can tweak it some more.

Then just recently, I came across Flying Logic. This is not quite mind mapping, but it is worth a look. You can map out the logic of something and do what-if experiments and see the results. I tried mapping out some processes and brainstorming some ideas in it.

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