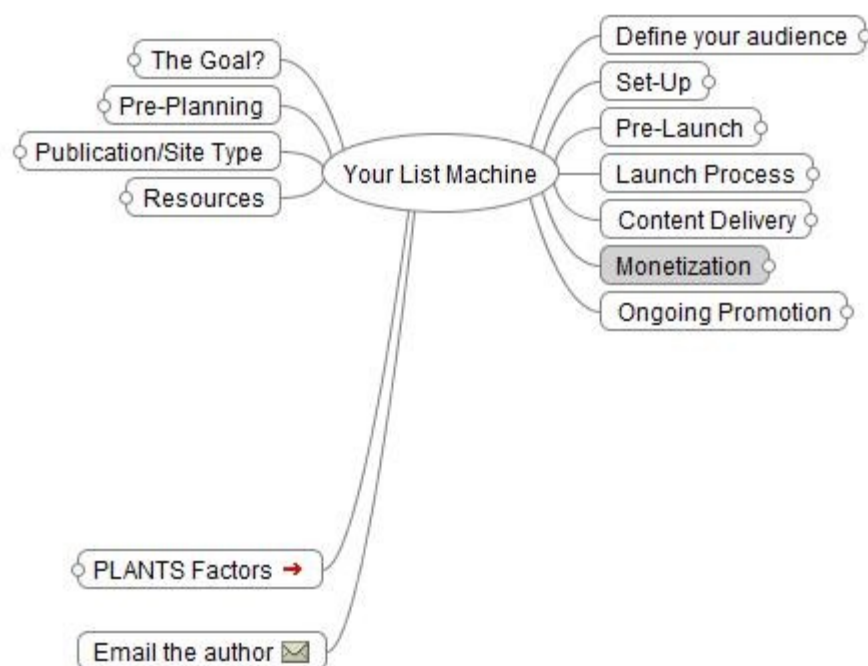


# WORKING WITH THE MINDMAP

## Getting Started

First things first. Go to <http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Download> and grab the newest version of Freemind for your operating system. Install that.

Once you've installed it, double-click on the file that came with this package called ListMap.mm. It should open and show something that looks like this:



Each one of those oval “nodes” that has a small circle toward the outer edge of the page opens up to reveal what are called “child nodes.” You just click on those circles to open them, and you can easily explore the map this way. Don't freak out when you start to see how big the thing is.

There are, as of this moment, over 1360 nodes making up the entire map.

They're laid out in 3 main sections. The left side is the planning and assessment section. This is where you'll start to look at what you want from your list (or other project), and what you have to offer to or to use to get it. The main nodes are:

**The Goal:** What do you want? The child nodes in this section offer some questions, and a few things to consider when setting the goal for this project, or for any other activity you may choose to undertake.

**Pre-planning:** This one has only two child nodes: Topic or niche, and initial format. Essentially, what will you talk about (or sell), and in what data format (text, video, software,

etc)?

**Publication/Site Type:** Also easy, but worth significant thought. You may mix and match these, or stick to one type. For example, one of my projects (my primary newsletter) is a simple plain text site that offers a way for people to sign up for a plain text newsletter delivered via email. I've maintained that model for almost 16 years now. It works, and it fits my personal style and the capabilities of everyone who has an email address.

It's possible to incorporate all of those site types, but it's probably not wise, at least without significant staffing and expertise. Some take extensive training and/or resources, while others can be used by anyone with access to a browser. It is possible, and in some cases preferable, to start out with nothing but a Facebook “fan” page.

**Resources:** Basic inventory. What have you got, and what do you need to get?

Take your time with this section. If you're clear on what you want, and what you're willing and able to deliver to get it, the rest gets a lot easier. You'll be focused on the goal, rather than getting stuck on using one specific technique or another.

Remember Jane's Third Rule of Marketing: *“Jane can have anything in the world she wants, as long as she courts the what, instead of marrying the how.”*

The right side is the execution stuff. This is how you go from where you are to where you want to be.

**Define Your Audience:** This section of the map will walk you through the process of defining, in a practical and useful way, exactly who your perfect prospect is, and where to find them online.

**Set-Up:** This section is all about the mechanics. Literally setting up your system.

**Pre-Launch:** This part outlines the various things you need to have in place before you actually roll out your list, or product, or site, or whatever else you're using this map to plan. Keep in mind that you are unlikely to use everything here, and you should feel free to cut out anything that doesn't fit.

Like the rest of the map, this has a labeled focus on list building, but it can be used for any online business activity. Make it your own.

**Launch Process:** This is the public side of the launch. The process of booting up your enterprise or project, in stages that help to ensure the best start you can create.

**Content Delivery:** The launch is just the beginning. What will you deliver, how, how often, in what format(s), and with what systems?

**Monetization:** Where's the money? This shows some options for making a profit on your efforts.

**Ongoing Promotion:** How do you sustain and increase the momentum from your launch? There are three main types of ongoing promotion we'll consider in this section.

*Structural:* This is the regular process of doing things to get more of what you want, and to build your business. Things you do often, and have to keep doing, to make it happen.

*Events:* These are the one-offs. New product launches, special holiday promotions, press releases, etc. They can be a big deal, but they aren't the sorts of things you can do every day.

*Streamers:* These are promotional efforts that you do once and which keep producing results steadily over time. They accumulate, which means a consistently growing return on the effort you put into them. These are the keys to passive returns in your business.

The third section is to the lower left, labeled “Plants Factors.” These are 7 things you must include in everything you do online. Each project or part of one should include as many of the 7 as possible. Some will only really accommodate 1, but many can include 3, 4, or even all 7 at once.

The acronym “PLANTS” is an easy way to remember what the 7 things are.

**P**roduct  
**L**inks  
**A**ctive affiliates  
**N**etwork  
**T**raffic  
**S**ubscribers and sales

**Product:** This doesn't only include actual commercially deliverable goods of whatever kind. It also includes all your marketing materials, ecourses, lead generation systems, giveaway reports, and anything else that can be used repeatedly in building your business. In a word, assets.

**Links:** Just that. Links back to some resource that generates traffic, sales, affiliates, partners (network), or subscribers. This is separate from traffic because it's a passive asset, and because of the search engine value. (It occurs to me as I write this that it also keeps the acronym from being just “pants,” which is probably a good thing, if somewhat incidental. ;)

**Active affiliates:** This one is obvious. It's easy to get people to sign up as affiliates. Attracting partners who will actively promote your offer is a whole other game, and one you want to focus on getting good at.

**Network:** This includes everyone whose participation in your business isn't limited in scope to either an affiliate, subscriber or customer (or both). It includes advisors, publishers who syndicate your content, product creation partners, suppliers, referral partners, advertising sources, personal friends, and anyone else you might deal with regularly over the course of time.

**Traffic:** Just that. Visitors to your site or other resources. (YouTube videos, social network

profiles, etc.)

**Subscribers and sales:** Mostly obvious. Just keep in mind that we're using the word 'subscriber' in the more accurate and modern sense of someone you can contact directly on a regular basis at will, rather than the more common "someone who gave you an email address and hasn't unsubscribed yet." They could sign up for an email list, follow you on Twitter, friend you on Facebook, sign up for your RSS feed, join your membership site, or choose to form any other lasting connection.

Each of these nodes open up to a number of ideas, suggestions, and options. Browse through them all in one session at some point, and spend some time thinking about how you can add them to your current business, or incorporate them into a project or system you're planning.

I recommend coming back to that section on a regular basis. I've been doing that for ages, and I don't recall the last time I went through the list and didn't find at least one new and useful idea waiting for me.

## **Make it your own**

So, you know what the map looks like. It's time to start planning your trip.

I'll get into changing the map in a few moments. First, I want you to make sure you know what it is that you want. Don't worry if you get it wrong the first time. You can change this thing around any way you want, any time you want.

Make a copy of the mindmap file and rename it to "WorkingMap.mm" or "Project-1.mm" or some other title that sets it apart from the original.

While you're working with it, keep your goal(s) in mind. Do not hesitate to delete any node or section that doesn't fit with those, or which you don't feel is something you want to do or use in your business. Change the order if you feel that's right, and do whatever else is needed to make this a useful map to your own desired end result.

No-one will use every step in this system. No-one should. It wasn't designed for that. The object in creating this thing was to give you as many ideas and options as possible, and to make sure that you had a guide to help you quickly isolate the things you need to do and learn, so that you can fill in the important gaps with a bit more clarity about the process.

If you only need 6 nodes on the right, that's all you should leave when you're done. If you need 200, well, that's what you need. There is no one answer that's right for everyone, or even for every project done by one person.

Use what you need, and delete the rest.

Now, on to the mechanics of changing the thing.

First note: When you're working with the map, there's one thing that can get confusing. Any keyboard or menu action you take will operate on the highlighted node. That's whichever node is currently grey, and can be set by using the cursor or the keyboard. This only works when the Freemind screen is the currently active application. Where that gets confusing is that, since it's a Java application, the highlighting will happen by moving the cursor over the map even when it's not the active screen.

Avoiding that is easy. When you switch to another program and back to Freemind, just click in the Freemind screen before doing anything else. That will become second nature quickly, but forgetting to do it may cause a little temporary confusion at first. It did for me, at any rate.

In order to edit the map, you'll need to learn the most basic keystrokes. To add a node that's further out to the left or right from the highlighted node (depends on which side of the main node you're on), tap the Insert key. Then type in the text you want to appear in the node and hit Enter. To edit the text on any node, highlight it and tap F2. To delete a node, just tap the delete key.

If you goof, and want to go back to a previous state, hold down the control key and tap Z.

Note that these instructions are for the Windows version. The docs/help files for the version you're using will explain any differences for other operating systems.

To create a node below the currently active one, (the same distance from the central node, and branching off the same node), just hit Enter. Type in the desired text and hit Enter again.

To change the order of "sibling" nodes (nodes branching directly off the same "parent" node), highlight the one you want to move, hold down the Control (CTRL) key and use the up and down arrows to move them around.

To cut/copy and paste parts of the map, from single nodes to whole branches, just highlight the desired node and use the appropriate keystroke combination. It will be the same as for that operation in any other program. For Windows, Ctrl-X cuts the highlighted node and any child nodes branching off from it. Ctrl-C copies them. To paste one in, highlight the node you want the copied/cut nodes to branch from and hit Ctrl-V.

You can use the mouse for this also. (Right button click for the options.)

That's everything you need to know to construct a basic mindmap or adapt an existing one.

As you look through the various sections, you'll be able to label some as having no impact on what you're doing. Delete those sections. Get rid of everything that's not contributing to your desired end result.

Get rid of the clutter.

When you've got what feels like a map that's as finished as you can get right now, let it sit for a few days, while you work on information gathering or product development. Come back to it later, and see if there are things that need to be added, or steps that can be eliminated. Look for ways to make things more productive and work together better.

That's where the "PLANTS" section can be a big help. Carefully integrating the systems so you get that extra leverage can build in extra profit channels that can get you moving much more quickly toward your goals. Just be careful not to turn leverage into a hammer. Your goal is to attract, not attack.

## SOME FINAL TIPS

Yes, that was all you need for the moment, as far as the planning stage. Really. This stuff is much more intuitive than most processes, and your own needs will drive you to an effective end result. There are just two especially useful tricks I want to point out. They'll make the process of keeping things orderly a lot easier.

The first is linking a node to a website or email address. To do that, highlight the node you want to embed the link on and hit Ctrl-K. That will open a text gadget that you just type or paste the URL into. For an email address, you'd format it just like a mailto: link on a website. You can hover over the email link on the lower left side with my email address to see the basic formatting.

To link to a file on your computer, you'd hold down the shift and control keys and tap 'K.' That will bring up a file selector. Browse to where the desired file is on your machine and click on that. Save the node, and you're good to go.

After that, when you click on that node, the website or local file will open in whatever program is set as the default for it on your computer. That can be very handy for organizing all the files for a given project in one easy to find place. And, if the files are in the same directory as the mindmap (or lower on the directory tree), you can distribute the whole thing as a product and others can use them through the same interface.

Mindmapping can be a very easy way to capture and develop ideas, teach others, distribute training materials, create quick and easy products and giveaway items, and more.

Let your creative side run with it, and I'm sure you'll come up with ideas I've never considered.

On that note... Get going. Create your plan and turn it into something that makes you money!

And have some fun while you're at it, eh?

Paul  
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For those who don't already get it, I publish a newsletter called "TalkBiz News." It's one of the oldest email newsletters on the subject of marketing online. I've been putting out issues of my little e-rag consistently for almost 16 years. I think it's pretty good, but I'm biased.

If you'd like to find out for yourself, you can sign up, and get a free copy of my 112-page book, "Need to Know," at <http://www.talkbiz.com>