

How To Mind Map Your Business

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If you're doing business on the Web, sooner or later you'll probably begin to feel like a juggler trying to keep ten balls flying through the air at the same time. There are just too many elements in your business plan to keep them all going at once.

The solution?

For many people the solution would be to make a list of all the key elements in their business plan. But lists are linear and the Mind doesn't think in a linear fashion. The Mind thinks in terms of associations, hierarchy, image, color, form, and pattern. So to organize your ideas and generate new ideas, a Map is much more effective than a list. In fact, at the back of your Mind, you probably already have a vaguely-defined map of your online business. A Mind Map is simply a way of putting that structure down on paper.

Mind Mapping, also known as 'Radiant Thinking', is a technique that was developed in the 1970's by Tony Buzan. A Mind Map consists of a central word or concept, with 5 to 10 main ideas radiating out from that central concept.

Here's an example of a Mind Map for an Internet Business.

At the center of a blank page are the words 'My Internet Business Plan', circled. Radiating out from those central words are seven key ideas, or Basic Organizing Ideas (BOIs): Search Engine Listings, Ezine Ads, Newsletter, Link Exchange, Writing Ezine Articles, Website, Affiliate Programs. Each of these BOIs is connected to the central circle by outward-pointing arrows, like the branches of a tree. You can see an illustration of this Mind Map at:

<http://www.freezineweb.com/mind-map.html>

Each Basic Ordering Idea sprouts a further set of ideas, also connected by outward-pointing arrows, like twigs at the end of a branch. For example, the Basic Organizing Idea 'Ezine Ads' gives rise to four more ideas: 'Paid Ads', 'Ad Swaps', 'Free Ads', and 'Ad Tracking'. 'Ad Swaps' in turn gives rise to two more ideas, 'Newsletter' and 'Website' and so on. Each Basic Organizing Idea can become the center of another Mind Map.

In one sense, a Mind Map is simply a map of what you know about a given topic, in this case your online business. And so it's a very effective way of taking an 'inventory' of what you know about a particular subject at a given moment in time.

But a Mind Map also causes your brain to make associations. Because each Basic Ordering Idea can become the center of another Mind Map, a Mind Map is capable of producing endless associations. In fact, if you use a Mind Map, whether you're writing an Ezine Article, writing an eBook, designing an entire website, or writing a sales letter, it's virtually impossible to get 'Writer's Block'; the very structure of a Mind Map keeps giving rise to new associations.

Another key benefit of a Mind Map is that it helps you organize information hierarchically, in a way that is not possible with lists. The tree-like structure of a Mind Map is a hierarchy and in the process of arranging your information along the 'branches' and 'twigs' of a Mind Map, you'll get a much better grasp of the information you're dealing with.

So, to sum up, here are the basic techniques for drawing a Mind Map:

- Place a central idea or concept in the middle of a blank page, and circle it.
- Jot down 5 to 10 Basic Ordering Ideas, radiating out from the central concept.
- Connect each Basic Ordering Idea to the central concept with outward-pointing arrows.
- As an aid to creating your Basic Ordering Ideas, ask yourself: "If the central concept of my Mind Map were a book, what would be the chapter headings?"
- Each Basic Ordering Idea can become the center of another Mind Map.

You can find more information about Mind Maps at the following websites:

- <http://www.peterussell.com/mindmap1.html>
- <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~caveman/Creative/Mindmap/Radiant.html>
- <http://www.shared-visions.com/explore/literature/mindmap.htm>
- <http://www.tsd.jcu.edu.au/netshare/learn/mindmap/howto.html>

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About The Author

Michael Southon has been writing for the Internet for over 3 years. He has shown hundreds of webmasters how to use this simple technique to get massive free publicity and dramatically increase traffic and sales. Click here to find out more: <http://www.ezine-writer.com/>