

This Might Unseat the Mindmap

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"Whoa" is the first reaction I get when I show off yesterday's project. I'm astounded at the ease of manipulation in ZuiPrezi, the online, flash-based, zooming and swooping presentation tool. Watching a presentation conjures up images of those neat and just out-of-reach multi-touch interfaces.

Thanks to an reintroduction to FreeMind as a presentation tool by Scott Granneman a few years back, I started to appreciate the ability to move information that isn't relevant to the current point of a presentation out of sight to reduce distractions. I was still able to keep context to the larger topic by showing linked relationships.

Not all information is that simple though, and to force all points down in to singular links sometimes causes me to minimize the importance of other relationships between information. Sometimes it's enough to just show that a relationship exists. And, sometimes I just need to tell a story

ZuiPrezi delivers. The development team has built an intuitive design interface which can be controlled with simple keystrokes almost as easily as with the mouse. Here's a snip of the toolbox:

The basic process is this:

- Drop information, images, video, and lines into the workspace
- Draw "screens" to control the presentation zoom level and degrees of rotation
- Draw a path from presentation start to finish.

Hit escape a few times to change to presentation mode. Click next and the presenter swooshes into and out of your screens to present varying levels of emphasis as perceived by relative object size. The vector nature of Flash makes this possible. Dots don't cut it, as evident by the tools handling of photos and images. Yuck.

This won't remove FreeMind from my toolset. Heck, I'll probably embed mindmaps into my Zuis, as long as the service stays available and reliable. I certainly don't trust it completely yet. I've come back into a saved presentation more than once to find my presentation looking different from how I left it.

Without further ado, here's the current state of the presentation I'm building:

Discussion about the tool is welcome; so is feedback and reaction about the current state of the presentation.