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What Are Online Collaboration& Brainstorming Tools?

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After web 2.0 turns the internet into a big information exchange platform, the usage of online collaboration and brainstorming tools become more common in everyday life. The basic function of a brainstorming and online collaboration tool is an online platform that helps user communicate, coordinate and collaborate with other users. There two main categories of online collaboration tools: Asynchronous collaborations tools and Synchronous collaborations tools. Asynchronous collaboration tools let users collaborating at a different time. Such as group calendar and E-mail. Synchronous collaboration tool lets users communicate at the same time. Such as multiplayer games or video communication systems.

The first idea of computer collaboration tools was published by Vannevar Bush in his article “as we may think”. In his article he shared his thoughts on a system he named “memex”. A system that stores books record and communications of an individual and make them available at any time. After the manual typewriter was invented in the 1970 everyone learned about office automation which led to the first collaborative software called Electronic information exchanges system(EIES) that allowed to do surveys, threaded replies, and group structured approaches. After the web 2.0 changes the concept of internet interaction Braining storming and online collaboration tool start to expand and they are embedded into our daily life.

Most of the online collaboration and brainstorming tools creates a platform for the user to brainstorm and collaborate with others. A good example of a Mind Map software. Mind Map is an ancient concept from the 3rd century for thinkers to collaborate and brainstorm, After the 1960 mind maps are similar in radial structure to the concept maps. The Mind Map allows users to organize and collaborate their thought on the digital blank sheet. On the digital blank sheet, users can type in different ideas then use the software build in mind map layout to organize their thoughts and share it with other users, the collaboration process is simple and effective, but its range of communication with other users is limited. For people to see your thought and collaborate on it, mind map requires other people to log in, this means that the Mind Map a close network. A close network limits the number of providers, in this case, is the people who have the account and who allow having the access to this mind map project. Also, there is similar software like “Bubble .us” which divides users into a smaller user group. Mind Map is mostly useful for small group projects that want no outside interference. Mind Map work best for group projects that designate a small group of people to collaboration like a high school group project. Since mind map can help people break down certain concept quicker there for it is often used in school.

Collaboration and brainstorming often require communication. In the digital era, a good open network for online interaction is always good for brainstorming. The best example will be wikis. The first wiki is WikiWikiWeb(1) and it was being developed in 1994, in Portland, Oregon and launched on March 25, 1995. Wiki is a website on which users collaboratively modify content and structure directly from the web browser. Wiki is one of the asynchronous and one to all collaboration tool. It greatly benefits from the number of users; the more user edits the work the more collaboration and brainstorming will happen. Wiki has become part of our modern life because it is very easy to access regardless you are a viewer or an editor. Easy to access is a double edge sword for collaboration and brainstorming. The good side is that the wiki page is a user-generated content that everyone can share his or her thoughts, so there is a verity of information that is being added and elaborate on the wiki page. The bad side of the wiki is that wiki relies on users to the participle, so no participants then no collaboration. Also, some of the wiki information might not be accurate due to lack of professional prove. Today there are averagely 15.6 billion views per day (2), the Wiki page has become the answer of everything and is mostly used for an online encyclopedia for people who needed to look define something quickly.

Many brainstorming, and collaboration tools are seamlessly embedded into a larger program. For example, Google Doc Suites. Google Docs is part of the Google service and its ability to combine with other Google software make it a universal word processor tool that lets users collaborate with each other. Google Docs Suites was first released in 2009 a Web as a word processor tool and over 9 years of development become online collaborate Microsoft Office.

Google Doc does not require a stand-alone program to be installed into the computer. This function makes google doc easier to access compared to its counterparts, all you need is an internet connection and a google account. Google doc syncing with cloud storage (Google Drive) which lets users access their work through any computer. Syncing also prevents any loss of information due to file corruptions. Google Doc is editable by multiple people at the same time. Just enter an email address and you can add people to help edit and if you don’t like what they did you can always go back to the history and get access to the previous version of the work. Google Doc can link in with other Google product such as the google classroom. Teachers can edit google doc online and send it back without converting a file or require a word processor to open it which greatly reduce processing time. Today google doc is one of the most commonly used word programs, and it has been used for a wide range of user as one of the most convenient online word tools.

1 Wiki Wiki Web Wiki History Retrieved 2010-10 08 http:// wiki C2.com

2 MONICA ANDERSON, PAUL HITLIN AND MICHELLE ATKINSON. Wikipedia at 15: Millions of readers in scores of languages Pew Research Center. JANUARY 14, 2016 [http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/01/14/wikipedia-at-15/](%20http:/www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/01/14/wikipedia-at-15/)