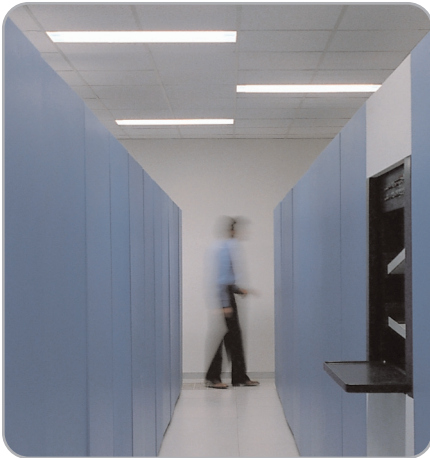




## Case Study

# MatrixDM



*“MindManager is utterly invaluable. It's changed my skills as a business person. I feel that I can apply a broader range of knowledge against problems more quickly.”*

### ROI

Cut MatrixDM's ramp-up time in half, enabling it to execute on its business plan in only two months; significantly reduced startup advising costs; enables year-round strategic planning.

### Company Profile

MatrixDM ([www.matrixdm.net](http://www.matrixdm.net)) offers a suite of tools designed to help marketing organizations manage workflow, projects, and communications. MatrixDM customers include leading advertising agencies, direct-marketing firms, and marketing-communications departments.

### Challenge

To manage all aspects of the startup planning process, and to carry that planning through to running the business.

### Business Planning

#### A startup software developer and consulting firm uses MindManager to plan and run its new business

MatrixDM™ Marketing & Consulting offers both products and services designed to give its clients better understanding and control of the direct marketing operational environment. The company's mission is nothing less than the transformation of the marketing industry. “We're trying to change the way an extremely inefficient industry works—one that's about to go through financial flux,” says Chris Prichard, CEO of MatrixDM. Prichard notes that innovations such as Tivo and ReplayTV have made it increasingly difficult for companies to reach audiences using traditional means. In such a fluid environment, he says, marketing organizations must find ways to quickly take advantage of changes in the advertising landscape.

The key to rapid response, Prichard says, is to use technology that leverages more of the human mind's capacity to understand and interact with visual images. To that end, MatrixDM has used Mindjet's visual information mapping software from day one. “Everything from the concept stage of the company all the way through today to our current marketing and sales strategy is captured in MindManager maps,” says Prichard. “These visual representations of information have enabled us to convey a single message about what our product—and our company—are doing, and to keep all those disparate resources on the same page.”

### Creating the business plan

Prichard first used MindManager to build his business plan, then used it to help turn that plan into reality. He created step-by-step maps that helped him and his team plan virtually every aspect of the startup process from product design and marketing to financial and strategic planning.

Prichard started by creating a map with one branch for planning the product's features and pricing. This naturally led to the next branch—the marketing plan. He created more detailed branches off the marketing branch that ranked the markets in which he planned to sell, and then he developed a strategy for reaching those markets.

“Now I had a visual document that laid out the product, the features to the product, the market defined, and the sales and marketing plan around it,” he says. “From there I was able to fill in the big objectives for the company, our goals, and our mission statement.”

He built additional maps to stage the growth of the company, as well as to gather all of the due diligence that would be required when it was time to attract venture capital. Now, he says, all the key people inside and outside the company work from these maps documents.

“MindManager is part of the DNA of the company and the way it was formed,” says Josh Jordan, MatrixDM's CTO. “It has allowed us to go from whiteboard to action faster than I've ever seen. And it gives us a central repository for documents.”

### Planning for the future

Most companies tackle strategic planning once a year. They wall themselves off for two weeks and labor over a static plan that quickly gathers dust on the shelf. Instead, MatrixDM uses MindManager to create 12-month rolling financial plans, with maps linked to updated Excel spreadsheets and the company's Salesforce CRM software. CEO Prichard uses these maps to manage how many customers to go after, how many resources to put against the expected work, and which people to hire and when. He also rolls that together into a 36-month view that quickly links back to the original business plan.

## Solution

MatrixDM uses MindManager to create maps linked to every part of the startup and business-planning process, from product development and marketing to financing and execution.

## Product

Mindjet MindManager

## Result

MindManager enables MatrixDM to manage its business using 12-month rolling financial planning rather than once-a-year planning. The company is confident that everyone is on the same page about its future growth path.

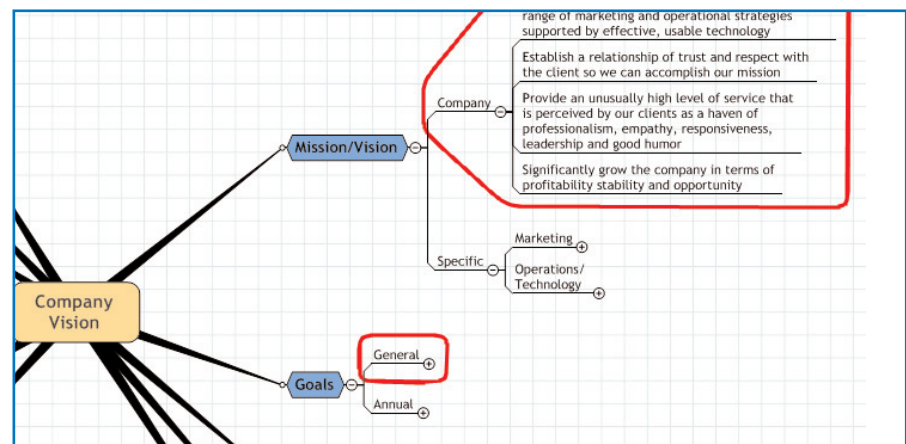
"It forces me to make my strategic planning a daily activity and not something I do every 12 months," he says. "I'm trying to decide what I want to do in three years based on data I'm looking at today. So strategic planning went from being that two-week walled-off process, to something that isn't the pain point it normally is."

## Working two steps ahead

Because Prichard had articulated the business so thoroughly in MindManager, he was set to execute on his business plan in only two months—far faster than most startups. When he's ready to move from bootstrapping the company with internal financing to raising outside venture capital, he knows all the documentation and business planning is ready to go. And because MatrixDM has done so much of the planning with MindManager, its costs for outside advice have been kept to a minimum.

Ron Lau of Venture X Group in Atlanta advised MatrixDM on its early-stage business planning: "The greatest benefit I saw with using MindManager is that it enabled MatrixDM to build a clear, organized map of all their thoughts on starting the business. There are so many aspects of the process of starting a company—fundraising development, operational rollout, resource requirements. For businesses to be able to see everything on one page is really valuable."

## Building a better mousetrap



Business planning with Mindjet MindManager

Prichard has tried products like Visio, but finds that they just don't compare with MindManager's ability to facilitate brainstorming in meetings, make connections between ideas and create tasks that synch up with other project-planning tools. "The difference is between pushing rocks up a hill and rolling them down," he says. "With MindManager it has been easier to maintain our momentum because we were able early on to set up a structure that serves us well as we pick up speed."

He has even sold his clients on MindManager. "We went into one agency with the full intention of selling our system, and ended up selling 10 licenses of MindManager before we left," he says. "The agency didn't end up going with us, but I think they're at least a little bit more organized now. So at least we had some positive effect on their ability to compete in the current environment."

Prichard says that when he found MindManager about three years ago, it was a revolutionary point for him in terms of the way I thought about running a business. "Personally, using MindManager has changed my skills as a business person. I feel that I can apply a broader range of knowledge quicker against problems. As a CEO and entrepreneur, I find MindManager to be utterly invaluable."



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