

IdeaLoom

**a Very Simple
and basic
Users Manual**

Contributed by JDN

Conversence

A graphic element consisting of three overlapping speech bubbles. The top-left bubble is yellow, the top-right is green, and the bottom is blue. They are semi-transparent and overlap each other.

Introduction: Basic difference between IdeaLoom and a “classical forum”

You would expect “normal forum” UI to appear once you’ve logged in. As this is not the case with IdeaLoom it is easy to get confused a bit by its UI once it appears on screen. Yet basic idea is quite simple.

We are all accustomed to hierarchically organised forums where you land on the page with topics on top of the hierarchy and then you delve into the threaded levels down. These forums manage posts or “messages” perfectly - yet it is easy to forget or miss about great contributions of peers - ideas, suggestions, etc. once they disappear from screen and merge into a stream of historical posts. The more people write, more posts, easier it is that important contributions might be lost.

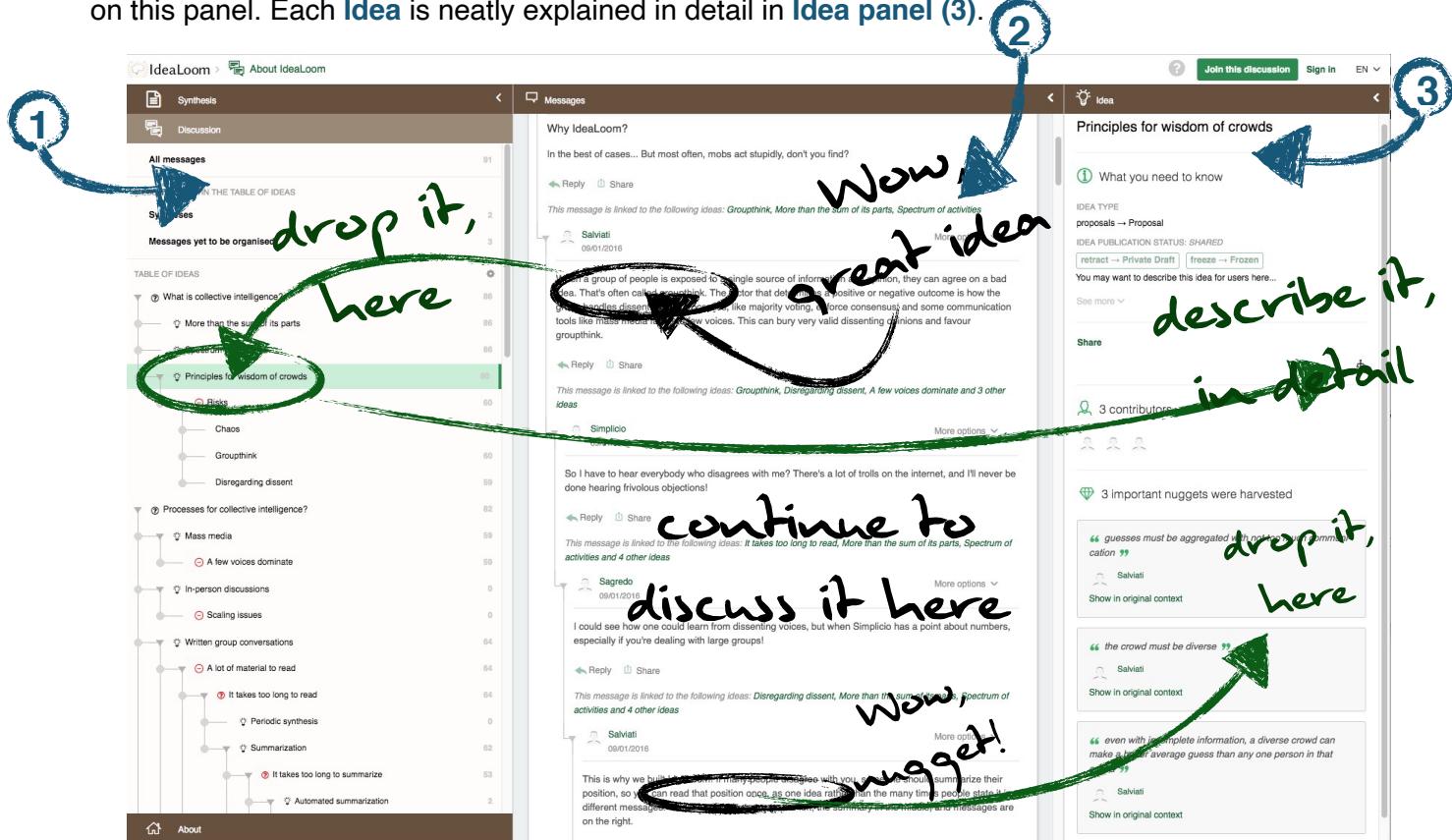
Second problem is that sometimes when you are in a thread of some topic, you realise that idea you are just reading is pertinent to a totally different topic. Even in a normal forum you can of course go, and copy paste a post or connect/hyperlink the idea to that particular topic. But it is quite cumbersome to do it.

However, we are not on forum just to chat and discuss in a neatly threaded fashion - we are there to solve a problem. And to solve a problem you need good Ideas, suggestions and since the problem solving revolves around “ideas” you have to be certain that not one good idea is lost.

Usually discussions start with one or few topics - and then progresses in more and more granulated structure with many nested ideas. Discussions are “live matter” and sometimes you realise that discussion went astray or there is a post that merits its own “thread”. Also ideas that are pertinent might need their own separate thread. Moving these things in normal forums usually cuts the link back to original position of an idea. IdeaLoom solves this problem by taking a normal forum “threaded messages functionality” and adding two main panels on the left and right of it.

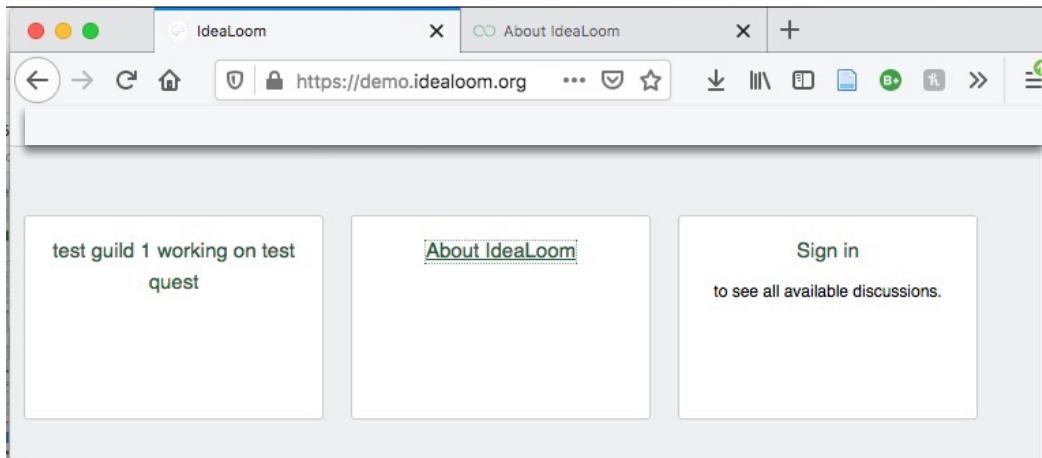
Instead of focusing on “nicely hierarchically threaded posts” IdeaLoom focuses on “Ideas”. It is structured around Ideas. And ideas do not like to be linear. They are networked/meshed/interconnected. To take care of this problem, solution was to have several interconnected panels available for user. Here are the main ones. You can add some others in preferences.

You have a familiar forum like place for threaded posts called **Messages panel (2)**. Navigation area with **Discussion panel (1)** where there is a place for Table of (nested) Ideas - all linked back to original posts. Also posts/messages that are not yet associated with any idea are also structured on this panel. Each **Idea** is neatly explained in detail in **Idea panel (3)**.

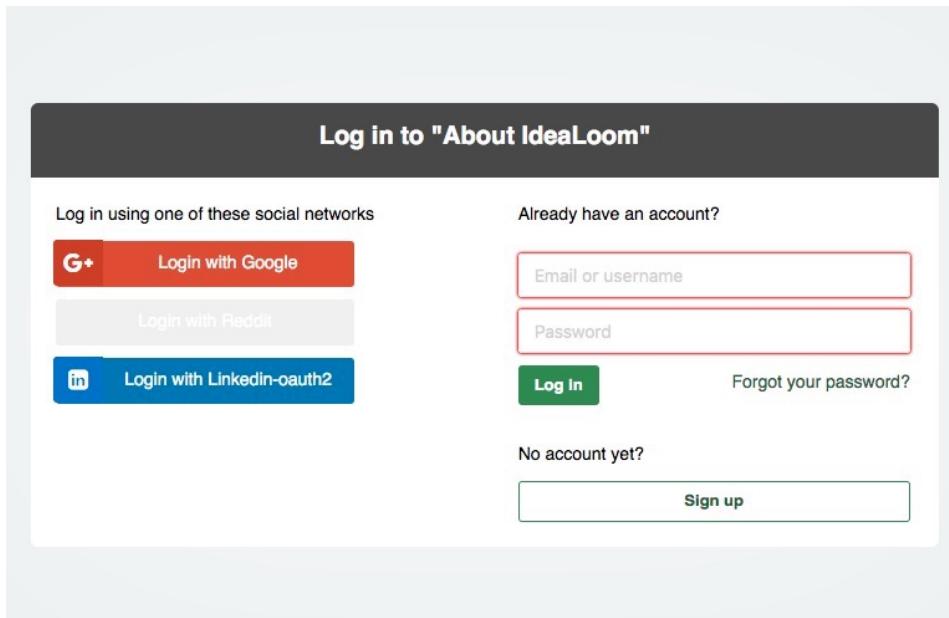


Basics:

You need to create an account in IdeaLoom first. Several ways to do it and join in to conversation. One way is over “landing page”. They will be different. What you see here is that there are two public discussions. All other available discussions are private and can see them only once you “Sign in”.



Would you choose to join the conversation about IdeaLoom, just click on that square. No worries if you do not have account yet. Other option is that you click - Sign in. In either case you end up on “Login screen”. (I think the “Login Screen” is self explanatory.)



In case you happen to have no account you should “Sign up”. In this case you decide to do so. On the right is the Join Idealoom form.

Enter your Name, email and password. Click on sign up and follow instructions in the sent mail.

System should recognise your default language and display the menus according to it.

A screenshot of a sign-up form titled "Join IdeaLoom". It includes fields for "Full name", "Email", "Password", and "Repeat password", each with a corresponding input box. Below these is a green "Sign up" button. At the bottom, there's a link "Do you already have an account? Log in!".

Sometimes you end up directly in a conversation. You might have been given a link to it like: https://demo.idealoom.org/about_idealoom. So you end up directly in discussion.

Some other features of the screen are also shown here.

The screenshot shows the IdeaLoom interface with several callout boxes highlighting features:

- Top left: "Click on the ‘Join this discussion or sign in’ button and follow the same procedure as described above."
- Top right: "Click to change interface language on the top right of the screen in the drop down menu"
- Middle center: "Click ‘?’ get to help section."
- Middle left: "Accept the general conditions."
- Bottom left panel: "MESSAGES NOT IN THE TABLE OF IDEAS" and "TABLE OF IDEAS" sections. The "Shared language" item is highlighted in green. A callout box says: "Unfold/fold panel by clicking on '<' on the far top right of a panel."
- Bottom right panel: "Join this discussion" button, "Sign in" link, and language dropdown set to "EN".

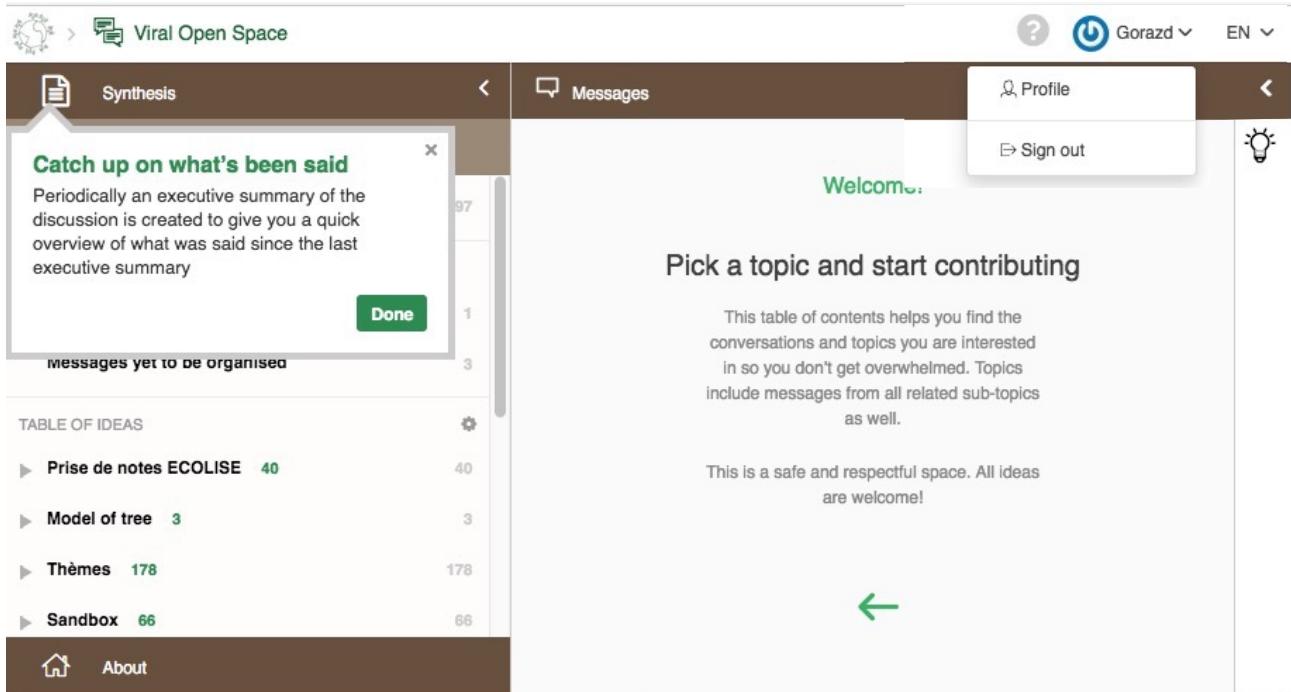
The screenshot shows the language selection dropdown menu with the following options:

- FR
- DE
- ES

A callout box on the left states: "Currently there are four languages available."

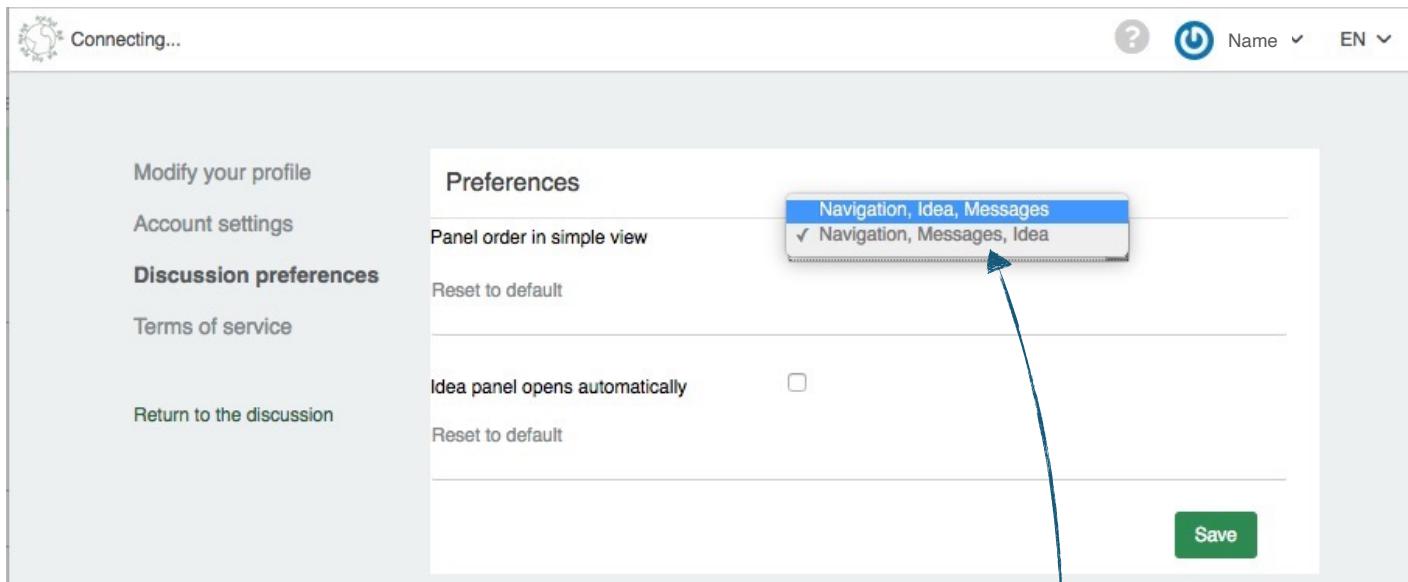
Preferences

Once you are logged in *Other preferences* are accessible by clicking next to your name to get to drop down menu and selecting “Profile”.



The screenshot shows the IdeaLoom interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with icons for user profile, help, and language selection (EN). Below the bar, the main area has two panels: 'Synthesis' on the left and 'Messages' on the right. A modal window titled 'Catch up on what's been said' is open in the center. The 'Messages' panel shows a list of topics like 'Prise de notes ECOLISE' (40), 'Model of tree' (3), 'Thèmes' (178), and 'Sandbox' (66). To the right, there's a section titled 'Pick a topic and start contributing' with a table of contents and a note about a safe space. A green arrow points from the 'Profile' link in the top right dropdown to the 'Profile' link in the dropdown menu.

Once “Profile” is clicked you end up here:



The screenshot shows the 'Profile' settings page. On the left, there's a sidebar with links: 'Modify your profile', 'Account settings', 'Discussion preferences', 'Terms of service', and 'Return to the discussion'. On the right, the 'Preferences' section is displayed. It includes settings for 'Panel order in simple view' (with options 'Navigation, Idea, Messages' and 'Navigation, Messages, Idea'), 'Idea panel opens automatically' (unchecked), and 'Reset to default' buttons. A blue arrow points from the 'Navigation, Idea, Messages' option in the dropdown menu to the 'Save' button at the bottom right, which is highlighted with a red box.

Modify your profile - change you name/nick.

Account settings - change your password and email.

Discussion Preferences - The panels in IdeaLoom are usually structured in a “*Navigation - Messages - Idea*” order. You can rearrange this to “*Navigation - Idea - Messages*” order.

To open Idea panel automatically select the option box next to it.

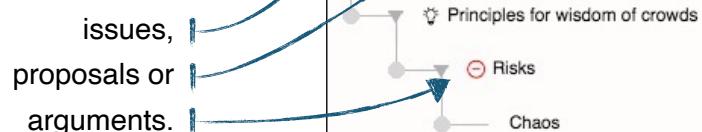
Navigation area

On the left of the screen there is a repository of all ideas and/or contexts that have arisen during the discussions that are worth exploring and discussing further. You can think of it as “contextual space of discussion’s ideas”. Also there is Synthesis section on the top and About section in the bottom.

The central subarea here is Discussion where everything revolves around “ideas/concepts/topics”. This is the basic structure and nesting of a Discussion’s main ideas or concepts or threads (In text I use these meanings interchangeably.)

These ideas are organised in whichever coherent way it suits you and your peers in the “Table of ideas”. You can rearrange them as needed anytime. Just select the idea, and drag it where needed. Unclassified ideas end up obviously in “Messages not in the table of ideas.” To fold / unfold the nested ideas click on the triangle on the left of the ideas branches.

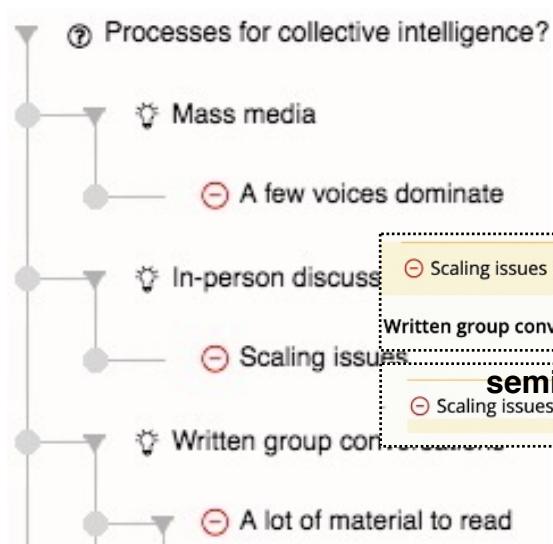
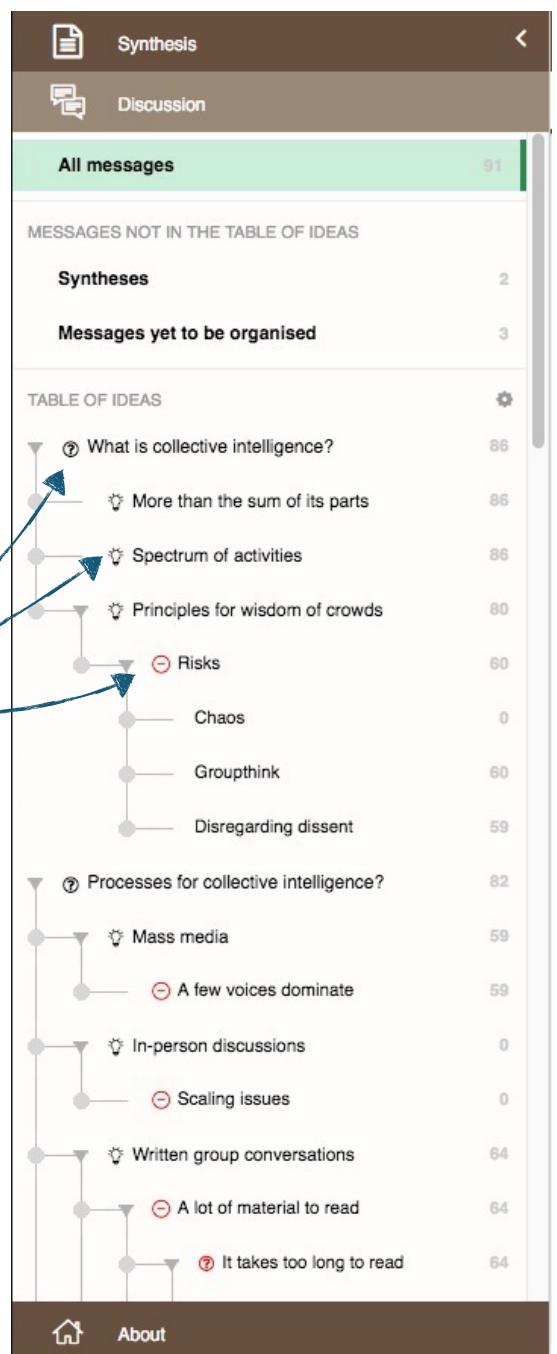
Ideas can be classified depending on needs. Like:



Ideas are also interconnected if necessary via messages and Nuggets. *Nugget is important concept that contextually belongs to a certain Idea*. When somebody writes something that merits remembering - just select it and drag it to the Idea detail area or drop it onto respective idea(s!). Cropped text will retain link to the original message so that you can later review the broader context when necessary.

Important! Organisation of ideas in this area is *not* based on thread organisation in a message area. Ideas are however connected to messages in a discussion, that are discussing particular concept or are pertinent to an idea, even though the message belongs to some other topic. Once you select an idea all the messages and thread connected to this idea are displayed in messages area on the right.

Each Idea/topic in this section has a detailed description in the “Idea details” area. Once selected here, the detailed description, etc of the idea appears on the far right of the screen in Idea panel.



Hint! Drop zones - ideas in the table

When you are rearranging “ideas” in the table of Ideas in the Navigation area and dropping them onto other ideas there are two different “drop zones”.

Drop on “full” and the idea you are dropping becomes a sub-idea of the highlighted one.

Drop on “semi full” - and the idea ends up on the same level below the highlighted one.

Drop zones - Copied text from message

If you are dropping “text” from message area:

Drop on “full” and the text you are dropping becomes a “Nugget” of the highlighted one.

Drop on “semi full” - and the text ends up as sub-text of the highlighted one.

Synthesis

is particular feature of IdeaLoom as it allows to harvest most relevant posts for the discussion and create - well - synthesis. It is created by well versed individual that is able to extract the most relevant posts and information. In this way even the latecomer into discussion can quickly grasp the essence. You can have several iterations of them.

Synthesis

Second Synthesis: A combination of techniques 26/10/2016

First Synthesis: Issues of collective intelligence 26/10/2016

Messages

Second Synthesis: A combination of techniques

Schematic summarization is a key technique. It is time-consuming to produce, but allows more people to get involved.

What are some processes for collective intelligence?

View conversation on this idea • 82

Written group conversations (like webforums)

Summary writing skill (summarizing through conversations) • 82

A few contributions on this topic • 82

About section

Nothing to write home about.

Synthesis

Discussion

About

Join the discussions

Your opinion deserves to be heard

Read the discussions

About IdeaLoom

Context

This is a demonstration discussion

Discussion objectives

Use it to get acquainted with the features of IdeaLoom

Statistics

Evolution of the total number of messages

4 participants have contributed since the beginning of the discussion

September 26, 2016 | October 2, 2016 | October 9, 2016 | October 16, 2016 | October 23, 2016

Contributors active recently (orange bar)

Contributors inactive recently (purple bar)

100 %

Last synthesis • 10/26/2016

[object Object]

Read the synthesis

Message Area

Here you have a close cousin of normal forum functionality where messages are hierarchically organised in a threaded and nested fashion.

This panel is the main conversational area. All responses and comments are gathered and nested here. You can collapse or expand the nested parts of conversation by clicking on triangle.

Starting a new thread

One can start a new thread anytime by clicking on the button at the bottom of Messages area. By default a new thread will be connected to a currently selected idea. It is however not necessary to connect it to any idea at the beginning. Any new message that is not connected to an idea will be automatically shown in Navigation under "Messages not in the table of ideas."

Another option is to scroll down to the bottom of the messages and there you will find another way to start a new discussion thread.

Another way to converse in Idealom is via emails. You can set up a conversation email and all the emails sent to this address will end up in the message area.

Setting up viewing preferences for message area

Depending on your viewing preferences you can arrange the Message area in several ways.

There is a simple view where you just select between the active threads and newest messages first. If you enable "more options" on the top right corner of the messages panel you can arrange messages according to: timeline or popularity, you can choose to see just message titles, or previews or complete messages. And of course you can filter them in various ways.

The screenshot shows a 'Messages' panel with a threaded conversation. The first message is from 'Sagredo' on 09/01/2016, stating: 'It seems to me the moderators will have a lot of work!' Below it, 'Salvati' replies: 'Yes. Ideally, moderators should keep an eye on participants who have a talent for summarizing, and get them involved.' A third message from 'Simplicio' follows: 'So then I could only read the summaries, and not the messages?' Another reply from 'Sagredo': 'Why bother writing the messages, then? Should we not just write ideas?' The 'Start a new discussion thread' button is visible at the bottom.

A modal dialog box titled 'Start a new discussion thread'. It has a 'New topic subject:' input field and a note: 'Add a subject above and start a new topic here'. Below is a note: 'Your message will be posted:'. Two radio buttons are shown: one selected ('Under the idea "Intro - Read me first"') and one unselected ('In the general "Humanum" conversation (a community manager will organize your contribution in the table of ideas afterwards, possibly by creating a new idea)'). At the bottom are 'Send' and 'Cancel' buttons.

The screenshot shows the 'Messages' settings panel. It includes tabs for 'Recently active threads' (selected), 'Newest messages first', and 'More options' (with a toggle switch set to 'off'). Below are filters: 'Recently active threads', 'Complete messages', 'Add filter', 'Print', and 'More options' (with a toggle switch set to 'on').

Recently active threads ▾ Complete messages ▾ Add filter ▾ Print More options

- Recently active threads
- Message titles
- Recently started threads
- Message previews
- Chronological threads
- Complete messages
- Chronological threads + jump to oldest unread message
- Oldest messages first
- Messages with text...
- Newest messages first
- Unread messages
- Most popular messages first
- Read messages
- Messages posted after...
- Messages posted before...
- Messages I posted
- Messages that reply to me
- Deleted messages
- Show also deleted messages

Here are the options available in drop down menus.

Hint!

A little confusing feature of Idealoom is that menu bar with selections scrolls with the messages. It disappears as we scroll down.

Message details:

Number of contributors in the full context of this message.

Number of messages available in full context

Click for more options in drop down menu.

View conversation
To remove the clutter and zoom in to selected conversation.

View conversation • 3 2

Salviati 09/01/2016

Why IdeaLoom?
Collective intelligence covers anything a group of people understand as opposed to any one person. For example, such as collective sensing, sensemaking, idea generation, etc. In case, a group can perform better as a whole than each member would on their own. You may have heard of the term collective intelligence.

More options ▾

- Mark as unread
- Export Post
- Show this message in its entire thread (clears all filters)
- Show only this message and its replies
- Show all posts by Gorazd
- Send an email to this user
- Show/hide extracts
- Delete this message

This message is linked to the following ideas: *More than the sum of its parts, Spectrum of activities*

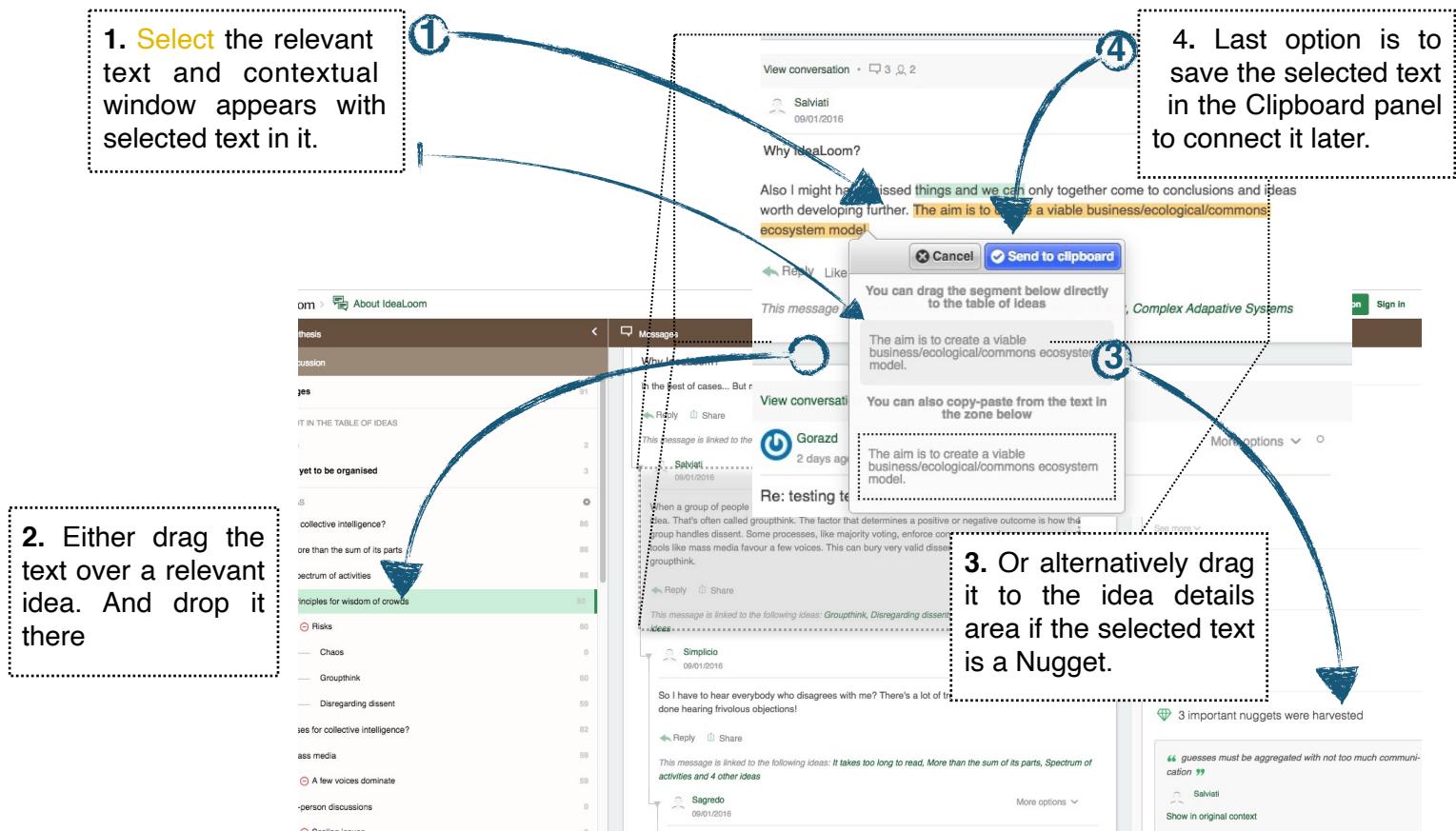
Type your response here...

Ideas that the message is linked to.
Click on the link opens detailed view.

Click on reply opens input field. Type the response and hit the send button.

Connecting the messages

Distinct feature of the IdeaLoom is that messages could be linked also to other ideas. This can be done anytime by all participants. The copied text will keep the link back to its original position, so one can always check back into the full context of its origins in the message area. So no important details nor broader contexts of discussions are lost. Once part of the message is connected to some other ideas, the whole thread becomes a part of that idea as well. In this way the broader context is preserved.



Idea details area

On the far right of a screen there is a Definition area where idea is explained in more detail and quotes pertaining this particular idea are assembled.

Here IdeaLoom provides space for a few things. On the top is the **title of the idea**.

Idea type/class which you can select from drop down menu.

The status of the idea - is it a draft or published, etc is controlled here.

Expression in next synthesis.

Sometimes you may want to change a text a bit for the synthesis, while keeping the description of the idea the same.

Next is detailed **description of Idea** where you write necessary details to clarify it.

One can of course **share** the idea with the world (FB, Twitter...).

Mind map icon

If you are a visual type you can click on a “mind map” icon and check the visual representation of the contextual space of the current idea.

Number of **contributing authors** to the idea are also shown and most importantly:

the Nuggets area.

In most chat/forums important thoughts, sentences, ideas, concepts are lost in downstream of a chat or a thread. In IdeaLoom anyone can “quote” or “pull” out the important parts of conversation and drop or paste them in this area.

To understand the source of Nugget, or broader context view it in an original context.

You can of course delete idea if you do not like it any more. Or create a voting session.

issue that questions → Issue
relevant issue → Issue
✓ proposals → Proposal
includes → Issue
includes → Reference
includes → Unspecified idea

See more ▾

DESCRIPTION OF THIS IDEA

B I [Rich Text Editor]

Here is | Save Cancel

Share

3 contributors

2 important nuggets were harvested

“ learn from dissenting voices ”
Sagredo
Show in original context

“ how the group handles dissent ”
Salviati
Show in original context

Add extracts by dragging them in this panel from the clipboard or messages

- Delete idea
- Create a multi-criterion voting session on this idea
- Create a token voting session on this idea
- Create a creativity session on this idea
- Create an inspiration module on this idea