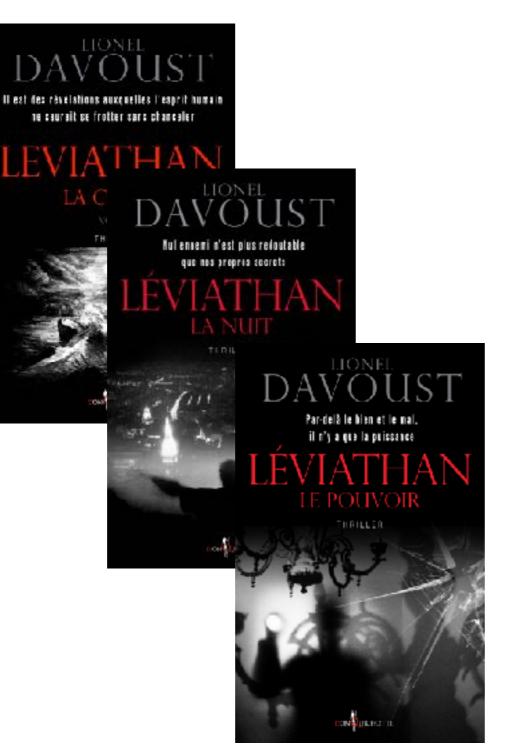




# Computer tools for the writer

Worldcon 75, 2017, Helsinki

## Hello world 😃







## A geeky story

Can we hack creativity with tools?

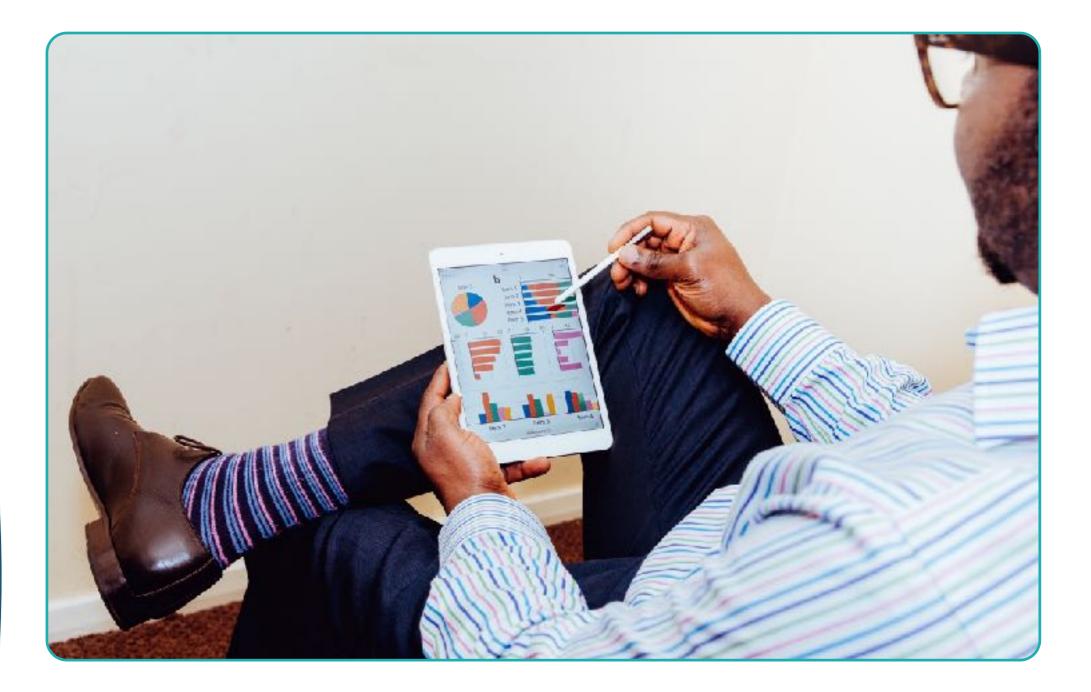
Things to look for... backed by *some* science and a **lot** of use.

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"Isn't all this enough?"

Absolutely. And yet...





## ... it's the 21st century, dude

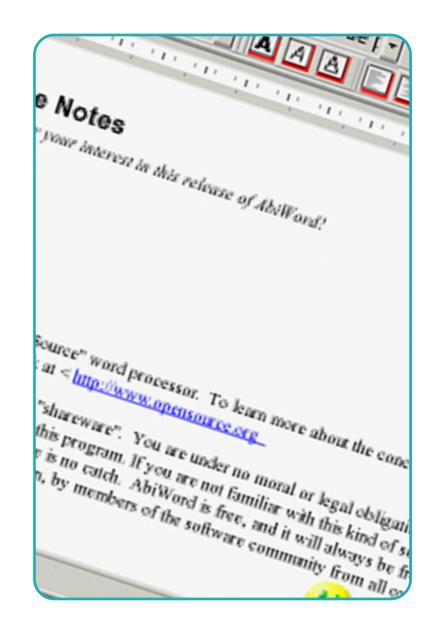
Can we work "better"?



## To support the writing?

Huge offer! Let's consider...

- Why writing software?
- Supporting the thinking
- Supporting the writing
- ➤ The best tool is the one you use







## Why writing software?



## Creativity and "flow"

(Mihály Csíkszentmihályi)

- Maximum focus
- Over a long time
- Challenge Vs. feedback
- Difficulty Vs. novelty
- "Play channeled by work" (Kourosh Dini)





## To write "better"?

- Make it easier, faster
- More depth & complexity?
- More fun!

In order to...

- Enter the "flow" state
- Help the mind along







## Make it easier, faster?

#### Qualities to look for

- Lower the barrier of entry (immediate, ubiquitous?)
- Aesthetics (interface tastes, simplicity?)
- To free the mind (focus, flow)
- Divide a project in smaller "tasks"





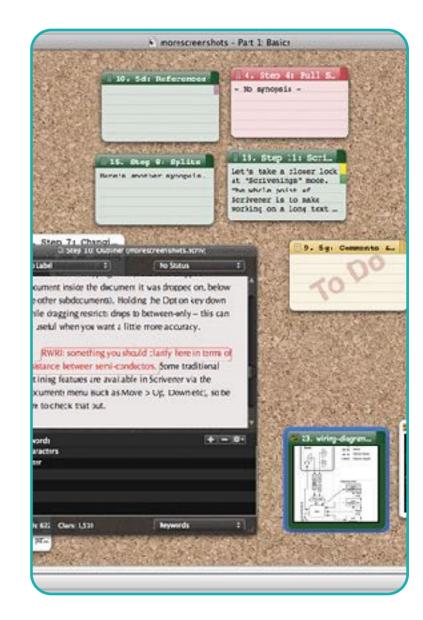
## More depth & complexity?

#### **Channel the inspiration**

- Incubate (ideas)
- Structure (outlining)

Organize your information (micro & macro levels)

- Around the story (reference)
- Inside the story (coherence, balance...)





## Pros & cons



- Ubiquitous
- Easy to organize
- Global view
- Reuse of material
- Backup



Some references

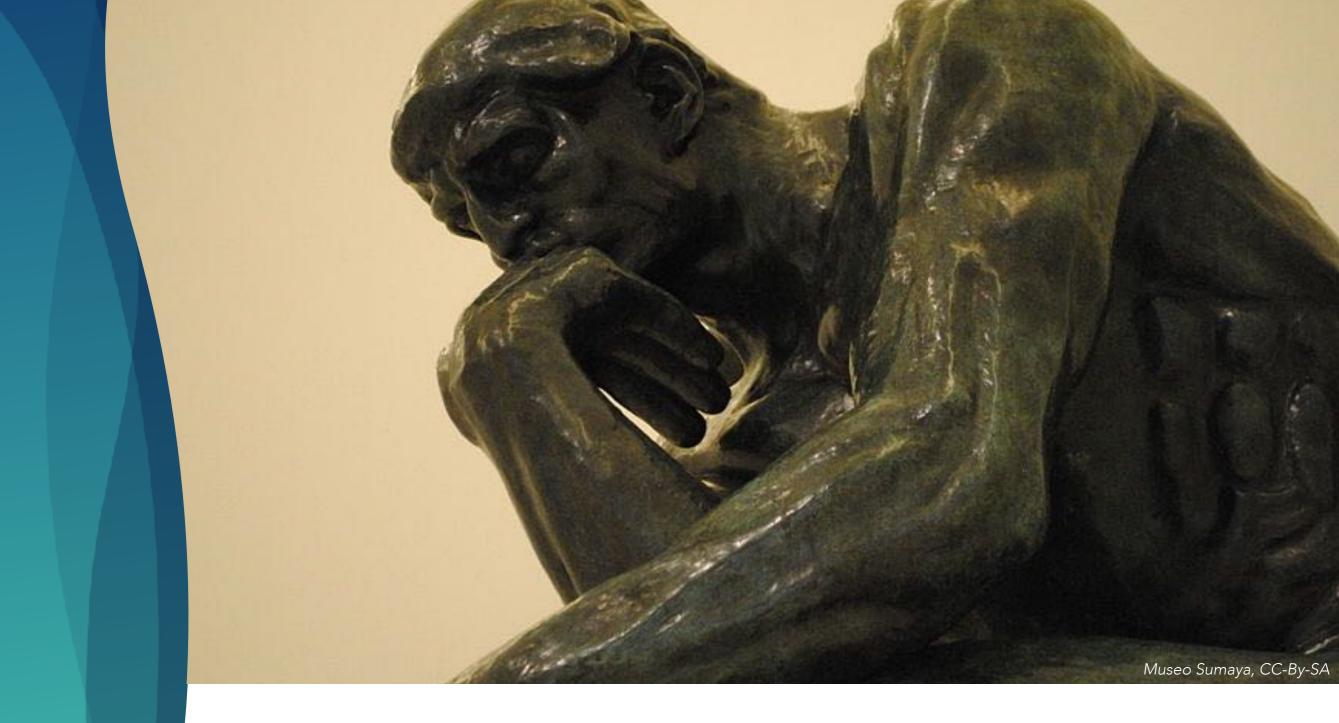
#### P

- Constraining?
- Indirect, virtual?
- Learning curve
- "Cold"

## What to look for

- Suited to your lifestyle (mobile?)
- To your workflow (architects Vs. gardeners)
- Doesn't impinge the creative process ( useless questions you don't want to answer)
- ► Flexible (customizable)
- Powerful (depends on your needs)





## To support the thinking



## From incubation to reference

#### Incubation techniques (ideas)

- Mind-mapping
- Outlining (linear or "snowflake")

#### **Reference management (choices)**

- Extrinsic (research)
- Intrinsic (created)



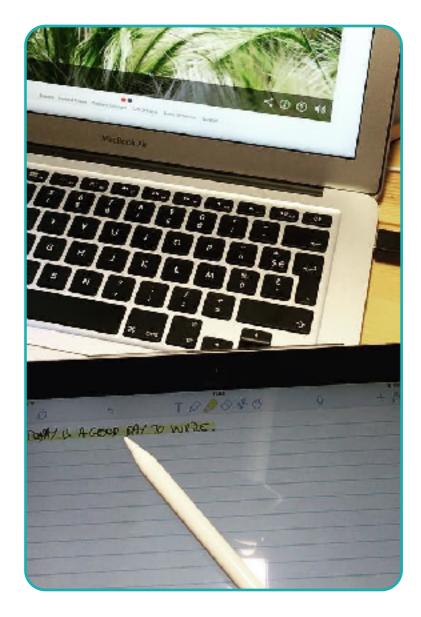
## The benefits of scribbling

- Kinesthesia of writing
- Doodling, drawing...

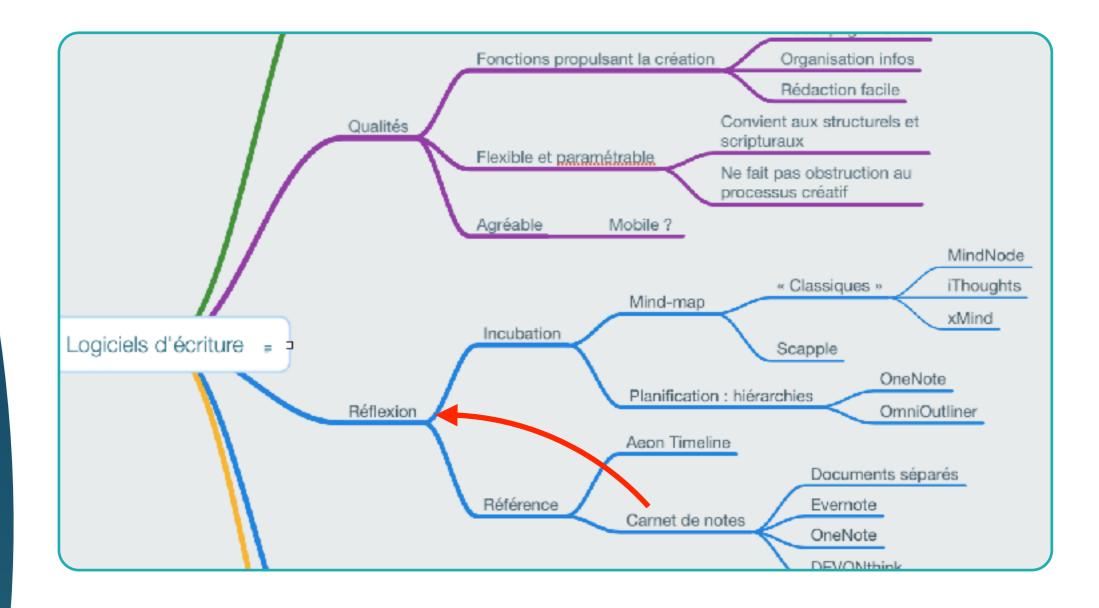
#### So what?

- iPad Pro + Pencil
- Surface + Pen (W10 hybrids)

Tastes in gear and software trump all...







## Mind-mapping



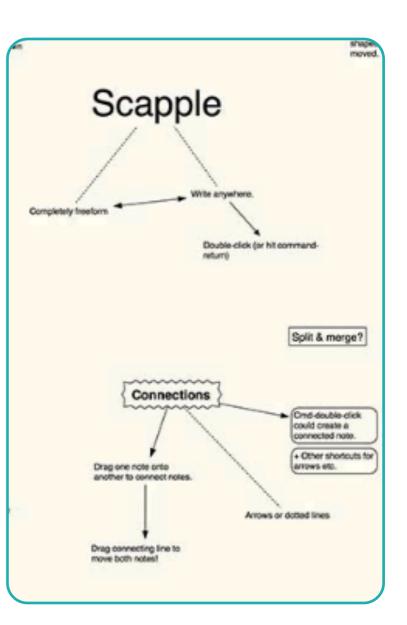
## Mind-mapping software...

#### Far too many

- Mindnode (Mac / iOS)
- XMind (Windows / Mac)

#### A special case...

<u>Scapple</u>





## Outline & reference

"Personal Information Managers". Consider:

- Easiness of organisation
- To broaden and deepen subjects
- Content capture (web, notes) (mobility?)

Also in pro writing software...





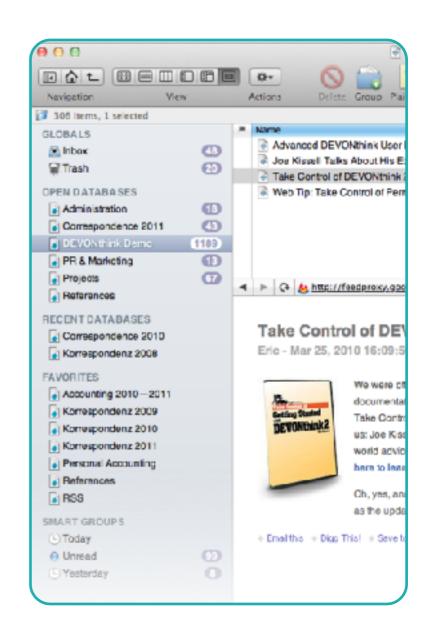
### Personal information managers

! « If it's free, you're the product. »

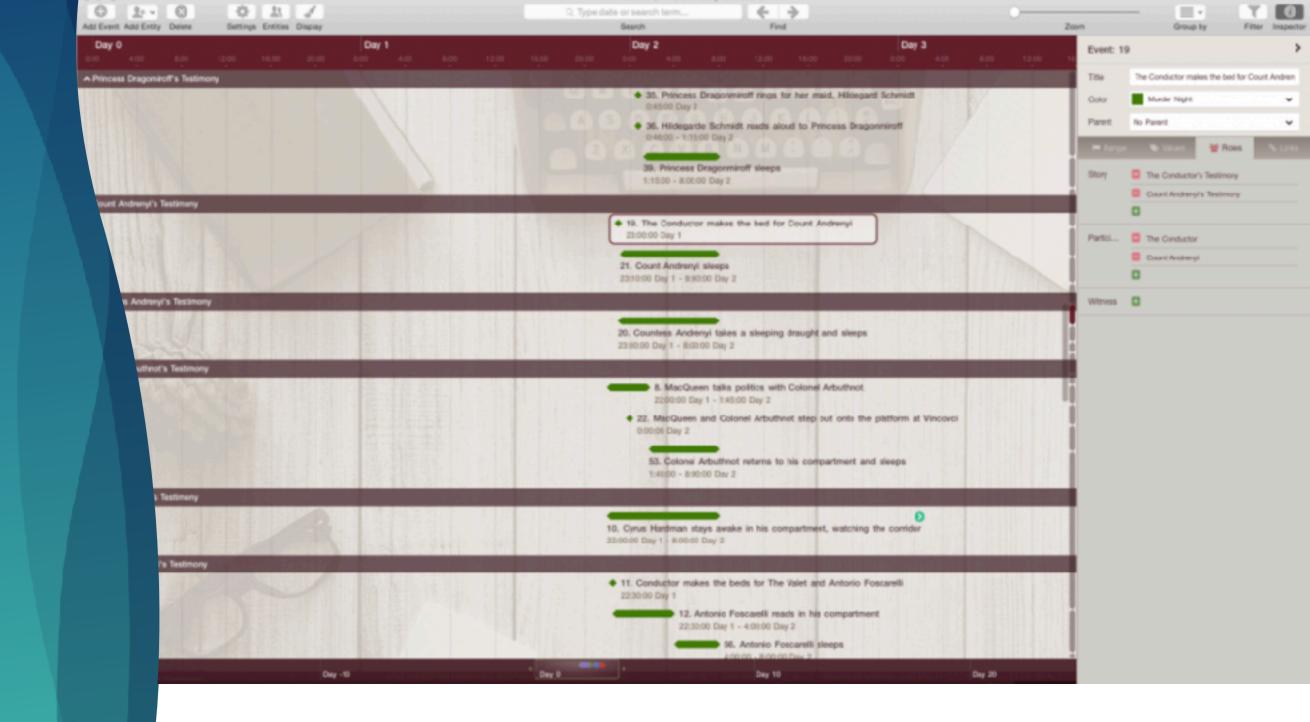
- OneNote (privacy?)
- Evernote (price, privacy, sorting?)
- DEVONthink (Mac)

. . .

• Your favorite word processor







## <u>Aeon Timeline</u>



#### Compiling the Draft

The main purpose of Sorivenet is to geber together material that will help you write a long piece of sent (whether novel, sheaks or hermal back), which may be repartered as individual then in the bindow but which can easily be output as one longe file. Thus, you write, gather and organize the material for your manageript in the Dight folder, and when you are ready to export or print the manuscript as a whole, you use Compile Dials [1:17this the File many, which takes the common of that hidder, formers it as you seecify, and outputs for priored it as a single document. Using the various settings available in these panes, you can report or print your manuscript however you like-and regardies of how the film are formatted in Sprivment itself.

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#### 20.2 Option Panes

Each report format has a variety of features available for customisation. Some of the talls will be available to all formats, but some are only available to optials types, and others only appear for single specialised lomnars. Since there is a good deal of displication, this action will go over each of the available take. It will be noted in each action which formats the tab is relevant to

#### 23.2.1 Contents Panel

This option pass is a core feature available to all report formats

The Contents pass is where you define which parts of the Druft Scrivener will us to its around mode of varying scope.



## To support the writing



## "Pro" writing software

## Support creativity without obstruction

- Total flexibility ("writing canvas")
- Allows you to outline in detail (or not)
- Keep track of the writing AND the reference

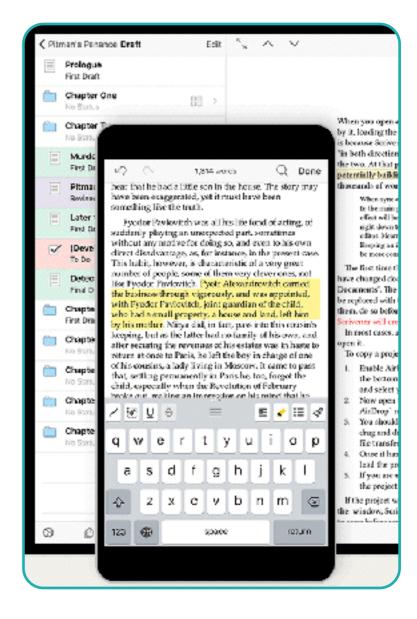
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🖑 Uncle Wiggly and the Polpit-Jack	
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## The best (IMO): Scrivener

- Hierarchical word processor (∞)
- Reference + production > export ("compiling")
- Outline view, card view (move around freely)
- Keywords & status
- Workflow tools (statistics...)

**Mac**, Windows, iOS (<u>articles and links</u>)

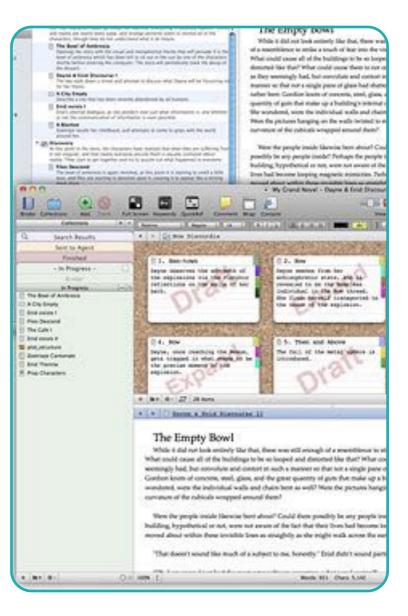




### Caveats...

#### Do the tutorial!

- LOTS of features (use'em or leave'em)
- Compiling
- For production and not (really) rewriting / correcting





## Scrivener alternatives

- Ulysses (Mac / iOS)
- Outline mode of your word processor!
- (Liquid Story Binder, Writer's Café, yWriter...)
- Scriptwriting: Final Draft



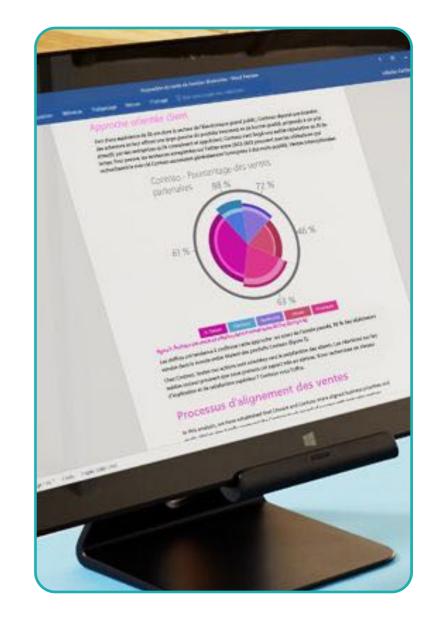


## Classical word processors?

#### Can't escape good ol' .doc(x)...

- Finish and polish
- Formatting?
- File exchange and editorial rewrites (publishing standard)
- 3rd-party correction packages

► Microsoft Word or LibreOffice (not StarOffice...)







## Conclusion: design your workflow

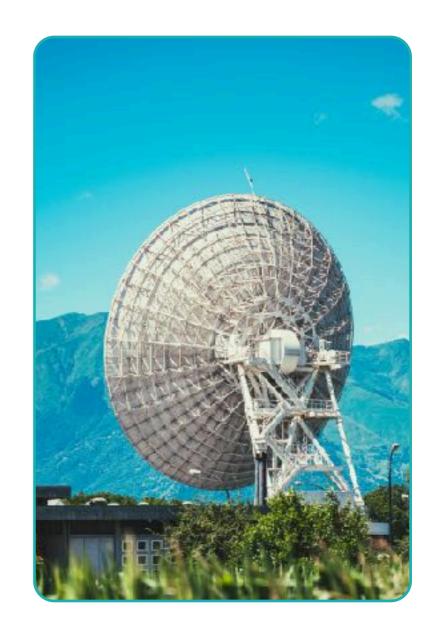


## The role of tools

- Not magical. They support / propel you further
- An investment (learning curve / time / personal approach...)
- With a return (pleasure, efficiency...)

**RLDCON 75** 

 As many as you need, as few as you can



They fit into habits and workflows > define yours!



## Thank you for your attention



Reviews and references (in French!) <u>http://lioneldavoust.com</u>

Questions ? ... bonus ?

## Productivity tools

- <u>TextExpander</u>
- Focus@Will
- <u>OmniFocus</u> (<u>Getting Things</u>
  <u>Done</u>, David Allen)
- Dropbox (or similar)
- ... a Mac

