

## Audience response tools – *engaging students in class*

Interaction is seen as crucial for problem-based learning. Increasing interaction between teachers and students can improve long-term retention of learning materials, enhance student attention and involvement, identify gaps in knowledge, and provide immediate feedback to your course. Audience response tools provide a way to increase interaction during lectures or to assess prior knowledge about the topic in question. They can be used as:

- quick formative assessments; to check whether students have understood information and concepts covered;
- ‘contingent teaching’; based on responses of the audience switch the focus of the lecture (because they favour this or seem to know less about a certain topic);
- discussion and debate starters by posing propositions or asking no-correct-answer questions;
- student engagement; creating a safe and attractive environment for interaction in which everyone can participate.

Within Maastricht University several applications have been used or are used. One example of a freely available audience response tool is [Mentimeter](#). Another tool is [Shakespeak](#), however, freely available only up until a limited audience size. Next to that the UM has a license for [GoSoapbox](#) and is piloting the presentations tool within [FeedbackFruits](#) (scroll down to Presentations). All tools can support and enhance interaction in your courses.

For teachers: you can turn to the [e-learning support team](#) for more information on implementing audience response tools in your course. You can also check the e-learning support team [website](#) (scroll down to e-interaction) for more information on UM practices with GoSoapbox.

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### *Evaluating four tools (amongst many...)*





The library e-learning support team has experimented with several tools in order to describe them and where they fit in UM’s problem-based learning. As may be expected all include the same basic functionality of asking simple multiple choice questions and providing feedback through different web browsers on any mobile device. We decided to describe four tools more in depth:

- GoSoapbox (UM license, available at least until August 1, 2018);
- Presentations tool within FeedbackFruits (currently piloted by University Library);
- Shakespeak (free version available up to an audience of 20 students);
- Mentimeter (free version available with unlimited audience size).



All four described tools have a relatively intuitive interface that users will easily get used to. Diverse types of audience response, such as multiple choice questions, word clouds, quizzes, scales, and open question, can be embedded into your presentation.

Another very important requirement is the possibility to integrate the application into PowerPoint or Keynote. This is possible for all four tools presented below with the exception of GoSoapbox. A schematic overview of the four selected tools:

				
	A web-based audience response tool to keep students engaged and gain real-time insight into student comprehension. <b>This tool is in license at the UM for the upcoming academic year.</b>	Web-based application integrated with EleUM. <b>UM has decided to license the tool, so pilots with the interactive presentation tool (part of the FeedbackFruits functionality) are possible.</b>	Powerpoint add-in allowing for responses through SMS, Twitter, and internet browser. Opportunity to export results to pdf or excel.	Free, easy-to-use, web-based tool without having to install or download anything. A powerpoint plug-in is however available for download.
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.gosoapbox.com">www.gosoapbox.com</a>	<a href="http://feedbackfruits.com">feedbackfruits.com</a> (scroll down to Presentations)	<a href="http://www.shakespeak.com">www.shakespeak.com</a>	<a href="http://www.mentimeter.com">www.mentimeter.com</a>
<b>Support</b>	<a href="#">Sign up</a> for a GoSoapbox teacher account and start creating events <a href="#">UM Instruction manual</a> <a href="#">Online Support Centre</a>	Contact the <a href="#">e-learning support team</a> for more information on using the Presentations and other FeedbackFruits tools.	<b>Not supported by e-learning support team</b> <a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions</a> <a href="#">Add-In Install Manual</a> <a href="#">Online Instruction Videos</a>	<b>Not supported by e-learning support team</b> <a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions</a> <a href="#">Online Help Centre</a> In-app message, email, and Twitter support available
<b>Price</b>	<b>Free license</b> (paid for by the UM already)	<b>Currently piloted by UM</b>  Contact the <a href="#">e-learning support team</a> for further information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freely available for groups up to 20.</li> <li>• Monthly or yearly fee for audiences &gt;20 people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freely available with unlimited audience size, however limited functionality.</li> <li>• Basic version is \$7,99/month</li> <li>• Pro version is \$19,99/month</li> </ul>

*This fact sheet has been created (last update July 2017) to inform teachers and students about audience response tools in general and the available tools at the UM. If you encounter changes in relation to the suggested tools or have suggestions for this sheet, please inform us at [elarning-ub@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:elarning-ub@maastrichtuniversity.nl).*