



Small Business

Instructor Guide

*Using GoVenture In
Your Learning Environment*



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GoVenture[®] Small Business

Instructor Guide

Using GoVenture In Your Learning Environment

1. Welcome



This Instructor Guide is provided to help you use MediaSpark's GoVenture Small Business simulation in your classroom or computer lab. If you are not already familiar with the award-winning GoVenture business simulations, we invite you to visit the GoVenture.NETwork at www.goventure.net or to contact us at 1-800-331-2282.

An electronic version of this document is also available on the GoVenture.NETwork.

2. About GoVenture Small Business

Make learning easier and more fun than ever!

GoVenture Small Business is a realistic business simulation that recreates the day-to-day experiences involved in starting and running a small business. Like a flight simulator for business, GoVenture Small Business puts learners in the role of founder and CEO of their own virtual business, while engaging them in realistic situations and problems. It's easy to use, visual, interactive, and exciting!

GoVenture Small Business is ideal for youth and adults in self-directed or facilitated learning environments and can be used to enhance training in marketing, entrepreneurship, business, finance, economics, career, family and consumer sciences, math, and other subjects.

Unlike any book, course, or seminar, GoVenture Small Business enables learners to gain years of business and life experience in minutes!

3. What Makes GoVenture Small Business Unique

GoVenture simulations enable “learning-by-doing”, an approach that cognitive scientists have identified as the fastest and most effective way for human beings to learn.

GoVenture simulations immerse the learner in a highly visual and interactive environment in such rewarding ways that learners feel intellectually and emotionally engaged in the experience — as if they were personally living it.

GoVenture Small Business offers several key advantages:

1. A complete experience, touching on all aspects of small business startup and management.
2. An educational tool designed to deliver the entertainment value of a game.
3. Helpful paper-based resources that complement and support the learning experience.

GoVenture Small Business is designed as a tool for youth and adults, to be used as a learning program on its own, or to complement other learning materials, courses, programs, and curricula. It can provide a valuable learning opportunity for an individual or an entire class, within a single hour of use – or over an extended period of time. The educational foundation and ease of integration in the classroom and curriculum make GoVenture Small Business the first choice among learners who are in the early stages of learning about business, as well as educators and trainers who are providing business training.

4. GoVenture for You

Education

GoVenture has been designed to be suitable for a variety of instructional approaches and levels. Whether the need is to create a completely new curriculum or to enhance an existing one, GoVenture offers a successful and valuable experience for instructors and learners, from middle school to adult education.

Business Service Centers

Good business managers and successful owners are not "born" — they must be trained in a number of business, management, and interpersonal skills. Would-be business people need to experience the thrills and challenges of running a business before they do so in the real world. GoVenture provides the experience necessary to gain valuable knowledge in starting and running a business without the risk of failure. Learn about accounting, finance, marketing, human resources, inventory management, and a wide range of life skills.

Banking and Financial Services

Small business owners can pose a significant service challenge to financial institutions. In many cases, they require a great deal of attention to the point where small business can be the least profitable segment of the commercial market. Nonetheless, they constitute a market that cannot be ignored. Financial institutions can provide startup businesses with a successful and valuable experience by directing them to GoVenture or by directing their own employees to GoVenture as a customer empathy tool.

Corporate Business Training

Training impacts the success of an organization at all levels. In order for employees to play a proactive role, they must have a strong understanding of the overall business model. By playing the role of the CEO or manager, GoVenture enables employees to gain a high level of understanding and empathy not possible using conventional training approaches. With a raised level of understanding, a multitude of benefits follows — increased performance, morale, loyalty, opportunity, and success.

Life Skills Training

GoVenture helps develop a number of necessary skills for success in the fast-paced Knowledge Economy, including: planning, just-in-time learning, problem solving, organization, critical thinking, and risk management. GoVenture addresses life skills training directly by immersing learners in a simulated world of experience that transcends the limitations of traditional teaching and learning approaches.

Unlike conventional educational materials, games and Internet portals, GoVenture offers a comprehensive learning experience. Simulations are combined with a wide range of learning resources for quick and easy integration into self-directed or facilitated learning environments.

What You Need to Play GoVenture Small Business

GoVenture Small Business is designed using proven technologies that will operate on personal computers, either stand-alone or over the Internet. For specific system requirements, please refer to the software documentation.

5. GoVenture Resources

Every GoVenture Educational license includes the following resources:

Small Business Simulation Software

A highly realistic and interactive business simulation software program that emulates the startup and operations of a business.

Software User Guide, Simulation Help, and Advisor Window

Print materials included with the software simulation and visual tools in the simulation designed to introduce you and your students to GoVenture, and to help you become comfortable with the program quickly.

Experiencing Small Business –

An Illustrated Introduction to Starting and Running a Small Business

A concise, easy-to-read illustrated guide that outlines the basics every small business owner needs to know in a summary format. For you and your students, this guide complements the GoVenture simulation by serving as a valuable resource throughout your course or program.

Performance Report

A helpful software tool that displays detailed simulation results, assigns a score to the performance based upon a number of factors, and can be printed out as a report.

Instructor Guide (this document)

A guide to help you learn about GoVenture and the various resources that are available for using GoVenture in the classroom or in a business or life skills training environment.

Learning Guides and Activities Workbooks –

Instructor and Student Editions

Lessons and activities designed to bring entrepreneurship education alive in the classroom. Every key decision an entrepreneur needs to make in starting and running a business is addressed with a corresponding activity from the Learning Guide. These Learning Guide activities help students better understand the decisions that need to be made within the GoVenture simulation.

Test Bank

The Test Bank consists of objective questions that are closely tied to content contained in the Experiencing Small Business guide. These questions are also suitable for general knowledge testing. An instructor version with complete answers is also included.

GoVenture.NETwork – www.goventure.net

A free website containing a wealth of business tools, activities, games, and collaboration opportunities for you and your students.

GoVenture Live the Learning

A free newsletter to help educators and facilitators bring business to life!

6. Getting Started

The following approach is recommended to help you and your students get started with GoVenture:

1. Browse through all of the resources that are provided with GoVenture Small Business to get a better understanding of how everything fits together.
2. Review the Software Users Guide document.
3. Start GoVenture Small Business. After clicking "Ok" on the *Getting Started* and *Note* screens, choose *Start NEW Simulation*, and then *Single Player*. Complete the Startup Details for a new business, or click the *QuickStart* button. With a new simulation, you are required to make the key Startup Details decisions for your business profile before you can begin running your business. A Business Plan and Personal Objectives are optional, and can be set up later by clicking on the *Home* button found on the main menu.

If you have less than 30 minutes available, you may wish to select the QuickStart option. QuickStart enables you to dive immediately into a preset business, without having to complete the Startup Details. Follow the directions given to begin the simulation. Be sure to take the guided tour which is offered just before the simulation starts.

Note: Every decision element in the Startup Details corresponds to an activity in the Learning Guide, as well as to a section in the GoVenture Experiencing Small Business illustrated guide.

Note: Refer to the GoVenture Small Business Software User Guide for information on running GoVenture over multiple computers.

4. Explore the various areas of program to become familiar with the different screens within the program and the types of decisions that need to be made. If you run your business long enough, you will experience a variety of events that will challenge you along the way. Also be sure to view the *Help* and *Advisor* information that is available to guide you through the program.
5. Virtual time is tracked by hour and day. The initial setting is for "Normal". You can adjust the speed at which this time passes by clicking the *Time* button at any point in the simulation.

Once you are familiar with the simulation screens, try starting and running a business of your own to get a better sense of how GoVenture works.

7. GoVenture and Your Curriculum

Possible Approaches

GoVenture is a comprehensive program designed to supplement and enhance your existing course, program, or curriculum. It has been specifically created to provide you with a broad and flexible range of options. You may choose to use GoVenture at the beginning of a course, at the end of a course, or throughout an entire term.

Using GoVenture at the Beginning of a Course

By using GoVenture at the beginning of a business course, students immediately gain “hands-on” experience in the issues involved, and the decisions that need to be made, in running a business. This experience provides them with considerably more insight into what they need to learn and why, making them more likely to participate in class discussion and to ask insightful questions. Lectures and textbooks become instantly transformed into valued sources of information when connected to GoVenture’s hands-on experience.

Using GoVenture at the End of a Course

By using GoVenture at the end of a business course, students can apply the knowledge, lessons, and techniques they have learned throughout your course to a highly realistic, simulated business setting. GoVenture provides students with the opportunity to gain experience and to make the important connection between business theory and practice.

Using GoVenture Throughout a Course

GoVenture is essentially a business laboratory where your students can go every week, or every day, to apply the information and concepts you are teaching about in class. Throughout your course, students can continually use GoVenture to experience and experiment with the knowledge they are gaining.

Choosing what is right for you depends upon the amount of time you have available to include GoVenture in your curriculum, and your desire to use the many GoVenture resources that are available. If you only have limited time, you may want to use the QuickStart scenarios and have students focus more on daily business operations. If business startup is a key element of your curriculum, you may choose to have students spend additional time on the Startup Details and Home sections of the simulation, making all the decisions for themselves – and perhaps using the activities in the Learning Guide for assistance.

Hours Required

Within the GoVenture simulation, time works under a constantly running virtual clock. In general, it takes one to three hours for students to become familiar and comfortable with GoVenture's various screens and the daily decisions that need to be made. Within this period, they will likely have experienced many of the challenges and issues they will need to understand in order to reach success.

As a general rule-of-thumb, you can count on every hour your students spend working with GoVenture equaling about a month of operating time for their GoVenture businesses. Playing under the default setting, one year of GoVenture business time will take about 10 to 20 hours of playing time. The basic speeds at which the clock can be set are listed in the following table.

GOVENTURE TIME SETTING ↓	Approximate time it will take to run a business for ...		
	1 Week	6 Months	1 Year
Very Fast	3 min	1½ hrs	3 hrs
FAST	6 min	3 hrs	6 hrs
DEFAULT = NORMAL	15 MIN	7½ HRS	15 HRS
Slow	30 min	15 hrs	30 hrs
Very Slow	4 hrs	90 hrs	180 hrs

On average, 10 to 20 hours with the simulation software will provide students with a full GoVenture experience.

Matching Business Scenarios to the Current Topic of Discussion

GoVenture can be used to provide targeted learning, by directly corresponding to the current topic at hand. For example, in one scenario you may wish to instruct students to focus exclusively on profitability, while in another you may want them to focus on successfully balancing work and home life.

Saving and Resuming Simulations

GoVenture simulations can be saved and resumed at any time. This allows students to continue to build and work with an existing business over an extended period of time.

Creating Your Own QuickStart Scenarios

You can create scenarios with specific Startup Profiles and turn them over to your students to manage. All you need to do is start a new simulation, make the desired decisions, and play the simulation for as many or as few virtual weeks as you want. Then, save the simulation and move a copy of it into the GoVenture QuickStart folder (the "\QUICKSTA" subfolder in your GoVenture Small Business program folder). Your scenario will then be included in the list of QuickStart options the next time the program is run.

If you are running the simulation from the CD-ROM, or if you prefer, you can provide a copy of your scenario to your students via disk or any network folder, give the file name and password, and instruct them to use the *Resume Simulation* feature and select your simulation file.

Note: Refer to the GoVenture Small Business Software User Guide for more information on creating and playing your own QuickStarts.

Every Simulation is Different

No two simulations will be exactly the same in GoVenture Small Business. While the businesses may be similar from one simulation to the next, there will be changes in economic conditions, market, competitive events, and (intelligently) random factors which will make each simulation a new challenge.

8. Facilitated and Self-Directed Learning

GoVenture is designed to be used in facilitated and/or self-directed learning environments. Students can dive in on their own, exploring and discovering their GoVenture businesses with limited supervision, or can be directed step-by-step through the various aspects of starting and running a business.

Students only need the GoVenture simulation software to begin exploring and learning. However, the additional resources provided can add value to their specific areas of interest and their overall business learning experience.

9. Individual and Group Learning

GoVenture can be used for individual or group learning.

Students can run their own businesses and make all of the necessary decisions. In Single Player mode, they do not compete directly against each other, but with other virtual competitors programmed within their simulations – and of course they compete with themselves in order to successfully grow their businesses.

For group learning, students can work together to make decisions and/or they can be assigned specific business areas to champion – such as Operations, Finance, Human Resources, and Marketing. Groups of up to five students per business/computer can work effectively.

In Multiple Player mode, students can compete head-to-head against other players or teams on up to 16 computers connected by a local area network or over the Internet. All play the simulation under the same economic conditions and the same potential for random events.

Note: Refer to the GoVenture Small Business Software User Guide for more information on running GoVenture with multiple players.

10. Evaluating Success

GoVenture provides various business and life balance measurements, such as revenue, profit, net worth, market share, customer satisfaction, employee morale, personal and work hours, personal stress, and more. This allows you and your students to focus upon and to evaluate a diverse number of success points.

GoVenture provides a detailed Performance Evaluation report. This report includes a score on pre-established factors, so students can compare their results. However, what role this score might play in your evaluation of their learning experience is your decision.

Please refer to GoVenture Experiencing Small Business, "Evaluating Success," and to the Software User Guide for more information on evaluating student performance.

11. We Want to Hear from You!

At MediaSpark, we are committed to providing our customers with the best support in the business! We make every effort to design easy to use, robust programs that run on various computer platforms and require little or no installation. However, if technological difficulties still arise, we are here to help. Toll free telephone, email, and fax assistance is readily available. We will call you back promptly, and stay with you until all of your issues are resolved. Our primary goal is to provide you and your students with a successful GoVenture experience every time.

We invite you to stop by the GoVenture.NETwork often, to learn about new features we have added to GoVenture and new simulations we are developing.

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