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Smartsims Update 2008

With the Fall semester fast approaching those in North America or Semester Two for those elsewhere on the globe, I thought I would take this opportunity to write to you all with an update on what we here at Smartsims have been up to over the last year.

It's been a very busy 2007/2008 for our team; with many of our long-term projects reaching completion this year. One of which is the new WebSim versions of our simulations that some of you have already been utilizing, but I'll go into more detail on these later. We have also had the chance to update all of our simulations based on market changes and also the requests we've received from you. The lists of updates for each product are detailed in the section below.

With June being one of our quieter months we were able to transfer all of our game databases to brand new servers and thanks to the growth rate of CPU technology, this equates to four times

the previous processing power. Your students will notice faster response times moving between decision screens and the Administrator is now much snappier.

MikesBikes continues to be a success in hundreds of courses worldwide, and our newest products Music2go and AdSim are gaining great popularity in Marketing and Advertising courses. If you know of any colleagues that may be interested in one of our simulations just let us know and we can provide them with a Demonstration.

If you would like more information on anything mentioned in this newsletter please feel free to contact us, and on behalf of the Smartsims team we look forward to working with you during your next course.

Ian McPherson
Director, Sales & Marketing

Website Changes

We completed a facelift of our website at the start of this year to coincide with the integration of the new WebSim/WebAdmin features. A larger scale update is in the process of development, we hope to create a website that will continue to service our simulations but also provide you with current information on our products and our community. Changes will start taking place over the second half of this year so keep an eye out for these.

As some of you may have noticed we now have available for your students an automated Login and Password request system. They can obtain website or personal login details directly through our website and receive these immediately by email.

In regards to the online resources, all of the Player's Manuals have been updated and the Powerpoint Presentations on our website have just been converted into flash format, so from August these can be viewed directly within your web browser.

Product Updates Commencing Second Half Year '08

MikesBikes-Advanced

- New Starting Year; students will be making decisions for year ahead 2009.
- For courses starting from September we have introduced an Internet Media Channel for Advertising and PR, this replaces the Newspaper Media Channel. The Media Preferences have also been updated to reflect current trends.
- The All Product Details report has been renamed Market Summary report. For the crossover period both names will be displayed.
- The Balanced Scorecard now displays Shareholder Value and Production Utilization.
- Modification of the takeover feature; improved reporting, can view balance sheet of Firm before purchasing, and we have also been tweaking the valuation of the parent company based on the owned firm's performance.
- Updated Player's Manual to accommodate the changes above.

MikesBikes-Intro

- New Starting Year; students will be making decisions for year ahead 2009.
- For courses starting from September, Bonds will be replaced by a new Loans decision. Your students will now be able to raise capital or repay loans at any time from year three onwards.
- For courses starting from September we have introduced an Internet Media Channel for Advertising and PR, this replaces the Newspaper Media Channel. The Media Preferences have also been updated to reflect current trends.
- The Scenario Information menu has been renamed Market Research.
- The All Product Details report has been renamed Market Summary report. For the crossover period both names will be displayed.
- Complete revamp of the Player's Manual.

Music2go Marketing

- New Starting Year; students will be making decisions for year ahead 2009.
- The Pricing screen now also displays Wholesale Price, Unit Cost and Unit Margin. These will auto-update when students enter new Retail Price and/or Retail Margin decisions, displaying a warning message if their decision causes a negative unit margin.
- Market Research purchased in previous years is now displayed.
- Complete revamp of the Player's Manual

AdSim Advertising

- WebSim versions now available for all three AdSim variants.
- Help files have been updated for Vista Compliance.
- Updated Player's Manual.

New WebSim Versions

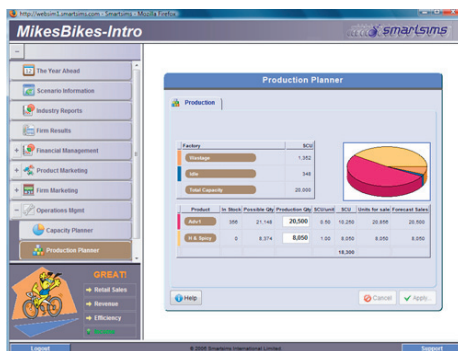
In 2006 a decision was made to take advantage of the new web application technology that had been developing and transfer all of our simulations into Web Applications.

It has been a long process of converting our existing Windows Multi-Player software into a web interface that is compliant with multiple browser types. Through the WebSim versions our Simulations can now be run through an Internet Browser and feature a complete facelift, updated ordering of menu items/reports, and integrated help screens. At the time of writing we have available WebSim versions for our MikesBikes-Intro, Music2go and AdSim Simulations.

As both the existing Software and new WebSim versions are just an interface to our servers, the data remains identical and therefore both versions can be used simultaneously which is especially useful for those who have Macintosh computers or are connecting behind a network firewall.

For this purpose WebSims are by default available through our website for Instructors and Students in addition to the existing software download. Instructors can also choose to run their Simulation purely as a WebSim and remove the software download option when students login.

We have yet to update MikesBikes-Advanced into the WebSim format due to the additional complexity of the decision screens but we hope to have a WebSim version of MikesBikes-Advanced by this time next year.



New WebAdmin

We now have an online Administrator (WebAdmin) which will allow Instructors to set-up their Simulation through our Website; from creating Worlds (a maximum of 14 Firms), scheduling rollovers, to emailing students. You can also view all of your Course, World Summary and individual Firm reports. All Instructors regardless of product now have access to the new WebAdmin when they login to our website.

Of course we are still more than happy to continue to setup your simulation as we have always done, so if you prefer this option and/or you have more than 14 teams please continue to email us with your class list. The advanced features such as equity injections and model changes are only available in the software version of the Administrator, so we will continue to keep both versions available to Instructors.

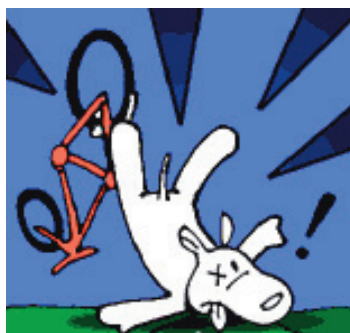
Our Community

University of Auckland (New Zealand)

Darl Kolb from the University of Auckland has been using MikesBikes-Advanced within his third year Management course for many years, and in fact many of our team were first introduced to MikesBikes as Darl's students (myself included).

A group of ex-students who also served as MikesBikes mentors have created an online collaboration (Wiki) of everything MikesBikes as a resource for his students. The website is an excellent knowledge database for all those currently using our simulations and we highly recommend you take a look:

<http://baddog.ac.nz>



University of Waterloo (Canada)

Bob Sproule has been using MikesBikes-Intro within his Introduction to Business course since 2005. Bob has provided us with an invitation that he would like to extend to all of our customers:

Good day to you all. My name is Bob Sproule, from the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. I teach an introductory management/business course and have been a user of Mikes Bikes- Intro for the past 3 years. I am a very strong supporter of this business strategy game, and am looking for opportunities to improve the pedagogy around the use of the game in the course I teach. Improvements in the pedagogy will improve the experience for the students as their learning increases.

Just over a year ago, I heard a conference presentation (at the MERLOT annual conference - www.merlot.org) on the development of a community of users of individual on-line learning objects. The theme of the presentation focused on the individual instructor benefits that could occur through the sharing and developing of resources supporting the use of learning

objects and the scholarship that could occur through such a community. MERLOT would be very supportive of a similar concept that would benefit their community.

I approached Smartsims to solicit their perspective and they, as we would suspect, are very supportive of any endeavour that could enhance the experience of the game.

What I am asking of you now, is an expression of interest in the concept. Based on confirming a level of interest among a group of the current users, I would be willing to start us on the path to the development of such a community. Thanks for your time and I look forward to hearing from you all.

Regards,
Bob Sproule

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