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LINKS Supply Chain and Service Management Simulation

The newest addition to the LINKS Simulations portfolio is an up-sized version of our popular LINKS Supply Chain Management Fundamentals Simulation:



By adding service decisions to the LINKS Supply Chain Management Fundamentals Simulation, the new LINKS Supply Chain and Service Management Simulation provides a convenient up-sized LINKS Simulations option for instructors wishing to include a “dose” of service content/context in a manufacturing-oriented course. Service is styled as call center management in the LINKS set-top box industry, with insourcing and outsourcing decision options.

More about the “small”+ LINKS Supply Chain and Service Management Simulation:

- targeted at introductory supply chain management, operations management, and logistics courses
- typical usage is expected to be 6 rounds
- each simulation round involves about 2 hours of (outside-of-class) student time
- priced at \$35 per student for a 6-round event in academic degree-granting programs

Further information about the LINKS Supply Chain and Service Management Simulation, including the participant’s manual (a downloadable pdf file), is accessible on the LINKS Simulations website: <http://www.LINKS-simulations.com>

For conversation about teaching with the LINKS Supply Chain and Service Management Simulation, contact Randy Chapman, the LINKS author (LINKS@LINKS-simulations.com).

Reminder: Game Run Schedules With Embargos

In processing LINKS game runs, our normal administrative protocol is that the results are “publicized” immediately after the game run is executed. “Publicized” includes uploading the new results to the LINKS web-server and sending e-mail to everyone in a LINKS industry (students and the instructor) to announce the availability of the new game run results. For most LINKS instructors, immediate game run processing and turnaround after the input submission deadline is desirable.

It is possible to “embargo” the availability of LINKS results until an instructor-specified time after the input submission deadline and subsequent game run. With an embargo, LINKS is run in the normal fashion (normally within two hours of the input submission deadline) and the LINKS results are uploaded to the web server so that the LINKS instructor has immediate access to the results. However, embargoed results are not available to students until the instructor-specified embargo time.

Embargoing is useful for instructors who wish to release results only after a class has concluded (for example, to retain students’ undivided attention throughout the class) or for instructors wishing to have early access to the results, before their students can access the results.

To embargo results, encode your embargo schedule within the game run schedule that you submit before your LINKS event begins. Here’s an example entry on a game run schedule for an embargoed game run:

November 7 @ 200pm: Round #7; results embargoed until 900pm.

Everyone in a LINKS industry always receives an e-mail announcement of the availability of new results immediately after a game run has been executed, regardless of whether embargoed results exist. And, embargoed results are “immediately” uploaded to the LINKS Simulation Database after a game run. However, students can’t access embargoed results until the specified embargo time limit has passed because the results’ links are inactive until that time.



Where In The World Is LINKS Simulations?



LINKS Simulations exhibits at 12+ conferences annually to reach out to prospective LINKS instructors and to interact with existing LINKS users.

We'll be exhibiting at these conferences in the near future:

August 1-3	AMA Summer Educators' Conference @ San Francisco
September 17-19	MMA Fall Educators' Conference @ San Antonio
September 20-21	SCMEC Conference @ San Antonio
November 5-7	SMA Conference @ New Orleans
November 22-25	DSI Conference @ Tampa

If you're attending any of these conferences, please do stop by our exhibit to chat.

LINKS Global SCM Competition

The 2014 LINKS Global SCM Competition is scheduled for October-November 2014. The LINKS Supply Chain Management Simulation is used in the LINKS Global SCM Competition.

Highlights of the LINKS Global SCM Competition:

- Cross-Institution 8-Round Supply Chain Management Simulation Competition
- Your Student Teams Compete Against Student Teams From Other Institutions
- Challenges Students in an Intense Team-Based Cross-Institution Competition
- For Students in Academic Degree-Granting Programs Worldwide
- Targeted at Upper-Level Undergraduates and All MBAs



Further details about the October-November 2014 LINKS Global SCM Competition (scheduling, student eligibility, costs, and registration procedure) are accessible via the LINKS Global Competition link on the LINKS website.

Registration signup and payment deadline for the 2014 LINKS Global SCM Competition is September 26, 2014.

Participating in a LINKS Global SCM Competition is an alternative instructional/learning opportunity to the traditional usage of LINKS within a single instructor's course (i.e., an event with students from a single course conducted according to the course instructor's preferred scheduling).

Faculty members with questions about the LINKS Global SCM Competition are invited to contact Randy Chapman, the LINKS author (Chapman@LINKS-simulations.com).



May 16 at the



UNIVERSITY of ST. THOMAS

Randy Chapman, LINKS author, recently spent a day in Minneapolis at the invitation of Dean Chris Puto, Opus College of Business, University of St. Thomas, a long-time LINKS user and member of the LINKS Hall of Fame.

The University of St. Thomas full-time MBA graduating class assembled at 830am, Friday, May 16 for an all-day marathon of LINKS final presentations. I was there too, at Chris Puto's invitation, as an interested observer and questioner in post-presentation Q&A time.

University of St. Thomas full-time MBAs encounter the LINKS Marketing Strategy Simulation in their 1st-semester marketing course. They re-engage with LINKS in the late-fall of the 2nd-year with at-large elections of CEOs who then recruit classmates to staff their respective teams for their 4th-semester LINKS-based business strategy course. The initial team activity is the creation of bids for available xLINKS Marketing Strategy Simulation [Extreme Edition] firms from a pre-existing xLINKS industry that these new teams manage forward throughout their 4th-semester business strategy class, co-taught by Mike DeVaughn and Chris Puto.



Mike DeVaughn

The presentation format for these xLINKS teams was:

1. Bid Rationale
2. Situation Analysis
3. Initial Strategy
4. Early Results
5. Strategic Revisions
6. Future Plans
7. Lessons Learned



Chris Puto

Each 25-minute team presentation was followed by a 5-minute audience Q&A. There were five presentations in the morning and five more in the afternoon after a lunch break.

It was an intense capstone MBA experience for everyone in the room ... graduating MBA class members, course faculty, and observers. Turnarounds, strategy selection and revision, innovation strategy|tactics|timing, balancing short- and long-term strategy and performance, operations and marketing excellence, and growth strategies and tactics were among the topics arising throughout these final xLINKS presentations. And, plentiful thought-provoking quotes arose during the day, such as:

- *"No regrets, just lessons learned."*
- *"Bad decisions make great stories."*
- *"Do fewer things better."*

Bravo and thanks to the 2014 University of St. Thomas full-time MBA graduating class for a thoroughly enjoyable day!

Printed LINKS Manuals

LINKS participant's manuals are freely accessible (downloadable pdf files) from the LINKS website. Some instructors prefer to provide their students with printed/bound hardcopy versions of the LINKS participant's manual, rather than relying on website downloading and local printing. We're happy to provide this service for domestic LINKS users (i.e., instructors teaching courses in the continental United States).



We do need at least **three weeks advance notice** to arrange for printing and shipping of manuals from our on-demand printer.

Manuals are shipped directly to the LINKS instructor by our on-demand printer. The LINKS instructor then distributes the manuals to LINKS students after verifying that a LINKS student has paid for LINKS usage (i.e., the student shows the instructor a LINKS registration/payment receipt).

The LINKS manual price is added to the LINKS usage fee to determine the total student price for a LINKS event. The prices for LINKS manuals vary from \$16/manual for the smallest (4-round) LINKS variants, to \$20/manual for mid-sized (6-round) LINKS variants, to \$25/manual for larger (9-round) LINKS variants, to \$30/manual for "extreme" (12-round) LINKS variants.

Contact Randy Chapman (Chapman@LINKS-simulations.com) with any questions about LINKS manuals or to order LINKS manuals for your students in a forthcoming LINKS event.



LINKS Train-The-Trainer Seminars

August 11-15 and October 6-10, 2014

LINKS Simulations Immersion Experience

Five Teleconferences and Four-Round LINKS Simulation Events

Registration is available for the next five-day, intensive-mode Train-The-Trainer distance-learning seminars for the LINKS simulations. Randy Chapman, the LINKS author, leads these distance-learning events for academic faculty interested in learning more about teaching with LINKS. These intensive-mode seminar formats includes 2-3 hours of work per day during each of the five days of the distance-learning seminars.

LINKS Train-The-Trainer Seminars are offered for the enterprise management, marketing, services, and supply chain management LINKS variants.

Current LINKS instructors are invited to pass along this announcement to faculty colleagues and

advanced doctoral students who might be interested in learning more about teaching with LINKS.

Experienced LINKS instructors sometimes participate in a LINKS Train-The-Trainer Seminar to refresh their memories of LINKS details just prior to teaching with LINKS or to explore another LINKS simulation variant for a future teaching activity. Such experienced LINKS instructors may elect just to participate in the TTT's four-round simulation event, ignoring the public teleconferences included in the LINKS TTT program. (PowerPoint decks are e-mailed to all LINKS TTT participants before each teleconference, so such experienced LINKS instructors may freely choose to participate in all, some, or none of the teleconferences as per their availability and interest.)

Reminders

LINKS Passcode Retrieval: LINKS passcode retrieval for a LINKS participant (student or instructor) is possible via the “Retrieve LINKS Passcode” link on the main LINKS webpage (<http://www.LINKS-simulations.com>). Executing the “Retrieve LINKS Passcode” operation e-mails the firm’s passcode to the participant’s official e-mail address as recorded in the LINKS Simulation Database.

Student Payment Timing: Student payment with a personal credit card is via the “Pay For LINKS” link on the LINKS webpage.

The published LINKS price (the discounted price) is in effect until the first round of LINKS is complete. Then, the price is increased 25%. This means that we can initialize a LINKS event (and advance LINKS through to its normal starting point) and students can continue to pay at the discounted price until the first scheduled round.

It is not necessary for your students to pay before LINKS begins to have access to the discounted LINKS price. Students must only pay before the first official game run on your game-run schedule to receive the discounted price. Thus, student payments can occur simultaneously with the beginning of a LINKS simulation event. As a practical matter, a final warning/reminder is e-mailed to those students who haven’t paid by the first game run, before implementing the non-discounted price.

E-Mail Address Management: Using their LINKS firm’s passcode, LINKS students may change their official LINKS e-mail address via the “E-Mail Address Management” button in the LINKS Simulation Database. Confirmations of e-mail address changes are e-mailed to the old and new e-mail addresses.

LINKS Instructor Resources: Instructors access LINKS Instructor Resources via the LINKS webpage. Contact Randy Chapman (Chapman@LINKS-simulations.com), the LINKS author, to obtain the username and passcode.



The LINKS Newsletter is a bi-monthly newsletter for current and prospective LINKS instructors and for LINKS friends. Please e-mail comments, suggestions, and other contributions (e.g., LINKS teaching tips) to Winkler@LINKS-simulations.com.



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