



the Small Business game
NEW TEACHING RESOURCE FOR IRISH SCHOOLS

www.businessgame.ie

Teacher Information (Business Studies: Junior Cycle)



www.businessgame.ie is a free teaching resource for Irish secondary schools, helping teachers to bring the Junior Certificate Business Studies Curriculum to life!

“ An innovative and engaging strategy for teaching Business and Enterprise ”

CAROLINE MCHALE
National Co-ordinator for Business and Enterprise

The core focus of the game is to help students understand what happens ‘behind-the-scenes’ of a business in Ireland, by enabling them to

manage and own their own business (a GAA Sports Store) through a computer game called ‘www.businessgame.ie’.

Teachers in secondary schools who are ‘demonstrating’ www.businessgame.ie to their students don’t have to be experts, but you should familiarise yourself with how the game works (please refer to ‘Player Manual’ which can be downloaded free of charge from the homepage of www.businessgame.ie).

Students are encouraged to experiment with different decisions and strategies, comparing the results across different games. For example: comparing the results of increasing prices (and potentially raising profitability) with the results from reducing prices (and potentially increasing demand).

www.businessgame.ie is directly linked to the following areas within the Business Studies syllabus:

- **Income/Expenditure/Cash Flow Statements/ Profit and Loss/Assessing the Business**
- **Consumer Protection/Banking/Investing/ Business Insurance/Foreign Trade/Forms of Business**
- **Business Finance/Planning the Business/ Communications/Letter-Writing/Report-Writing**
- **Employee & Employer/Industrial Relations/ Marketing/Delivery Systems/Business Documents/IT**

The game demonstrates to students that every business decision they make, will have an impact on time (hours) and money (cash-flow) for their business.





Don't forget the
'Tips for Teachers'
on page 5

www.businessgame.ie & the Curriculum

www.businessgame.ie was developed with the assistance of secondary school teachers, to link directly into the Business Studies Curriculum (not just an 'add-on'). Here are a few examples of how you can link www.businessgame.ie to the topic you're covering in Business Studies:

Income & Expenditure

What fixed expenditure, irregular expenditure and discretionary expenditure do you have each week in this game?

What was the opportunity cost for you, when you decided to buy footballs rather than jerseys?

If you decide to hire another employee in this game, what will be the effect of the new salary on your expenditure?

False Economy & Loss Leaders

Explain why it could be a false economy not to insure your stock?

How can you use 'Loss Leaders' in this game to get more customers?

Banking, Saving & Investing

Write down five factors that you should take into account, before deciding to apply for a loan. List three reasons why a bank may refuse to give you a loan in this game.

What are the main factors that you would take into account, before deciding to invest in a new business opportunity?

Business Insurance & Foreign Trade

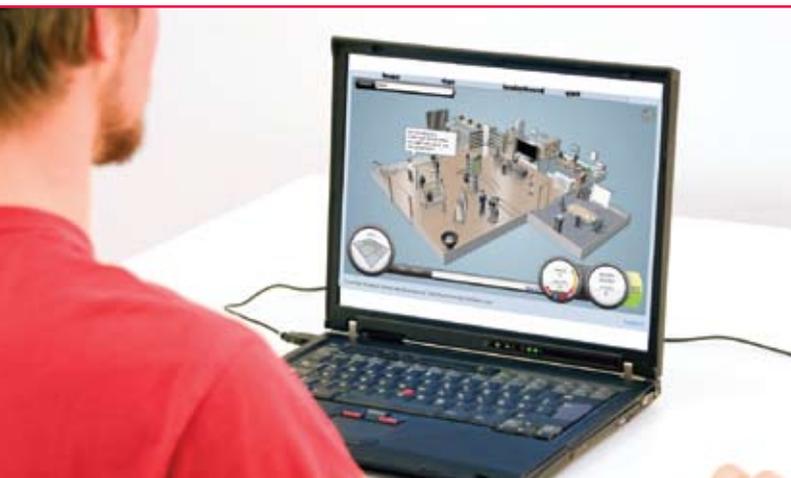
What factors need to be considered when calculating your store's insurance premium?

What factors do you need to take into account, before you import goods from overseas for sale in your shop?

Forms of Business & Business Finance

What are the advantages to becoming a limited company in this game? What are the disadvantages to staying as a sole trader?

When you're buying that new piece of equipment for the store, should you buy it with available cash, get a loan or sign a hire purchase agreement?



“ Teaching business in schools can be made more realistic with www.businessgame.ie. It brings the subject to life and real business scenarios suddenly became topics of conversation. ”

ANNE RYAN

*Business Studies Teacher,
Our Lady of Mercy College, Dublin 9.*

Students can work in small teams for co-operative learning



Planning the Business & Cash Flow

Write a business plan for your store, which you have to give to your bank manager (to get loan approval). List three reasons for preparing a cash flow statement for your store.

Communication, Letter-Writing & Report-Writing

What's the best way to communicate with your shoppers? You need to tell your staff about a change in opening hours – what's the best way to communicate this to them?

Write a letter to a new employee, offering him/her a job (don't forget to tell him/her about start-date and salary!)

Write a letter to a supplier, to complain about the increase in their prices.

Write a report outlining the results of a recent customer survey which you carried out. Within this report, include some recommendations for improving standards in your store.

Chain of Production & Retailers

Write down the channels of distribution that are used in your industry.

Write down three functions of a retailer, using your store as an example.

Write down three examples of how retailing has changed in Ireland over the past twenty years.

Write down three examples of how retailing might change over the next twenty years.

Employment & Industrial Relations

Write down the steps that you follow, when you're employing new staff in the game.

What are your rights and responsibilities, as an employer?

What are the rights and responsibilities of your employees in this game?

Explain the term 'unfair dismissal'. How can you, as an employer, avoid dismissing someone unfairly?





**Students can play
the game outside of
school too!**

Marketing & Advertising

What market research should you undertake, as a retailer?

What are the different ways of getting shoppers into your store (and encouraging them to buy more, when they get there)?

You're advertising special offers on national radio - write a 30 second script for your advert, to persuade shoppers to come to your store.

Suggest a suitable method of advertising for these different messages:

- Sales Assistant Wanted
- Half price on adult football boots
- Launch of this season's jersey

Business Documents

Write a letter of enquiry to a security company, requesting a quote for security services.

Write a customer receipt for a local G.A.A. team which have just purchased twenty full kits.

Introduction to Record-Keeping & Assessing the Business

Prepare a profit and loss account for your store. Work out each of these measurements for your store:

- Profitability
- Net Profit Percentage
- Return of Capital Employed

Information Technology

Write a paragraph on the use of computers in the day-to-day running of your store. What computer hardware and software does your store need?





You can even give
www.businessgame.ie
as homework!

Insider Tips... for Teachers Only!

You can decide whether or not you share these 'Insider Tips' with your students....

In all games, an existing business has been taken over by the player (the game assumes that you haven't started a brand new business).

The character starts off as a sole trader (until the player decides otherwise – you can change to a limited company immediately)

(TO DO THIS: GO TO OFFICE/FILING CABINET/ SELECT OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE)

As a sole trader, the character will automatically work a minimum of 40 hours per week (this will decrease automatically, when staff members are hired to help share the workload).

(TO DO THIS: GO TO STAFF ROOM/ POSTER ON WALL/ ADVERTISE FOR STAFF)

The character will have access to their own capital, which they can use to invest in the business (usually €20,000 – click on the safe for the 'inject your own capital' option).

(TO DO THIS: GO TO BOARDROOM/SAFE/ INJECT SOME OF YOUR OWN CAPITAL)

Some icons aren't activated until certain events happen (for example: the cake icon becomes active as soon as you hire your first staff member)

(TO DO THIS: GO TO STAFF ROOM/ POSTER ON WALL/ADVERTISE FOR STAFF)

Some actions can boost score (for example: invest in local sponsorship/reward your staff regularly)

(FOR SPONSORSHIP: GO TO STORE/SCREEN BEHIND DESK/SPONSORSHIP)

(TO REWARD STAFF: GO TO STAFF ROOM/CAKE/ REWARD YOUR STAFF)

Your health score will automatically deteriorate, unless you take care of yourself (for example: take a coffee break or give yourself a long weekend)

(TO DO THIS: GO TO STAFF ROOM/PIN BALL

MACHINE/TAKE LONG WEEKEND OR GRAB A COFFEE)

Don't forget to reduce your risk and take out a comprehensive insurance policy!

(TO DO THIS: GO TO OFFICE/FILING CABINET/ TAKE OUR INSURANCE)





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REGISTRATION

SCHOOL REGISTRATION

Registration is **FREE** to all schools.

To register as a school, just follow these simple steps:

1. Log onto www.businessgame.ie
2. On the homepage, click on 'School Registration'
3. A Microsoft Outlook box will appear
4. Submit your school's details
5. You will receive your school login details within 48 hours

6. The school can then register each teacher
7. The teacher can register each student, giving them a username and password

The teacher can manage student progress and check their results. This option also gives teachers access to additional free resources on the site.

In cases where a teacher or school cannot do the full registration, students can register themselves (on the homepage). However, under this option, the school will not have access to additional resources or have access to student monitoring.

PRIZES

**TEACHER
PRIZE:
WIN A
HIGH SPEC
LAPTOP**

Teachers who register their school and a minimum of ten students, will automatically be entered into a draw to win a laptop computer. Subject to terms and conditions.

(Please note: teachers must register **AFTER** September 1st 2009 to be eligible for this draw).



**STUDENT
PRIZES:
DIGITAL
CAMERAS AND
MP3 PLAYERS**

If your student scores over 20,000 points or more, they'll be entered into a draw to win digital cameras and MP3 players.

(Please note: students must be registered through the School Registration option to be eligible for this draw)



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Ireland's EU Structural Funds
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THE SMALL BUSINESS COMPANY
experts in small business