



# Student manual

February 2024

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## Introduction

Sim-u-sell is an internet-based simulation game, aimed at helping undergraduate and graduate students of business to experience the complexities of **sales management** firsthand. Central to the game is the United States sales force for a reseller of a new and superior type of solar panels that is sold to local solar installers.

In the simulation game, you play the role of a new national sales manager. Your job is to build and manage a sales force that will allow you to capture the US market. As the solar panels that you sell are made in Asia by third party producers, and the technology-license that you have is non-exclusive, you realize that the success of your firm depends on how well you manage the sales force.

In each round of the game, the players make the decisions for a full quarter. Based on your own decisions, as well as the decisions of the other players, Sim-u-sell calculates the total amount of sales, profit and other outcome variables. As in real-life, reaching a high sales number is only part of the puzzle. Ensuring your sales are maximally profitable is a much bigger challenge.

The game can be played either as a small team, or by individuals. It is up to your instructor or facilitator to decide what works best for your circumstances. To encourage learning as part of a classroom setting, all the teams play against each other.

## Setting up the simulation

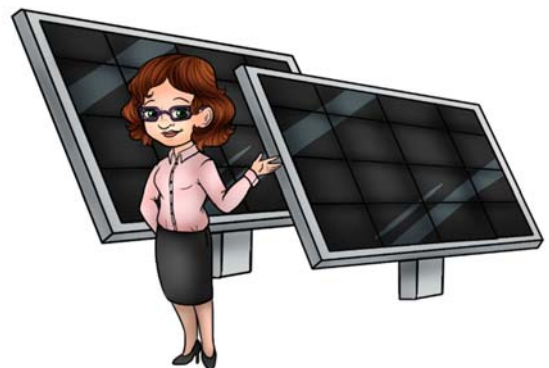
You register on [www.simusell.com](http://www.simusell.com). After you have validated your email address, you provide the six character registration code that your instructor provided you with.

While setting up your team account for the first time, you will be asked for a team name, to provide the name(s) of each team member, and to supply their email addresses. These email addresses will be used for in-game messages, for example, to notify you when the results of a previous round are available or when a new decision round is due. (Note: your instructor may select to disable this feature to avoid sending/receiving a large number of emails).

Once everything is set up, you will be directed to a payment page where you can provide your payment details. Your account will be activated once your payment has been received.

## The market

You are selling state-of-the art high performance solar panels to solar installers. The product is superior to virtually all other panels out there, but as you have a non-exclusive resell license from the manufacturer, there are competitors out there that can offer the exact same product. As a result, the product does not differ meaningfully between your closest competitors.



In addition, the manufacturer controls the price point very strictly, resulting in all direct competitors charging the exact same for the solar panels. Phrased in terms of the traditional marketing mix (the “4Ps”), you cannot control the P for Product, nor the P for Price. As the sales manager, the only thing that is under your direct control is your sales force. The result is that in the Sim-u-sell market the firm with the best sales force and most effective sales management will outperform the competition.

**Market growth and seasonality**

Moreover, market research by the manufacturer suggests that it takes about two quarters for the full market potential to be available. They expect that in the first quarter (Q1) of year 1 only 10% of long-term potential will be realized. In Q2, market research indicates that 50% of long-term potential will be realized. However, from Q3 onwards, 100% of long-term potential should be realized, with a healthy annual growth rate of around 8%.

On top of this long-term trend, the market for solar installations also has a very distinct seasonal pattern. Although panels can be installed year-round, solar panel installers begin to stock up in Q1, then increase their purchases in the second quarter (Q2), and begin slowing down their purchases in the third quarter (Q3). For the fourth quarter (Q4) demand sharply decreases again, as snow and ice hinder the installation of solar panels in a substantial portion of the United States. Typically, if average sales are 100, then Q1 sales are index 90, Q2 = 140, Q3 = 120 and Q4 = 50.



## The sales force

At the start of the game, each team starts with four experienced B2B salespersons: Olivia, Charlie, Elvira, and Hector. To ensure a level playing field, each team has the exact same four salespersons, differentiated only by an armband with your team's color.

Over time, your sales force can change. Depending on your management decisions, the sales force can change in composition, but even the four initial salespersons will become different salespeople depending on the decisions made by each team. In other words, in an industry with four teams, Olivia Blue, Olivia Red, Olivia Green, and Olivia Brown are identical at the start, but over time the sales potential of Olivia Blue may be substantially different from that of Olivia Brown.

Below you will find a short bio of Olivia, Charlie, Elvira, and Hector. More information about their role perception, aptitude, skills and motivation can be gleaned directly in the simulation. Each team will start with these four salespeople. The last name of Olivia, Charlie, Elvira and Hector reflects your team color. Other teams may try to hire "your" Charlie away by offering him a better job, but even if they are successful, Charlie's last name will never change.

Keep in mind that the resumes and descriptions are only a brief snapshot. Salespeople change over time just like everybody else, and a first impression gleaned from a resume sometimes may turn out to be wrong.

### Olivia



Olivia always knew she wanted to pursue a career in sales. She attended Nevada State College where she received her bachelor's degree in business. Growing up in Nevada, she began her career in the entertainment industry, selling show tickets and vacation packages. Her hard work, competitiveness and education made her a great hire as a Sales Representative. There is no doubt her future is bright as she is full of potential. Although no longer selling vacation packages, her love for travel still is very apparent.

### Charlie

After receiving his liberal arts associate degree from Adrian College, Charlie spent some time in merchandising prior to getting involved in sales. Charlie got his break when hired on as an intern at Procter & Gamble. After his internship he was hired on as a junior sales rep and after many hard years of work eventually made it to a junior sales manager within the same company. Charlie was brought into his new role as a sales specialist. Who knows where he might go from here. In his free time, Charlie likes to shop online, he is always looking to buy the latest trending merchandise.



### Elvira



Elvira attended Otterbein University where she graduated with a non-business associates degree. She began her career at Medtronic as a customer service rep and that is where she discovered the joys of working with people. After two years in that role, she made a switch to sales as it was more lucrative, and money has always been a strong motivator for her. She stayed with Medtronic for another four years before switching to sell pharmaceuticals with Abbott until she landed a new job as the lead sales associate here. She is very hardworking and with a little recognition and training, she could be a star sales representative.

### Hector

Hector was born in Honduras and came to the US when he was eleven years old. Growing up, his family did not have a lot of money, but based on his high SAT scores, he received an almost full scholarship for Florida International University (FIU). At FIU he learned about the possibilities of a career in sales, joined the student organization PSE, and became motivated to make a name for himself as a successful salesperson. Although Hector is early in his career, the unlimited income potential of being a successful salesperson is an important driver for him.













## Other salespersons






There are 61 other salespersons looking for employment in the solar industry, in addition to the four starting salespersons of each team. For example, in a market with eight teams, there will be  $61 + 8 \times 4 = 93$  sales reps available.






The salespersons who are active in this industry have a wide range of backgrounds, and closely mimic the composition of the B2B sales workforce in the United States based on education, gender, and race. Due to the physical requirements of travel and occasionally visiting solar contractors in the field, people with disabilities are underrepresented compared to the US labor market, although “Ben Swinkels” (see below) is determined to show those challenges are overrated.






Note that the sales reps in sim-u-sell are all individually modelled. That means that like real people, no two sales reps will respond exactly the same, even when you manage them identically.





















<p>Alejandro Zamudio Lead Sales Associate</p>  <p>Annual Salary \$171,200</p> <p>Extend Offer</p> <p>Compare</p>	<p>Bree Carpenter Sales Representative</p>  <p>Annual Salary \$93,800</p> <p>Extend Offer</p> <p>Compare</p>	<p>Caroline Button Junior Account Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary \$64,000</p> <p>Extend Offer</p> <p>Compare</p>	<p>Zach Thomasch Lead Sales Associate</p>  <p>Annual Salary \$164,000</p> <p>Extend Offer</p> <p>Compare</p>	<p>Christina Park Sales Associate</p>  <p>Annual Salary \$112,000</p> <p>Extend Offer</p> <p>Compare</p>
<p>Weayaya Eastman Sales Advisor</p>  <p>Annual Salary \$84,000</p> <p>Extend Offer</p> <p>Compare</p>	<p>Meili Liu Sales Advisor</p>  <p>Annual Salary \$76,000</p> <p>Extend Offer</p> <p>Compare</p>	<p>Jenny Ross Sales Associate</p>  <p>Annual Salary \$88,000</p> <p>Extend Offer</p> <p>Compare</p>	<p>Toni Koomson Sales Intern</p>  <p>Annual Salary \$23,352</p> <p>Extend Offer</p> <p>Compare</p>	<p>Emily Rakowski Sales Executive</p>  <p>Annual Salary \$200,000</p> <p>Extend Offer</p> <p>Compare</p>

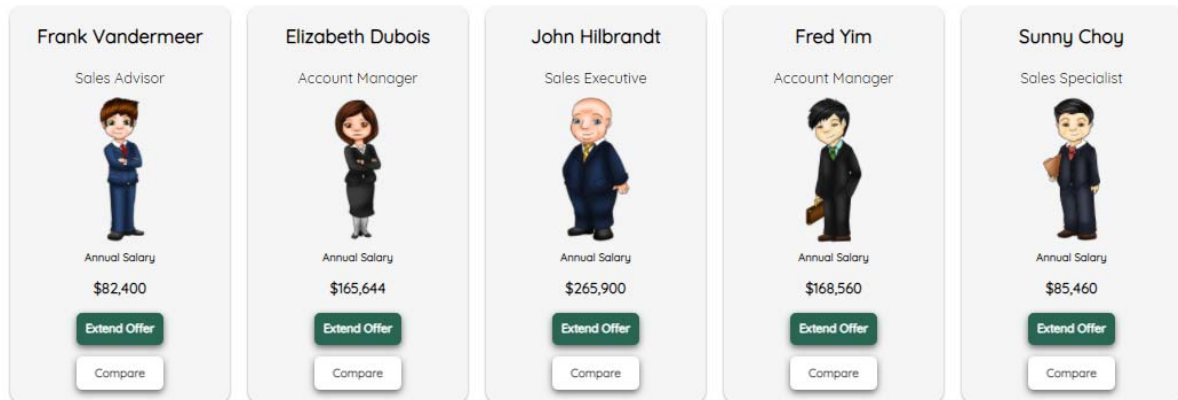


<p><b>Melissa Meyer</b> Sales Intern</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$24,892</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Carol King</b> Sales Associate</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$77,692</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Fox Clinton</b> Outside Sales Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$198,680</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Mark Basadur</b> Outside Sales Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$196,660</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Patrick Plouffe</b> Senior Account Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$200,160</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>
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<p><b>Stephanie Jimenez</b> Sales Intern</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$18,752</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Darrion Mitchell</b> Sales Business Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$245,500</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Beverly Naketa</b> Junior Account Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$51,872</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Evelyn McBride</b> Business Development Sales Specialist</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$224,600</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Steve Rayman</b> Junior Account Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$50,440</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>
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<p><b>Victor Zhao</b> Lead Sales Associate</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$141,980</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Alexis Johnson</b> Sales Intern</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$20,140</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Kelly McLoughlin</b> Sales Specialist</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$81,036</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>William Washington</b> Sales Specialist</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$81,800</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Dick Cooper</b> Sales Specialist</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$85,140</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>
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<p><b>Alyssia Richardson</b> Account Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$164,788</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Rachel Morrison</b> Sales Representative</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$76,228</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Katrena Moris</b> Senior Account Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$193,420</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Paul Rutgers</b> Sales Associate</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$83,860</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>David Sharpton</b> Junior Sales Representative</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$46,020</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>
<p><b>Kevin Smith</b> Junior Account Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$49,500</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Charles McCloud</b> Sales Executive</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$268,280</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Chuck Mayer</b> Sales Business Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$256,040</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Vivian Wang</b> Junior Account Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$49,476</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Debmayla Singh</b> Lead Sales Associate</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$148,380</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>
<p><b>Michael Wright</b> Sales Intern</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$8,440</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Ragu Raman</b> Sales Executive</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$23,344</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Victor Marcos</b> Business Development Sales Specialist</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$101,072</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Kartheek Rajagopal</b> Junior Account Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$22,700</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Kenny Taylor</b> Senior Sales Consultant</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$93,096</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>
<p><b>Mark Ader</b> Sales Specialist</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$36,416</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Michael Miller</b> Sales Advisor</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$38,016</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Mariam Al Maktoum</b> Lead Sales Associate</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$63,892</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>David Money Penny</b> Sales Executive</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$119,656</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>	<p><b>Yuki Wang</b> Account Manager</p>  <p>Annual Salary <b>\$75,852</b></p> <p><a href="#">Extend Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compare</a></p>



## Decisions to make each round

### The Sales Forecast

The sales forecast is essential for the rest of the organization to efficiently manage the solar panel supply chain. If you forecast too high, the cost of goods sold will increase because of additional storage costs and financing charges. If you forecast too low, the cost of goods sold will also increase, because of rush order fees, and much higher transportation costs. In addition, if the forecast is more than 25% too low, the manufacturer cannot close the gap anymore by working extra shifts and overtime. In that case, your sales force will lose out on sales because of out-of-stocks.

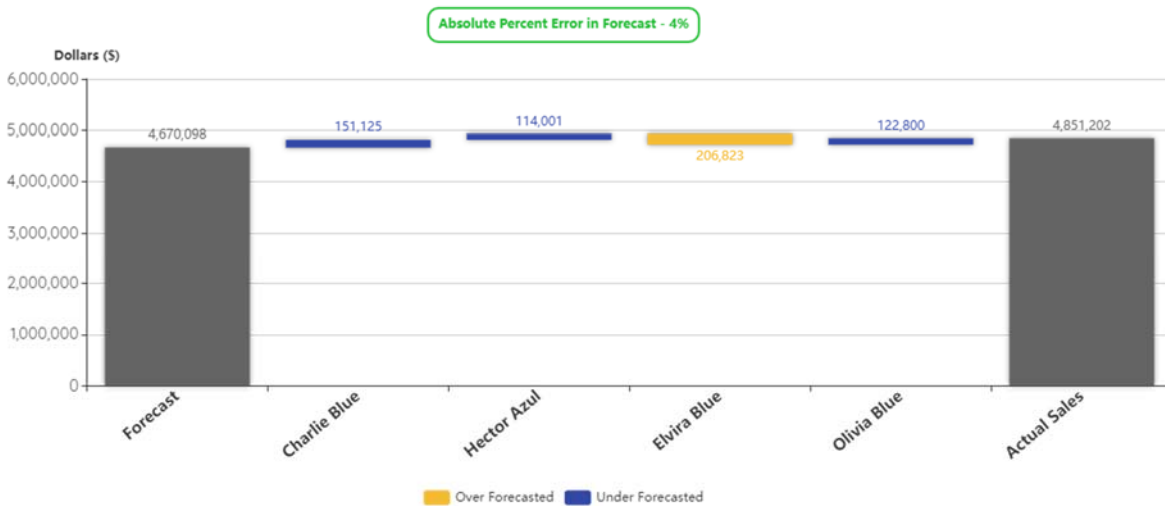
The sales forecast in Sim-u-sell is not shared with the salespersons. It is simply your best estimate of next quarter sales. Unlike sales quota, the sales forecast itself has no motivational impact on the salesperson. However, the sales forecast for all salespersons added together is a crucial determinant for the number of solar panels ordered from the manufacturer, and thereby the main driver of your cost-of-goods sold.

An important driver for the sales forecast is the seasonality in demand. As discussed earlier in this manual, the market potential for solar panels fluctuates from quarter to quarter based on the season. Other factors, such as the effectiveness of your other sales force decisions, as well as how the competition is doing, also play important roles.

Note that you have to make a decision on the forecast for each individual salesperson that works for you. Sim-u-sell will add all forecasts up. Over-forecasting for one salesperson will be crossed-out against under-forecasts for another salesperson. In the end, only the sum of all forecasts will be compared with the sum of all actual sales to calculate your **Absolute Percent Error in Forecast**.

More than anything else, accurate forecasting can really help your bottom line in the solar panel industry by getting the cost-of-goods-sold under control. There are several reports available in Sim-u-sell that can help you make this important decision. An important starting point is the Forecast Accuracy Report (see below). In the example shown, the sales manager under-forecasted sales for Charlie (151k),

Hector (114k), and Olivia (123k), but over-forecasted for Elvira (207k). As a result, the total sales forecast in this example was only 4% off from the actual sales for the quarter. Forecasting within 20% from actual sales will get you the lowest cost-of-goods sold, and thereby the highest gross margin.



## Compensating your sales force

Compensation is an important tool to ensure that your sales force stays maximally motivated. Sim-U-Sell allows you to work with three different compensation components: fixed salary, commission and bonuses, and allows you to customize these components for each individual salesperson. Added together, salary, commission and bonus form the salesperson’s total compensation package.

You can use a single form of compensation, for example, a 100% commission compensation plan, or a combination of two or three forms of compensation.

### Fixed Salary

The fixed salary component is what each salesperson earns per year, regardless of how much they sell. The number you input in the decision screen represents the salesperson’s quarterly salary, but the monthly number is automatically calculated for you. Increases in the fixed salary are typically much better appreciated by salespeople than pay cuts, although over time salespeople will eventually get used to a new, lower fixed salary as well.

### Commission

The commission component is a percentage of total sales generated by your salesperson. You can select any percentage of commission between 0% and 100%, as well as fractions.

### Bonus

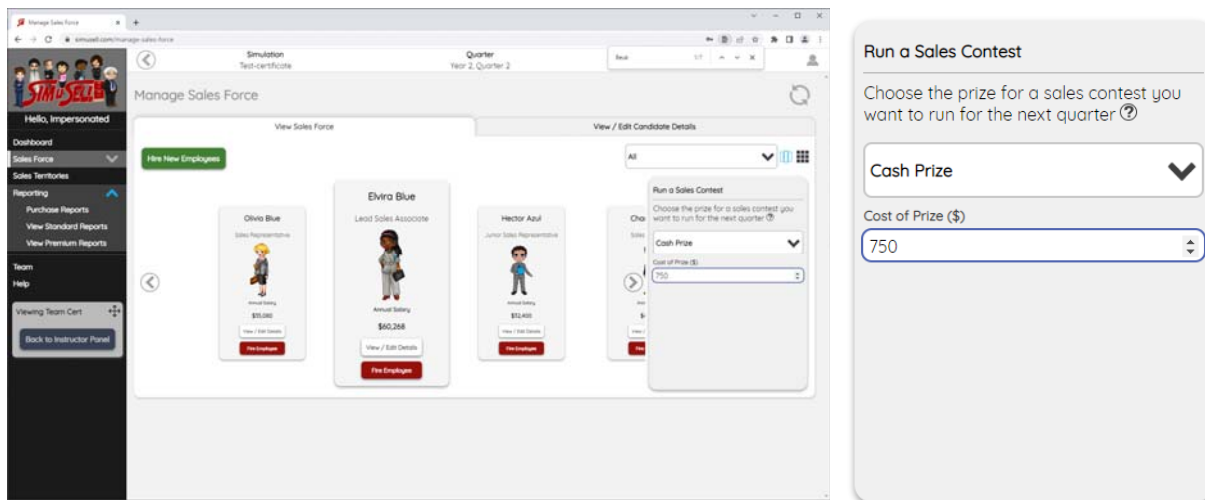
A bonus is a fixed amount of money the salesperson can earn for reaching a specific goal. Often, these goals are related to reaching a certain **sales quota**. Unlike commission, bonuses operate on an all or nothing basis. If the salesperson reaches the goal, the full bonus will be paid. However, if the salesperson falls short of the goal, even if it is by a little, none of the bonus will be paid.

In order to set a bonus, you have to make a decision on the goal that needs to be reached, as well as the amount of the bonus in dollars. Within Sim-u-sell, the only type of activity that is rewarded by a bonus is reaching one's sales quota. Hence, when you set a bonus, make sure you also set the corresponding sales quota. For a bonus to work properly, i.e., to boost the salesperson's motivation, you need to make sure the corresponding quota are realistic, yet stretchy. Sales quota that are set too low will not stimulate the salesperson. In fact, it may signal to the salesperson that they can "relax" once they hit your easy target. On the other hand, quota that are set too high may seem so unattainable that some salespersons will not even try very hard, anticipating that they are unlikely to succeed.

## Sales Contests

To (temporarily) boost sales, you can introduce a sales contest. For each sales contest, you have to determine what prizes people can win. There are three options: cash prizes (money), merchandise prizes (free product), or luxury vacations (travel). You managed to get a good deal on the luxury vacation packages, which means you can get the same motivational uplift for half the cash value. However, luxury vacations are taken in the boss' time, and thus reduce future sales somewhat.

The winner of the sales contest is the salesperson whose current quarter sales are the highest compared to the previous quarter sales. Keep in mind that a sales contest right after you have redesigned your sales territories has the potential to greatly upset salespeople who perceive that their territory potential has been reduced due to your decisions.



The image shows a screenshot of the Sim-u-sell 'Manage Sales Force' interface. The main window displays a list of salespeople: Olivia Blue (Sales Representative, \$15,000), Elvira Blue (Lead Sales Associate, \$60,258), and Hector Azul (Junior Sales Representative, \$12,400). A 'Run a Sales Contest' modal window is open, allowing the user to choose a prize type (Cash Prize is selected) and set a 'Cost of Prize (\$)' of 750. The interface includes a sidebar with navigation options like 'Dashboard', 'Sales Force', 'Reporting', and 'Team'.

## Recognition

In addition to financial compensation, recognition often forms an effective way to increase motivation and job satisfaction. Moreover, recognition often is very cost effective. However, keep in mind that not every salesperson appreciates recognition equally. Also, the motivational impact of recognition diminishes if it is used too frequently or for salespersons who in the eyes of their peers do not deserve to be recognized.

## Supervision

As a sales manager, you can directly influence individual salespersons by supervising them. This offers opportunities for coaching, as well as making sure the salespersons perform as required. Moreover, most (but not all) salespeople experience the attention that comes with supervision as a positive factor that increases their overall job satisfaction and selling motivation.

However, as a sales manager, your time is limited. Even though you work long hours, the total number of hours you can devote per month to direct supervision is only 100 (i.e. about 30 hours per week). In the decision menu, you provide per salesperson how many monthly supervision hours you are going to devote to each salesperson.

Some salespersons will need a lot of supervision, other salespersons can do with (almost) no supervision. Some love it, others will hate it. There is no minimum amount of time you have to spend on supervision, but the Sim-U-Sell environment will warn you if you exceed the maximum amount of 100 supervision hours.

## Selecting the accounts to focus on

Most firms differentiate customers based on their attractiveness for the firm. A-accounts are typically seen as the most attractive, because these customers are large and have a high profit potential. B-accounts are less attractive, for example because they are smaller or only have a moderate profit potential. C-accounts are typically the smallest, least profitable customers.

However, there is only a fixed amount of customers in each group. If every competitor in the market focusses on A-accounts, competition will be stiff and therefore the success rate of each sales call will be lower. In those cases, focusing more on B- or even C-accounts may turn out to be more beneficial.

As a default, each salesperson will focus his or her time equally amongst all three customer segments.

## Training the sales force

Each of your salespersons comes with a different set of skills and experiences. Over time, every salesperson gains more experience, but training can help in strengthening the skills and abilities of your sales force much faster than time along.

Training isn't free. First, it costs you out-of-pocket money (i.e. the course fee). Second, when salespersons are being trained, they lose productive selling hours. Typically, the training modules offered in this simulation take several days to complete and reduce a salesperson's time spent selling. As a company policy, you can only send each salesperson to a maximum of one training module per quarter.

The following 10 training modules are currently approved by your firm's Human Resources department:

Course name	Cost	Duration	Main anticipated outcome
Basic "SPIN" Sales Training	\$2500	10 days	Introduces the new sales rep to the basics of selling, with a focus on which questions to ask your customer
Company Orientation	\$500	1 day	Introduces the new hire to the company. This course has been shown to dramatically reduce corporate policy violations.
Time & territory management	\$2500	4 days	Improves the ability and efficiency of a sales rep to plan his or her territory.
Effective use of sales technology	\$2500	4 days	This course is not only for older reps. With new tablet technology and computer systems available, everyone benefits from this course.
Sales Presentation Skills	\$1900	1.5 days	It covers the basics of how to structure and organize an effective sales presentation.
Negotiation skills	\$3000	4 days	This course helps salespersons to improve their ability to find and negotiate win-win contracts, where both the customer and your firm come out ahead.
Motivation seminar	\$4000	2 days	This seminar is intended to boost the salesperson's confidence and motivation. Long-term effects are less clear.
Product knowledge	\$1000	10 days	This course is mostly done in-house, and is crucial in getting salespersons up-to-speed with your product offering. As the products and production processes change over time, this course provides benefits for both the new and experienced sales

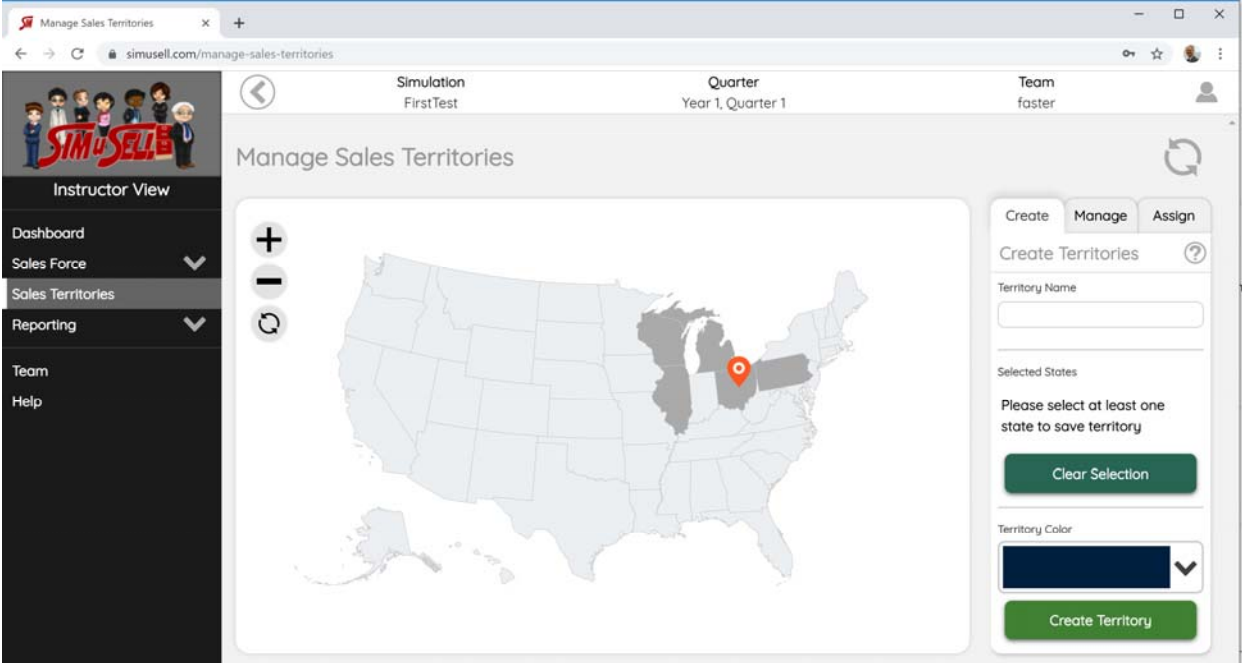
			representative.
Business Ethics and Sensitivity Training	\$800	1 day	Improved awareness of business ethical issues and an important
Customer Relationship Management seminar	\$3000	3 days	This course covers both the technical aspects of using the Sales force.com CRM software, as well as covers the “soft skills” of relationship building, cultivation, and management.

### Designing sales territories

Sim-U-Sell starts just one territory in the Midwest region of the United States. However, in the redesign sales territories menu, you can adjust the number of territories and redesign each territory. Your firm uses the 50 states as the “geographic control units”. That means that you can group different states together as one territory, but you cannot break up a single state to fit in two different territories.

There is no requirement to include all states in your territory plan. For example, you can include Alaska in a territory, but you can also decide not to sell in that state. The size and composition of your territories directly influences the travel time of your sales force, and thereby impact the total time that is available for actual selling.

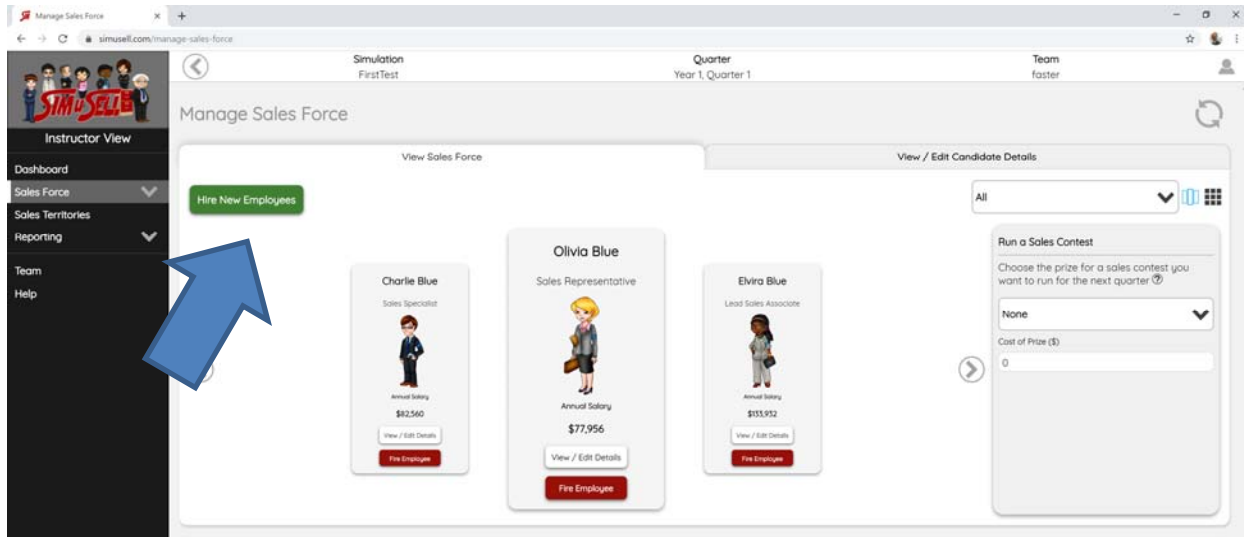
You can assign one or more salespersons to the same territory. If you assign more than one salesperson to a territory, they will work out a way to avoid too much overlap in their own activities within that territory. Depending on their time and territory management skills, this inter-salesperson coordination will be more or less efficient. However, if you assign no salesperson to a territory, or if the last salesperson who works in a territory gets fired or quits, you will generate no sales from that territory until you reassign at least one new salesperson.





## Hiring and firing a salesperson

If you feel your sales force requires additional salespeople, you can hire one or more new salespersons per round. Likewise, if you believe your sales force would be better off without one or more specific salespeople, you can fire them. The only limit of the size of your sales force is the number of salespersons available in the job market, as well as your ability to effectively supervise them.



## Hiring an unemployed salesperson

There is a pool of currently unemployed salespersons who are looking for work in your industry. You can study their resumes and make a salary offer. If they accept, they will join your sales force at the start of the next quarter.

Note that this lengthy hiring process is somewhat similar to real-life, where hiring the right person for a complex B2B sales role can easily take multiple months.

The screenshot displays the 'Hire New Employees' interface. The main area shows a grid of 24 employee candidate cards, each with a name, title, and annual salary. A sidebar on the left contains navigation options like 'Dashboard', 'Sales Force', and 'Hire New Employees'. On the right, a detailed view for 'John Hilbrandt' is shown, including his bio, annual salary of \$227,513, education, and various skill bars. A blue arrow points to the 'Extend Offer' button at the bottom right of the candidate details panel.

### Hiring one of your competitor's salespersons

It is also possible that you hire a headhunter to provide you with the resumes of the salespersons of your competitors. Headhunters work extremely fast, and can provide you with the resumes of top performing salespeople in your industry within the same round. However, hiring a headhunter comes at the cost of \$10,000.

If you decide to make an offer to one or more salespeople whose resumes you've just received, the headhunter charges you another 15% of their annual salary as a connection fee, and another 15% as a success fee if the salesperson accepts your offer.

Salespersons that are currently employed and satisfied with their job typically confront their current employer with your offer, giving that employer the chance to match or even exceed your offer in order to keep the salesperson. If it is not matched by their current employer, they will join your team after the next round. Dissatisfied salespeople may accept your offer on the spot, and will be part of your team at the beginning of the next round.

## Firing a salesperson

You can decide to fire any salesperson that you want. However, as a company policy, you will have to pay three months of salary as a severance pay. Once fired, a salesperson is unlikely to ever return to your company. Moreover, if a salesperson was seen by the rest of your sales force as a top performing salesperson, firing him or her will hurt the morale of all your other salespeople for the following quarter. However, if the salesperson was seen as a poor performer, firing him or her will have a temporary moral boosting effect, as it reinforces the notion that you as a sales manager are keeping the sales force accountable for their performance.

## Quitting salespersons

Salespersons may quit their job if they are unsatisfied with how you manage them. This risk is particularly large when they receive an offer from one of the competing teams, but if their job satisfaction falls below critical levels, they may even decide to try their luck in another industry and leave without a competing job offer.

## Sales analytics

To help you in your role as a sales manager, Jim, the senior Vice President of Sales, will provide you with all the information his team can extract from your systems. In addition, external market research reports can be ordered as well. Your firm has a long-standing relationship with the firm “Caveat Emptor Marketing and Sales Research.” Sim-u-sell is realistic in the sense that not all external market research reports provide you with value, yet all of them will cost you money.

Market Potential Forecast \$ 2,000 Purchase	Market Share Report \$ 2,500 Purchase	Customer Segment Analysis \$ 1,000 Purchase	Head Hunters Sales Superstar Shortlist \$ 10,000 Immediate Purchase	HR Report \$ 750 / employee Purchase	Customer Satisfaction Report \$ 750 Purchase
Territory Analysis \$ 100 Purchase	Competitive Insights \$ 30,000 Purchase	Extended Industry Performance Report \$ 2,500 Purchase	Competitive Dominance Report \$ 1,000 Purchase	Relative Dominance Report \$ 800 Purchase	Salcs Forecast Report \$ 250 / employee Purchase

Most reports take one quarter to complete, unless specified otherwise. That means that if you order a report in this quarter, you will only receive it the next quarter. The following reports are available:

## Quarterly profit and loss statement

Jim automatically produces these statements for you free of charge straight from the accounting system. It shows you your sales volume and your sales team's contributions to your total revenue and net profit. By clicking the + signs you can get a further breakdown of what type of accounts your Revenue comes from, and how the Expenses are split out. See the sample report.

		Quarterly Profit and Loss Statement				
(In dollars)		Employees				
	Total	Olivia Green	Elvira Green	Darrion Mitchell	Stephanie Jimenez	
Sales Volume (units sold)	22,011	3,878	4,007	5,864	8,261	
<b>+</b> Revenue	3,301,737	581,744	601,171	879,647	1,239,174	
Cost of Goods Sold	2,311,215	407,220	420,819	615,752	867,422	
Gross Profit	990,521	174,523	180,351	263,894	371,752	
<b>+</b> Expenses	260,371	48,576	56,659	61,441	93,694	
Net Profit (Loss)	709,149	119,947	118,691	202,453	278,057	

## Competitive Ranking Report

The competitive ranking report shows how your revenue and profit rank against that of other teams. Information is available both in bar and line graphs, as well as in a table format with the exact numbers per quarter. Click on the + sign to expand the Revenue and Profit by Quarter tables.



### Market potential forecast

Caveat Emptor can research the market potential for the next quarter for you for only \$2,000. That is, if you order it this round, it will provide you with a forecast before you have to make next quarter's decisions. The report provides you with the forecasted numbers per state, grouped the way you have your current territories structured.

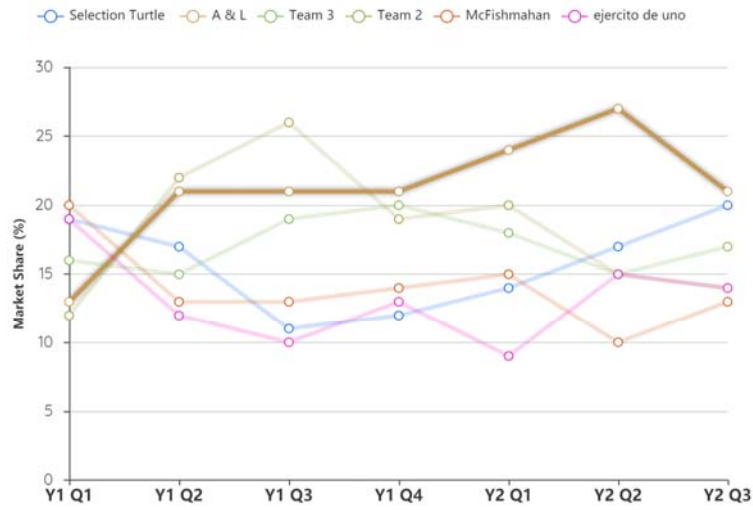
Market Potential Forecast						
Territory Sales Potentials						
Territory	States	Total Sales Potential (\$)	A Account Potential (\$)	B Account Potential (\$)	C Account Potential (\$)	
-	Central Plains	4	475,489	120,489	187,360	167,640
		Kansas	84,323	8,432	42,161	33,729
		Nebraska	55,271	5,527	27,635	22,108
		Iowa	110,338	27,584	38,618	44,135
		Colorado	225,557	78,945	78,945	67,667
+	Midwest	4	1,558,751	521,508	545,563	491,680
+	Southeast	5	1,634,724	416,929	628,089	589,706

### Market share report

Caveat Emptor can research the market share in the next quarter for you for only \$2,500. The report takes a quarter to compile, and will show you how much of a specific market you were able to capture during this quarter. This report provides you with the historical numbers for different quarters to identify trends, and splits out performance per account type. In addition, it provides you with each individual salesperson's direct contribution to the market share.

# Market Share Report

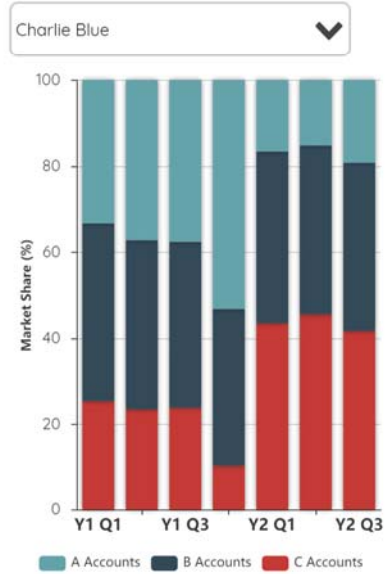
## Market Share By Quarter



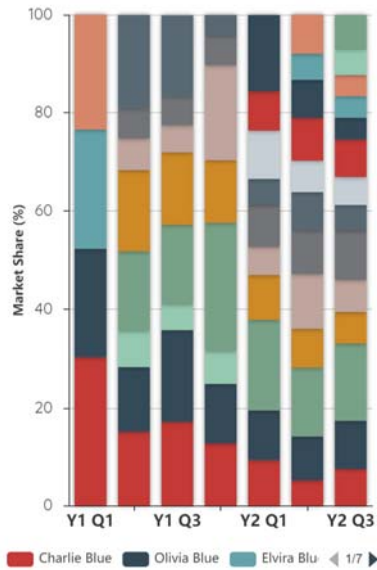
## Team Name

Selection Turtle

## Employee Market Share by Account



## Market Share Within Team



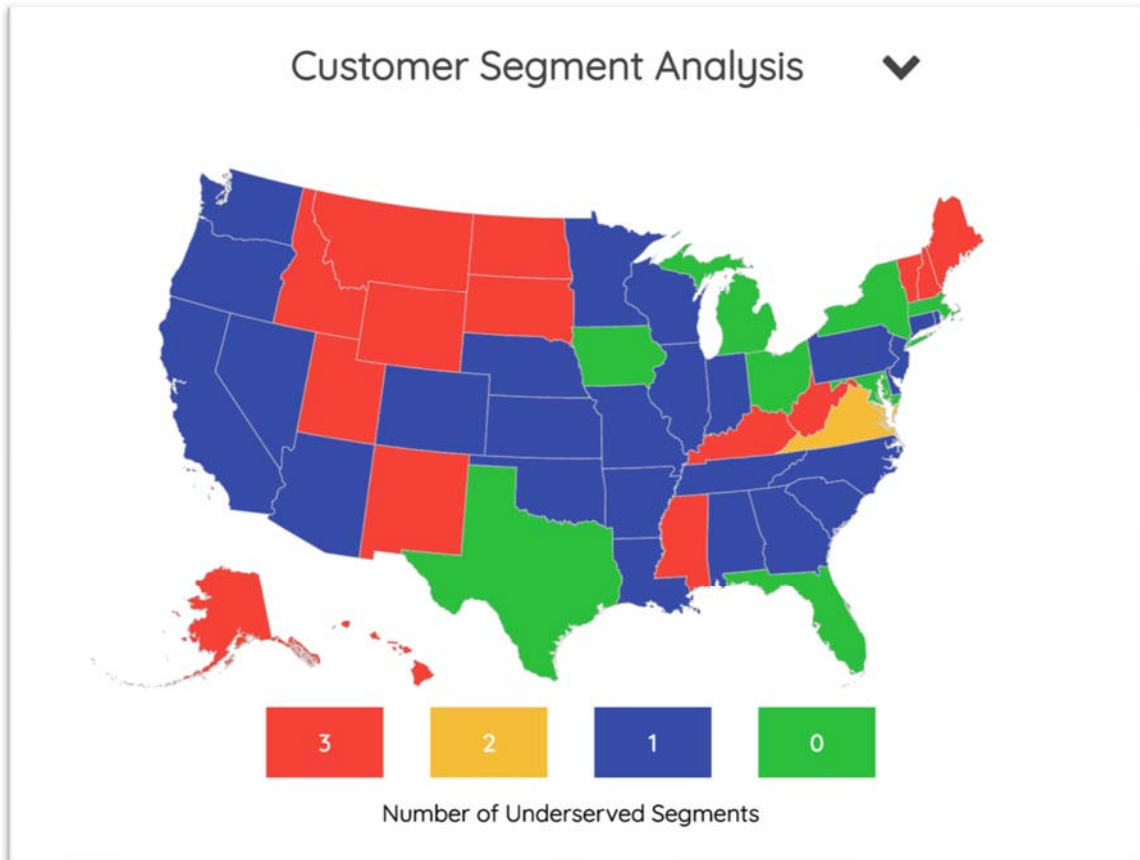
## Last Quarter Employee Accounts

Employee	Accounts		
	A (%)	B (%)	C (%)
Melli Liu	16.1	39.3	44.6
Mark Basadur	18.3	38.0	43.6
Rachel Morrison	16.1	39.3	44.6
John Hilbrandt	16.1	39.3	44.6

### Customer segment analysis report

This report will indicate how many of the customer segments (A, B, or C accounts) are underserved in each state. The report does not tell you which of the segments is underserved, it only indicates the number of segments that would benefit from a higher number of sales reps available to them.

Note also that this report is taking the perspective of the customer. For example, a green color does not mean that your firm serves customers adequately in a state, it only means that the customers in that state are being served well, perhaps by your firm, or perhaps by one or more competitors.



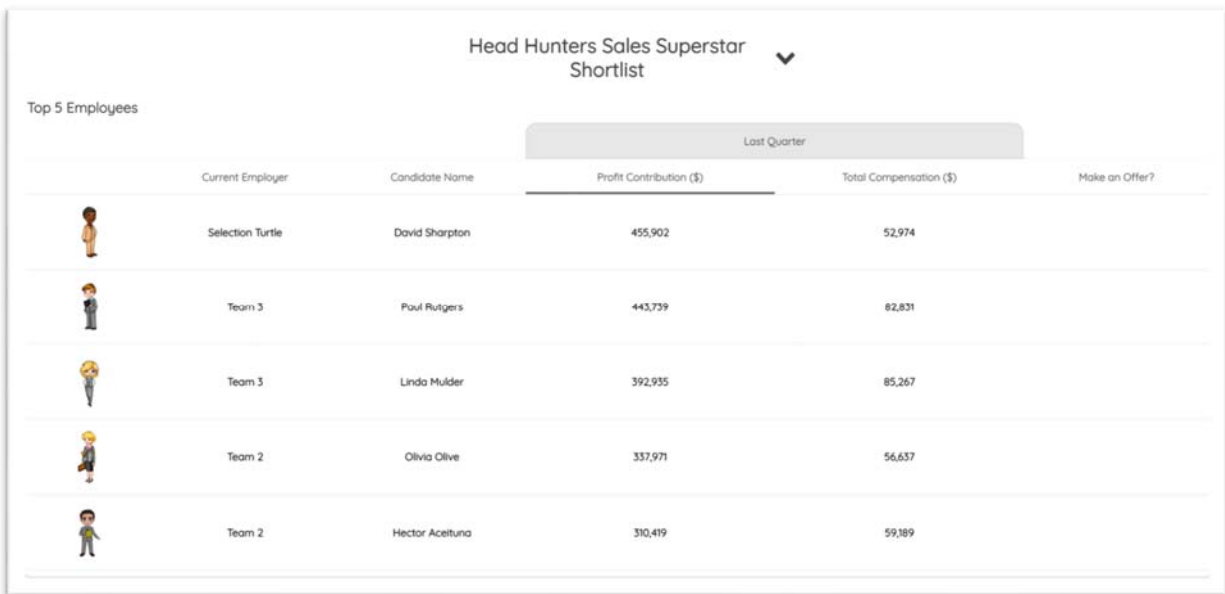







## Headhunter's Sales Superstar Shortlist

When you are considering extending your sales force by hiring a salesperson who is currently employed by one of your competitors, the Head hunter's Sales Superstar Shortlist is the first step you have to take. This report comes at a price tag of \$10,000. Unlike most other reports, the results are available instantaneously, in time for you to make a decision.

The report provides you with the names of the five best performing salespeople in the market, their resumes and their current employer. As part of the Head hunter's services, they are willing to get you in touch with the candidate of your choice so you can make a salary offer. Read the section about hiring salespeople for more information on additional fees.

This service is only available during the same quarter in which you ordered the report. Therefore, the information in this report truly comes on a use-it-or-lose-it basis.



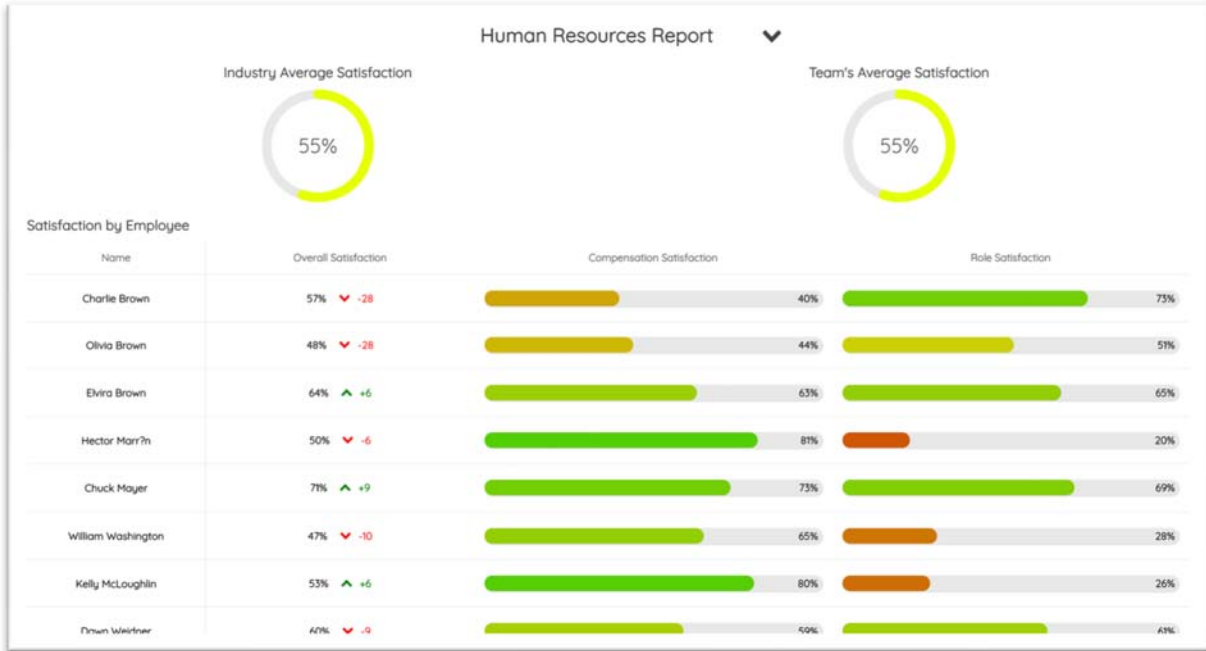
Head Hunters Sales Superstar Shortlist					
Top 5 Employees					
Last Quarter					
Current Employer	Candidate Name	Profit Contribution (\$)	Total Compensation (\$)	Make an Offer?	
	Selection Turtle	David Sharpton	455,902	52,974	
	Team 3	Paul Rutgers	443,739	82,831	
	Team 3	Linda Mulder	392,935	85,267	
	Team 2	Olivia Olive	337,971	56,637	
	Team 2	Hector Acetuna	310,419	59,189	

## Human Resource report

Caveat Emptor's Human Resources branch can also survey your sales force to find out how satisfied they are with their jobs. This report costs \$750 per salesperson for data collection and analysis, meaning that firms with larger sales forces have to pay more for this report.

The HR report provides information about the satisfaction levels of your employees versus that of the industry. Feedback is split in satisfaction with the overall compensation, and feedback about how satisfied everyone is with their role.

Through years of experience, they have designed a questionnaire that is remarkably good at finding out the true satisfaction of salespeople, without too much bias being introduced by socially desirable answer patterns. Because of the vast experience of Caveat Emptor, they are also able to show you the industry average salesperson satisfaction so you can benchmark your own performance.



### Customer satisfaction report

This report tells you how satisfied your customers are. The graphical report is split for A-accounts, B-accounts, and C-accounts.

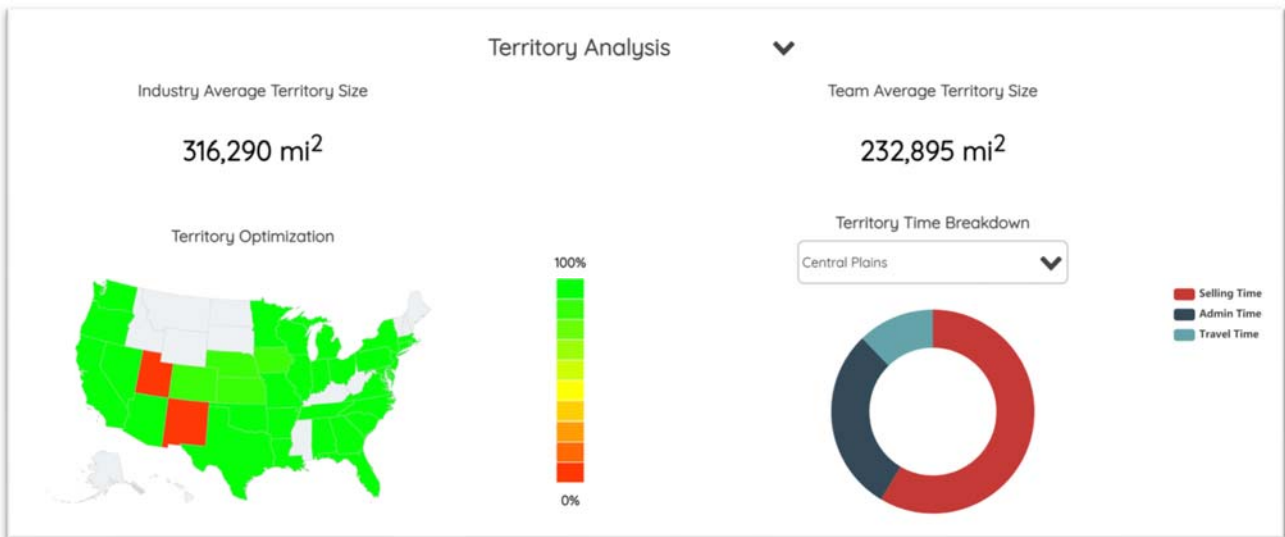


## Market potential forecast

For only \$2,000 Caveat Emptor can research the market potential for the next quarter for you and format the report based on your current territory structure. So, if you purchase a report this round, it will provide you with a forecast before you have to make next quarter's decisions. The report provides you with the forecasted numbers per state and territory.

## Territory analysis

This report analyzes the design of your sales territories. It reports on the average size and traveling time for your salespersons per territory and provides the nation-wide average of the territories of your competitors.



## Competitive Insights

Your boss told you Caveat Emptor also produces a special kind of market research that they euphemistically refer to as a Competitive Insights Report, but is perhaps best described as corporate espionage. If you purchase this report, you will have to specify the competitor you want to investigate. The next quarter, you will receive a document that exactly describes the decisions made by this competitor, as well as a copy of the research reports that competitor ordered.

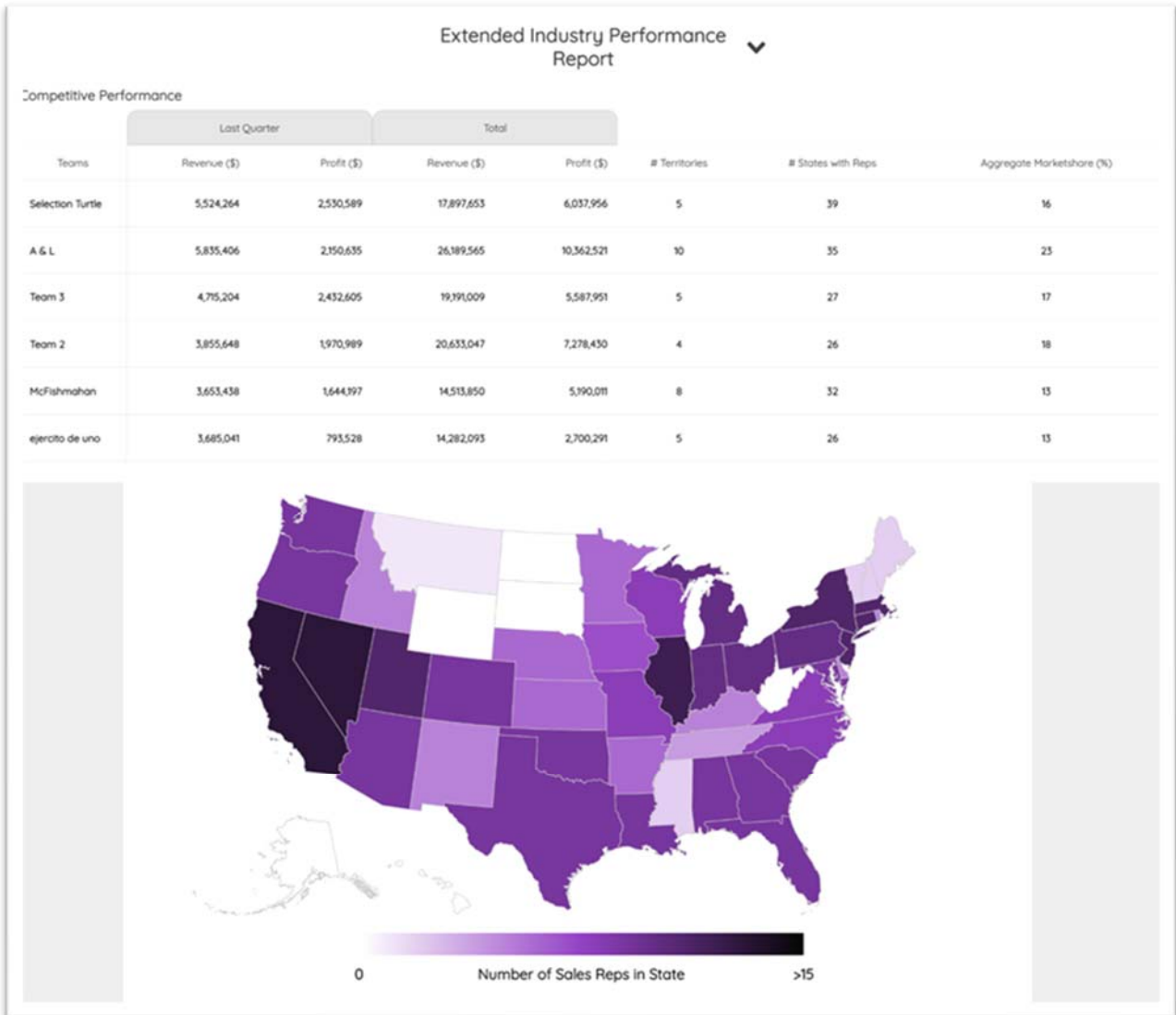
The fee for this report is \$30,000, which needs to be paid in unmarked \$100 bills. Jessica, the sales controller, can help you with this, but to compensate her for the trouble, she always adds another \$200 to your cost center for dinner with her husband.

This report is covered by Caveat Emptor's Don't Ask Don't Tell policy. If you do not ask how they get the information, they won't tell. Your firm's general counsel has advised you it is very wise not to ask.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Corporate espionage serves as a didactical tool in this game, as it offers the opportunity to learn from those teams that are most successful. Corporate espionage obviously also exists outside this simulation game. However, it is important to realize that there are ethical and potentially legal implications to using such information in the

## Extended Industry Performance Report

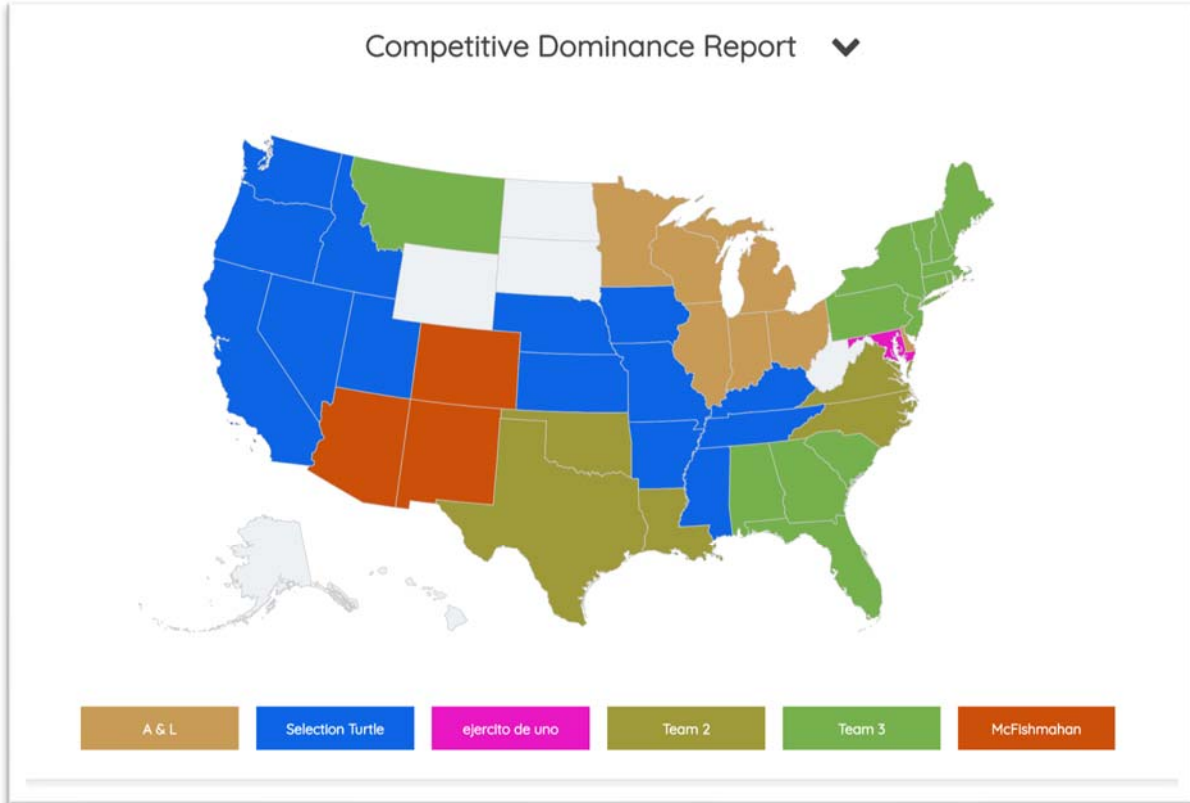
This report provides you insights into the territory structure of players in the industry, the number of sales reps active in each state, and the market share of your competitors.



real world. See for example a unique settlement in 2001 between Proctor & Gamble and Unilever.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/07/business/p-g-said-to-agree-to-pay-unilever-10-million-in-spying-case.html>

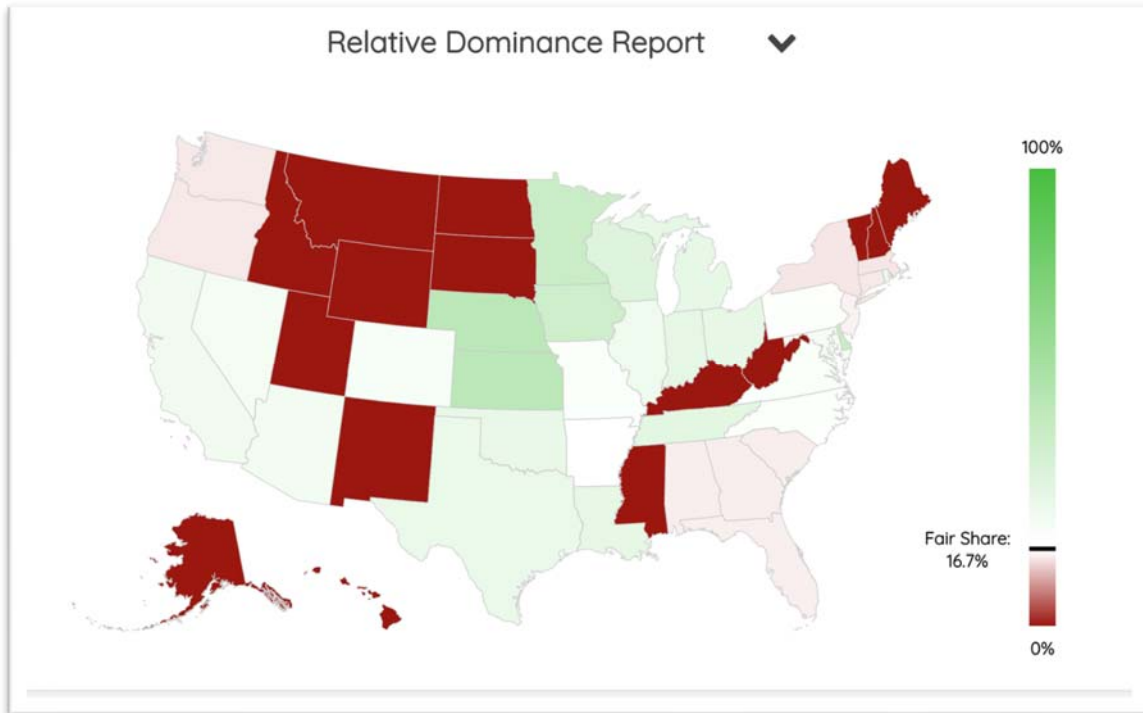
### Competitive Dominance Report

The competitive dominance reports informs you which firm is the market leader in a given state. It's based on the observations of your sales force and gives you an overview of the number of competing salespersons your sales force encounters in each territory.



### Relative Dominance Report

The relative dominance report tells you how well your team is doing in a given state. Green colors mean you do better than your fair share. Red colors mean that you do worse than your fair share in that market. The fair share is determined by dividing 100% by the number of competitors. So in a game with five teams, you need to have more than 20% market share to be performing above your fair share.



### Sales Forecast Report

You can ask each salesperson to report how many phone calls they made this month, how many appointments they set up, how many presentations they made, how many negotiations took place, and how many sales they closed.

Although this information should in theory be available from the CRM system, you have realized over time that unless you ask your sales force explicitly, not all salespeople enter all their activities, especially those early in the pipeline, in the CRM system.

As a larger sales force takes more time and resources to survey, the cost of this report is \$250 per employee surveyed. It is possible to only survey a portion of your sales force. In the sample report below, the sales manager opted to ask only three salespersons for their input, and these salespersons represented 19% of last quarter's sales. Obviously, this would be cheaper to do, but may not be as accurate if you extrapolate.

Sales Forecast Report			
Sales Forecast by Employee			
Employee	Assigned Territory	Next Quarter Sales Forecast (\$)	Last Quarter Sales Percentage (%)
Steve Rayman	Pacific NW	65,343	3
Charlie Brown	Midwest	203,021	8
William Washington	Midwest	185,765	8
Total Next Quarter Sales Forecast		Total Percentage of Last Quarter Sales	
\$ 454,129		19 %	
<small>This forecast does not include the effects of any changes in competitive pressure, any changes in territory structure, or any new sales reps that you may have hired.</small>			

Other aspects to consider when evaluating this data:

- Experienced salespersons are typically very knowledgeable about the seasonality pattern and market growth. However, their forecast will be made before you make any new decisions for the next round. In other words, it is based on the situation as it was at the beginning of the quarter. For example, if you decide to give a salesperson a multi-day training in a quarter, the number of days the salesperson actually ends up selling in that quarter is less than he/she anticipated when reporting their personal forecast.
- Similarly, if you increase or decrease the size of the salesperson's territory during the current decision period, this territory adjustment will not have been incorporated in their personal forecast. Instead, the numbers they provide to you will be based on how the territory structure originally was at the beginning of the round.
- The salespeople in Sim-u-sell do not fully understand the new product adoption curve that is described in the market growth section in this manual. As a result, their sales forecast in the first three quarters of the simulation is unreliable. However, once the market matures, this is no longer a problem.
- Finally, unknown to you and your salesperson are decisions that the other competitors are making for the current quarter. For example, if a competitor retreats from a territory, it's likely the salesperson will catch a break and sell more than forecasted. But if one or multiple new competing salespersons enter your salesperson's territory, it may be much harder to reach the forecasted amount.

## Certificate of Completion

Upon successful completion of the simulation, your instructor has the option to award you a Certificate of Completion (see the sample below). You can see in the video in the link on how to incorporate the certificate in your LinkedIn profile <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-htAdvBUlpw>





## Credits and disclaimer

Sim-U-Sell is designed by Dr. Frederik Beuk and Tom Czerny. The images of the salespersons are designed by Emily Zieroth. Coding is done by Samuel Livingston, Simon Livingston, and Erich Berger.

The software is offered “As Is”. Although the highest efforts have been taken to ensure operationability and accuracy, no warranties to either are made. Any similarities between salespeople in the game and any living individuals is coincidental. All copyrights are reserved.

**Frederik Beuk, Ph.D.** is an associate professor of marketing at the University of Akron’s Fisher Institute for Professional Selling. As a sales coach, professor Beuk’s students have competed and won at the highest levels of both national and international sales competitions, such as the National Collegiate Sales Competition, the World Collegiate Sales Open, the Sales Decathlon, and the Baylor Business Negotiation Competition.

The University of Akron is an AACSB accredited business school, and a founding member of the University Sales Center Alliance. The Fisher Institute is home to one of the oldest academic sales programs in the United States, and has one of the largest sales labs in the nation. In addition, the Fisher institute houses the first dedicated sales biometrics laboratory in the United States, where researchers conduct sales studies involving physiological responses.

Prior to joining academia, professor Beuk worked in the marketing and sales unit for Unilever in the Netherlands, Belgium and Chile. He has taught courses in professional selling, sales management, and business negotiations at the undergraduate, graduate, and executive level.

**Tom Czerny, MBA** holds a Master’s in Business Administration and a Master’s in Information System Management from the University of Akron. He also earned a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. Tom aspires to own his own sustainable online business, while continuing to consult entrepreneurs and business owners on how to grow and develop their brands. He enjoys spending time with family and friends, biking, and reading, and is most passionate about entrepreneurship, self-development, and discovering niche applications for technology that can be made into viable revenue generating businesses.



