GETTING STARTED WITH \textit{THRESHOLD COMPETITOR}

\textbf{INTRODUCTION}

Below we specify the computer requirements for using \textit{Threshold Competitor}. We also tell you how to login and register so that you can use the \textit{Threshold Competitor} software.

\textbf{EQUIPMENT NEEDED}

In order to use the \textit{Threshold Competitor} web programs, you will need a computer with Internet Explorer version 6.0 or higher that is connected to the internet. If you experience difficulty opening the program, you may have to turn off any “pop-up” blockers and configure your browser to accept cookies. There are also features in the program that allow you to send certain files as email attachments. If you intend to use these features and are using your school’s email system, ask your instructor to have the greatsims.com web site “white listed” with your school’s IT department in charge of screening incoming emails attachments so that the attachment is “scrubbed” from your email, or delayed in its delivery to your email address. Finally, although optional, we advise that you use a printer so that you can generate printouts of your quarterly results.

\textbf{PREPARING TO REGISTER}

You need two items before you can register to use the \textit{Threshold Competitor} programs.

1. \textbf{A company code provided by your instructor.} The company code will assign you to one of the companies operating in the industry for the Team version of \textit{Threshold Competitor}. Even if you will not be using the Team version, you need a company code to create your data file on the server’s \textit{Threshold Competitor} database.

2. \textbf{Proof of purchase.} You can pay to access \textit{Threshold Competitor} in one of two ways. One way is to purchase a participant’s manual that includes a valid Activation Code through a bookstore. You will need to do this \textit{prior} to beginning the registration process. \textit{Please note that if the activation number you use has been used previously, it is invalid. You will NOT be able to use it to register for using the programs!} The other way is to use a credit card to pay online as part of the registration process.

\textbf{REGISTERING TO USE THE \textit{THRESHOLD COMPETITOR} SOFTWARE}

Once you have received a Company Code from your instructor and either purchased a manual with an Activation Code at a bookstore or have a credit card ready for online purchase, you can begin the registration process. To \textit{register} the \textit{Threshold Competitor} programs, follow these steps:

1. \textbf{Connect to the Internet.} If you are continuously connected to the Internet through a cable modem or DSL access, go to Step 2. If you use a dial-up modem to connect with the Internet, connect now.

2. \textbf{Open Internet Explorer.} Open Internet Explorer by selecting Start, then Programs, then Internet Explorer. Or if you have the Internet Explorer icon showing on your desk top or task bar, just click on that icon.

3. \textbf{Open the \textit{Threshold Competitor} Web Site.} Enter the web for \textit{Threshold Competitor} in the address bar for Internet Explorer. The web address is \texttt{http://www.competitor.greatsims.com}. Once you do this, a screen like that shown in Exhibit 1 will appear on your monitor.
4. Register to use *Threshold Competitor*. Select the “Click Here” link to begin the registration process. A screen will appear on your monitor asking you to choose between registering with an Activation Code or a credit card. After selecting one of those two options, a screen similar to that in Exhibit 2 will appear on your monitor.

   a. Registering with an Activation Code. Enter a valid activation code and a company code, plus other information as shown in Exhibit 2. As stated above, you can receive an activation code by purchasing a *Threshold Competitor* manual through a bookstore. Your instructor will provide you with your company code. Notice that your login name and password must be 6-10 characters.

   b. Registering Online with a credit card. If you chose to pay online with a credit card, the Activation Code entry box shown in Exhibit 2 will not be displayed. Enter the company code your instructor will give you, plus the other required information. Notice that your login name and password must be 6-10 characters.

5. Remember your Login Name and Password. Once you have successfully registered to use *Threshold Competitor*, you will not need to do so again. You will only need to enter your login name and password. While your login name and password will be emailed to the email address you supplied when registering, do not forget what you entered. If you do, you will need to contact your instructor to find out what they are. You cannot open the programs without *both* your login name and password.
SELECTING THE THRESHOLD COMPETITOR PROGRAM

Once you have logged in to Threshold Competitor, you will see a screen like that shown in Exhibit 3. There are two versions of Threshold Competitor with which you can work; Team and Solo. They are two versions of the same program. The decisions you enter and the reports created by the programs are identical. In the Team program, your competition will be companies managed by other simulation participants. In the Solo program, your competition will be nine companies managed by the computer.

Exhibit 3

Threshold Competitor
Select Simulation Type

Team Simulation
Compete against your classmates

Solo Practice Simulation
Compete against your computer for practice

Your instructor may also choose to have you take an exam using the Solo version of Threshold Competitor. If that happens, a third option called “Solo Exam Simulation” will appear on the main screen. It will look like that shown in Exhibit 4. The only difference between these two programs is that for Solo Practice you can restart the game from the beginning as many times as you wish. With Solo Exam, however, you will have only one pass through the quarters you will manage your company. You cannot restart the game, as you can in Solo Practice.

Exhibit 4

Threshold Competitor
Select Simulation Type

Team Simulation
Compete against your classmates

Solo Practice Simulation
Compete against your computer for practice

Solo Exam Simulation
Compete against the computer using the parameter set by your Administrator

Whether you will be using the team or the solo version of Threshold Competitor in your course, we recommend that you use the Solo Practice Simulation as a tool to learn the fundamentals of working with the Threshold Competitor program. Use the Solo Practice Simulation to try out each step as you read about it in your manual. Do not worry about what decisions you enter. Any of the decisions you enter now can be changed later. If you cannot get access to a computer as you read the manual, you will still be able to understand the information presented. Read the text and look at the sample screens in the manual to see what you will see on the computer monitor. Then try things out on a computer as soon as possible.
ACCESS TO THE PARTICIPANT’S MANUAL

To view and print the Threshold Competitor Participant’s manual, go to www.greatsims.com. Next select the Competitor link on the left side of the screen. Then scroll down and select the link for downloading the student manual.