



FOR EDUCATORS

Instructor Guide

Run a competitive classroom market, control the pace, debrief real student decisions and turn each quarter into assessment evidence.

ACADEMIC MODE

4 OR 8 QUARTERS

2-10 TEAMS

FREE

Recommended starting point

Explore the Demo Course first, then run one disposable Practice Round before official Quarter 1. The practice result can be debriefed and reset so interface learning does not affect assessed performance.

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What Markup Markets is

Markup Markets is a competitive business simulation for marketing, strategy and introductory business courses. Student teams manage wireless-headphone companies across 4 or 8 simulated quarters. Product, price, advertising, production, quality, distribution, research and investment decisions interact inside the same evolving market.

Academic Mode adds persistent classes, team membership, a disposable Practice Round, autosaved decisions, instructor-controlled deadlines and result release, management rationales, audit and decision history, instructor analytics, classroom debriefs, printable reports, cumulative reports, XLSX/CSV export and optional final team reflection.

The first-class workflow

1	2	3	4	5
Explore	Create	Practice	Debrief	Compete
Open the Demo Course and Instructor Tour.	Choose 4 or 8 quarters and create teams.	Run one disposable decision cycle.	Discuss outcomes, then reset cleanly.	Open official Q1 and control pacing/results.

Recommended academic setup

For most courses, use the 8-quarter format with standard starting capital, standard research and product-development rules, management rationale required, one Practice Round, optional or required final reflection, and instructor-controlled result release. Use 4 quarters for a workshop or shorter module.

Before class

- Open Academic Mode and explore the Demo Course.
- Complete the Instructor Tour.
- Create the class and choose 4 or 8 quarters.
- Share the class code and team codes; confirm membership, then lock teams.
- Run Practice Round if enabled, debrief, then Reset & Begin Official Game.
- Set the first official deadline and open Q1 decisions.

Students make connected decisions, not isolated quiz answers.

The simulation is strongest when students must explain how several business choices fit together. The objective is not to discover a hidden formula, but to form a strategy, observe the market response and adapt.

Learning objective	What students practice
Segmentation & targeting	Identify meaningful customer differences and choose whom to serve.
Positioning	Connect product, customer, price and marketing message.
Pricing	Balance margin, volume, market share and competitor response.
Forecasting	Translate uncertain demand expectations into production decisions.
Marketing allocation	Evaluate whether advertising investment creates enough incremental demand.
Research	Decide when additional information is worth paying for.
Operations	Manage capacity, defects, inventory, shortages and excess stock.
Financial thinking	Connect revenue, costs, cash, profit and future investment.
Adaptation	Change strategy when market evidence contradicts assumptions.

Pedagogical principle

Decision -> reasoning -> outcome -> debrief -> adaptation. Management rationale and decision history let you discuss thinking as well as results.

Student quarterly cycle

- Review released company reports and Market Information.
- Discuss target customer, positioning and resource allocation as a team.
- Enter decisions; Academic Mode autosaves work server-side.
- Write the management rationale when required and submit.
- After the instructor releases results, interpret outcomes and revise the next plan.

CLASSROOM WORKFLOW

Practice before performance

The Practice Round is designed to separate interface learning from assessed performance. Teams complete one full decision cycle, receive a disposable result and can discuss what happened. The instructor then resets every team into official Q1 from the same starting conditions.

PRACTICE	DEBRIEF	RESET	OFFICIAL Q1
Students submit a complete plan and experience the market once.	Discuss trade-offs, surprises and what teams would change.	Practice decisions and results are discarded from official state.	All teams start official competition from equal conditions.

Instructor workflow

- Monitor Not Started, In Progress, Submitted and Late teams from Overview.
- Close decisions at the deadline; reopen individual submissions when a correction is appropriate.
- Process the quarter, then inspect Industry Analytics and Quarter Debrief before students see results.
- Release results to every team simultaneously when you are ready to discuss them.
- Use Decision History, management rationales and the Activity Log when reviewing student choices or resolving disputes.

A 10-15 minute debrief

01	What changed in the market?
02	Which company decision appears most consequential?
03	Which result was surprising, and why?
04	What should management change next quarter?

Use Presentation Mode for projector-friendly market share, revenue, profit and company value. Anonymous Company A/B/C labels can help keep discussion focused on decisions rather than team identity.

TEACHING FORMATS

Use the same simulation at different teaching speeds.

Format	Suggested use
90-minute session	4 quarters with short decision windows, brief debriefs and an accelerated final challenge.
4-week module	Week 1 Product I/Q1; Week 2 pricing/research; Week 3 competition/inventory; Week 4 final Q4 + reflection.
8-week module	Approximately one quarter per week, tied to weekly marketing/business topics.
Semester project	8 quarters with richer rationales, cumulative reports and final presentation/reflection.

Instructor controls you will use most

Submission state See whether each team is Not Started, In Progress, Submitted or Late.	Deadlines Open and close decision windows and move the class forward when ready.
Reopen Allow an individual team to correct an accidental submission without resetting the class.	Process vs release Process the market first, inspect results, then release when the teaching moment is right.
Reports & export Use printable reports and XLSX/CSV records for review, grading or classroom research.	Final reflection Collect a structured team reflection at the end when enabled.

The quarter ends. The teaching material does not.

Markup Markets can turn each processed quarter into printable evidence for student reflection, instructor assessment and class debriefs. The previews below are actual Quarter 1 examples generated by the simulation.

1ST QUARTER

Nectar Audio Business Report

Auto-filled private A4 report - all information available to this company after the quarter

ENDING CASH	QUARTER PROFIT	REVENUE	MARKET SHARE
\$1,376,463.20	\$868,963.20	\$1,376,451.50	27.37%
UNITS SOLD	RETAIL PRICE	AWARENESS	SATISFACTION
12,556	\$130.00	29.71/100	63.81/100

Market Position & Brand Image

Retail price	\$130.00	Target segment	Students
Marketing message	Built to Last	Overall market share	27.37%
Revenue / unit	\$109.62	Target segment share	49.90%
Awareness	29.71/100	Reputation	57.51/100
Satisfaction	63.81/100		
Adjusted Brand Image (Brand)	63.81/100		
Review rating	4.00/5	Word of mouth	1.00/5
Brand influence	-0.0%		

Financial Performance

Starting cash	\$507,500.00	Revenue	\$1,376,451.50
Manufacturing	\$499,886.30	Product development	\$0.00
Advertising	\$7,500.00	Quality control	\$0.00
Research	\$0.00	Factory upgrade	\$0.00
Total expenses	\$507,486.30	Quarterly profit	\$868,963.20
Ending cash	\$1,376,463.20		

Submitted Decision - Auto-filled

Decision	Actual	Decision	Actual
Advertising	\$7,500.00	Manufacturing	\$500,000.00
Quality control	\$0.00	Factory upgrade	\$0.00
DTG / Wholesale	75% / 25%	Research	None
Competitor target	None	Campaign slogan	1.00/5
Current product	Atlas	Future product R&D	\$0.00
Product launch	\$0.00		

Product Strategy

Current product	Atlas	Quarter R&D	\$0.00
Project status	Product 1 tested for all four quarters	Launch cost	\$0.00
Feature	Current Level	Next Target	Change at Launch
Sound Quality	3.10	-	-
Battery Life	2.90	-	-
Comfort	3.00	-	-
ANC	1.90	-	-
Microphone Quality	1.80	-	-
Durability	2.70	-	-
Design	3.00	-	-

MARKUP MARKETS - Private Company Report

Nectar Audio - Page 1

1ST QUARTER

Public Market Report

Public market results - A4 PDF generated automatically after the quarter

POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS	UNITS SOLD	CONVERSION	NO PURCHASE	SUPPLY SHORTFALL
84,000	45,882	54.62%	25,812	12,306

Public Market Ranking

#	Company	Retail price	Units sold	Market share	Rating	Satisfaction	Awareness	Reputation
1	Nectar Audio	\$130.00	12,556	27.37%	4.00/5	63.8	29.7	57.5
2	Vanta Sound	\$119.00	8,987	19.61%	4.07/5	64.6	33.4	57.7
3	Orion Audio	\$148.00	7,519	16.61%	3.96/5	61.9	32.9	57.8
4	Forge Acoustics	\$212.00	6,188	13.49%	3.60/5	58.3	32.5	54.5
5	Ember Labs	\$243.00	5,803	12.91%	3.76/5	58.2	31.8	55.1
6	Atlas Sound	\$279.00	4,589	10.02%	3.75/5	60.3	32.5	56.8

Customer Population

Exact segment population and quarter-to-quarter shifts are not shown in this public report.

Public Reviews

Company	Customer reviews
Nectar Audio	The product stands out for its design. - Its microphone quality is less competitive than the rest of the package. - Customers are very satisfied with the overall ownership experience and value.
Vanta Sound	The product stands out for its design. - Its comfort is less competitive than the rest of the package. - Customers are very satisfied with the overall ownership experience and value.
Orion Audio	The product stands out for its battery life. - Its sound quality is less competitive than the rest of the package. - It offers impressive value compared with competing products.
Forge Acoustics	The product stands out for its comfort. - Its durability is less competitive than the rest of the package. - The price is difficult to justify against competing alternatives.
Ember Labs	The product stands out for its sound quality. - Its noise cancellation is less competitive than the rest of the package. - The price is difficult to justify against competing alternatives.
Atlas Sound	The product stands out for its sound quality. - Its comfort is less competitive than the rest of the package. - The price is difficult to justify against competing alternatives.

MARKUP MARKETS - Private Company Report

Public Market - Page 1

Private Company Report

Team-specific financials, market position, submitted decisions, product strategy, manufacturing/quality, segment performance, customer experience, break-even analysis and decision analysis.

Public Market Report

Shared market KPIs, company ranking and public customer reviews while withholding selected private market signals.

Assessment suggestion

Do not grade only the winning company. Performance is useful evidence, but strategic reasoning and adaptation are often more educationally important.

Component	Example weight
Strategy and coherence	25%
Use of evidence	20%
Adaptation across quarters	20%
Management rationales	15%
Final performance	10%
Final reflection / presentation	10%

What to watch as students play

Metric	Interpretation
Market share	Percentage of actual unit sales captured; not the same as profitability.
Revenue	Sales value before operating expenses.
Profit	Revenue after simulated operating costs.
Cash	Resources available for future decisions.
Inventory	Finished units carried after the quarter; excess stock can tie up capital and age.
Awareness / reputation	Market recognition and accumulated perception of the company/product.
Customer satisfaction	Recent ownership experience and value perception.
Company value	The simulation's summary valuation measure.

Exact formulas are intentionally undisclosed

Students should understand relationships and make decisions under uncertainty rather than solve the simulation algebraically.

Troubleshooting

- Lost connection: Academic Mode restores the server-autosaved draft.
- Accidental submission: reopen that team's work before processing.
- Wrong team: move the student through Team Management.
- Deadline change: extend it before processing the quarter.
- Dispute or confusion: review Activity Log and Decision History.
- Never delete the server runtime folder during an active course; it contains persistent class data.

Privacy & accessibility

Academic Mode stores the WordPress identity needed for classroom participation, class/team membership, decision drafts/submissions, rationales, timestamps, simulation results, reports and enabled reflections. It does not require WordPress passwords. Use the in-product privacy/support request for account or retention questions during pilots.

Laptops are recommended, but student decisions and reports are responsive for phones and tablets. The interface includes keyboard-focus indicators and reduced-motion support; statuses use visible text rather than colour alone.

QUICK REFERENCE

Instructor checklist

01	Explore Demo Course
02	Take Instructor Tour
03	Create Class and choose 4 or 8 quarters
04	Invite teams and confirm membership
05	Lock membership
06	Design Product I
07	Run Practice Round (optional)
08	Debrief practice result
09	Reset & Begin Official Game
10	Open Q1 and set deadline
11	Monitor team status
12	Close decisions and process quarter
13	Review analytics / debrief
14	Release results
15	Repeat official quarters
16	Collect final reflection when enabled
17	Export reports / class data

Pilot feedback matters

After the first class, ask what was confusing, which screens were most useful and what would prevent future use. Academic Mode includes built-in instructor and student feedback forms so early classroom experience can shape the next release.

Support & resources

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