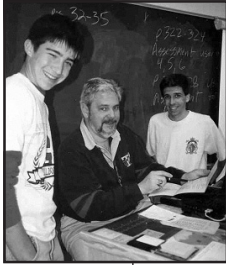


# CASE study

## GoVenture “Hooks” High School Students



*“Kids today are grabbed by the graphics, the animations, and the look and feel of the GoVenture interface. It speaks to them,” says Michael Perry. “But the interface Mediaspark developed,” he hastens to add, “is also appropriate for adults who use the program for business training.”*

### Michael Perry

Business Education Teacher  
Chapel Hill High School  
Douglasville, Georgia

#### The End User

Michael Perry, 42, is a full-time business education teacher at Chapel Hill High School in Douglasville, Georgia in suburban Atlanta. He also teaches business at the Coles College of Business at Kennesaw State University. In 1999, Perry received one of three state-wide Honor Teacher awards in the middle-school category sponsored by the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* newspaper. Later that year, he was recognized as Innovative Teacher of the Year by the Phi Delta Kappa Education Fraternity of the State University of West Georgia.

#### The Challenge

After teaching business communications and computer skills for 12 years, Michael Perry was looking for a multimedia simulation game that would not only engage his high school students, but also show them what it's like to be an entrepreneur.

“Not long after I first started teaching, I brought in a rather simple program that let them run their own lemonade stand,” Perry recalls. “They could see who would make the most profit, based on pricing, weather conditions (the rain clouds would appear and disappear), and I saw how hooked they were. Since that day, I’ve been hooked on them using technology. Over the years, I’d been looking for something more sophisticated on the graphics end, to upgrade that lemonade stand. The more realistic you can make it, the more they enjoy it and learn from it.”

#### The Solution

It was at the National Education Computer Conference in Atlanta, in the summer of 2000, that Perry first came across *GoVenture*. “I thought, ‘This is what I’ve been looking for,’” he recalls, adding that the game combines deep educational content with engaging interactivity.

● An award-winning teacher, Michael Perry teaches business education in high school.

● He was looking for a multi-media simulation game that would engage and instruct his students in entrepreneurship.

● Years ago, his students had been hooked on an interactive game in which they ran a lemonade stand. Now, he was looking for the next generation business simulation game.

● He spotted *GoVenture* at an education conference in Atlanta.

## Using GoVenture in the Classroom

Perry introduced *GoVenture* in late November, 2000 to 4 classes of 28 ninth, tenth, and eleventh graders in his Microcomputer Applications course. While writing their own business plans, his students learn and demonstrate their ability to use PowerPoint, Excel, and Microsoft Word. Having completed the business plan project, the next step was to ground their theoretical understanding in actual experience.

"I had installed the *GoVenture* icon on their desktop," Perry relates, "and it caught their attention. Before I even assigned it, some had already discovered it, and they were enthralled. You could tell they were excited with what they were doing. I said to myself, 'I have found the right tool.'"

Once the students set up shop within the game, they immediately began comparing to see whose business was doing better than the others. They found out the hard way how important it was to have reliable employees because they had to fill in when an employee failed to show up for work."

## Learning Outcomes

"It's a high-quality multimedia simulation that fills in the knowledge they don't have," observes Perry. "That's why I use it as a capstone. As an educational product, it ties everything together."

Asked what learning outcomes he attributes to *GoVenture*, Perry replies: "Balance. They see it's important in life to balance what you're doing. One of the things about the newer generation is they've already experienced much more stress about how to balance things, than we ever did. So here, they're getting a reinforcement; the real world is like this, but there are ways to handle the stress."

For Perry, another key learning outcome is teamwork. "This is something we don't teach much in school," he says, "but the main reason people get fired from their first job is because they can't work with other people. Here, they learn they're not doing everything by themselves. In the simulation, they're having to hire and delegate work. As entrepreneurs, each of them is the head of a virtual team. This reinforces the actual team skills that they learned in the business plan project." He adds that they're also learning what it means to take care of customers and how to price a product, as well as basic business terminology.

In addition to his busy schedule of teaching a full course load at high school and teaching two nights per week at Kennesaw State University, Perry has promoted *GoVenture* at two conferences for Alabama, Georgia and Florida teachers. The three questions that are normally asked are: 1) Can I apply this to my classroom?, 2) Is it easy to use?, and 3) Will it hold the students' attention? "It passes all three questions," he reports.

Michael Perry has moved on from the lemonade stand—and now he's spreading the word.

**by Andrew Safer, Freelance Writer**



*GoVenture - Live the Life of an Entrepreneur* has won numerous awards in the United States and Canada and was recently given a 5-star rating by PC Magazine. *GoVenture* is available on CD-ROM and can be run on both PC and Macintosh computers. The program is supported by a comprehensive set of Instructor/Student print materials and a companion website. Contact us today for more information about *GoVenture* and our highly affordable pricing options.

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- *Perry's students write business plans while learning PowerPoint, Excel, and Microsoft Word. He introduced GoVenture to give them practical business experience.*
- *Students engaged with the game immediately.*
- *Soon they began to understand the importance of reliability in the workforce because they had to cover for employees who didn't show.*
- *Students learned the importance - and difficulty - of balancing their work and personal lives.*
- *A key learning outcome is teamwork. They learn they have to work with others.*
- *They also learn about taking care of customers, pricing products, and business terminology.*
- *Today, Michael Perry spreads the word about GoVenture at teachers' conferences.*