



Micro Business

Software User Guide



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GoVenture[®] Micro Business

Software User Guide

1. Welcome



This Instructor Guide is provided to help you use MediaSpark's GoVenture Micro Business simulation in your classroom or computer lab. If you are not already familiar with the award-winning GoVenture business simulations, we invite you to visit the GoVenture.NETwork at www.goventure.net or to contact us at 1-800-331-2282.

An electronic version of this document is also available on the GoVenture.NETwork.



2. GoVenture Micro Business

What is the GoVenture Micro Business Simulation

Learn the basics of business—in an easy and fun learning simulation!

GoVenture Micro Business is an easy-to-use program that introduces you to the experience of running your own micro business. It's the perfect first step for youth or adults who want to start with the basics of running a very small business. It also offers the opportunity to apply concepts in other subjects such as mathematics, finance, career, or general life skills in a fun business setting.

Like a flight simulator for business, GoVenture Micro Business puts you in the role of the owner of a mobile business cart, where you must decide what products to sell and where and when to sell them in order to maximize profits. It's easy-to-use, visual, interactive, and exciting!

Unlike any book, course or seminar, GoVenture Micro Business enables you to gain years of experience in minutes! Manage all the key aspects of your own virtual business – price your products, buy inventory, advertise, review financial statements, hire employees, manage schedules, and more. Monitor your success by evaluating profitability and overall business results.

Try your business skills on your own or against your friends and classmates. Gain practical experience so you have the confidence to explore starting and running your own small business!

What Makes GoVenture Micro Business Unique

GoVenture simulations enable “learning-by-doing”, an approach that cognitive scientists have identified as the fastest and most effective way for human beings to learn. GoVenture simulations immerse the learner in a highly visual and interactive environment in such rewarding ways that learners feel intellectually and emotionally engaged in the experience — as if they were personally living it.

GoVenture Micro Business offers several key advantages:

1. A fun and easy-to-use learning experience to learn the basics of running a small business.
2. An educational tool designed to deliver the entertainment value of a game.
3. Helpful paper-based resources that complement and support the learning experience.

GoVenture Micro Business is designed as a tool for youth and adults, to be used as a learning program on its own, or to complement other learning materials, courses,

programs, and curriculum. It can provide a valuable learning opportunity for an individual or an entire class, within a single hour of use — or over an extended period of time. The educational foundation and ease of integration in the classroom and curriculum make GoVenture Micro Business the first choice among learners who are in the early stages of learning about business, as well as educators and trainers who are providing basic business training.

GoVenture for You

Education

GoVenture has been designed to be suitable for a variety of instructional approaches and levels. Whether the need is to create a completely new curriculum or to enhance an existing one, GoVenture offers a successful and valuable experience for instructors and learners, from elementary school to adult education.

Business Service Centers

Good business managers and successful owners are not "born" — they must be trained in a number of business, management, and interpersonal skills. Would-be business people need to experience the thrills and challenges of running a business before they do so in the real world. GoVenture provides the experience necessary to gain valuable knowledge in starting and running a business without the risk of failure. Learn about accounting, finance, marketing, human resources, inventory management, and a wide range of life skills.

Banking and Financial Services

Small business owners can pose a significant service challenge to financial institutions. In many cases, they require a great deal of attention to the point where small business can be the least profitable segment of the commercial market. Nonetheless, they constitute a market that cannot be ignored. Financial institutions can provide startup businesses with a successful and valuable experience by directing them to GoVenture or by directing their own employees to GoVenture as a customer empathy tool.

Corporate Business Training

Training impacts the success of an organization at all levels. In order for employees to play a proactive role, they must have a strong understanding of the overall business model. By playing the role of the CEO or manager, GoVenture enables employees to gain a high level of understanding and empathy not possible using conventional training approaches. With a raised level of understanding, a multitude of benefits follows — increased performance, morale, loyalty, opportunity, and success.

Life Skills Training

GoVenture helps develop a number of necessary skills for success in the fast-paced Knowledge Economy, including: planning, just-in-time learning, problem solving, organization, critical thinking, and risk management. GoVenture addresses life skills

training directly by immersing learners in a simulated world of experience that transcends the limitations of traditional teaching and learning approaches.

What You Need to Play GoVenture Micro Business

GoVenture Micro Business is designed using proven technologies that will operate on personal computers, either stand-alone or over the Internet. For specific system requirements, please refer to the software documentation.

More Information

For more information on GoVenture Micro Business and other simulations, visit the GoVenture.NETwork Internet portal or contact MediaSpark at:

Sales: 1-800-331-2282 USA/Canada
Telephone: 902-562-0042
Fax: 902-562-1252
Internet: www.goventure.net

3. Playing GoVenture Micro Business

Each time you run GoVenture Micro Business you will first go to the **SETUP** screen, after clicking "Ok" on the **WELCOME**, **GETTING STARTED**, and **NOTE** screens. On the **SETUP** screen you will have the following options:

- Start NEW Simulation
- SAVE Simulation
- RESUME Saved Simulation
- Continue with this simulation *
- Sound ON/OFF
- QUIT

* This button is not displayed when you start the program. However, if you return to this screen while playing a simulation, you will see this option, which allows you to go back and continue playing the current simulation.

Start NEW Simulation

Complete the Startup information for a new, custom simulation, or click the *QuickStart* button.

QUICKSTART

QuickStart enables you to dive immediately into a preset business, without having to complete the Startup Details. Click the *QuickStart* button and choose a file. Then click the *Begin Simulation* button to start.

CUSTOM SIMULATION

With a new custom simulation, you are required to make the key Startup decisions before you can begin running your business. A Business Plan and Personal Objectives are optional, and can be set up later by clicking the links in the *Reports* screen. Then, click the *Begin Simulation* button.

Take your time to view the guided tour which is offered just before the simulation starts, or browse through the screens on your own. When you are ready to start running your business, click the orange *#1 Market* button on the Simulation Menu to begin.

SAVE Simulation

You can halt time in the GoVenture Micro Business simulation and save your simulation to disk, and then return to it later. To do this, click on the *Setup* button in the lower right corner, located in the Application Menu on all the main GoVenture Micro Business screens. This will take you to the **SETUP** screen, where you can click on the *Save* button, then name and save the file to a hard drive or diskette.

You have the option of entering a password if you wish to protect against unauthorized use of your file. Be sure to note the password used; it will be needed to resume the simulation.

You also have the option to *Lock* your file. Locking a file will prevent the file from being overwritten later by another file of the same name. If you are creating a QuickStart file, it is recommended that you lock the file (see *Create and Play Your Own QuickStart*).

RESUME Saved Simulation

Click on the *RESUME Saved Simulation* button and call up your saved simulation file. If the file was originally saved with a password, you will need to type in the password to open it. When the file opens, play resumes where you left off when you saved the file.

END Simulation

The simulation will automatically stop if you go out of business (become bankrupt). Otherwise, you can continue the simulation for as long as you wish.

Even after the simulation ends, you will be allowed to review the entire simulation, including the Performance Report. However, you cannot alter the simulation after it ends.

If you wish to save your results, be sure either to Print the Performance Report or to Save the simulation before quitting the program or starting a new simulation. If you Save the completed simulation, you will be able to view the results later by selecting the Resume option (see above).

QUIT GoVenture

To quit GoVenture Micro Business and exit the program completely, select the *Setup* button from the Application Menu, and then click the *Quit* button. If you wish to resume your current simulation at a later time, be sure to save it before quitting (see above).

Create and Play Your Own QuickStart

Once you are familiar with GoVenture, you may wish to make your own QuickStarts and add them to your copy of the program so that an entire group of users is challenged with the same scenario.

Create a QuickStart

To create a QuickStart, start a new simulation, and complete as many of the Startup details as desired. You can run the simulation for as long as you wish, or not at all. Then, save the simulation file in the QuickStart subfolder (“\QUICKSTA”) of your GoVenture Micro Business program folder, or save the file in a different folder and move a copy to the QuickStart subfolder.

Passwords are optional when saving your QuickStart file. However, if you save the file with a password, the password will be required to run the QuickStart file.

Locking the file is recommended when creating a QuickStart. To lock the file, click on the Lock option box when saving. This will prevent anyone from overwriting the QuickStart file inadvertently later.

Play Your QuickStart

To play your QuickStart, run GoVenture, start a new simulation, and click the QuickStart button. Your QuickStart will now appear in the list of selection options. The simulation will begin at the point in the simulation where you saved the file.

If the QuickStart simulation was originally saved with a password, the password will be required to run it.

Edit Your QuickStart

If you wish to edit your QuickStart file, you must run GoVenture and choose the Resume Save Simulation feature. If originally saved with a password, you will need to type in the file's password to open and edit the file. Once you have completed your modifications, you can resave the simulation file in the QuickStart folder.

If the original file was locked (recommended), you will have to save the revised QuickStart file with a different name.

Note that if your QuickStart file was saved after the simulation started, you may not be able to change some earlier decisions.

Remove Unwanted QuickStart Files

GoVenture shows all the simulation files in the QuickStart folder in the list of QuickStart options. You can remove any unwanted QuickStart file from the list in GoVenture by deleting or moving the file from the QuickStart folder (“\QUICKSTA” in your GoVenture Micro Business program folder). The next time GoVenture is run, the deleted file will not display in the QuickStart list.

4. How GoVenture Micro Business Works

Objective

The key objective of GoVenture Micro Business is to provide you with the virtual experience of running a mobile cart business.

The business objective is to run a profitable operation which grows and gains a dominant market share. Evaluating this against your goals and lifestyle objectives may help you make future career choices.

And of course, the overall objective is learning — in an engaging, but challenging, environment.

Simulation Activities

Playing GoVenture Micro Business involves the following activities:

Starting Up a Business

Starting up a business involves everything from selecting the type of business to buying the equipment needed and obtaining necessary permits. For each component of the Startup details, you must select from a number of different options and complete all the mandatory elements in the following Startup details:

- Your Profile
- Business Plan
- Products
- Business Name and Logo
- Seed Financing

The Personal Objectives under Your Profile and Business Plan sections are optional. Completing these may help you with strategies and future decisions, but they do not affect the operations of the simulation directly. They may also be accessed while running the simulation under the *Report* button and completed at a later point.

Market

The first step each day is to select which of five locations you will choose to set up your cart that day:

- Factory District
- Business District
- Shopping District
- Park
- Arena

You can review the weather forecast and news of any special events which might affect the flow of potential customers to each area. You can review competitor information and see where they plan to set up that day — but they might change their minds at the last minute.

Schedule

The second step is to decide the hours you will open the business that day. You can select as many or as few hours as you want, starting whenever you want. Or, you can relax and take the day off, not opening at all that day.

Products

In the third step, you have several decisions to make. You must order inventory for the day. If you order more than your cart will carry, a trailer can be rented. You must have all the items in stock in your inventory. Keeping enough inventory in stock requires planning and monitoring, so that you neither run out of stock, nor overstock and have to discard spoiled goods kept beyond their shelf life. Next, you must decide if you are going to invest in quality or appearance to upgrade your products. And then you must price each of your products.

Employees

If you need help selling, you can hire one of three potential employees. Review their backgrounds and then hire one, two, or all three. Once you have hired them they will continue to work for you until you un-hire them.

Advertising

Part of your role as the business owner is to develop a sales and marketing strategy. Do you want to be lowest priced in the market? have the highest quality? provide the longest hours of operation?

Use advertising to help you communicate with your customers and potential customers and increase their brand awareness of your business. You can select from radio, newspaper, and busker (a live entertainer) advertising for the day.

Open for Business

After you have made these five sets of decisions, you can open for business, and the simulation will calculate your results.

Reports

After you have completed each day of business you can review how successful you were by reviewing the financial reports and charts on key finance and marketing information. The results of your operations may lead you to modify your business strategy, and will frequently require you to take action to improve any unsatisfactory operating results.

Personal Profile & Stress

The Your Profile area in Startup area and the **REPORTS** screen allows you to access and set your own personal objectives. Later, you can compare what you wrote with how you actually ran your business. Were you true to your own objectives?

GoVenture also monitors your stress level in the **STATUS** window. If you work too much you will become tired and your stress level will increase.

Market Influences

Population and Competition

There are underlying economic factors which affect the market. People of different age categories, family sizes, and income levels have different buying preferences. And you have two competitors who may decide to open for business in the same location you do on some days.

Weather and Random Events

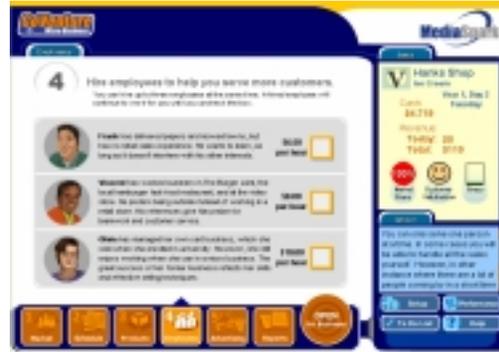
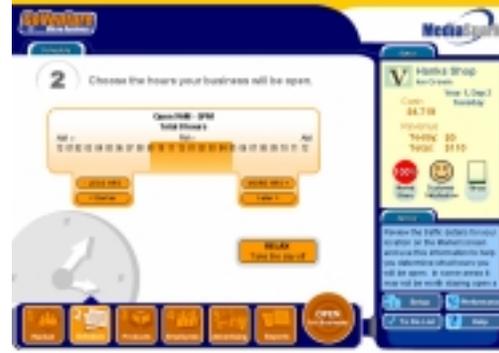
Weather will play a role in when people shop. There will also be unforeseen events which happen to your business – equipment might break down, or an employee might not show up for work. You must be ready to react to these situations. Too much stress can make you sick, which could also impact your business.

Every Simulation is Different

No two simulations will be exactly the same in GoVenture Micro Business. While the business options will be the same from one simulation to the next, there will be changes in economic conditions, competition, weather patterns, and (intelligent) random factors which will make each simulation a new challenge.

You can also vary the experience by changing the type of products and the startup details, or by running the simulation for different time periods. A successful experience in one simulation does not guarantee equal success in the next — being consistently successful takes work!

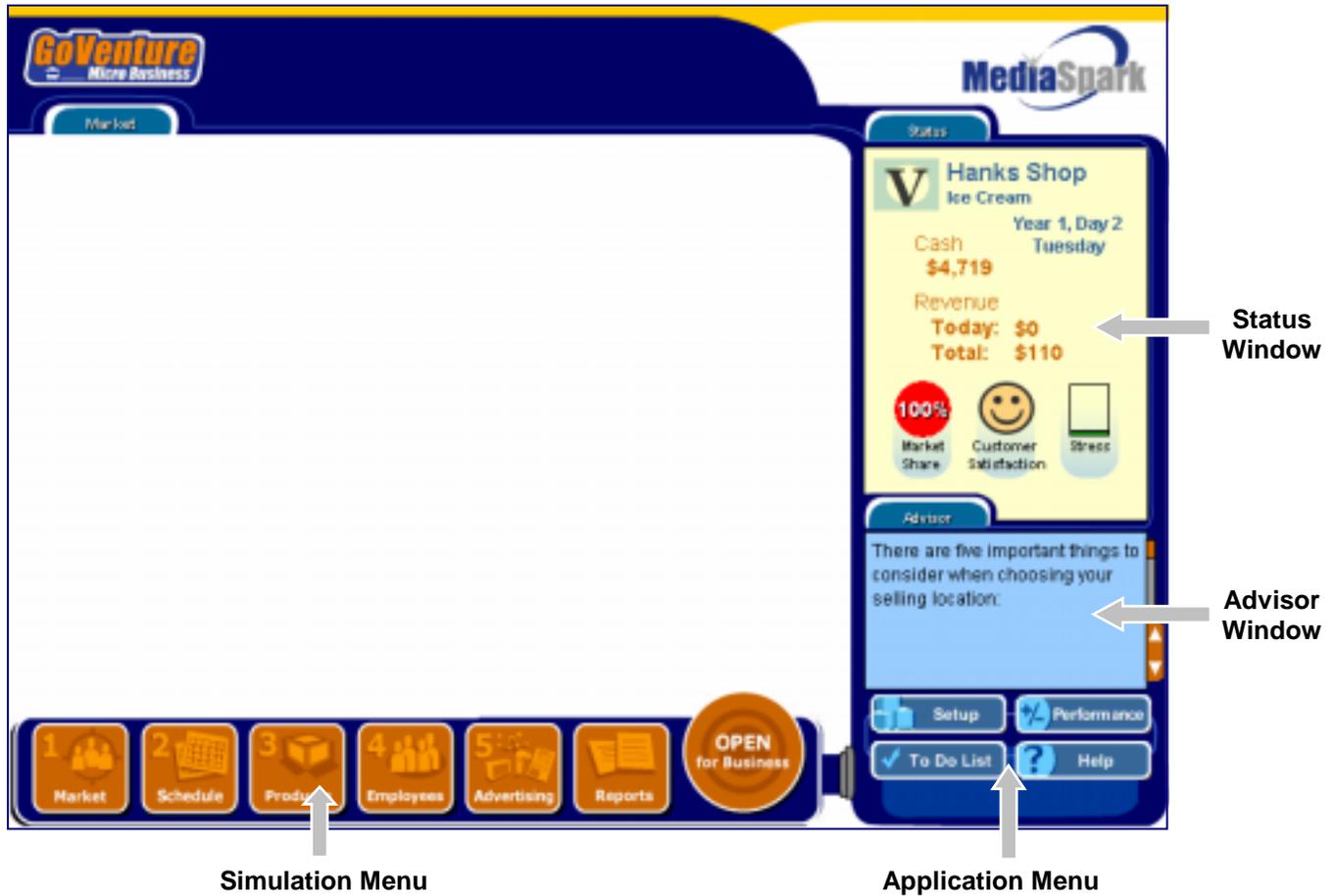
5. GoVenture Micro Business Screens



Interface Layout

Overview

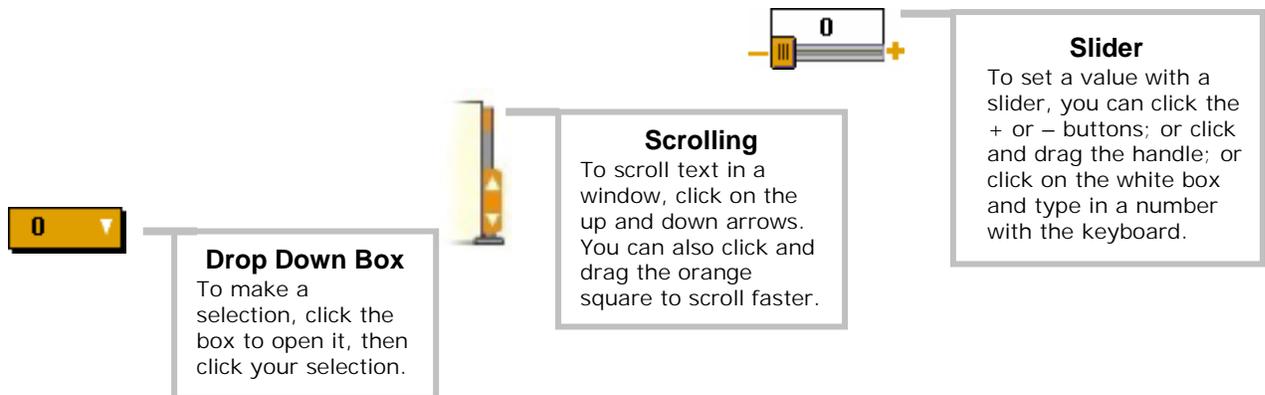
The GoVenture Micro Business interface is designed to be intuitive, and easy to use. The key areas of the interface are outlined below:



Navigating the Program

DROP DOWN BOXES, SCROLLING TEXT, AND SLIDERS

As you navigate through the simulation, you will notice various objects, such as buttons, sliders, and links. All orange colored objects are clickable or can be manipulated.



Simulation Menu



Simulation Menu

Use these buttons to navigate to different screens in the simulation.

1 MARKET

Allows you to check weather, news, traffic, and competitor information. You then select the location for the current day's operations.

2 SCHEDULE

Allows you to set hours you will be open for the upcoming day.

3 PRODUCTS

Allows you to order inventory, rent extra storage space, invest in quality and appearance, and set prices for each product.

4 EMPLOYEES

Allows you to review backgrounds of three potential employees and hire one or more to assist you.

5 ADVERTISING

Allows you to purchase radio, newspaper, or busker advertising.

REPORTS

After each day of business you can review your reports on your financial and marketing status. You can also update your personal profile and business plan here.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Click this button when you are ready to open for business each day, and the simulation will activate and run your results.

Status Window, Advisor Window, and Application Menu

The screenshot shows a mobile application interface for 'Hanks Shop Ice Cream'. The top section, labeled 'Status', displays business metrics: Cash (\$4,719), Revenue (Today: \$0, Total: \$110), Market Share (100%), Customer Satisfaction (smiley face), and Stress (green bar). Below this is the 'Advisor' window with a text message: 'There are five important things to consider when choosing your selling location:'. At the bottom is the 'Application Menu' with buttons for Setup, Performance, To Do List, and Help. Three callout boxes provide detailed descriptions for the Advisor Window, Application Menu, and Status Window.

Advisor Window

The Advisor Window displays information and advice as you are playing the simulation.

Application Menu

SETUP
Takes you to the application options:

- Start a new simulation.
- Save this simulation.
- Resume a saved simulation.
- Turn Sound on or off.
- Quit the program.

TO DO LIST
A helpful checklist to remind you of the daily tasks required.

PERFORMANCE
Takes you to the report on your performance with this simulation.

HELP
Displays detailed help for the simulation.

Status Window

This window displays a summary of your key business information. It is always visible so you have instant access to this important information.

DAY & DAY OF WEEK
The current simulation day and the day of the week.

CASH
The total amount of cash your business has.

REVENUE

- Today: The total value of sales made so far today.
- Total: The total value of sales made since the start of the simulation.

MARKET SHARE
The percent of customers attracted to your business. The rest of the customers in the market patronized your competitors.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
The current level of customer satisfaction — poor (sad), neutral (straight line), or good (happy).

STRESS
The current level of your stress level. The higher the level, the more the stress. Green is low stress. Red is high stress.

6. Performance Evaluation

Success in GoVenture Micro Business

GoVenture Micro Business is designed to be fun and educational. There are two overall measurements for success:

1. How much you learned about running a business.
2. How successful your business was.

If you know more about running a business now than you did before, have gained some insight and confidence, and perhaps had some fun along the way, then consider your experience a success!

If you wish to conduct a detailed evaluation of the results of your business decisions during the simulation, you can do so by reviewing the GoVenture Performance Report or by conducting your own personal evaluation.

Measuring Performance in GoVenture Micro Business

Performance Report

A summary of your simulation decisions and results can be viewed by clicking the *Performance* button on the Application Menu. This report provides summary data on your setup and operations, including:

- Days in Business
- Total Revenue and Net Profit/(Loss)
- Market Share
- Customer Satisfaction
- Advertising Costs
- Employee Hours
- Stress Level
- Setup Selections
- Financial Statements
- and more . . .

By clicking the *Performance* button during a simulation, you will get a report on the status to date. If you save your simulation after completing it, you can return to the Performance area at any time and review or print the report.

Profit Rating

After you have run your business for at least two weeks, the Performance Report will give you a Profit Rating, by estimating a full year of business operations based on your performance to date. It estimates what profit you would have if

the rest of the year's results were similar to past activity. Will you be an Experimenter, a Tycoon, or on a level in between?

The Profit Rating only evaluates financial success by estimating a year's profits. Since you do not earn wages in the business, look at the profit as how much money you will earn at the end of the year.

The Profit Rating can change from week to week as your operations change. But it cannot measure how much you learned from the simulation.

Measurements of Business Success

Profits

A business must generate profits in order to survive in the long run. It is common for startup enterprises to lose money initially. However, over time, the trend should be to generate ongoing profits.

Market Share

The percentage of customers your business obtains of all sales is called Market Share.

Time in Business

Simply surviving and keeping a business running for a length of time can be seen as a success in itself.

Customer Satisfaction

Without customers, you have no sales. Satisfied customers return and buy again. Satisfied customers also tell their friends and promote your business by word of mouth free advertising — often the best type of endorsement your business can obtain.

Measurements of Personal Success

Time with Friends and Family

A successful business owner has to balance both business and personal commitments. An indication of how well this balance has been achieved is shown in the number of hours spent on personal time with friends, family and self.

Stress Level

Stress is a critical factor in the long-term health of the business owner, and thus of the business. Many factors affect the owner's stress level – lack of sleep, family commitments, employee problems, financial concerns, sales levels and more. In the near term most business owners can survive high stress periods. Over time, stress will impact their ability to manage the business successfully.

Personal Goal Achievements

Achieving personal goals is a comparative analysis. It includes comparing the tangible and intangible selections on your Personal Objectives list with what you have achieved. Only you can determine what constitutes success in reaching your personal goals.

7. Next Steps

If you enjoyed the GoVenture Micro Business experience, we encourage you to try other GoVenture simulations, where you can *gain years of experience in minutes!*

