AdSim Quickstart Guide
(2021 Rev C)

AdSim Quickstart Guide

AdSim is a Principles of Advertising simulation where you will plan and implement an Advertising and Promotion campaign for your Smartphone Manufacturing Company.

Getting Started

1 Read this Quickstart Guide in full. It contains hints and tips to get you started.

2 When you are ready to access your AdSim company, go to www.smartsims.com and log in using the login and password which has been emailed to you by Smartsims. If you do not have a login and password, email help@smartsims.com to request this.

3 Open your Single-Player and start practicing. This will allow you to get used to the simulation before your Multi-Player competition begins.

4 Watch the tutorial videos available within the simulation interface, or in the Smartsims support website.

Single-Player vs Multi-Player

The AdSim Single-Player allows you to practice against a single computer controlled competitor. You are able to roll forward into the next decision period / year, or roll back as you wish in order to test and change your decisions. Your primary goal is to maintain a higher Total Market Contribution (TMC) than your competitor and to exceed your annual performance targets. Key results including your annual targets will be displayed after every rollover.

In the Multi-Player you will compete against other student teams in your class to create the highest Marketing Contribution (see 'goals' section below). Moving from one year (decision period) to the next is done by automatic rollover on preset dates. Before each of these scheduled times your team needs to have all decisions for the upcoming year entered into the Multi-Player.

Your Goals – Marketing Contribution and Secondary Performance Targets

Total Marketing Contribution (TMC) is the key performance indicator in the AdSim Advertising Simulation.

Marketing contribution is an annual measure of how profitable your company was as a result of your marketing strategy for the previous year.

Marketing Contribution = Wholesale Sales Revenue – (Cost of Goods Sold + Marketing Expenses)

Your **Total Marketing Contribution (TMC)** is then just the sum of your annual marketing contribution figures over the length of the simulation. Your goal in Music2Go is to achieve a higher TMC than your competitors by the end of the simulation.

The *Industry Benchmark Report* under Key Reports on the Home Screen shows how you are performing relative to your competitor(s).

You can find your Secondary Performance Targets in the *Performance Targets* report on the home screen. Check the Performance Targets Report after each rollover to see if you achieved your targets.

In the Single-Player you should always look to exceed these secondary targets. In the Multi-Player, these secondary targets are more guidelines to support your primary goal of creating more Total Marketing Contribution than your competitors.

Summary of the AdSim Scenario

You are the Advertising and Sales Promotion Manager for your Smartphone Manufacturing Company.

After every rollover, the Key Results and information about the Year Ahead and hints and tips for the coming year will be displayed. Read this information carefully so you are aware of new developments in the Scenario each year.

You are given a fixed budget every year with which to plan and implement your Advertising campaign. This budget will be increased as new decisions become available as the simulation progresses.

Both you and your competitor(s) provide mid-range 'Android' style Smartphones. These phones are all similar in terms of price and technical features. So, most of the difference from the customers' perspective is in the branding and promotion.

There are two market segments in AdSim – New and Repeat Customers. New Customers are first time buyers of Smartphones and Repeat Customers are those that have previously purchased a Smartphone and are looking to upgrade or replace their old phone.

These segments have different preferences, demographics and sizes. You should view the *Market Demand* report on the home screen each year to see how successful you were in each market segment last year, and to decide which segment you want to bias your decisions towards next year.

In the Advertising decision screens you will find information on advertising reach for the media channels, media viewing habits, and other demographic information for the New and Repeat Customer segments.

You set your Brand Positioning Strategy each year. Brand Positioning refers to the key messages that you want customers to associate with your brand so it has a distinctive place in your customers' minds. All the potential messages about your Smartphones are true, so you need to choose the options that appeal the most to your markets.

There are a variety of Market Research reports available for purchase every year, and effective use of Market Research is critical to succeeding in AdSim. You may purchase market research by clicking on the reports at the right-hand side of your decision screens. A screen will open telling you how much the report costs and asking you to confirm that you want to buy it.

We **strongly** recommend you buy the *Market Survey of Customer Needs* report early in the simulation. This details what Brand Positioning Strategy, Customer Relationship Management Strategy (Year 3 onwards), and Marketing Communications Strategy (Year 5 onwards), will appeal the most to each segment.

The most successful students will be those who can combine research from multiple sources to create an effective marketing campaign, and who continually review in order to refine their campaign.

Decision Schedule

1. **Brand Positioning Statements.** Choose the branding messages that you think will appeal the most to your target markets.

2. **Advertising Planning**. Allocate your promotion budget to the 5 main media channels: Social Media, Digital Media, TV, Print, and Radio. View the *Media Advertising Reach* report on the Advertising Plan screen for information on advertising reach and media viewing habits.

3. **Advertising Media Mix (available in Year 2)**. Target your advertising spend in more detail. For instance, Digital Media can be split into Search, Display / Banner, Digital Video, Digital Audio, and Email. And the Digital Video sub-category can be targeted by genre: Reality, Drama, Documentary, News, Sports, and Comedy. View the media research report on each media decision screen to find the ideal allocation for the New and Repeat Customer segments.

4. **Customer Relationships (available in Year 3)**. Decide what type of CRM, Warranty, Support, and Loyalty systems to fund.

5. **Marketing Communications (available in Year 5)**. Choose from various types of Sales Promotions, Trade Promotions, Sponsorships, and Social Influencer initiatives.

6. **Market Research**. Purchase research every year to help plan and evaluate the effectiveness of your campaign. Figuring out which research is relevant and continually monitoring and improving your campaign is critical to succeeding in AdSim.

FAQs

Help! My Decisions aren't being saved!

- Make sure you always click the Save button after changing a decision.

- Always check the Current Saved Decisions report at the top right of the screen after entering your decisions to make sure you haven't missed anything.

- Always check the Budget Report on the home screen to make sure you are within budget or check the live budget at the top right of each decision screen.

I checked my decisions last period and I tried to spend $Xm on Media Advertising, but after the rollover it appears I actually spent less than that. What happened?

Remember that you have a fixed budget each year. If you exceed that budget, then your Media Advertising spend will be reduced. Always check the Budget Report on the home screen to make sure you are within budget before each rollover.

Someone keeps changing my decisions! (Multi-Player)

Remember that you probably have 2-5 people assigned to your Multi-Player firm, and any one of them can log in and update the decisions. You should discuss with your team members who is responsible for actually updating your team's decisions to avoid confusion.

If you experience any other difficulties, feel free to contact the Smartsims Support Team:

Email: help@smartsims.com

Website: www.smartsims.com