

# Simulations: Why Are They Effective?

**Y**ou're buckling in for an overseas flight in a brand-new Boeing 777. The pilot comes on the PA:

"Ah, ladies and gentlemen, our flight time today will be six and a half hours at a cruising altitude of 33,000 feet. And I should mention that this is the first time I have ever been on a 777. Wish me luck."

Before setting foot in the real world, pilots, military personnel and disaster response teams use intense simulations to learn how to respond to high-intensity challenges.

Why would we place corporate leaders and their teams in situations without first giving *them* a chance to try things out? The risks are huge — new strategy investments can run into the hundreds of millions of dollars. BTS offers a better way: customized business simulations.

## 'NOW I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE CEO'

A customized **business simulation** of your enterprise, business unit or process, using real-world competitive dynamics, places leaders in a context where they step out of their normal day-to-day role and gain ex-

posure to the big picture. Participants make decisions in a risk-free environment, allowing them to experience critical interdependencies, execution best practices and the levers they can use to optimize their company's key performance indicators.

Leading corporations are increasingly turning to simulations to help build strategic alignment and execution capability when faced with the following business challenges:

- Implementing a **new strategy and key performance objectives**.
- **Accelerating** strategy execution and innovation.
- Improving business acumen and financial **decision making**.
- **Transforming sales organizations** into business results accelerators.
- **Leadership development** focused on front-line execution.
- Implementing **culture change aligned to strategy**.
- **Integrating** newly merged companies.
- Modeling complex value chains for **collaborative cost elimination**.

Within minutes of being placed in a simulation, users are grappling with issues and decisions that they must make — now. A year gets compressed into a day or less. Competition among teams spurs engagement, invention and discovery.

## THE SIMULATION CONTINUUM: CUSTOMIZE TO FIT YOUR NEEDS

Simulations have a broad range of applications, from building deep alignment to developing execution capability. The more customized the simulation, the more experience participants can bring back to the job in execution and results.



In this business challenge, teams participate in a three-year customized Web-based simulation.



By Rommin Adl, Executive Vice President, BTS

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Standard or off-the-shelf simulations can be tailored for similar impact.

## 10 ELEMENTS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE BUSINESS SIMULATIONS

With 25 years of experience building and implementing highly customized simulations for Fortune 500 companies, BTS has developed the 10 critical elements of an effective business simulation.

1. **Highly realistic** with points of realism targeted to drive experiential learning.
2. **Dynamically competitive** with decisions and results impacted by peers' decisions in an intense, yet fun, environment.
3. **Illustrative**, not prescriptive or deterministic, with a focus on new ways of thinking.
4. **Catalyzes discussion of critical issues** with learning coming from discussion within teams and among individuals.
5. **Business-relevant feedback**, a mechanism to relate the simulation experience directly back to the company's business and key strategic priorities.
6. **Delivered with excellence**: High levels of quality and inclusion of such design elements as group discussion, humor, coaching and competition that make the experience highly interactive, intriguing, emotional, fun, and satisfying.
7. **User driven**: Progress through the simulation experience is controlled by participants and accommodates a variety of learning and work styles.
8. **Designed for a specific target audience**, level and business need.
9. **Outcome focused**, so that changes in mindset lead to concrete actions.
10. **Enables and builds community**: Interpersonal networks are created and

extended through chat rooms, threaded discussions and issue-focused e-mail groups; participants support and share with peers.

## BETTER RESULTS, FASTER

Well-designed business simulations are proven to significantly accelerate the time to value of corporate initiatives. A new strategy can be delivered to a global workforce and execution capability can be developed quickly, consistently and cost-effectively. Back on the job, participants own the new strategy and share their enthusiasm and commitment.

## SIMULATIONS EVEN MORE POWERFUL IN COMBINATION

Comprehensive deployment of simulation and experiential learning programs combines live and online experiences. The deepest alignment, mindset shift and capability building takes place over time through a series of well-designed activities. Maximize impact by linking engagement and skill building to organizational objectives and by involving leadership throughout the process.

## PUTTING SIMULATIONS TO WORK

Simulations drive **strategic alignment**, business acumen, leadership development and sales force transformation, among other areas. A successful experiential learning program cements strategic alignment and builds execution capability across the entire organization. Results can be measured in company alignment, team effectiveness, revenue growth and share price. ♦

***BTS** is a global leader in accelerating strategic alignment and execution through the use of customized business simulations and discovery-based learning solutions. Please visit [www.bts.com](http://www.bts.com) for more information.*