Badge Builder Simulation

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**Objective**: To teach students marketing concepts through a hands-on simulation. Students will create a product, calculate price, produce promotions, and place it in the marketplace for purchase by other students.

**Overview**: Students are placed in groups of 4 or 5, each with a “job” within that group based on their personality type. Jobs include President, Administrative Assistant, Designer, Manufacturer and Salesman. Each group designs and then creates badges using a badge machine. Using an Excel spreadsheet, they keep track of production cost, profit, losses, and promotions in their “business plan.” Students go to the Market, setting up a table at the Media Center. Another class purchases the badges from them using “money” they have earned in their class for good behavior. At my school, this is another CTE Intro class—that way, each student has the opportunity to be the producer in my rotation, and the consumer in another rotation. Each company then calculates their winnings based on their profit, and receives CTE KASH based on their success.

**Grading**: Students are graded both on team assignments, and on individual performance. Grades are NOT based on how much money they make in the simulation. Each member of the group gets a group grade on assignments like their poster, packet, and business plan. They then take a group evaluation where they evaluate themselves and each member of their group. These scores are added together to equal their individual grade. Students who miss large portions of the unit due to absences will feel the loss in their individual grade. I usually assign extra assignments in Print Shop to compensate for that loss.

**Preparation**: Before Day 1, there is a bit of prep that goes into it. First, assign students into groups of 5. Each student in the group is assigned a job. I use the six personality types to determine this, giving them a personality quiz I created at <http://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/story.php?title=cte-intro-personality-quizz>, and then giving them jobs accordingly. You can do it this way, or just assign them randomly.

President – Thinker/Organizer/Persuader

Administrative Assistant – Organizer/Thinker/Helper

Designer – Creator/Helper

Manufacturer – Doer/Helper

Salesman – Persuader/Helper

You will also need to print the packets and have them ready to go. The packet is 12 pages long and you will need one for each group. You can organize however works best for you, but I have a Tupperware box for each group, where they store their scissors, markers, and glue stick. I also have a Ziploc bag for each group in each period, labeled, where they can put their completed badges.

**Cooperating Class –** This project requires a cooperating class. Our 4th Quarter CTE Intro teacher, Mr. Simpson, does this—he brings his kids each quarter to the Market. All our kids know they will get a chance to buy and sell—by 4th quarter, the kids I get are SO excited to finally get their turn! All the other teacher needs to do is hand out the fake money, and come to the 20-minute market on Day 8.

Determining how much money to give the cooperating class is complicated—you don’t want them to have too much or too little. Mr. Simpson has created an Excel spreadsheet that helps him determine how much to give, based on their grades. This file is on my website.

**Getting Started:**

In order to do this unit, there are supplies you much purchase and make ready. One thing I love about this project, though, is that once you purchase the machine, the badge parts are quite inexpensive and you can do the whole project each year for less than $200, depending on the number of students you have. You can also cut down on price by limiting how many badges each group makes. In my project, each group makes 10-13 badges—so that’s about 1500 badges a year. Here are the items you need to purchase:

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| Item | Cost | Description |
| Badge Machine  [2 1/4" Badge-A-Matic (Machine Only)](http://ep.yimg.com/ca/I/badgeaminit_2129_428993) | $400.00  <http://www.badgeaminit.com/> | There are three sizes—1 ½, 2 ½, and 3 ½. I suggest you start with the middle, standard size. I use both the 1 and the 2 inch machine. This is for the mid-size model at badgeaminit.com. You can get cheaper ones, but for the volume, I suggest this model. I actually have two of each size so two groups can make badges at once—each year I have added one. But one machine will work. There are other companies that make badge machines as well—this is just the one I deal with. I like their lifetime warranty! |
| http://ep.yimg.com/ca/I/badgeaminit_2209_26425090Badge Parts | $64.00 for 1000 OR  $150 for 2,500  <http://www.usabuttons.com/> | I order the parts from a different company, USA Buttons, because they are a LOT cheaper and my district has an account with them. As for how many to buy—take the number of students in your 7th grade class and multiply by 3. Then maybe add another couple hundred for good measure, or to make as rewards in your auction or whatever. |
| Circle Cutters  http://ep.yimg.com/ca/I/badgeaminit_2209_26438062 | $25.00 - $200.00 | I suppose these aren’t an *absolute* necessity, but I highly recommend them. If you cut them out with scissors they don’t always fit the machine right and can come out badly. I get mine at Badge-a-Minut, but USA Buttons also offers some. I have never tried them so I don’t know if they fit the machines well or not. |
| Estimated Startup Cost: | | $550.00 |
| Estimated Yearly Cost: | | $150 |
| Suggested Add-ons – over time as you build up your supply, there are other items you might want to consider getting as well. You don’t need them to start out, but they make things a lot easier! | | |
| Plastic Easel | $.65 each at Usabuttons.com | Great for displays, I have about 60 of these and the kids “rent” them to display their badges. It’s something I’ve added in their business plan |
| Quick Punch | $75.00 at Usabuttons.com | This is SO worth the cost. It just makes cutting them out so much easier. They only have it for the small 1 ¼” size, though, not for the 2 ¼ inch. |
| http://ep.yimg.com/ca/I/badgeaminit_2264_20893151 | $179.95 at Badge-A-minut | This is a bit of a splurge and way overpriced, but I don’t know how I functioned without it. It took A LOT longer to make badges back when we used the circle cutters because some kids just *cannot* figure it out. This is very simple and easy. Glad I bought one. |

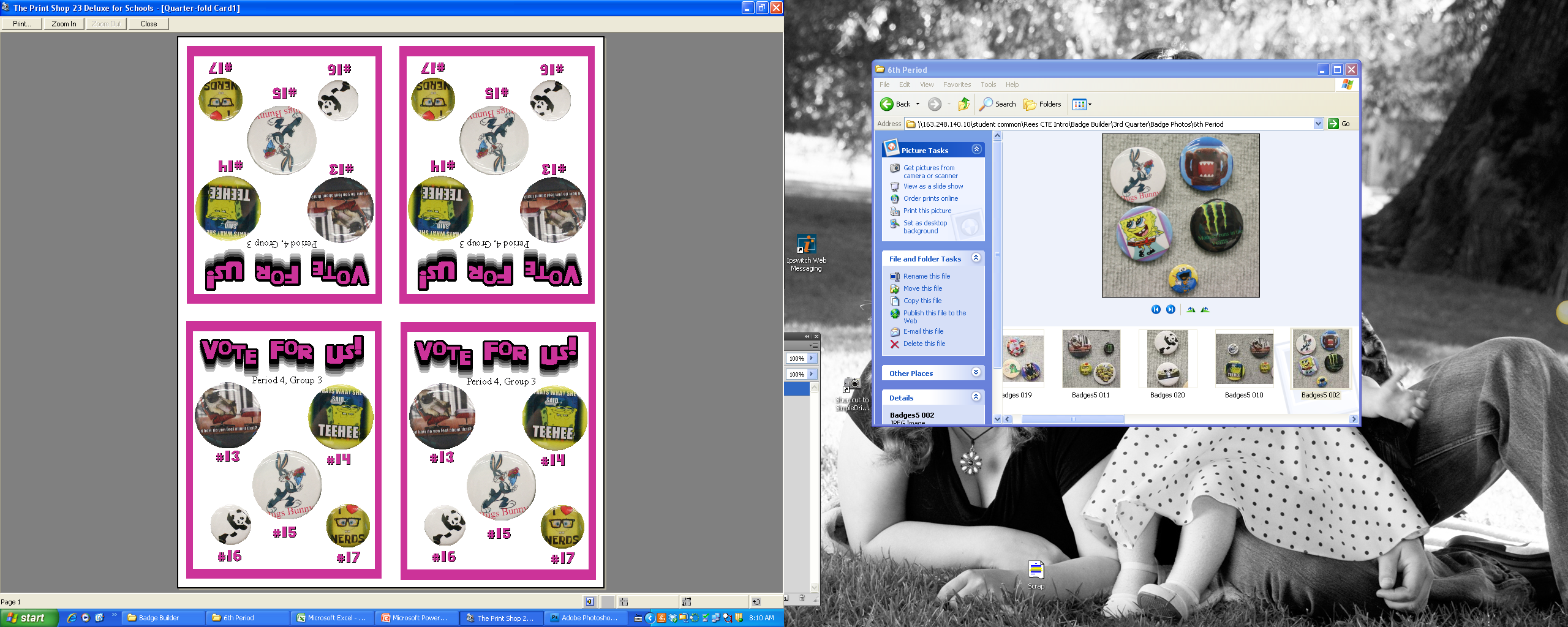
**The Simplified Version** – I have greatly simplified this project from how I actually do it in my classroom. Each quarter I am adding, changing, updating and redefining how I do it. This packet will include this project in its simplest form, with further information on how to modify it at the end.

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| Day | Objective | Notes |
| Day 1:  Know Your Company | * Introduce groups, jobs, and explain duties of each job * Show “Day 1” of power point, going over money, grading, daily checklist, attendance, etc. * Student will get to know the members of their group. * Each “company” will choose a company name and slogan * Team will create a logo, which the designer will create * Turn in logo, print it, and glue it into page 2 of the packet | Sometimes I do the new seating chart and introduction of groups the day before Day 1, calling it a “prep” day, so as to give the kids more time to work in their groups on Day 1. |
| Day 2: Design Brainstorm | * Groups will brainstorm ideas for their badges—searching the internet, comparing ideas, and drawing them on the Designer Brainstorm page in their packet * Students will receive additional instruction on how to design badges using the Print Shop, or whatever program you are using. (You can use Word, or preferably Power Point if you do not have a Desktop Publishing program.) * Students will begin to design their work in Print Shop. | The daily power point gives detailed instructions to the students for what needs to be done each day. Also, each group has a checklist in their packets that further reminds them what needs to be done. It is the Administrative Assistant’s job to check off the list each day. |
| Day 3: Design Approvals | * Teacher demonstrates how to make a badge. * Students will fill out Step One of the Business Plan in Excel. * Continue creating designs in Print Shop * Get each finished design approved on the Design Approval Sheet, where they glue each design into their packet and bring it to me for approval. | I usually demonstrate on Day 3, but that may vary depending on time and what day of the week it is. |
| Day 4: Design Completion | * Finish all designs in Print Shop by the end of the period. * All designs approved * Fill out Manufacturing page in packet * Print SIX copies of badge designs * Read “How to Make a Button” Power Point or watch video * Introduce the assembly line for making badges * If groups are ready, begin making badges | It can be difficult to get all groups done making badges in one day. I usually try to get at least two groups done making badges on Day 4, then the other four or five groups on Day 5. Students print six copies so if they have a loss, they have another copy right there. |
| Day 5: Manufacturing | * All groups make and finish their badges by end of period using the assembly line method * Any badges that turn out defective are counted as a “loss” and are recorded by the administrative assistant. * If you are doing Votes, they start this today if they have time. They glue each design on a “vote prep” page that I later scan in and put on a website so they can be voted on later. | I have groups sign up on the board when they are ready to make badges, then call them up one by one as the previous group finishes. Because I have two machines, I have two groups going at once. Teams that are finished can play games while everyone else catches up. |
| Day 6:  Promotions | * Start creating two-page poster in Print Shop * Plan promotions like decorating the table and displaying badges * Fill out Step Two of the Business Plan. * Groups can opt to do a Teaser Poster as an additional promotion | You can do several different types of promotions, or you can do none at all. I also have picture frames available to rent, and the kids can do mini flyers. The possibilities are endless. |
| Day 7:  Advertising | * Finish two-page poster and other promotions * Finish teaser poster and Step Two of Business Plan * Fill out the Cashiering page in the packet * Fill out the “Are We Ready?” sheet and get it signed * Instructs students about tomorrow’s activities | The “Are We Ready?” worksheet is designed to ensure that each group has done everything they need to for the Badge Market the next day. If they don’t get it signed that day, they lose 10 pts in their packet. |
| Day 8: The Badge Market | * As students are coming in, remind them to get their poster, badges, and anything else they have brought ready to go. * Go to the site where you are doing the Market—you need a large open space with a large table for each group. I use the library, but I have also used the Technology teacher’s room when necessary. * Students set up their table—10 minutes * Other class arrives. They buy badges with the money they have been given. * Students record sales on their cashiering page. * When all money is gone, other class returns to class. Any unsold badges are immediately turned in to you. * Return to class. Place posters on the wall. | The actual “Market” takes only about 20 minutes. I usually do them on Friday, our “short” day. I don’t allow teams to keep the badges they don’t sell—otherwise they might be motivated NOT to sell them. But each member of the team that takes 1st place gets to design and create whatever badge they want. |
| Day 9: The Results | * President fills out Step Three of the business plan, entering their results from the Market, as well as the losses they may have gotten on Day 5. * If you are doing votes, tally them up and give them out to the students to add to step 3 of the business plan. (tally sheet available on my website if you want it) * President turns in Business Plan digitally. * Group fills out the Group Evaluation page * Teacher grades each Business Plan and gets results. Announce results to the class * Do Step 4 – Create the graph as explained in the Business Plan, once results are given out. Print. * Make sure packets is completely filled out, staple graph to the back and turn in to the basket | This day can be a little crazy! As each group turns in their plan, I go through it quickly and make sure it’s correct. If there’s time, have them finish Step 3 on Day 8 and have them turn it in, so you can grade it before class the next day. I usually can get it done during class with little difficulty. They can’t finish the graph until you have all Business Plans turned in and have your results. |
| Day 10: Group Evaluation | * Students fill out a Group Evaluation page in Excel and send it to teacher electronically. * They evaluate themselves and their team members on a scale of 0-4 for six different areas. * Discussion about what they learned about the 4 P’s in the badge unit * Students begin “What I Learned” Essay. Can be completed on another day, or assigned as homework. * Teacher enters the results of the evaluations on Excel Grading sheet provided. * Print checks. Enter grades. | This only takes about 10 minutes. Sometimes I just give them the rest of the period for games as a reward for their hard work while I enter the results of their evaluation. Or you can have them start the essay. |

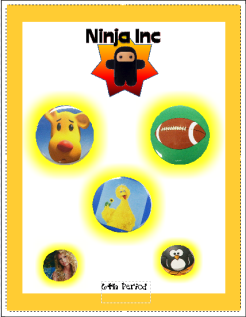
**Extras**

This is (unbelievable, I know) just the bare minimum of the Badge Unit. I have tried to simplify it as much as possible. But there are many other things I have added as I do this each quarter to make it more fun and exciting and innovative. You are welcome to try them, or try your own changes.

* Voting
* Flyers
* Different Badge Types
* Photos of Badges
* Frames & Stands
* Giveaways
* Table Placement

**Voting** – Voting adds a deeper dimension to the activity because it makes the number of possible sales more unlimited. Without voting, each group can only sell their 10-12 made badges and their three orders. This gives a limited outcome on how much money they will make. By adding votes, the groups can have a lot more sales and make a lot more money. I add the votes into Step 3, and each vote counts for half a sale. It can be done in different ways—when I first did it, I gave each kid in the cooperating class three “vote tokens” which they gave to their three favorite groups for a specific badge. It was the job of the group to record on their cashiering page what the vote was for. Eventually I made it all electronic, uploading pictures of each badge (prepared by the each group) onto the internet and then creating a Google doc where the cooperating class would go back to class after the Market and vote. This has worked out MUCH better and allowed me to tally the votes a lot more easily. You can see my online voting here: <http://schools.jordandistrict.org/elkridge/Badge%20Voting/Badgevoting1.htm>

**Flyers** – This is a promotion added to Step 2 that is aimed at getting more votes. The kids make a flyer with 4 to a page (I have them make a greeting card in Print Shop) that shows each badge and it’s number. They hand these out that the Market in hopes that the kids will take them back to class and use them to choose which badge to vote for. This is a very popular promotion that most groups do.

**Teasers** – This is a great promotion they enter on Day 3 where they create a simple page with a picture of each badge, their logo, and their period. They put it up in the cooperating classroom several days before the fair. The kids then have a chance to decide before the fair which ones they want the most. This became particularly important when we did the Table Placement change, mentioned below.

**Different Badge Types** – As I got into the unit more, I started to try out other types of badges you can buy. Badge-a-Minut also sells keychains, magnets, bulldog pins, mirror-backs, and spinback parts that can all be used in your same machine. I use magnet and spinbacks. The only problem with spinbacks is that USA Buttons does not produce spinback parts, so I have to buy them from Badge-a-minut, and they are MUCH more expensive. So I limit how many each group can do and it works out great. I simply added “TYPE” as one of the parameters in the Business Plan to accommodate the second badge type. They have a higher production cost for the students as well.

**Photos of Badges** – I did not include this in my instructions, but I DO take pictures of each badge for the student posters. As each group finishes, they put the badges on a specified place on my carpet wall, and I take pictures. Then I put those pictures in Student Common. Later the kids pull them up into Print Shop and crop them for their posters. This is certainly not required and is a bit more work, but to me it’s worth it.

**Frames & Stands** – I have actually purchased frames from [www.framecloseouts.com](http://www.framecloseouts.com). You can select the sizes and types but not the exact frame—saves a lot of money and I don’t really care which ones I get so it worked out great. After I got the frames I got fat quarters of material and backed it with batting. The kids often choose to rent them and add it to their cost on Day 2. They can also rent plastic stands that I got from Usabuttons.

**ABCD Badges** – This is an add-on for Step 1 in the business plan where a team can use the same badge design for a second type of badge. So same picture, but as a magnet as well a pinback, for example.

**Giveaways** - A giveaway is when the group makes an extra badge that they give away at the Market in a drawing. Each person who buys from them enters the drawing, and at the end they may win a badge. I did this for the first two years but don’t do it anymore. It’s still a really great promotion!

**Raffles** - A raffle is when the kids make or bring raffle tickets that they sell for $1.00. Then they draw one out and they get a free badge. This is great because a lot of times the customers have extra money but not enough for a badge, and are more than happy to enter a raffle. The money is tacked on to their winnings.

**Table Placement & Billboards** – This is something I added this last quarter that made so many other aspects of the badge unit more relevant. Instead of putting all the tables for the Badge Fair in one area, I spread them out throughout the library. Students had to “bid” for the table they wanted. This was great for teaching them the importance of location and the Place “p” in the marketing mix. It made the salesman’s job at the Badge Fair more important, as well as the promotions like teasers and posters. I even added a “Billboard” promotion where they could create another poster and put it on a stick to hold up high for those groups who were in the back of the library.

*On my website, there are files for the basic version, and then there are the advanced version files below which will show the packet, power point and business plan exactly as I use it now with all the “bells and whistles.” Take from it what you want!*