# Bridging Academia and Corporate Through Experiential Learning in China– HCD Learning

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## ABSTRACT

*Changing market dynamics are forcing companies to strengthen their employee competencies and the teams they work in. This is especially true in this age of digital advent into every sphere of life, forcing companies to adapt to changing consumer preferences, habits and market competition. Nowhere is this problem more pronounced than in China, which, in the past two years has come to boast to have the most advanced and sophisticated digital ecosystem in the world amid a rapidly changing consumer behavior. At this point in time, HCD Learning, a pioneer in experiential learning in China, has enabled numerous leading business schools and universities in China such as CEIBS, Peking University, Jiaotong University and industry leading MNC organizations such as Coca-Cola, P&G, Huawei, Bosch and Big Chinese companies such as Baidu, Tencent, Alibaba (The Big Three) to help students and the management teams to transform their mind-set and equip the right skills to excel in the market through experiential learning (leveraging business simulations).*

*During the conference, we would like demonstrate how we helped (a) A leading business school in China to enable students to equip with go-to-job skills (b) A Fortune 500 MNC operating in China market and its top management to quickly adapt and align to the changes in their core customer needs by learning new skills using two of our simulations – **Marksimos** and **ChangeMan**. We request to have attendees at the conference experience these simulations at the conference at ABSEL 2017, and explain learning delivery model through a video.*

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## SIMULATION INTRODUCTION - MARKSIMOS

Marksimos is a pedagogical tool that re-creates a market scenario. The simulation is designed based on the basic business concepts such as 4P's of Marketing, Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning (STP), Demand Forecast, Inventory Management, Product Planning Strategy among many.

The simulation setting is as follows:

The market has 6 consumer segments: Price Sensitive, Pretenders, Moderate, Good Life, Ultimate and Pragmatic. Each of the consumer segments has a unique preference. Preference is based on the Price Appeal, Value Perception and Image Perception of the products. So what products are they?

6 FMCG companies compete to capture the market with their products. All the products from all the companies belong to the same category (for example a soft drink), but they have different product attributes.

The simulation could run for 6 periods. Each period in the simulation represents a quarter (3 months) in real-life. When a team starts playing, the system already simulates the market for 3 periods. Hence each team inherits a company with certain strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, they need to make decisions based on the market and competitor information (available through various reports).

The goal for participants is to get maximum cumulated net profits and incremental market share by the end of the simulation.

In effect, the simulation is competitive, in that, a team's performance depends not only on their business prowess but also how well the other teams do.

## SIMULATION INTRODUCTION - CHANGEMAN

ChangeMan is a set of tools and technologies designed to support managers to develop accessible ways to deal with changes, and to develop an overview of change at the right level of complexity. The tools, which includes simulation and a physical change board, will help the managers map out their change projects and make them understand their own role better. It is based on academic theories including Rick Maurer's change cycle theory, the theory of three resistances, John Kotter's eight steps leading change and his widely accepted theory of leadership.

The simulation setting is as follows (this section is customizable):

- A company has introduced a new CRM system for its sales team. However, not everyone is happy about it. The team has 10 employees and each has his own perception towards this new change (both positive and negative). As a change manager, you need to channels your limited resources to guide your team through the change process while addressing their resistances.
- The goal of the simulation is to complete the change process with all your team members fully aligned to the change process.