

**Virtual World Entrepreneurship
ENTP 6864**



copyright ByteSight 2010

House of Flames -Second Life

Syllabus

Deborah Wise

I. Course

Course Number:	ENTP 6864
Course Title:	Virtual World Entrepreneurship
Number of Semester Credit Hours:	3
Prerequisite:	None
Date Revised:	February 2010
Prepared By:	Deborah Wise
Textbooks:	Synthetic Worlds: The Business and Culture of Online Games, by Edward Castronova The Entrepreneur's Guide to Second Life: Making Money in the Metaverse, by Daniel Terdiman

II. Course Description

Virtual World Entrepreneurship is a graduate-level course that examines online culture, design and production. While not intended to create professional online entrepreneurs, it prepares participants for immersion in a virtual environment, virtual market research and produce and execute a virtual business model that can become a template for future projects. Design decisions from a technology view will be assessed, along with the economies of a virtual world lifestyle

III. Objectives of the Course

- A. Become familiar with Second Life as an example of a virtual social and business environment.
- B. Demonstrate the knowledge, skills and ability to effectively conduct market research in a virtual space to discover new commerce opportunities.
- C. Demonstrate the ability to produce and execute an applicable business plan based on a pre-determined budget, with cost and revenue data during a prescribed period of time.

- D. Develop, deliver and evaluate a product of your own making, as well as products developed by fellow students in the virtual environment.
- E. Prepare a final project report that chronicles the development and execution of market research, business plan, product development and launch, and results.

IV. Instructional Approach

The course will emphasize creative thinking, where the instructor is less of a teacher and more of a facilitator in the learning process. Learning will be accomplished by participation in online discussion, virtual world activities, and written assignments. Participants are expected to actively question and reflect on the material presented, producing projects that address specific requirements and outcomes. These projects and activities will form the basis for evaluation and grading.

V. Grading Procedure

Evaluation	Points
Discussion Board Participation	200
Individual Projects	200
Group Projects	200
Final Project	200
Project Presentation	100
Project Postmortem	100

Total Points: 1000

VI. Text and References



Synthetic Worlds: The Business and Culture of Online Games by Edward Castronova



The Entrepreneur's Guide to Second Life:
Making Money in the Metaverse by Daniel
Terdiman

VII. General Instructions/Policies

Contact Information:

Deborah Wise, Virtual World Research
Email: dr.deb@me.com (office)
Phone: (720) 394-4043 (office)

Questions and Administrative Hours:

Email is the preferred contact method (please put the course name and number in the subject line) and is checked almost constantly during business hours; outside business hours email is checked less frequently but an answer can usually be expected within 2 hours. The same is true for phone calls during business hours. Online chat can also be arranged in Second Life.

Evaluation activities:

Entrepreneurship rarely occurs in a vacuum; most development environments have a design project team consisting of requirements gatherers, designers, developers, management and even end-users. While we teach according to a problem-based model, basic material development skills need to be developed individually. Teams may complete the final project, as the entire project lifecycle will be documented. The expectation is that all members of the team will creatively contribute, increasing individual as well as team knowledge.

Discussion Board:

Evaluation of discussion activity will be based on three main criteria: 1) Are there enough individual threads for the student to become part of the discussion (this is a quality vs. quantity decision)? 2) Is the grammar, spelling and sentence structure what one would expect to find in an academic setting (instant messaging

grammar and spelling should be saved for that forum)? 3) Overall, do the discussion threads address the forum question presented without venturing far off-subject?

Individual Projects:

Individual projects are intended to ensure an individual is adjusting to virtual life and can maneuver and contribute to the environment as a product member of a society.

Group Projects:

Each group project will focus on a specific phase of business development (Market Research, Product Development and Design, and Business Plan). These will be viewed as development “problems” with requirements and outcomes the learner must meet in order to be successful.

For each project, it is expected the deliverable will be posted according to requirements (email or learning management system), as well as virtual world demonstration. If participants don’t have access to the materials necessary for completion (computer hardware necessary to effectively participate in a virtual space), please let the instructor know at the first class session.

Final Project:

The final project will actually follow a period of time as an operational business in Second Life, with costs and revenues submitted as part of project completion. The final project will be submitted in as other assignments, as well as demonstrated synchronously in Second Life. For this project participants may work in teams in order to improve collaborative learning skills. There will be a separate rubric for the final project, to insure all requirements have been met.

Other Activities:

Participation in this class requires the student to create a Second Life account and develop an avatar identity in a virtual space. There is no basic cost to do this, however there are optional paid accounts that can be purchased at the discretion of the student. Any money earned past the initial budget allotment (which will be provided) will belong to the student/group, as well as the copyright to any products developed. This is to encourage the

student to further develop and create products and services that may or may not have real-world application.

Project Peer Review:

This form-based review is meant to objectively determine how completely participants met the requirements and deliverables for each project. The object of this evaluation is to provide presentation feedback to the student.

Lessons Learned Paper:

This one-page paper is less of an assignment and more of a reflective evaluation that answers three questions: 1) How has my knowledge of the subject been changed as a result of this class? 2) What concepts can I take back to my place of business/influence? 3) Has the class improved my ability to think creatively, conceptualize and complete a project according to defined outcomes, both in my estimation and that of my peers?

VIII. Course Schedule

Date	Topics	Second Life	Activities/eCollege
Week 1	Welcome to Second Life	Create SL account and avatar	Course Intro- Overview of syllabus and objectives
	What is Second Life and who is in there?	Explore SL and do market research	Castronova Chap 1 -2 Terdiman Chap 1-2
	Defining Second Life as a Virtual Economy	Lots of window-shopping!	Discussion Board Questions
	Intro to Final Project - choose teams	Meet as a team in Second Life	Final Project Rubric
	House of Flames videos	Be Someone Go Somewhere Make Something	Individual Project 1: Scavenger Hunt - due by end of week 1

Week 2	Second Life Market Research	Take (2) SL classes that correspond to product area	Discuss Market Research Individual Project
	Requirements and Outcomes for proposed product - how will it benefit residents?	Online Activity - Individual and group advertizing design	Discussion Board questions
	The best and worst products in SL	Show and Tell!	Castronova Chap 3 and 4 Terdiman Chap 3-4
	House of Flames Videos	Define the Market Your Contribution Marketing Analysis	Individual Project 2: Market Research due by end of week 2
Week 3	Business Plans - the economy of SL	Join trade/business groups	Discussion Board Questions
	Knowing when you need help	Contact experts and compare prices for assistance	Create financial plan based on marketing analysis
	Active Learning - constructing knowledge with Activity	Meet in-world to work on business plan	Castronova Chap 5-6 Terdiman Chap 5-6
	House of Flames Videos	Business Plans Anonymity and Business Finances	Group Project 1: Financial Plan - due by end of week 3
Week 4	Prototypes	Look at forums/blogs in your product area	Discussion Board Questions
	Testing	Set up in-world meeting with Debe/TA to look at your prototype	
	Refining	Meet in-world as a group to work on your project	Castronova Chap 7-8 Terdiman Chap 7-8
	Videos	Mod/copy rights Name that prim! Locking/Unlocking	Group Project 1: Business Plan - due by end of week 4

Week 5	Branding/ packaging	Prominent Brands	Discussion Board Questions
	What to charge	Meet online: Create packaging	
	Making packaging people want to keep	What to put in the package	Submit sample of brand/package
	Videos	Boxes Rez-faux Gift bag	Castronova Chap 9-10 Terdiman Chap 9-10
Week 6	Retail space	Assigning the money-taker	Discussion Board Questions
	Signage	Choosing the space	Determine how your money-taker will report income
	Lag (Latency)	Setting up shop	Group schedule for coverage submitted
	Payment Systems (payment goes to one avi)	Temp on Rez Demos Location	Castronova Chap 11-12 Terdiman Chap 11-12
Week 7	Product Launch Event	Reliability/ Customer Service	Discussion Board Questions
	Long Term sales with short term memories - customer service	Group Meeting - EVERYONE	Product Launch
	Copyrights and taxation	Game faces - finishing touches	Financial Financial Report Due
	Voting - shaking hands & Kissing babies		Business Plan due next week
Week 8	What Did we learn?	Take a breath	Discussion Board Questions
	Building on innovation	Virtual Business - can yours become real?	Final Project (voting results)
	Is activity an effective way to learn? Could you teach what you learned to someone else?	Private party...for YOU!	Final Business plan and Postmortem due
	Feedback		FCQ's