



2014

**Virtual Enterprises International
National Business Plan Competition**

Guide

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Tenth annual Virtual Enterprises International National Business Plan Competition. This competition represents an opportunity for the Virtual Enterprises International (VEI) community to motivate and reward its best performing Virtual Enterprise teams, while showcasing the sophisticated knowledge and skills that VE students acquire, which are often attributed to college students and business professionals.

Additionally, it builds momentum for an already fast growing, unique program, which has expanded from seven (7) New York City-based virtual firms in 1996, to more than 500 firms nationwide today, representing more than 10,000 students. Virtual Enterprises International has become an integral part of the nationwide school reform movement.

This guide has been developed to provide VE Coordinators and students with information about the Competition and preparing for a unique educational experience. Carefully review this document; it includes Competition deadlines, logistical details, guidelines, rules and recommendations.

Additional support for the competition is being provided by private-sector partners, institutions of higher education and many individuals who believe in VEI's mission.

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2014 DEADLINES

Date	FOR TEACHERS AND TEAM MEMBERS
Thursday, February 13	<p>Final date to send business plan and all relevant materials to your regional director for final review. These materials include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firm Logo (high resolution JPEG) • Agreements/contracts with non-virtual entities showing evidence of negotiation in a single PDF file. • A signed Photo Release Form for each team member in a single PDF file. • A signed Ethics Agreement in a PDF file. • One digital team photo (1,200 DPI high resolution JPEG) • A digital copy of the business plan in a single PDF file. <p>After the submissions have been reviewed, the regional director will give the team permission to register for the national competition, which should take place no later than Thursday, February 20.</p>
Thursday, February 20	<p>Final date to register your team online at www.veinternational.org - 2014 National Business Plan Registration</p>
Friday, March 21	<p>Send the following to tyler@veinternational.org</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) FINAL copy of your presentation (slides/video) as a zipped file.
Wednesday, April 2	<p>On the day of the event, bring the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 hard copies of your business plan • 14 copies of the presentation in Handout format (3 slides per page) to provide judges.
	FOR REGIONAL DIRECTORS
February 13-20	<p>Review submissions of the following materials for each team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firm Logo (High resolution JPEG) • Agreements/contracts with non-virtual entities showing evidence of negotiation in a single PDF file. • A signed Photo Release Form for each team member in a single PDF file. • A signed Ethics Agreement in a PDF file. • One digital team photo (1,200 DPI high resolution JPEG) • A digital copy of the business plan in a single PDF file. <p>If there are missing or incomplete items, please communicate with your teachers to provide updated material.</p>
Friday, February 21	<p>Final date to upload all materials noted above to PitchBurner. Regional Directors can schedule a training session from Ethan Meyer at Pitchburner on their own emeyer@pitchburner.com.</p>

2014 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Date & Time	Event	Hospitality
Wednesday, April 2 Time 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Preliminary Rounds and Championship Round Location: The McGraw-Hill Companies, 1221 Avenue of Americas (49 th Street entrance)	Breakfast and lunch
Thursday, April 3 9:30 a.m.	Official Opening & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Announcement of 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place & Trophy Distribution Virtual Enterprises International Trade Show 69 th Regiment Armory 68 Lexington Avenue (between 25 th & 26 th Streets), New York, NY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * First, second, and third-place will be announced and trophies will be distributed at the Opening Ceremony. * Finalist teams are invited to the VIP seating section by the stage to observe the opening ceremony. The top three teams will be seated in the first row with their Coordinators. <p>Note: Fourth, fifth, and sixth place teams will be informed of their placement.</p>	N/A

ELIGIBILITY

Competing teams are selected and registered by the Virtual Enterprises (VE) State/Regional Office. Each region may send up to 10% of the qualifying firms that compete in the regional business plan competition to the National competition. Teams must be approved by their State/Regional Coordinators/Directors to compete. If a state is not using all of their allotted teams, the National Office of Virtual Enterprises International may offer a wildcard.

Four (4) to six (6) **high school** VE students can participate on a team; the technology team member must participate in the Q&A and can, if the team wishes, participate in the oral presentation. All firms competing in the National Business Plan Competition are required to register and participate in the New York City International Trade Show **The team must submit a digital copy of their written business plan to the State director for final review before the team can be registered to participate in the National Business Plan Competition.**

REGISTRATION

Once a team has been approved by the State/Regional Director, the VE coordinator must complete the registration form which can found at www.veinternational.org/nbpc. If a team member cannot participate in the competition after the registration has been submitted, VEI must be notified by the state/regional office, via email and sent to Tyler@veinternational.org of the student substitution. The substitute must be a student-employee this school year of the registered VE firm.

COMPETITION GUIDELINES & FORMAT

The National Business Plan Competition is an exciting educational experience in which participants utilize academic skills, business knowledge and public speaking to “sell” a business concept and secure funding for start-up, expansion, or to report to the board of directors, customers, etc.

The competition is based on both the written business plan and the oral presentation. The written business plan is worth 50% and the oral business plan presentation is worth 50% of the overall score for each round of the Competition. (Business Plan documents and Business Plan Presentation Rubrics and Score Sheets are available at <http://www.veinternational.org/resources/reference files>).

BUSINESS PLAN DOCUMENT

Business plans (1 electronic/digital copy) must be received by **Thursday, February 13, 2014**. Once the business plan has been submitted for the Competition, no changes can be made to the document. The written score is determined by judges who read and rate business plans prior to the oral presentation.

ORIGINAL WORK: Business plans and presentations must reflect the original work of current students from the firm. Students are required to write a brand new, original business plan. If you see an old plan, it is for guidance and may not be copied. **Plagiarism** is the act of using the ideas or work of another person or persons as if they were one’s own, without giving proper credit to the source. VEI reserves the right to disqualify a firm, at any point during or after the competition, if an aspect of the business plan has been plagiarized or if the written plan or the oral presentation is determined to reflect a plan or presentation from a previous year. **ANY COVER, GRAPHIC (except firm logo), OR TEXT COPIED FROM A PREVIOUS BUSINESS PLAN(S) WILL DISQUALIFY THE PLAN FROM THE NATIONAL COMPETITION.**

FORMAT

Business plans cannot exceed 20 pages; not including cover page, executive summary, table of contents), plus an additional 5 pages of supporting documents. Written plans must be presented in size 12- font and be one-and-one-half or double spaced. It is acceptable for the Table of Contents and the Executive Summary to be on the same page.

VE ORGANIZATION

As part of Management Functions (for details see Written Rubric), please indicate whether the firm is organized as a B, C, or S corporation or LLC. The S and LLC corporations need to provide

1. A list of all the shareholders and
2. An explanation of how profits and losses will be allocated to each shareholder (i.e., what percentage of profits and losses will be allocated to each shareholder).
3. The B Corporation must provide a self-assessment.

AGREEMENTS

Contracts/agreements with non-virtual entities **MUST** be included with the business plan submission, have a **seal of approval** from the state office, and show evidence of negotiation (**MUST** include name, title of the person, email address, and phone number of business contact(s) who signs the agreement. Letters, emails or other documentation can also be included). The total income from negotiated agreements with non-virtual entities **cannot exceed 75% of the total yearly salaries.**

Note:

- *Trade sales and sales from non-virtual entities need to be reported on separate lines on the Income Statement.*
- *Contracts must be made with non-family members.*
- *Purchase orders do not constitute a contract.*

DATA MUST BE REAL

Fabricated information on the financials, marketing, in operations or any part of the business plan can result in a disqualified submission. Example: XYZ firm has its own politician, President of the United States, who wears our ties. If there is an agreement with the President of the U.S., the actual agreement, approved by the state office must be included with the business plan.

Sales reported on an income statement **cannot** be the result of imaginary transactions. Sales transactions need to be actual transactions that are documented (supported) by sales invoices for which payment has been made or is expected. Except for the sale of services, **sales must be supported by actual wholesale purchases** between firms or the state/regional office and must be reflected in the VE firm's financial statements.

REQUIRED FINANCIAL REPORTS

- Income Statement:
 - *Projected:* Provide a projected multiple-step income statement for the fiscal year ending 4/30/2014 with details by month. Breakout sales made at trade shows and to non-virtual entities. (Contract sales to non-virtual entities may not exceed 75% of budgeted salaries expense for the current fiscal year.) *Note: Some months of this statement will include actual numbers. Label columns as "actual" or "projected."*
 - *Actual:* Provide an income statement through December 31, 2013 with actual numbers.
 - Balance Sheet:
 - *Projected:* Provide a projected balance sheet dated 4/30/2014.
 - *Actual:* Provide a balance sheet using actual numbers as of 12/31/13.
 - Cash Budget
 - *Projected:* Provide a projected cash budget for payments and receipts of cash for the fiscal year ending 4/30/2014 with details by month. *Note: Some months of this statement will include actual numbers. Label columns as "actual" or "projected."*
 - *Actual:* Provide a cash budget through December 31, 2013 with actual numbers.
 - Notes to financial statements that explain or provide additional details about the assumptions and/or methods used to determine the numbers.
 - Financial Write-up:
 - A written summary/explanation/interpretation of the financial data. Include a comparison of projected and actual numbers through 12/31/13 with an explanation for significant differences.
 - It is recommended (not required) that firms footnote how they determine salaries and footnote the months that the VE firm is closed and not generating revenue.
 - **Local competitions:** income statement & cash budget through 10/31/13; balance sheet 10/31/2013.
 - **National competition:** income statement & cash budget through 12/31/13; balance sheet 12/31/2013.
- * **Firms may not borrow more than 5 months of operating expenses.**
 - * Depreciation method is standardized: straight-line method over 5 years.
 - * Business plan financial statements columns labeled "actual" **MUST** be based on **ACTUAL TRANSACTIONS**. The team can be disqualified if it is determined at any time DURING or AFTER the competition that the information is not accurately reported.
 - * VE merchandise for non-service firms need to **BUY** their inventory and, if asked at any time, be able to provide evidence of purchases and payment.
 - * Federal corporate taxes are only paid if there is a net income. Please check for possible state and local corporate taxes when there is no profit.

INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION

VEI reserves the right to conduct an audit of transactions, request documentation on inventory purchases, bank statements or any documentation to support the submitted business plan. The competition also reserves the right **not** to return submitted business plans.

ORAL PRESENTATION ROUNDS

The Competition also has a total of two (2) oral preliminary presentation rounds and for the finalist teams a Championship Round. In all rounds, teams are allowed 8-12 minutes for their presentation.

Presentations that exceed the time limit will be penalized according to the oral competition rubric.

Teams may use slide presentations, video or other visual aids. Please note that video clips, in the past, have not always been successful. Please specify the type of presentation software you are using on the Team Registration Form. Teams may use any presentation software. **Please notify VEI (tyler@veinternational.org) of the software you are using.**

Teams **must** have fourteen (14) paper copies of the materials (handouts, slides, overhead slides, etc.) they plan to give to judges.

At the completion of the team presentation, judges will **pose questions to ALL team members**. The **judges have 8 minutes to ask questions** relating to the oral presentation or written plan. Each member of the team, including the technology member, **MUST** participate in answering questions. Any member of the team may choose to answer the question. Team members may **NOT** confer with each other while formulating answers.

Communication Devices

During all rounds, participants are **NOT** permitted to have cell phones or communication devices at any time during the competition. The school/VE Coordinator is responsible for collecting and placing their team's cell phones and communication devices in a labeled bag provided by Virtual Enterprises International. **ANY** team member breaking this rule will cause the entire team's disqualification. **ONLY** VE state/regional/national or school principals may carry their communication devices into the competition.

Competition Rounds: Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Preliminary Rounds I & II

- * The time schedule for Round I will be emailed, in advance, to each team's VE Coordinator.
- * Teams must register and report to the competition waiting room, with their VE Coordinator, no earlier than 30 minutes before their scheduled presentation time.
- * Each team is required to present their business plan **twice**
- * VE teachers and/or parents will be admitted to observe their team during Rounds I and II. No more than **two** State/Regional Office staff members will be admitted to the room. VEI reserves the right to limit observers depending on the size of the presentation room.

Round I

- * Teams will be escorted from the competition waiting room to the judging room for their presentation.
- * Students need to know how to connect their laptop to an LCD (one will be provided in the presentation room), to open their computer and presentation. VEI will provide a computer for the Championship Round. Team members may only be assisted by the technology specialist from the competition staff. If materials need to be distributed, it needs to be done by the student competitors.
- * Presentation room observers may NOT interact with student team members once they enter the presentation room and may NOT assist student participants in any way. They must also sit a 'meaningful distance' from the judges and the student team members. Any attempt to communicate or any form of communication with team members or judges will result in a penalty or disqualification.
- * No one but the competition staff can communicate with judges inside or outside of the presentation room.
- * Team members may distribute presentation material to the judges, but not gifts.
- * Team members may NOT shake hands with the judges prior to or after the presentation.

- * Teams may give the Lead Judge a copy of contracts, and or agreements referenced in the business plan and/or oral presentation (each need to have been approved by the State Office and include the name, title, email address, and phone number of the business contact(s) who signed the agreement, and letters, emails or other documentation).
- * For each round, once a person observes a team presentation, he or she will NOT be permitted to re-enter the competition waiting room. They must go to the post-presentation room.
- * To prevent distractions, individuals will be asked NOT to enter or exit a room once a presentation begins.
- * Teams are NOT permitted to ask judges to give them a one or two minute warning before their time is up.
- * Team members must wait until the Lead Judge welcomes them and invites them to start their presentation.
- * Questions asked by the judges will be directed to the team.

Break

- * Upon completion of the Round I presentation, the team will be escorted to the Post-Presentation (waiting) Room.
- * The time slot and room number for the Round II team presentations will be available in the Post-Presentation (waiting) Room forty-five (45) minutes after the end of Round I.

Round II

- * ALL rules from Round I apply to Round II.
- * After a team has completed their Round II presentation, they will proceed to lunch.
- * The top six teams that have qualified to be finalists for the Championship Round will be announced during lunch.
- * We encourage all teams to remain after lunch and observe the Championship Round.

Championship Round

- * VE Coordinators are permitted to watch the presentations of competing teams during the Championship Round **ONLY AFTER** their team(s) has presented.
- * To prevent distractions, individuals will be asked **NOT** to enter or exit the Competition Room once a presentation begins.
- * Team members will use the laptop provided by VEI in the Championship Presentation Room.
- * A team member may distribute presentation material to the judges (copy of their slide presentation and/or handouts, etc.).
- * Team members may **NOT** shake hands with the judges prior to or after the presentation.
- * Team members must wait until the Lead Judge welcomes them and invites them to start their presentation.
- * Questions asked by judges will be directed to the team and any member may respond. Each member of the team **MUST** attempt to participate in answering a question.
- * Team members are prohibited from speaking to friends and guests of teams, school affiliates, other team members or judges.
- * Friends, guests of teams, and school affiliates **may** attend the Championship Round with advance notification to VEI, but may NOT communicate with any team members at any time before the team presentation.
- * After a team presents, they can observe other team presentations in the auditorium or exit the building.

DRESS CODE

All team members are expected to dress in standard business or professional attire for all competition events. Sneakers, jeans and other casual clothing are not acceptable. Males are expected to wear suits or sport coats and ties. Females are expected to wear dresses, suits, or pant suits.

RULES OF CONDUCT

- * VE Coordinators **MUST** be with their teams at all times.
- * Use of cell phones and other communication devices are prohibited and may not be carried by a student participant during the competition.
- * Smoking, by law in New York City, is not permitted in office buildings, public institutions, restaurants, trains or buses.
- * Team members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and to exhibit good sportsmanship. This means that every courtesy, both in speaking and behavior, should be extended to all team members, advisors, faculty members, judges and dignitaries at the competition.

Good Sportsmanship

The traditional value of sportsmanship needs to be given thought and attention. It is expected that all teams and their members demonstrate good sportsmanship when you show respect for yourself, your teammates, your opponents and the judges. A part of sportsmanship is playing clean and handling both winning and losing with style and dignity. Sportsmanship can have a positive influence on everyone. Good sportsmanship suggestions include:

- * Abide by the rules of the competition.
- * Share in the responsibilities of your team.
- * Keep communication positive and enthusiastic even if your team loses.
- * Respect the effort made by other teams.
- * Applaud good performance no matter who gives it.
- * Cheer your teammates with positive statements.
- * When officials make a decision, accept it gracefully even if it goes against you.
- * Shake hands with/congratulate the winning team(s).

TECHNOLOGY

A high resolution (1,200 DPI) digital team photo in business or theme attire must be sent by email to VEI by the due date (see page 3). Teams may use any presentation software, video and/or other visual aids. A digital copy of the presentation must be emailed to VEI by the due date (see page 3). **Teams are NOT permitted to make changes to the slide presentation once it has been submitted.**

Teams need to use their own laptop for the Preliminary Rounds. Finalist teams must use the competition computer provided for the Championship Round. An LCD projector will be provided by VEI for the Preliminary Rounds and the Championship Round. Teams need a flash-drive with their presentation loaded and to know how to work with the flash drive to access their presentation without assistance. **We strongly recommend that teams bring a back-up flash drive and one (1) paper copy of their presentation.**

TIPS FOR THE ORAL BUSINESS PLAN PRESENTATION

The following guidelines will assist teams' preparation for the Business Plan Presentations.

Know Your Business Plan

- * It is important that all members of the team are thoroughly familiar with all aspects of their business plan.
- * When presenting the industry analysis, be sure to analyze the real industry as well as the virtual one.

Review

- * Videos of prior National Business Plan Competition teams' oral presentation at www.veinternational.org/resources/reference_files.

* The score sheet for the written business plan and the oral presentation [www.veinternational.org/resources/reference files](http://www.veinternational.org/resources/reference_files)

Be Mindful That

* New school year 2013-2014 national standardized business practices for VE firms **MUST** be followed.

* VEI reserves the right to conduct an audit of transactions or any documentation used to support the business plan.

* If you have any questions, please call or email Iris Blanc at (212) 769-2710 or iblanc@veinternational.org.

Practice

Practice your presentation in three ways: individually, as a team and in front of an audience.

Practice Individually

* Each team member should review their presentation to make certain that it makes sense. Rehearse in front of a mirror, your parents and friends. This helps you to feel confident and find your style.

Practice as a Team

* Rehearse your presentation as a team multiple times. Be sure to use your visual aids while practicing so that technology becomes a seamless part for your presentation. Critique each other constructively.

Practice in Front of an Audience

* Present your business plan in front of an audience. This helps your team to become comfortable in front of “strangers,” develop “eye contact” skills, and receive valuable recommendations to improve your presentations.

* Some people who can be included in your audience are VE colleagues, teachers, principal and business partners. If possible, request that members of your audience read your business plan and develop questions to be posed to your team after your presentation.

* It is strongly recommended that the team work with an industry coach/partner who can provide valuable professional guidance.

Suggested websites

* Public speaking:

http://www.impactfactory.com/gate/public_speaking_training_course/freegate_1552-1104-88327.html

<http://www.aresearchguide.com/3tips.html>

Be prepared to answer questions

* It is recommended that the team members practice responding to questions posed.

* Questions can be related to any aspect of your business, written plan, or oral presentation.

* Consider familiarizing yourself with:

- Concerns of a business today (e.g., the recession, interest rates, outsourcing, taxes and ethics)
- Current events and how they may affect your business (e.g., prices, supplies, market availability, customers, employees, profits)
- The names of your key customers and suppliers
- Personal finance concepts

Using Notes

Presenters may use notes or an outline for reference during the presentation. Visual aids are for the audience and judges to follow your presentation. Angle yourself so that you are partially facing the screen as well as the audience. You can use a pointer or light beam to emphasize an item on the slide.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOTAPING

* The Photo Release Forms must be sent to your State/Regional Director with the Business Plans by the due date as indicated (see pg 3).

* Advisors are NOT allowed to photograph or videotape or record their teams during presentation in the Preliminary Rounds of the competition. They may photograph, videotape or record their teams during the Championship Round. Flash bulbs are NOT permitted. No one will be permitted to roam the room causing a distraction during any round of the competition. **Any action that distracts or interferes is to be avoided.**

SECURITY

Photo identification is required for admittance to all event facilities. Students, chaperones and guests must have photo I.D. available at all times during the competition. The safety, well-being, and behavior of students are the responsibility of chaperones and the VE coordinator.

We recommend that students always:

- * Travel in groups
- * Have photo identification available
- * Carry emergency contact information as well as the hotel name, address and phone number
- * Additional information that may be helpful to the coordinator:

New York City has a 24-hour information system. For non-emergencies call 311

If you need emergency assistance, call 911, or the VEI National office: (212) 769-2710.

TRAVEL WITHIN NEW YORK CITY

The New York City transit system uses a Metro Card for entry to subway trains and buses. You can purchase a Metro Card at the nearest subway station. For more transit information, visit the New York City MTA website at www.mta.info or www.hopstop.com

VEI reserves the right to disqualify any team or team member, at any time during the VEI National Business Plan Competition, for a violation of any rule in this guide or for any behavior that VEI deems to be dishonorable.

APPENDIX I



NATIONAL BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION PHOTO RELEASE FORM

Instructions

Please ask parents/legal guardians to complete this release form giving permission to photograph film or videotape their child participating in the National Business Plan Competition. Signed Photo Release Forms for all team members must be provided to regional director as a single PDF File by February 13, 2014. Final Deadline for Submission by Regional Director is February 21, 2014.

For information call Iris Blanc at 212-769-2710 or email iblanco@veinternational.org.

NAME OF STUDENT (Please Type or Print Legibly)

SCHOOL CITY/COUNTY STATE

I, _____, hereby consent and agree to the taking of photographs,
Print Name of Parent/Guardian

movies, or videotapes of my son/daughter by Virtual Enterprises International (VEI) and the New York City Department of Education on April 1 through April 3, 2014.

I also grant to VEI, Virtual Enterprises International, and the New York City Department of Education the right to edit, use and reuse said products for public relations to create awareness of the National Business Plan Competition and the Virtual Enterprises program. I further consent and agree that the name of my child may be revealed therein or by descriptive text or commentary.

I also hereby release Virtual Enterprises International and New York City Department of Education and their agents and employees, from all claims, demands, liabilities whatsoever in connection with the above.

While VE students retain authorship of their written business plans at all times, VEI reserves the right NOT to return the written document and has the discretion to use the plan to further the purpose of the Virtual Enterprises International.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

DATE

ADDRESS, CITY STATE, ZIP OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

HOME PHONE NUMBER OF PARENT/GUARDIAN _____

CELL NUMBER OF PARENT/GUARDIAN _____

APPENDIX II



NATIONAL BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION Ethics Agreement

Instructions

Ethics agreement, signed by School Principal, Coordinator, and all team members, must be provided to regional director as a single PDF File by February 13, 2014. Final Deadline for Submission by Regional Director is February 1, 2014.

Business plans, slide and oral presentations must reflect the original work of current students from the VE firm. Disqualification for plagiarism can occur before, during, or after the competition. I understand that business plans and slides/PowerPoint presentations will be reviewed before the competition.

Plans or presentations that are not original and different from the work of previous years will be disqualified from the National Business Plan Competition. It is, however, understood that financial history and other historical facts regarding the company will be consistent with prior years.

Please have all listed parties print and sign their acknowledgement that all work is the current firm's original work, and he/she understands that disqualification will result from plagiarizing past work.

Please print

Firm Name _____

School Name _____

School Address, City, State, Zip _____

Principal Name (print)	Signature
Coordinator Name (print)	Signature
Team Member 1 Name (print)	Signature
Team Member 2 Name (print)	Signature
Team Member 3 Name (print)	Signature
Team Member 4 Name (print)	Signature
Team Member 5 Name (print)	Signature
Team Member 6 Name (print)	Signature