

## Design concepts used in “Business Games” examples

In computer based training, the primary goal of games is to make information more digestible –not an attempt to create a diversion from the material.

Balance of Complexity:

<b>Less Complex</b>	<b>More Detailed</b>
Transparent Content –the user gets the message directly.	Two things to communicate –Must first teach the user how the game is played, then communicate your message.
Universal –can use it over and over.	Hardwired –maybe only one time use.

If the same model looks different, it can feel different.

Screen space is always an issue.

You can often save space by sharing answers among a series of questions. (This also gives the user the chance to acclimate themselves to one screen, and stay there a while.)

A model that is easy to duplicate and modify is worth an initial investment.

There are always shortcuts to production.

(See the attached description of just a few.)

## **Production Shortcuts used in “Business Games” examples**

### **Put text content in calculation icons**

Instead of typing text into display icons (which risks changing the margins or moving text), use embedded variables. Define the variables (before display icon appears) in a calculation icon.

Additionally on the Macintosh, it’s nice to leave starter text in the calculation icon as one block of text (“AnswerOne”, not “Answer One”) because the production author can just double-click in the calculation icon and replace the whole string at once. (See page 557 in “Using Authorware.”)

### **Keep display icons locked by using “movable in area” not “Movable:=FALSE”**

One decent way to keep display icons from moving is to set the display icon’s “Movable” attribute to FALSE (See page 236 in “Using Authorware”). However, this only prevents movement while running, the author can still accidentally move the contents of the display icon.

To assure the graphic never moves, set the display icon’s “Effect” to “Movable in area” and set the start and end to the same location (with the icon in its correct location, click “base” then click the display, click “end” then click the display). (See page 239 in “Using Authorware.”)

You can even copy and paste this whole display icon then replace the duplicate’s contents with different graphics (of the same size) and they’ll be perfectly registered—no matter where you paste the new contents!

## **Production Shortcuts used in “Business Games” examples (Continued)**

### **Set variables by referencing calculation icon’s “IconTitle” (“EDIT” convention)**

You can set variables by using “VariableName:=GetNumber(1,IconTitle)” inside a calculation icon—you just have to be careful that the first number in the icon’s title is the value you want the variable to become. Name the icon “Variable = EDIT:5” to bring attention to other authors that the number following “EDIT” is referenced inside the calculation icon—and they shouldn’t change it, or put another number before it.

This way, an author can intentionally edit the value of the variable by just changing the number after “EDIT” —never having to go inside the calculation icon.

### **Put dummy number after icon titles to keep the names unique (“SET” convention)**

If the “EDIT” convention is used in an icon that’s referenced (See page 519 in Using Authorware) then duplicate’s icon titles will be incremented (to keep them unique). This is a problem if you want to have control over that number—you won’t be able to have more than one with the same name. To avoid this, use an icon name like “Variable= EDIT: 5 SET:1” lets Authorware go ahead and increment the number after “SET” to 2, then 3, etc.

The number is meaningless and keeps growing as your project does—but no matter what, you’ll be able to edit that “EDIT” portion of the icon.

## Contact Information

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### (Mention the Macromedia User Conference)

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