THE HEADQUARTERS PILOT

A decision worth debating.

The offer

A private, facilitated Franchise Operations Challenge for a junk-removal franchise network. Six teams of two or three people work through three decision rounds in 90 minutes, then leave with a written lesson and a follow-up commitment.

Learning objective

Recognize when accepting more work reduces profit. The pilot also exposes the difference between operating profit and cash remaining after an upfront investment.

What headquarters receives

A planning call, common scenario brief, rehearsal, live facilitation, team scorecards, private decision reports, headquarters coaching summary and a 30-day follow-up discussion.

How competition works

Each team runs a separate fictional company. All teams use the same starting assumptions, rival and disruption. Teams choose different plans and moves. Decisions do not affect other teams' markets; comparison happens through the facilitator console.

What is ready

Existing Strategy Room, model-based round evaluation, JSON and decision-memo exports, the new facilitator console, sample event, reports and this pack. A live event still requires a headquarters partner, facilitator, date, meeting details, roster and device rehearsal.

Starting points

Pilot overview: https://dumpsterdiverwargames.com/franchise-pilot
Facilitator console: https://dumpsterdiverwargames.com/event-console
Team rehearsal: https://dumpsterdiverwargames.com/strategy-room

One sponsor. One objective.

Headquarters champion

Training or Learning & Development owns the learning objective. Operations or Franchise Support supplies an adviser who reviews whether the tradeoffs are useful. The budget holder confirms scope and cost. The event organizer recruits participants and owns the meeting logistics.

Planning-call questions

Which operating decision is most often misunderstood? Who should practice it? What would a useful debrief show? Who can approve the pilot? Where can a 90-minute session fit? Who receives individual reports? What evidence would justify a second session?

Record before invitations

Brand: ___________ Champion: ___________ Budget owner: ___________
Objective: ___________ Date/time/time zone: ___________
Meeting link or room: ___________ Facilitator: ___________
Technical producer: ___________ Team count: ___________
Authorized report recipients: ___________ Agreed fee: ___________

Scope boundaries

One common fictional scenario; up to six teams for the first pilot; one 90-minute session; standard reports; one headquarters debrief. Bespoke game mechanics, integrations, real-company data ingestion and shared-market multiplayer are separate work.

Pilot success agreement

Proposed targets to confirm with headquarters: at least five of six teams complete all rounds; at least 80% of responding participants rate the session useful (4 or 5 out of 5); at least five teams leave with an owner and review trigger. Record response counts. Improved business performance is not a promised outcome.

Four weeks to the table.

Four weeks before | facilitator + champion

Run the 20-minute demo. Select the objective, participants, report audience and success measures. Confirm the fee and scope in writing. Reserve the date and meeting space. Assign one technical producer.

Three weeks before | headquarters organizer

Invite six teams. Assign one operator per team, plus an operations or crew perspective and, optionally, a note-taker. Use team aliases in the console. Keep names and contact details in headquarters' approved registration system.

Two weeks before | operations adviser

Review the fictional assumptions and scoring rules. Confirm that the lesson is relevant without claiming the model predicts real results. Send the participant brief and access instructions.

One week before | facilitator + producer

Rehearse the full three-round flow with at least two test teams. Check sign-in, save/reload, JSON export, matching-scenario import, report export and backup restore. Test the actual devices, network, projector, audio and browser zoom.

One day before | organizer

Confirm attendance, meeting access, team aliases and accessibility needs. Download this pack and the sample event. Open a fresh event in the console. Prepare a private file collection method and paper decision sheets.

After the session | facilitator

Within two business days: send each team its report and headquarters its agreed summary. Within seven days: hold the buyer debrief. At 30 days: collect evidence of practices tried and agree whether to repeat. These follow-ups are a manual schedule, not automated messages.

The 20-minute walkthrough.

0-3 minutes | diagnose

Ask: "Where do your operators most often confuse growth with profitable capacity?" Restate one specific training problem. Explain that the demo uses fictional numbers and independent team scenarios.

3-6 minutes | set the board

Open /event-console, load the sample event and show the common scenario. Explain the three plans: protect the core, improve operations, or open a second area. Point out that upfront investment changes cash independently of operating profit.

6-11 minutes | one live decision

Export a backup if needed, start a fresh demo event and add Demo Crew. Keep Service specialist and Disposal-cost increase. Choose Protect the core, then Build local demand. Before committing, ask whether seven more inquiries fit 24 slots. Record a rationale and commit. Round 1 should show 24 completed jobs, five unserved inquiries, $3,520 operating profit and $23,520 cash.

11-15 minutes | show the deliverable

Load the sample event again. Open Review & export. Compare cash, operating profit, investment, completed jobs and unserved inquiries. Export a sample team report and headquarters summary. Explain that no score measures real customer satisfaction or employee ability.

15-18 minutes | shape their pilot

Ask which managers should attend, what the adviser would change in the discussion, and what would count as useful feedback. Keep the initial financial baseline fixed so everyone is comparable.

18-20 minutes | make the next step concrete

Agree who owns the pilot decision, the proposed week, the operations adviser and the scope. Send the one-page overview and a tailored proposal after the call. Do not promise a confirmed event until headquarters agrees.

04 / PARTICIPANT BRIEF

Bring your operating judgment.

Your assignment

Work with your team to manage a fictional junk-removal company. Choose an opening plan, then commit one move in each of three rounds. Explain the tradeoff before seeing the result. Your objective is to understand capacity, profit and cash, then identify a practice worth reviewing.

Roles

Operator: controls the team's Strategy Room and exports its results. Operations voice: challenges capacity and delivery assumptions. Finance / note-taker: checks spending, reserves and the written rationale. Two people can share the last two roles.

Before joining

Use the meeting details supplied by headquarters. The operator signs in to Strategy Room with their own account, tests a saved practice round and exports any previous memo before resetting. Bring a laptop with a modern browser, power and reliable internet. Tell the organizer about accessibility needs before the rehearsal.

Common settings

Opening cash $20,000; price $450; reserve floor $5,000; demand 100%; direct costs 100%; collection lag 0. Rival: Service specialist. Disruption: Disposal-cost increase beginning in round 2. The facilitator may select another declared rival/disruption before play; all teams must match.

During the event

Use one active rehearsal tab per team account. Discuss before committing. Write a rationale of at least 12 characters. Do not restart to improve your competition result. Export the final JSON and memo to the facilitator's agreed private collection location.

At the finish

Record one practice to review, an accountable owner or role and a review date or trigger. Results reflect a simplified model. No game decision spends business money, dispatches crews or changes another team's market.

Know what the numbers mean.

Opening plans

Protect the core: $0 investment; 24 job capacity; 24 base inquiries; $220 direct cost per job; $800 overhead per round.
Improve operations: $2,500 investment; 28 capacity; 26 base inquiries; $200 direct cost; $800 overhead.
Open a second area: $6,500 investment; 36 capacity; 32 base inquiries; $220 direct cost; $1,100 overhead.

Round moves

Protect reserves: no extra spending or capacity.
Back the crew: $900 spend; four extra job slots and two extra inquiries this round.
Build local demand: $1,200 spend; seven extra inquiries this round. Extra capacity and demand from moves do not persist into later rounds.

Default competitive pressure

Service specialist reduces available inquiries by two each round. From round 2, Disposal-cost increase adds $50 per completed job. These effects are scripted. They are announced assumptions, not a hidden human opponent.

Arithmetic

Completed jobs = the lower of available demand and capacity.
Revenue = completed jobs x $450.
Operating profit = revenue - direct costs - overhead - move spending.
Closing cash = opening cash - upfront investment + cumulative operating profit, with immediate collection in this pilot.
Unserved inquiries = demand above capacity.

Limits

Each round represents one modeled week. No taxes, credit, depreciation, financing, carry-forward demand or real customer satisfaction is modeled. Investment is separate from operating profit. The baseline is fictional and has not been calibrated to any franchise's actual economics.

Agree the rules before play.

Eligibility

Use the same baseline assumptions, rival and disruption. All three rounds must be complete to receive a rank. Incomplete teams appear in the report without a rank. Do not change the plan after round 1 or restart for a better result.

Order of comparison

1. Teams that stayed at or above the $5,000 reserve floor rank ahead of teams that breached it, including immediately after investment.
2. Within each reserve group, higher closing cash ranks first.
3. If cash ties, fewer unserved inquiries ranks first.
4. Exact ties share a rank; no arbitrary tie-break is added.

Show separately

Operating profit, upfront investment, completed jobs and unserved inquiries remain visible alongside cash. This scoring intentionally favors liquidity and reserve discipline. It is not a universal measure of business quality or an endorsement of one real-world growth strategy.

Reasoning review

Use a separate qualitative discussion: Did the rationale identify the constraint? Did it state an expected consequence? Did the team revise its thinking after results? Did it name evidence needed before a real decision? Recognize useful reasoning without adding unannounced points.

Imports and corrections

The console rejects rehearsal files with mismatched assumptions. Keep the source JSON and memo. If an entry is wrong, confirm the correction with the team, preserve the prior backup, and import the verified JSON. Record the correction in the facilitator's notes. Do not silently reconstruct a winning result.

Publication

Detailed results are private to agreed recipients. Public recognition requires participant and headquarters agreement. Never describe the exercise as a ranking of real franchises or managers.

90 minutes. Keep the debate moving.

0-10 | brief and practice

Read the objective and rules. Confirm roles, team aliases and matching assumptions. Explain scripted rival behavior and independent team markets. Practice a decision verbally; do not count it as round 1.

10-25 | round 1

Teams choose their opening plan and first move. Prompt: "What are you spending, and what constraint does it change?" Ask teams to predict the consequence before committing.

25-35 | review consequences

Ask one team to explain cash versus profit and another to explain unserved inquiries. Keep private notes and team reports off the shared screen unless agreed. Avoid telling teams which move to choose next.

35-50 | round 2

Restate the previously announced disruption. Ask: "Does the same move still make sense under the new cost?" Teams write the rationale and commit.

50-65 | round 3

Ask teams to adapt with the remaining cash and capacity in view. Collect final JSON and decision memo exports through the agreed private channel. The producer imports and verifies each team's three completed rounds.

65-85 | debrief

Show the agreed comparison. Ask what surprised teams, which assumptions matter, and what evidence they would gather in the real business. Record a practice, owner and review trigger for every team.

85-90 | close

Recognize clear reasoning. Collect the post-session questions and usefulness rating. Confirm report delivery and the 30-day check-in. Export the event backup before closing.

Keep a usable record.

Setup

Open /event-console. Start a new event and fill the event brief. Add team aliases. Confirm the rival and disruption before the first decision. The shared scenario locks once any team has committed a round.

Two ways to capture decisions

Preferred distributed workflow: each team uses Strategy Room, exports rehearsal JSON, and sends it to the facilitator privately. Select that team in the console and import.
Facilitated fallback: record the plan, move and rationale directly in the console. It uses the same evaluation model as Strategy Room.

Storage and privacy

Console records are saved in this browser on this device. They are not synchronized with cloud accounts and do not have per-user permissions. Use aliases and roles instead of sensitive details. Someone with access to the same browser profile can view them. Keep exported reports in headquarters' approved storage.

Backups

Export an event backup after each round and at the end. Import backup restores an event after validation and a replacement confirmation. Keep old backups until the reports are accepted. Starting a new event or loading the sample replaces the current local event after confirmation.

A save or connection problem

Stop decisions if Strategy Room reports a save warning. Preserve any available export, keep the tab open and reconnect. If the console cannot save, export a backup before closing. If another console tab changes the same event, export your current work and reload. Run only one facilitator console tab.

Paper fallback

Use the decision sheet on the next page. Give every team the same disclosed scenario. Record and collect all choices. Enter them into the console after recovery, or use the published arithmetic for manual results. If accurate scoring cannot be restored, finish the learning discussion and defer rankings.

Decisions first. Results second.

Event and team

Event: ____________________________ Team alias: ___________________
Operator: ________________________ Date: _________________________
Opening plan: Protect the core / Improve operations / Open a second area
Rival: _____________________________ Disruption: ____________________

Round 1

Move: Protect reserves / Back the crew / Build local demand
Why this move? ____
Expected consequence: ____
Actual result / cash / profit / jobs: ___________________________________

Round 2

Move: Protect reserves / Back the crew / Build local demand
Why this move? ____
Expected consequence: ____
Actual result / cash / profit / jobs: ___________________________________

Round 3

Move: Protect reserves / Back the crew / Build local demand
Why this move? ____
Expected consequence: ____
Actual result / cash / profit / jobs: ___________________________________

Commitment

What changed our view? ____
One practice to review: ____
Owner or role: ____
Review date or trigger: ____

Facilitator verification

All teams used the same assumptions: Yes / No
Three choices and rationales recorded: Yes / No
Memo and JSON collected or paper record preserved: Yes / No

Evidence for a second session.

Ask before and after

1. A company has 24 available slots and 29 inquiries. How many can it complete without extra capacity?
2. Can the plan with the highest operating profit finish with less cash? Explain why.
3. If a $1,200 campaign creates inquiries but no additional completed jobs, what happens to operating profit, all else equal?

Answer key / facilitator only

1. 24 jobs; five inquiries remain unserved.
2. Yes. Upfront investment can more than offset additional operating profit; collection delays can also matter outside this zero-lag pilot.
3. It falls by $1,200. Demand above capacity does not generate revenue in this model.

Score each answer 0 or 1 using these concepts; compare the same participants' before/after totals. Do not interpret this short quiz as a validated assessment.

Post-session feedback

Usefulness: 1-5. Relevance to your role: 1-5. Confidence explaining cash versus profit: 1-5. What was confusing? Which decision created the best discussion? What practice will you review? May the facilitator contact you about the pilot? Keep testimonial/publicity permission separate.

Headquarters debrief within seven days

Report invited, attended and completed teams; feedback response count; usefulness distribution; paired knowledge-check results; common reasoning themes; commitments with owners; technical issues; and suggested improvements. Separate observed evidence from facilitator interpretation.

30-day follow-up

Ask which practice was tried, what evidence was reviewed, what changed, and what prevented action. Record a concrete example with permission. A reported improvement is an observation, not proof that the simulation caused it.

Repeat decision

Repeat if headquarters finds the reports useful, the session fits its training needs and delivery is reliable. Fix confusing mechanics before expanding. Consider a convention session only after a successful smaller rehearsal.

A report headquarters can read.

Clearly labeled demonstration

Three fictional teams use the default baseline, Service specialist and Disposal-cost increase. Each chooses Protect reserves, Build local demand, then Back the crew. Only their opening plans differ. These are sample results, not customer outcomes.

Rank 1 / Route Crew

Improve operations. Closing cash $29,800; operating profit $12,300; investment $2,500; 78 completed jobs; three unserved inquiries; reserves safe.

Rank 2 / Core Crew

Protect the core. Closing cash $29,200; operating profit $9,200; investment $0; 70 completed jobs; five unserved inquiries; reserves safe.

Rank 3 / Growth Crew

Open a second area. Closing cash $27,240; operating profit $13,740; investment $6,500; 98 completed jobs; one unserved inquiry; reserves safe.

Coaching interpretation

Growth Crew has the highest operating profit and completed jobs, but the lowest closing cash because of its initial investment. Route Crew wins under the declared liquidity-focused rules. This does not establish the best long-term expansion strategy. Ask what a longer time horizon would change.

Suggested commitment

Practice: Review available capacity before buying additional leads.
Owner: Operations manager.
Review trigger: Review four weeks of verified job and capacity data in 30 days.
Next evidence: Accepted jobs, completed jobs, staffing limits, direct cost and lead spending.

Explore the source

Import sample-event.json into the console or choose Load sample event. The accompanying sample scorecard and reports are generated from the existing game model. Editable templates and outreach drafts are included in the organizer download bundle.