



JA Company Program — 2020 Company of the Year Competition

The Competition

The JAUM Company Program of the Year Competition is our annual celebration of the achievements of *JA Company Program* students. Student companies proudly present the results of their enterprise and learning experience. This year's competition is Thursday, **April 23rd from 10am-5pm.**

The JACP COY is not simply a business competition for young people. The goal is to balance the business achievements of each team as a whole with the personal development of each individual member. Therefore, for a team to win, it is not sufficient just to run a financially successful JA company or to have created an exciting product or service. JA company members also must demonstrate that they understand how and why the company performed as it did.

Student companies appear before a panel of independent judges who determine company performance against the competition criteria as compared with other JA companies at each stage of the competition process. Judges will be looking for evidence of innovation and the application of new ideas in all aspects of running the company. They also will look for an understanding that continuous improvement through innovation is essential to the success of a business.

Eligibility

Permitted Minimum and Maximum Age of Participants

Students representing their companies in the competition must be between 15-19 years old on July 31 of the year of participation. Students that fall outside of these guidelines can only be approved to participate by the Chief Academic Officer, Junior Achievement USA, and the JAUM President.

Number of Participants per Company

Maximum of 5 students are allowed to represent their student company at the competition.

Official Language of JAUM

The language to be used at all stages of the competition is English. Companies have the option of using an interpreter for the interviews with the judging panel.

Competition elements

There are four elements to the competition with an opportunity to showcase *JA Company Program* products at the Entrepreneurial Expo tabling session prior to the kick-off of the event. The judged elements are:

- Company report (submitted electronically prior to competition)
- Commercial Video – maximum of 1 minute (submitted electronically prior to competition)
- Presentation to the judging panel
- Interview with the judging panel

At each stage, the judges make an assessment of the company. There is no winning formula. Each JA company is different and its members must decide how best to convey their understanding and experience to the judges.

There is a maximum of 8 teams which may compete in the competition. If there are more than 8 teams, then all teams will go through a pre-qualifying round in which the top 8 teams will be chosen to move on to the competition. Teams advancing to the North Dakota competition will be notified by December 11.

Each member of the winning teams will be awarded scholarships for post-secondary education at the conclusion of the event. 1st place - \$1,000, 2nd place team - \$500, and 3rd place team - \$250

Stage One: Written JA Company Report

The JA Company Report is an opportunity to showcase the team's overall business performance and what was learned and achieved throughout the *JA Company Program* experience.

Guidelines

The report should read as a single business document, not as a series of repetitive directors' reports. The report should demonstrate the JA Company achievements. The report must be written by company members and should be original and innovative in approach, not based on a template from previous years. A recommended approach is to ask each director to write a brief report of his/her activities and then combine the information into one cohesive document.

- There should be a review of members' development as individuals and as a team.
- JA Company membership and structure should be illustrated.
- Any special activities undertaken by the JA Company should be included.
- Companies are encouraged to include photographs of their product or service, charts, infographics, or other appropriate visual elements.

Report Submission Guidelines

- A PDF copy of the report must be submitted electronically to JAUM as part of the company's competition registration. A copy of the report must be sent to: wtotimeh@jaum.org and should arrive **no later than Wednesday, April 8th by 5pm.**
- Language: The report must be submitted in English.
- A maximum of 9 pages (or fewer) of 8.5 x 11 sheets to include the cover page are permitted. No appendices are allowed. The minimum font size to be used is 12 point. The report must be free from any factual, spelling, or grammatical errors and should be visually pleasing.
- The cover should include:
 - Company name
 - Year of operation
 - Name of volunteer, teacher/school and local JA office
 - City, State
- Page one must be an Executive Summary and include:
 - Company name or logo
 - Mission statement
 - Product/service description
 - Summary of financial results
 - Summary statement of JA Company performance
 - Index of JA Company Report contents

Judging Criteria

Guidelines Compliance – The report should adhere to guidelines noted above. This includes meeting page number requirements, including an Executive Summary, avoiding spelling or grammatical errors, and attention to visual appearance.

Financial Performance – the company should include information about financial performance including break-even analysis, capitalization, total units sold, revenue generated, expenses incurred, profit margin, investor return, and liquidation. A financial statement of activities or liquidation report is also required.

Innovation – The report should demonstrate how the company's product, service or specific business strategy incorporated innovation and /or innovative thinking and how that impacted overall business performance.

Marketing and Sales Strategies and Methods – The company should share specifics on marketing and sales activities. This may include information on overall marketing strategy, target audience, competitive advantage, product/service features and benefits, sales methods, and customer services techniques. Students are encouraged to provide examples of any social media pages, websites, advertisements or other resources created to support these efforts.

Leadership and Organization – The report should showcase company leadership and describe how they were identified, how they motivated employees, describe strategies used to achieve company goals, and share how processes were developed and improved to maximize efficiencies.

Learning Experiences and Future Application – The company should shared any successes, failures, or key learnings from the *JA Company Program* experience as well as include examples of how this experience will shape future plans of the company or its members.

Key Points Assessed by Judges

Scoring will be assessed on the following basis:

- Overall written presentation to include an Executive Summary
- Product innovation
- Marketing and Sales – strategies and methods
- Leadership and organization
- Financial performance

Commercial Video

The commercial is an opportunity to showcase the benefits of the company's product and innovative approach to meeting their customers' needs.

Guidelines

- The presentation should grab the viewers' attention and spotlight the company's product or service. The commercial should bring to life the benefits and use of the product/service in a way that will be memorable for viewers.
- The clip should clearly demonstrate how the product or service adds value/fulfills a need for the target audience.
- When making the video, think of some of the best commercials – what made them the best and what made them memorable? Were they funny, innovative, or shocking? Did they tell a story? Did they speak to an experience you personally have felt?
- **Please note: All videos must adhere to copyright protection guidelines. Students may not use copyright protected images, music, or references without express written permission. Any videos that include music copyright infringement will be denied. Please cite the music source (artist and song title) at the end of video even if the music is public domain or royalty free.**
- The maximum time allocated for each video presentation is 1 minute.
- Company must upload video to YouTube as a public video. Name the video the name of your company.
- Commercials should be uploaded and link sent to wotimeh@jaum.org no later than **5 pm on Wednesday, April 8th**.

Judging Criteria

Creativity – Commercials are often funny or innovative making them memorable for the viewer.

Relevance and content – Advertising creates awareness of the product/service and can convey messages, attitudes, and emotions to entice and intrigue audiences.

Call to Action – The commercial should clearly explain how to purchase the product, contract the service, or support the cause based on the value or need.

Delivery technique/Style – The commercial uniquely delivers information to the viewer. The video should grab attention and showcase the product/service or business in a unique way.

Clarity of message – The commercial clearly expresses the product/service and demonstrates how the product adds value/fulfills a need for the target audience.

Product demonstration/use – The commercial should include a demonstration of the product/service in order to provide context for the viewer.

Scoring will be assessed on the following basis:

- Engaging, innovative, and memorable
- Relevance and content conveyed to audience
- Marketing and Sales – promote purchase
- Within time allotment and attention grabbing
- Expresses value
- Product demonstration

Stage Two – JA Company Presentation (presentation before the Judging Panel)

This is your company's opportunity to engage with the judging panel and demonstrate your knowledge of the company and overall experiences.

Guidelines

- The presentation should summarize the key experiences and achievements of the company. Try to bring to life and include the accomplishments and challenges of your company's endeavor for the audience. Sharing what you have learned from your mistakes and subsequent solutions is as important as your achievements.
- It is recommended that presentations include visual elements such as Microsoft PowerPoint or other presentation programs. Internet connectivity will not be available in the presentation room and students should plan accordingly. The presentation team must not exceed five members. It is up to the team to decide who will have an active role in the presentation. The day of, **provide JAUM staff with a flash drive** that holds the electronic presentation data needed.

- All presentations must be delivered in English (greetings and similar in another language are acceptable).
- The maximum time allocated for each presentation is four (4) minutes.
- The narrative style should be business-like but may include the use of some humor. Students are encouraged to be creative in their presentation style.
- A JAUM staff member will be available to assist with visual aids or technology. JAUM will provide a set of specifications regarding technical support available.
- Multimedia enhancements such as videos and audio should not overshadow the presentation or impair the judges' ability to assess the experiences and achievements of the company.

Criteria

Structure of Presentation – The presentation should summarize the key experiences and achievements of the company by telling their unique company story.

Delivery Technique and Style – There is an effort to engage the audience and keep the presentation moving at a nice pace. The team exudes confidence and enthusiasm in their company presentation.

Visual Presentation, Visual Aids, and Hand-outs – The PowerPoint presentation, visual aids, and hand-outs support the presentation in a creative way and should enhance the overall presentation.

Relevance and Content – The presentation should be relevant to the team's business performance and include in-depth content as well as demonstrate the team's continuous improvement efforts, while referencing mistakes and successes experienced during company operations.

Critical Thinking – In response to judges' questions, students demonstrate disciplined thinking that is clear, rational, open-minded and informed regarding their company or product/service.

Key Points Assessed by Judges

Scoring will be assessed on the following basis:

- Structure of presentation
- Relevance and content
- Delivery technique
- Visual aids and hand-outs
- Originality

Interview with the Panel of Judges

The interview is a very important aspect of the competition because the judges can ask any questions about the students' understanding of how and why the company performed as it did, the general lessons they gained from the experience, and how these lessons might be applied in other situations.

Guidelines

- Student teams will be interviewed collectively without an audience present. Each student should be prepared to answer questions related to their business performance and learning experiences.
- Company members (without their advisors or teachers) will be questioned by the panel of judges for a maximum of 10 minutes about different aspects of their business.

Criteria

- **Demonstration of personal skill development** – Each student will be asked to share what they have learned and gained from participating in the *JA Company Program* experience.
- **Knowledge and understanding of how businesses function** - Students should be prepared to answer any specific question related to their business.
- **Ability to apply lessons learned to new situations** – The company should be prepared to answer questions regarding their business performance and apply it to other situations.
- **Ability to sufficiently answer questions** – The company will be assessed on whether they could sufficiently answer judges' questions.
- **Demonstrate Social Responsibility**- The company will be asked to share how their experience has benefited the community or filled a need. What was their philanthropic vision?

Key Points Assessed by Judges

Scoring will be assessed on the following basis:

- Development of personal skills
- Team spirit
- Knowledge and understanding of how businesses function
- Ability to apply lessons learned to new situations

Entrepreneurial Expo

Prior to the kick-off of the competition the student companies will be asked to set up a table top display of their product with students ready for a product pitch and engaging display with collateral materials. This is a non-judged element of the competition but critical to the understanding of their product, company and overall experience success.