

WINTER 2020

- Technology Has Its Limitations **1**
- Simulation Program or Training Program **2**
- The Fire Dog **3**
- Automatic & Mutual Aid Challenge **4**

NEW FREE RESIDENTIAL SIMULATIONS

Thanks to Chief Nick Martin from Traditions Training and the Concord Fire Department (New Hampshire), we have added four new simulations to our Free Simulation Sets <https://simsushare.com/free-simulation-sets/>, entitled "Residential Urban Sims #2". These include a single family residence, two apartment buildings, and a taxpayer, with 3 conditions plus the arrival condition.

GET YOUR 1-PAGE QUICK START GUIDES!

Grab any and all of our SimsUshare Quick Start Guides that review basic operations in 1 page each! Covers making a basic sim, evolving conditions, masking, and basic CTC operations. Check them out at <https://simsushare.com/quick-start>. plus the arrival condition.



Technology Has Its Limitations

The Hindenburg, or more precisely, the LZ 129 Hindenburg, was the 804-foot-long flagship dirigible of the Zeppelin Company in Friedrichshafen, Germany. In 1936 the Hindenburg inaugurated commercial air travel across the Atlantic by carrying passengers in relative luxury on a round trips between Germany and the United States. Fourteen months later the airship came to a spectacular end. Although much has been written about the decisions and human error that lead to its demise, often overlooked is the cutting-edge technology that it deployed.

Among its technological advances were the ship's shape and dimensions which gave it much greater lifting capability and structural strength. Another Hindenburg innovation was gas cells made of a gelatin film sandwiched between layers of cotton which was viewed as far superior to the goldbeater's skin (the outer membrane of cattle intestines) that were used on earlier zeppelin models. The four Daimler-Benz engines, the Anschutz "auto-pilot," as well as proposed, but never implemented, gas preservation and water recovery systems were all advanced technology for that era.

Although it had been built for helium, the United States had a monopoly on the

production of helium and refused to export it to Germany due to military considerations. Thus, the Hindenburg was filled instead with 7,000,000 cubic feet of highly flammable hydrogen gas. Although the exact reasons for the Hindenburg disaster on May 6, 1937, while docking at Lakehurst, N.J., are still open to debate, the loss of 36 lives (out of the 97 onboard) and the intense media attention that followed, essentially brought this means of commercial travel to a screeching halt.

Disasters won't stop technology from innovating and looking for an easier or better way to do something. Often the benefits are tangible. Technology that saves lives is a case in point. Our first responders are better equipped and better trained than ever before. Innovations such as fire simulation programs allow a safe way to practice on a facsimile of the fireground. Nonetheless, technology will likely never eliminate human error and other factors that lead to loss of life and property. Training therefore must accentuate decision-making and communication skills. Technology has its limitations but when properly used to complement and enhance training, it can make a huge difference in the outcome of an event. 🔥

DID YOU KNOW?

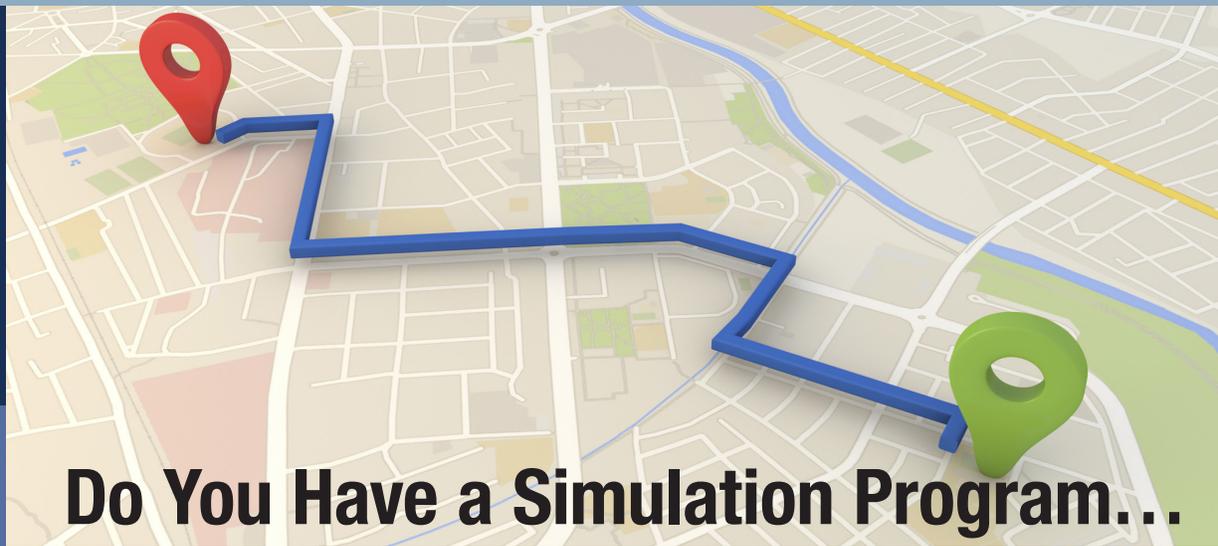
1. The **Hurst Rescue tool**, or “Jaws of Life.” was invented by George Hurst, circa 1961, after he viewed a stock car race accident in which it took workers over an hour to remove an injured driver from his car. An earlier invention, a floor mounted gear shift called the Hurst Shifter made him a wealthy man.

2. **RIC, RIT, RIG, RID** and **FAST** are acronyms that stand for the same thing—a dedicated crew, team, group, etc. of firefighters that is assigned for rapid deployment to rescue lost or trapped members. All in favor of standardizing fire department acronyms, say aye!

3. On December 7, 1736, Benjamin Franklin, co-founded the **Union Fire Company**, also known as the “Bucket Brigade.” It was the first formally organized all volunteer fire company in the colonies and was based on Boston’s Mutual Fire Societies. The difference was that the Union Fire Company protected the entire community whereas the Fire Societies only protected its members. The Union Fire Company was a mutual aid organization and as such had no chief.

4. Napoleon Bonaparte is generally attributed with creating the first “professional” firefighters, known as **Sapeurs-Pompiers**, and selected from the French Army. The company was organized in 1810 after a ballroom fire at the Austrian Embassy in Paris injured several dignitaries. Nothing like a diplomatic embarrassment to free up public spending on essential services.

5. **Fire Prevention Day** falls on October 9th each year. (Fire Prevention week runs from Sunday to Saturday each year during the week that includes October 9th.) The date was chosen to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire that occurred from October 8 to 10, 1871. The fire killed approximately 300 people, destroyed roughly 3.3 square miles of the city, and left more than 100,000 residents homeless.



Do You Have a Simulation Program... or a Simulation *Training* Program?

The difference between having a simulation program versus having a simulation training program can perhaps best be compared with having a car versus having somewhere to go with a car. Having somewhere to go means you have a destination or a purpose in mind. That implies planning how to get there and determining the steps you will take along the way. With no destination or purpose in mind, a drive might simply be for sightseeing or to kill some time.

A simulation program can be either a toy or a tool depending on how it is used. The best use of a simulation program is to enhance an existing training program or add substance to one that is in development. Simulation programs generally cost something and may be included as part of an overall training budget. The best way to justify any training equipment expenditure (including software) is to measure how it contributes to achieving your overall goal or objective. If it simply does cool things, it may not get used very much in the long run. But, if it can complement every aspect of your training, then its value is not just a monetary consideration.

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A simulation training program can be used to enhance important areas such as Company-Level Training, Continuing Education, Officer Development, Assessment, Validation, Proficiency, your Promotional Process and SOP/SOG Development & Validation. When a training program includes applicable simulations, the lessons or main points being taught are more easily grasped and therefore more readily committed to memory. Critical thinking, decision-making and communication skills are some of the most important skill sets that can be taught. Simulations can be developed that focus on the specifics of each one of them.

If you have a simulation program, is it a regular part of your training program? If it isn't, ask yourself why not? If your simulation program doesn't easily accommodate your training goals, take a look at other programs that are more user-friendly. If your simulation program does the job you need it to, then reach out to the developer and see what resources they offer to help you use it. Transforming a simulation program into a simulation training program shouldn't take a long time or require a lot of effort but the benefits will be immediate and long term. 🔥

SimsUshare has created a handbook that can help guide you through the development of a simulation training program. Find it on our Help page or [click here](#) to open it



Bring Back the Fire Dog!

Some mascots are cool. Others are kind of hard to figure. The banana slug should never have caught on as a mascot, yet, the University of California's Sammy the Slug was even named top college mascot by no less than Sports Illustrated. Not to be outdone, the University of Arkansas at Monticello chose a crop eating boll weevil as theirs. And, perhaps strangest of them all, Evergreen State College picked Speedy the Geoduck (pronounced *Gooley Duck*), a highly suggestive clam with a long neck protruding from its shell.

Since there are plenty of weird mascots out there, can I make a case for bringing back what might be the best mascot ever, the fire dog? A polka-dotted Dalmatian riding shotgun in a fire truck is an indelible image of pop culture and folklore. So, where have all the fire dogs gone?

When horse-drawn fire carriages hit the scene in the late 1700s, Dalmatians had already established a reputation as an ideal carriage dog partly because of their strength, vitality and size but also because they seem to have an affinity for horses. Dalmatians would run ahead of the wagons barking the alarm to get out of the way. At the fire scene, they would stay with the horses and help keep them calm with an added duty of protecting

the firefighting equipment. Back at the station they became companion animals to the horses in their stalls, in addition to killing a few rodents and keeping thieves away from the firehouse's valuables. In other words, they pulled their weight!

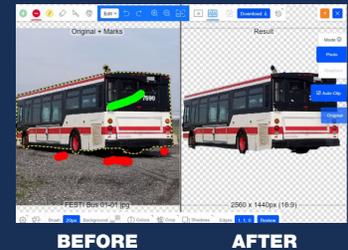
When horse drawn wagons gave way to a different kind of horsepower, Dalmatians were no longer needed to sound the alarm or keep the horses company. Highlighting their changing role was a gradual shift from calling them fire dogs to calling them firehouse dogs. They did, and in some places still do, find their way into fire trucks on route to fires and parades, but their role is now closer to that of trophy wife than a working employee of the fire department.

Let's state the obvious. The fire dog is no longer needed for the original jobs it performed, but perhaps this creates an opportunity. They are still great mascots when in the public eye and great companions when hanging out at the station. The only drawback with Dalmatians (I know I'll take a hit from Dalmatian owners on this one) is that they tend to be fiercely loyal to their "family" at the fire station but are cool and aloof towards strangers from outside it, including other dogs. In other words, they look the mascot part but may not always act it.

Might I suggest that this is a great opportunity to look at the qualifications of other breeds. I realize there will be push back from traditionalists who feel that the only suitable fire dog must have black spots on a white background. This is simply a PR problem, easily solved by dressing up a friendly Lab, Golden, Beagle, Collie or Mixed Breed in a clever outfit (see picture) and inviting a bunch of young children over to the fire station to say hello. Have him (or her) work the crowd for a half hour and it's case closed! The fire dog's polling numbers are the envy of every politician and will only improve the already positive image of the local fire department. It's time to bring back the fire dog! 🔥

RECOMMENDED APP: CLIPPINGMAGIC.COM

A great feature of SimsUshare is that it lets you add pictures of tools, victims, apparatus, etc. to your sims. But how do you remove the background from the original picture? For example, note the Before and After picture of the bus.



If you don't have a program to do this, or you do have one but it's a pain to use, please check out Clipping Magic.

<https://clippingmagic.com>

Clipping Magic is not a free program, but it is well worth the US \$4/month that will save you a lot of time and headaches. You might even come to enjoy making clip art to insert into your sims!

How does this web-based tool work? First, you upload your source picture with the background. Then, you use a green brush to tell the app which areas of your picture to keep, and a red brush to tell it what to discard.

Clipping Magic looks for boundaries in an image such as the bus outline in this picture.

The app is simple to use and it's fast. It only took us about 30 seconds to cut out the bus (as shown)—it would take another minute or two to clean it up and you'd have a bus in PNG format ready to add to a sim. In our view, Clipping Magic is a must have for every sim developer!

QUARTERLY TIP: FAST-SWITCHING FOR EDITING LOCATIONS

Several months ago, one of our customers made a great suggestion for time-saving when editing multi-location sims—*Tom, we heard you!*

You are likely familiar with the usual method of changing locations:

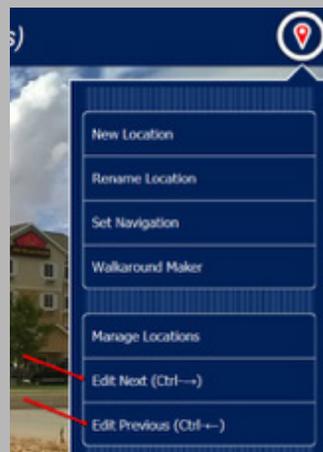
- Click the **location menu**, then
- Scroll down and drag the menu until you reach the next location you want to edit, then
- Click the **"Edit: <Location Name>"**

That's easy enough, but it can be time-consuming if you have a lot of locations to scroll through and you just want to edit the next or previous location.

Great news! **Version 2.8.6** let's you skip all of those steps with a simple keystroke: **Control "→"** to edit the next location, and **Control "←"** to edit the previous location (on a Mac you can use the **Command** key ⌘).

As a reminder, when you have more than 10 locations, SimsUshare puts an entry in the Location menu (as pictured), but the keystrokes work regardless of the number of locations.

At SimsUshare, we are always on the lookout for time-saving improvements, so please keep your suggestions coming!





AUTOMATIC & MUTUAL AID MEETING A SPECIAL TRAINING CHALLENGE

Career, volunteer, industrial and military fire departments all have automatic and/or mutual aid agreements with their neighbors. This is a vital arrangement that can provide additional resources in a timely manner, but it is also one that presents some unique challenges. At times, departments may not even be aware of all the departments included in their agreements!

It is not uncommon that a secondary department is geographically closer to an incident than the primary department having jurisdiction and may arrive first on scene. Will this affect overall strategy and tactics? Are existing agreements and department SOPs/SOGs compatible? Also, with training budgets already stretched to the limit, how can this necessary inter-departmental training be effectively added to the mix?

Conducting simulations, such as with SimsUshare CTC, can help facilitate this training. Scenarios can be after-action recreations of actual incidents, or specific and realistic hazards in your jurisdiction—those that keep you up at night. Simulations let you run an incident again and again, to develop consistent knowledge and skills across all

participating departments. Some benefits you can get from inter-departmental training are:

- Develop, practice, standardize communications
- Develop, maintain personnel interoperability efficiencies
- Familiarization with tactical worksheets
- Develop standardized tactical worksheets
- Develop realistic, accurate scenarios for effective after-action reviews of critical incidents
- Develop “standard” operating practices
- Develop, practice, standardize SOG’s
- Build, maintain operational rapport at all operational levels: Strategic, Tactical, Task.

Furthermore, we sometimes forget that command skills—like any other skillset—are perishable and require periodic practice to keep them sharp. This is especially true in the context of working with neighboring personnel and resources. Just as we dedicate time to getting the routine down and knowing what to expect from our own personnel, we can use the simulation process to ensure we’re operating consistently with the neighbors we rely upon. 🔥

NEXT WEBINAR

Introduction to SimsUshare States

Wednesday January 22, 2020

This is an intermediate webinar about a new SimsUshare feature: SimsUshare States. States gives you a way to group locations reflecting the same condition, for example, incipient, extension, knockdown, etc. With playback in the CTC, when you change the state (such as changing to the extension state), SimsUshare moves all units to their proper location for that condition. Remarkably we’ve done this without complicating the user interface, so this webinar gives you a peak into how to activate and use this important new capability!

Free registration is required. Please visit <https://simsushare.com/events/> to register.

RECENT WEBINARS

20 Minutes to Masking Mastery (December, 2019)

Creating your Simulation Training Program (November, 2019)

Wide-Screen and Effect Previews: SimsUshare v 2.8.6 (Oct, 2019)

Visit: <https://simsushare.com/ctc-webinars> for recordings

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