# Optimizing Simultaneous Decisions

**Course Project**

**Instructions:**

In this project, you will work through an optimization problem that has increasing complexity.

*You will make three submissions in the course of completing this project. After completing Part One of the project, you will submit a partially completed version of this project document for instructor review. A submit button can be found on the Part One assignment page.*

*After completing each subsequent part of the project, resubmit this project document and any supporting documents to your instructor for grading. A submit button can be found on the Part Two and Part Three assignment pages. Information about the grading rubric is available on any of the course project assignment pages online.* *Do not hesitate to contact your instructor if you have any questions about the project.*

#### **Part One—Create a Linear Optimization Model**

In this part of the course project, you will create a mathematical model based on a specified goal and a set of predetermined market values.

In order to satisfy this part of the project, you will review the scenario and the parameters supplied in an Excel workbook. You will summarize the objective, list the decision variables, and identify constraints for the problem. In addition, you will formulate an Excel-based spreadsheet model. Finally, you’ll specify cells or cell ranges necessary to find an optimized solution using Solver.

Step 1: Begin by downloading the Excel workbook provided on the Course Project page. Find the sheet labeled “bid selection model” in the workbook.

**Scenario:** You are a confectionary manufacturer reviewing bids for the retail packaging you need for your products next quarter under a bid process. You have received one to five bids from each of six suppliers on 10 packaging products.

There are 18 bids in total, reflected in two tables in a supplied worksheet. The first table shows, for each bid, the maximum production commitment for each type of packaging. The second table shows the unit cost for each type of packaging.

In addition to these two tables, you have an array (a one-dimensional array) showing your minimum needs for each type of packaging. You will also see some cells that are shaded but have been left empty.

Step 2: Answer the following questions around this scenario:

1. What is the objective for this problem?

The objective of this problem is to identify the minimal cost for retail packaging based on different bids.

1. What are the decision variables for this problem?

$F$30:$W$39 is the decision variables. Minimum Units Needed for Each Product is the decision variable across all bids. Minimum Units Needed for Each Product count should be met across all bids in a optimized cost.

1. What constraint(s) is/are there in this problem? *(summarize this using words)*

The constraint what we have are the following:

* 1. Bids (Offered by Supplier) should be greater than or equal to Decision Variable Value
  2. UNIT COSTS (Specified by Suppliers as part of bid) should be minimal
  3. The sum of each Product(decision variable) should not exceed beyond Minimum units needed for each product.

Save a copy of this project document with your answers included. **You will need to provide this as part of your Project Part One submission.**

Step 3: Now complete a spreadsheet model of this problem in Excel. You will use the two matrices, the minimum needs array, and the blank, shaded cells to complete your model. Be sure to open the Solver dialog box and specify the objective, decision variables, and all constraints before saving the workbook.

*Hint:* You may wish to revisit the Excel model for the earlier activity: Find an Optimal Result Using Solver. This model uses the =SUMPRODUCT function, which is a function you need to use when calculating total costs in your model.

Step 4: **Submit the Excel workbook** with your completed model and this project document to your instructor using the Submit button on the Course Project, Part One assignment page.