Interacting With Students Through MobLab

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Some Context

- My classes (primarily Principles of Microeconomics) typically have between 270 to 380 students
- Meet either two times a week for 75 minutes per class, or 3 times a week for 50 minutes per class
- I still teach in a lecture format; students are not expected to have any work done prior to coming to class
  - Incorporate active learning through in-class activities conducted on MobLab

Problems From My Lectures

- Even the most committed student will lose focus at some point in the lecture
- It is easy for a student to just defer reviewing material from class until a later date
  - Which of course is not ideal
- Not the easiest for students to ask questions in a larger lecture
- Some concepts in economics are also not ideal to *just* talk about. It is much more effective if students can learn by doing.

My Solution: MobLab

- MobLab provides one platform that I can use to give quizzes/surveys and run economic experiments/games

- In a typical lecture, I will give a quiz or survey every fifteen to twenty minutes to break up the class time
  - These can range from 1 minute to 10 minutes long
  - Students can work in groups to discuss if they want (most of them do)

- In a typical semester, I run between 3-5 MobLab experiments
  - I always use experiments for teaching convergence to the equilibrium, game theory, and the tragedy of the commons.

In Class Survey and Quizzes

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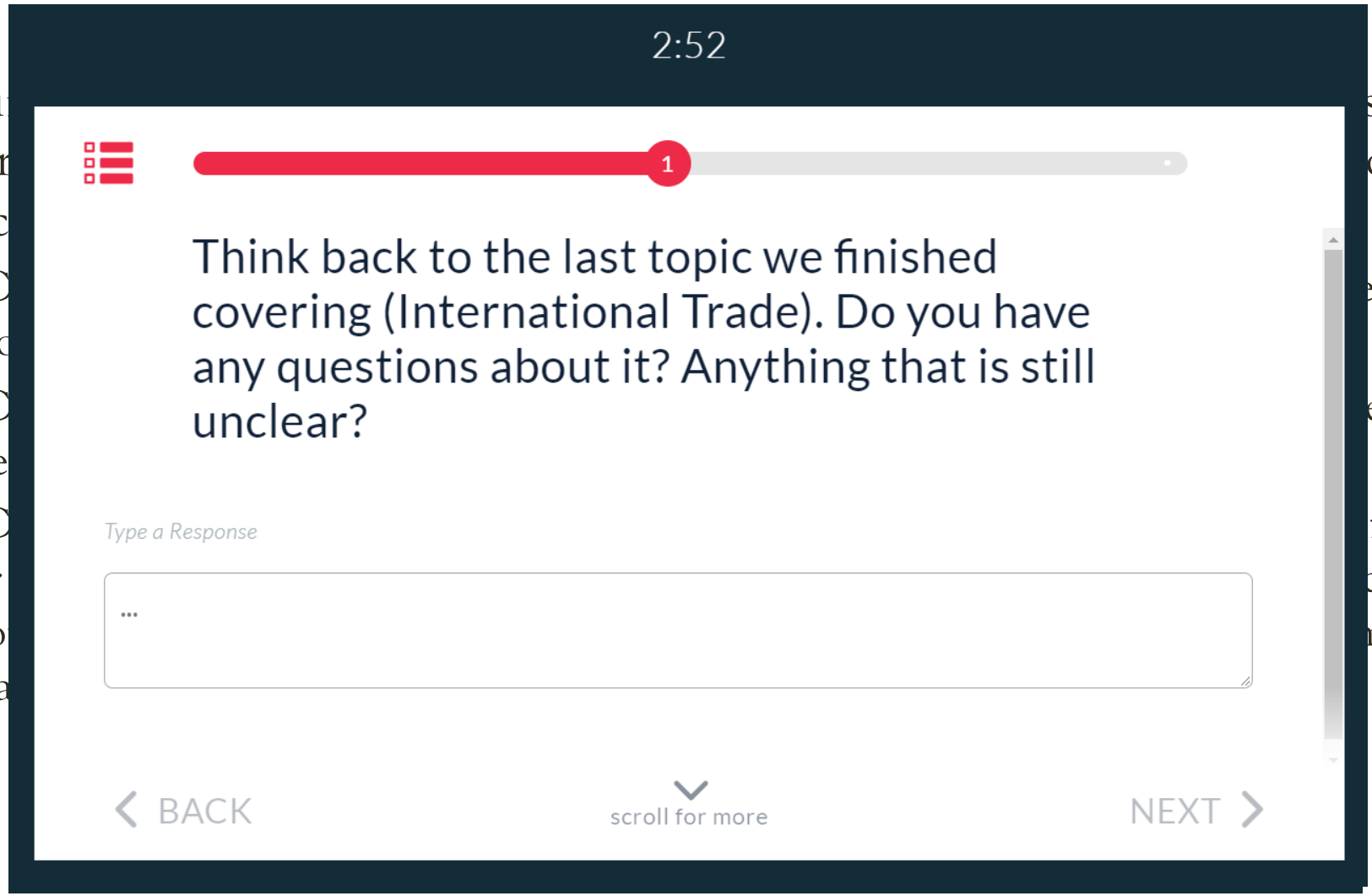


In Class Surveys and Quizzes: Administrative

- I tend to reuse quiz questions semester to semester, but will write new ones where I see fit.
  - These are written prior to class, and I just hit "run" in class to activate it
- Quizzes are also a way for me to take and encourage attendance
- I always have access to all the data. MobLab also compiles results right away if I want to show the class how they did or how they answered
- You can assign point values to questions, group things however you want, and send grades back to your LMS
- Students can go back and see the questions and the right answers (only if you allow them to)

Experiments and Games

- Experiments are not just something interactive and fun to do in my class, it is critical to the student learning process

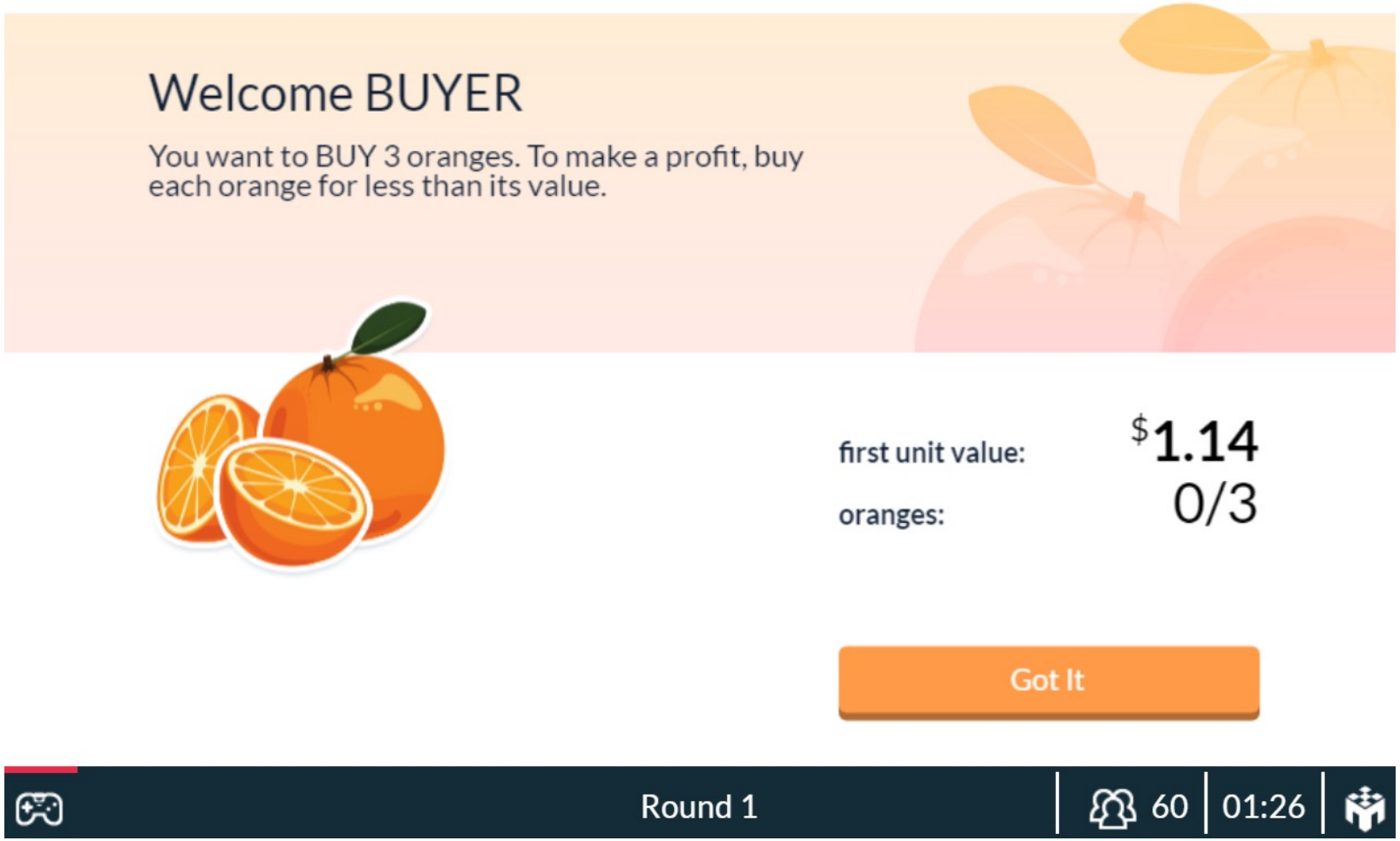
- The results we get from the market experiment are brought up time and time again for the rest of the semester in other contexts
  - Students can much more easily grasp how the market equilibrium is determined in those different situations

- Pre-game instruction and post-game discussion are very important
  - MobLab gives great resources on both!

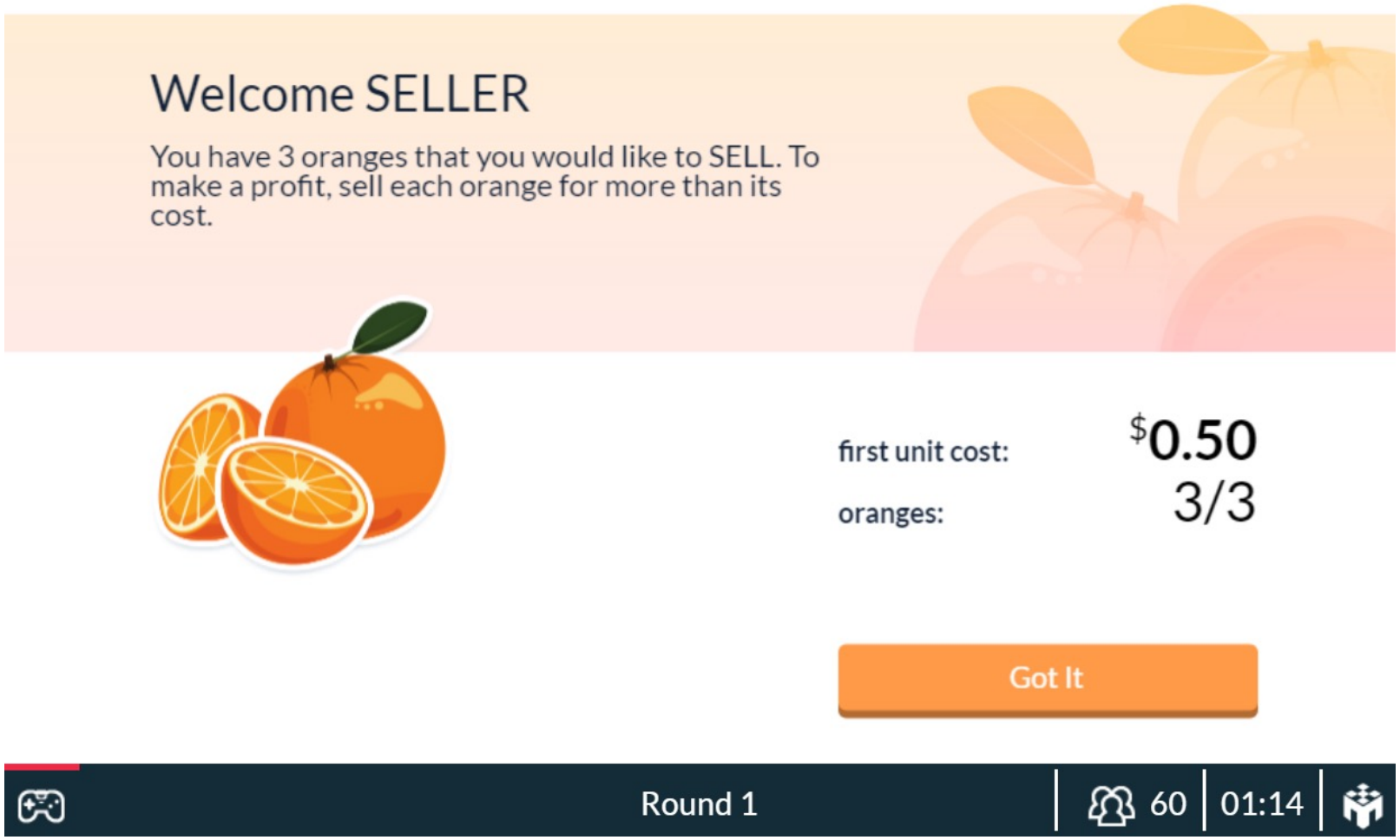
Market Experiment

- You are either a buyer or seller of oranges
  - Either 3 oranges to buy, or 3 oranges to sell (assume pay-to-produce for producers)
- You can buy or sell one orange at a time
  - buyers submit bids – an offer to buy
  - sellers submit asks – an offer to sell
- When bid $\geq$ ask: a transaction happens!
- Your goal: Make as much profit as you can
  - Partial EconPoints are awarded to high scorers!

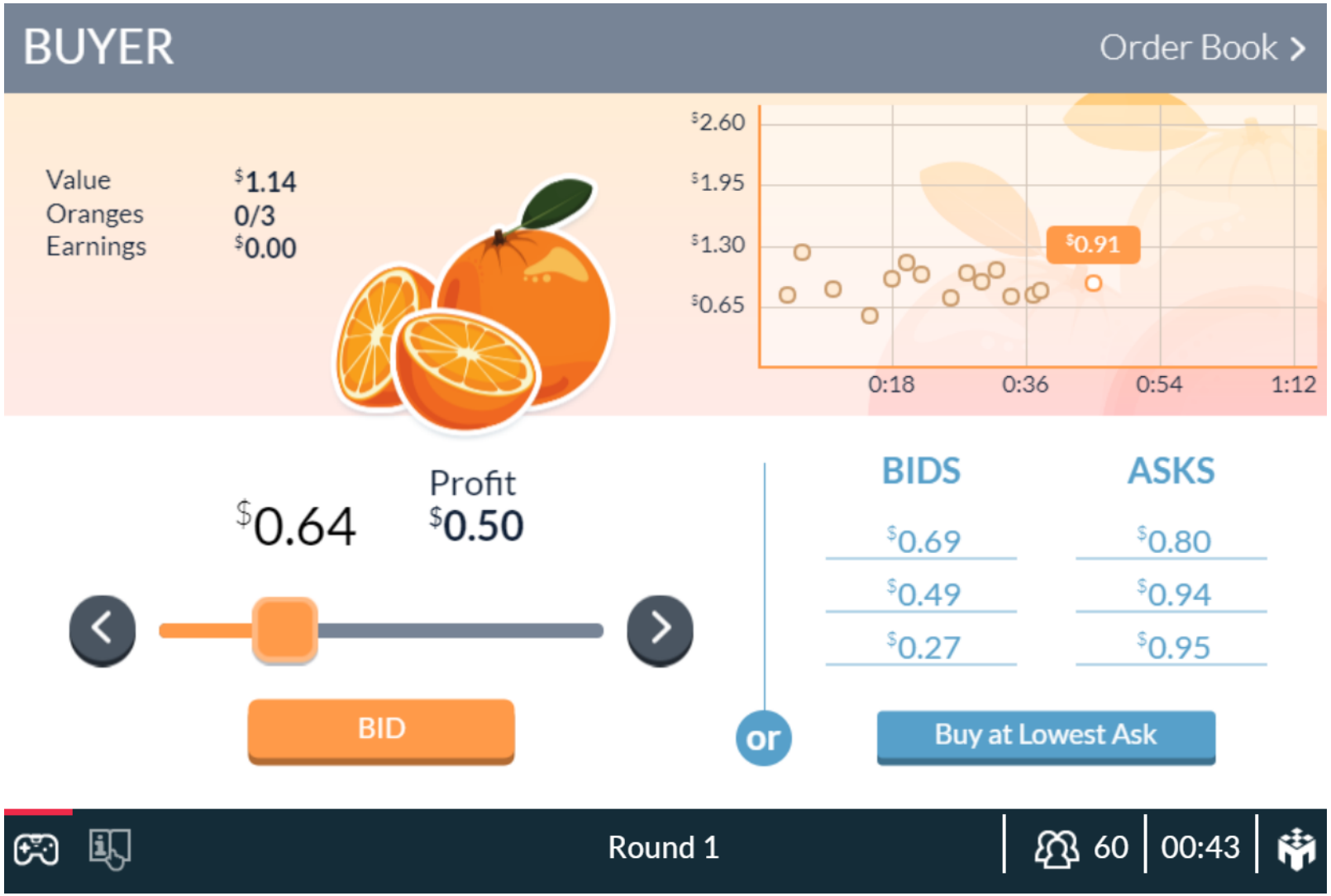
If You Are a Buyer:



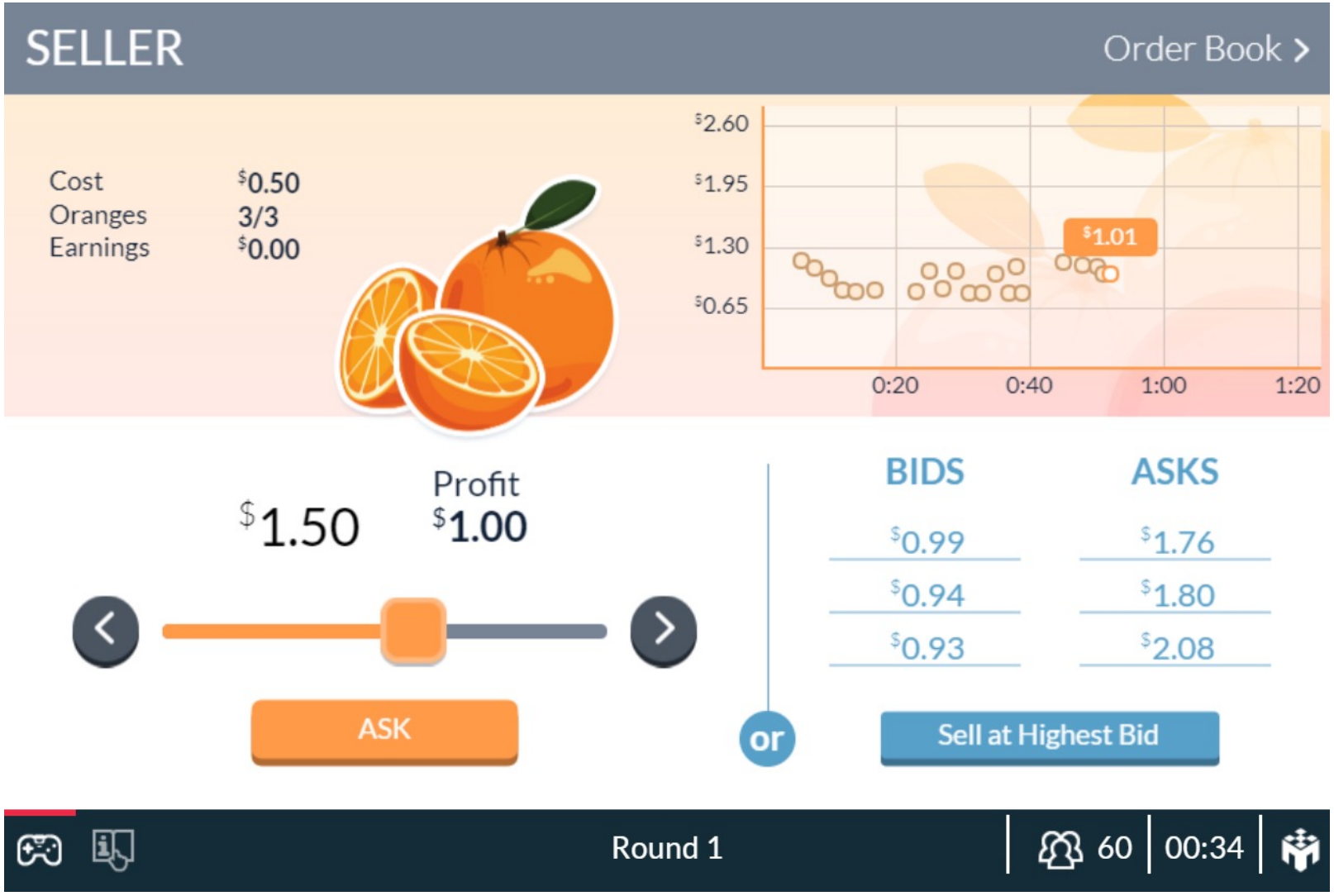
If You Are a Seller:

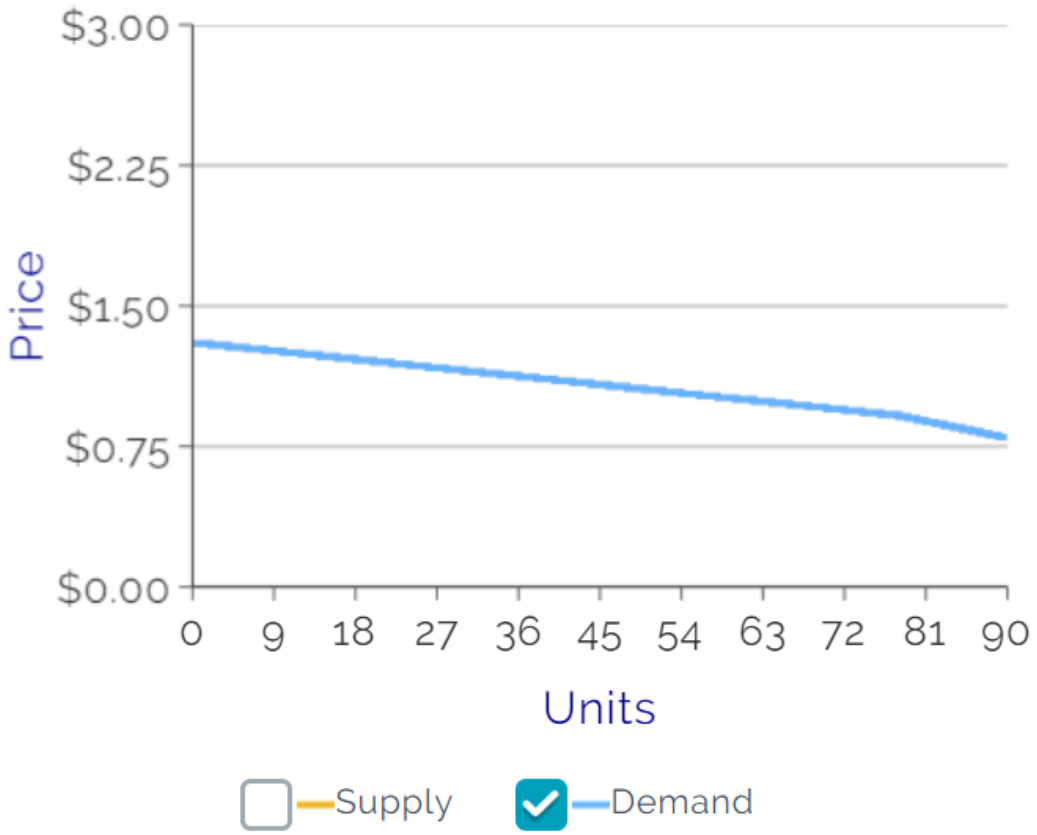


Buyer's Screen



Seller's Screen

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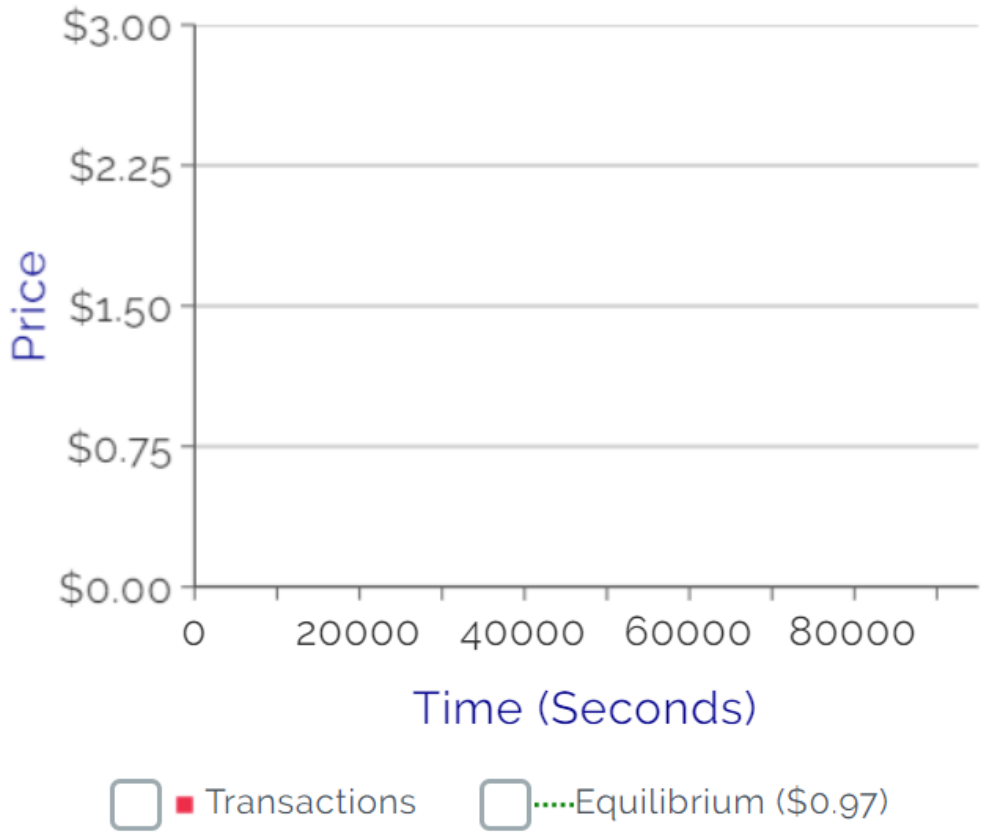
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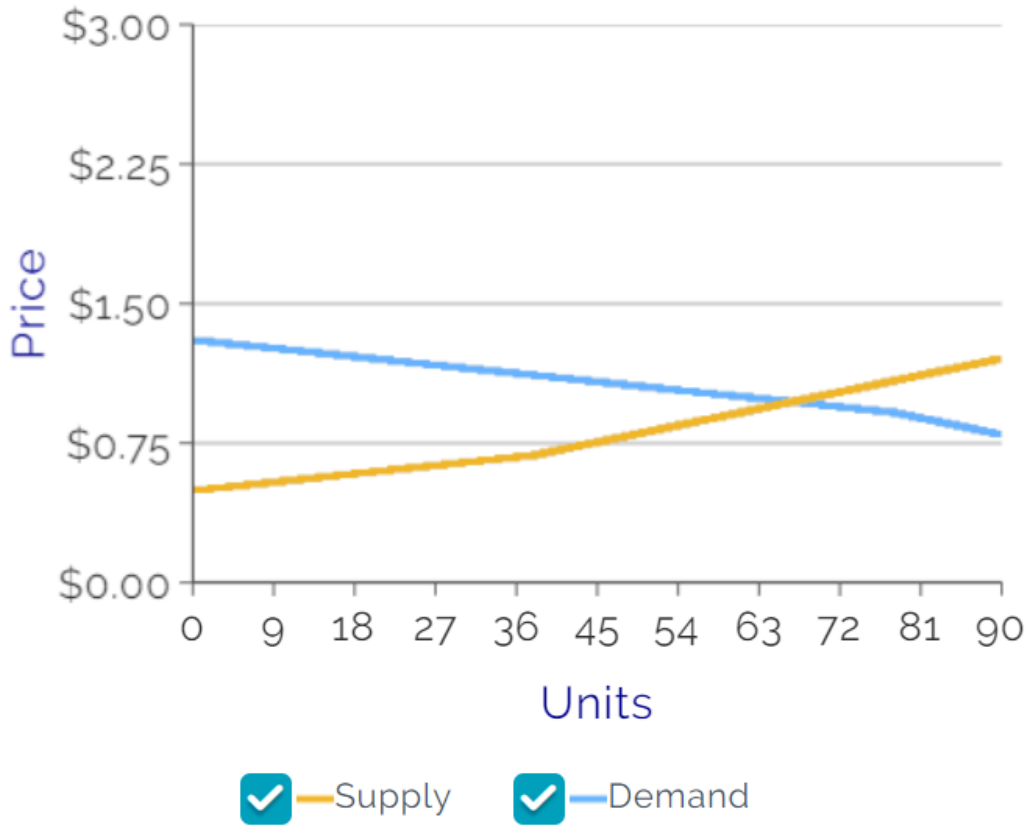
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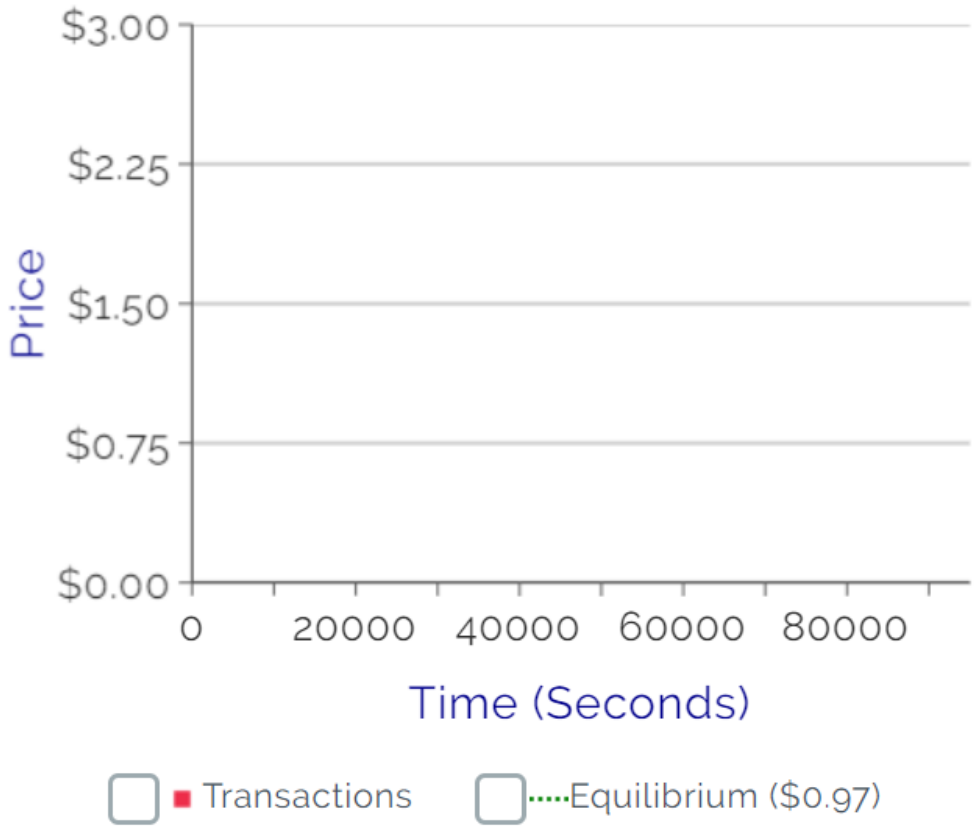
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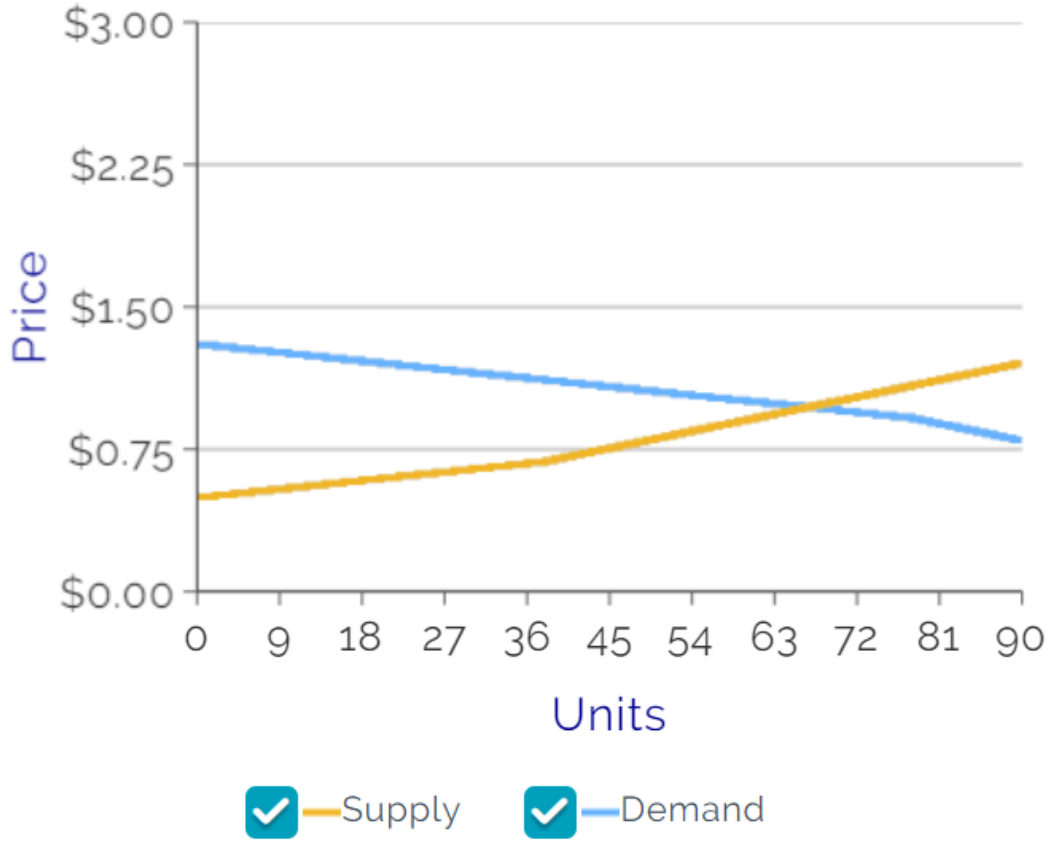
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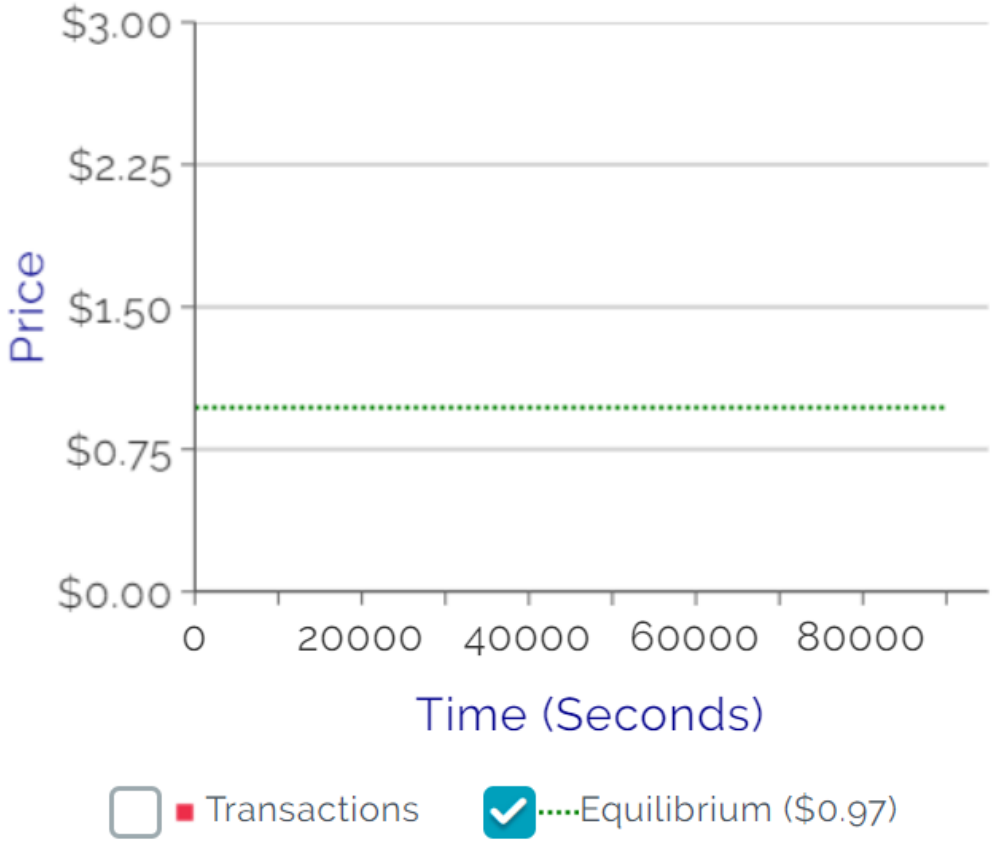
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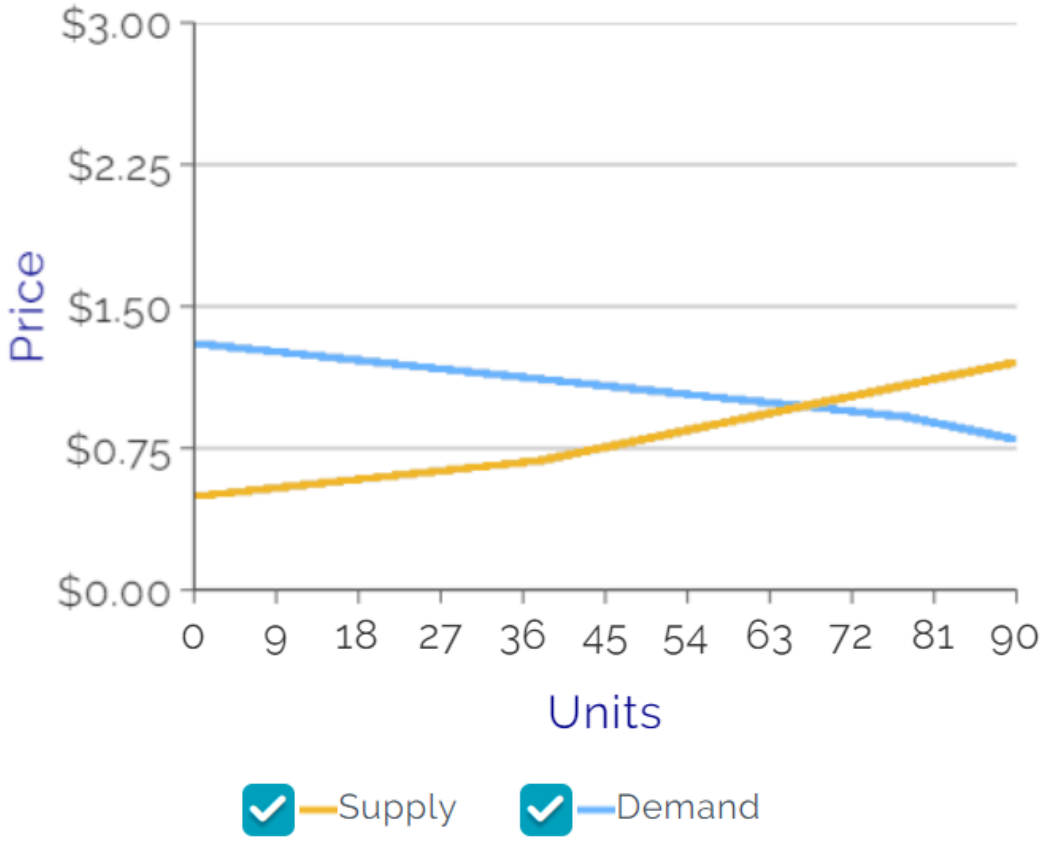
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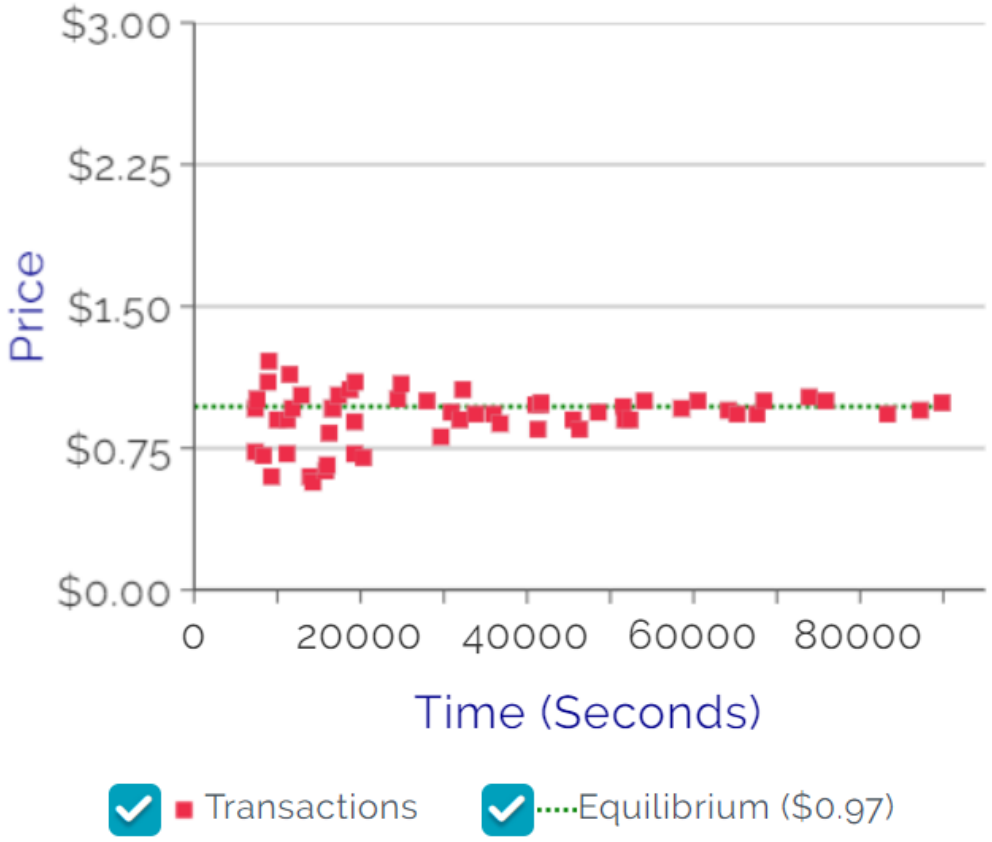
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Final Thought

- Professors do not have to completely change their class to add surveys or experiments. I understand that class time has a high opportunity cost.

- My suggestion: Start small! Add one survey/quiz to each class, or one game in a semester.

- MobLab has excellent resources and customer support. Use them abundantly!