BP: Beyond Petroleum? is an interactive case study that shows the strategy followed by BP during the period 1997 – 2008 when John Browne was the CEO of the company. He made drastic changes in the company, turning it into a global oil industry giant – and the world’s first green petroleum company.

The multimedia case is divided into the following sections:

- A Brief History of BP
- Structure and Evolution of the Industry
- Climate Change
- John Brown’s strategy
- Crumbling Enthusiasm
The first chapter shows the expansion and evolution of BP since its foundation, in the year 1908, up until the year 1997.

BP was founded in 1908 to extract Persian oil under an agreement between the United Kingdom and Persia. Its original name was Anglo-Persian Oil Company. But later it changed its name to Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. In 1951 it diversified its geographical base by adding production in other Middle Eastern countries and changing its name to British Petroleum. After this period, BP continued its expansion to other countries and continents, as well as merging with other companies from the sector such as Amoco and Arco, today becoming one of the major oil companies around the world.

Fueling BP’s growth in the 1980s was the British government’s decision to sell its remaining stake as part of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s broader privatization and market liberalization strategy. The Saudi acquisition had made BP a major gasoline retailer, enabling the company to join the ranks of vertically-integrated oil firms. BP continued its expansion through several smaller acquisitions in the 1990s.

But its boldest move did not come until the end of the decade, when BP finally joined the ranks of global oil industry giants. In August 1999, BP announced plans to merge with U.S.-based Amoco, making the combined entity the world’s third largest oil company. The BP-Amoco deal was announced just as crude oil prices reached $11.80 per barrel, their lowest level in 25 years. In a statement released at the time, CEO John Browne said: “International competition in the industry is already fierce and will grow more acute as new players emerge. In such a climate the best investment opportunities will go increasingly to companies that have the size and financial strength to take on those large-scale projects that offer a truly distinctive return.”
Information surrounding the oil industry is presented through the use of interactive maps, charts and graphs.
Climate change has its own dedicated chapter within the case study, and includes animations explaining the concept as well as interactive graphs.

In these graphs it is possible to compare the GHG emissions by country. A timeline highlights the main facts associated with the subject.
The crucial part of the case details the strategy followed by John Browne. The section begins with a speech he made at Stanford University in 1997.

This section also includes the following elements: the redesign of the logo, the Beyond Petroleum Campaign, actions and results within the period 1997 to 2007, graphs and the response of the competitors.
The last chapter defines the two major problems that Browne had to face: The accident in the Texas City Refinery and the oil spill in Alaska.

Information about these events is provided and includes reports, videos and images. To conclude, the question about the future of BP is posed, as Browne leaves the company and Hayward takes control.