



Autodesk Underscores Commitment to Next Generation of Engineers with Continued Sponsorship of FIRST Robotics Competition

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Autodesk commits to three-year sponsorship, provides software and training to foster students' enthusiasm for science and technology

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Jan. 12 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Autodesk Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) today announced that it is pleased to continue its 13-year sponsorship of the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition, which kicked off January 8, 2005, at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester. Recognizing the importance of training the engineers of tomorrow, Autodesk is increasing its commitment to the organization by donating more than \$24 million in software and sponsoring the FIRST Robotics Competition Championship.

The competition, which teams professional engineers with high school students, challenges students to solve an engineering design problem in only six weeks. The 2005 competition is expected to include more than 24,000 students with teams from across the United States, as well as Canada, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Great Britain and Israel. This year's student competitors will receive licenses of Autodesk Design Academy, which includes Autodesk Inventor(R) Series, the world's best selling 3D mechanical design software. Students will also receive 3ds max(R), award-winning animation and modeling software from Autodesk's Discreet division. In addition to the design software, students will have access to the Autodesk Streamline(R) collaboration service, enabling them to better manage and share their design information with team members and judges. Students will participate in 30 regional competitions held throughout March, and winning teams will be invited to attend the Championship, which will take place April 21-23, 2005, at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta.

"The FIRST Robotics Competition aims to inspire energy and enthusiasm for science, math, and engineering," said Dean Kamen, inventor, entrepreneur, and founder of FIRST. "Continued support from Autodesk furthers this goal and demonstrates the company's commitment to the education and development of the future engineering workforce. We couldn't do it without the support of Autodesk."

According to Carl Bass, COO of Autodesk, "Autodesk continues to support FIRST because we believe this program plays a critical role in the development of the next generation of engineering professionals. This competition exposes students to challenges faced by real-world engineers and provides them with a healthy competitive environment to solve these challenges, fostering skills that will ultimately help students become successful in their professional careers."

As a major corporate sponsor of the FIRST Robotics Competition for the past 13 years, Autodesk has donated millions of dollars in software to participating students. Autodesk also provides software training and creates a virtual library of parts to simplify the design process and speed the students' development of working robots that meet the engineering design challenge.

Autodesk Inventor Award

The Autodesk Inventor Award will be presented at the Championship event to the team that best understands, documents, and communicates the distinct phases of the design process, from concept to completion, using Autodesk Inventor software.

Autodesk Visualization Award

Also to be presented at the Championship, the Autodesk Visualization Award will recognize excellence in student animation that clearly and creatively illustrates the spirit of the FIRST Robotics Competition. In competing for this award, the student teams will create a 30-second animation about their robot, their team, or the FIRST competition, using Discreet's 3ds max software.

About FIRST

Accomplished inventor Dean Kamen founded FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. Based in Manchester, N.H., FIRST designs accessible, innovative programs to build self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology, engineering and math. With the support of many of the world's most well-known companies, the non-profit organization hosts the FIRST Robotics Competition for high school students and the FIRST LEGO League for children 9-14 years old. To learn more about FIRST and the FIRST Robotics Competition go to www.usfirst.org.

About Autodesk

Autodesk, Inc. is wholly focused on ensuring that great ideas are turned into reality. With six million users, Autodesk is the world's leading software and services company for the building, manufacturing, infrastructure, digital media, and wireless data services fields. Autodesk's solutions help customers create, manage and share their data and digital assets more effectively. As a result, customers turn ideas into competitive advantage by becoming more productive, streamlining project efficiency, and maximizing profits. Founded in 1982, Autodesk is headquartered in San Rafael, California. For additional information about Autodesk, please visit www.autodesk.com.

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