



Autodesk Invests in the Engineers of Tomorrow as Official Supplier and Championship Sponsor of the 2006 FIRST Robotics Competition

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Leader in 3D Donates More Than \$8 Million in Software and Resources to Bring Science and Technology to the Forefront of Education

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Jan 09, 2006 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Enabling high school students to push the boundaries of innovation in engineering and 3D design visualization, Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) today announced the continuation of its longstanding sponsorship of the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition for 2006. Autodesk has been a major sponsor of the FIRST Robotics Competition since 1992, most recently named as the FIRST Robotics Competition Official Supplier and Official Championship Sponsor. In this role, Autodesk provides the software students use to design their robots, demonstrating the company's commitment to helping the students of today become the engineers of tomorrow.

The contest brings together competing teams of young people and their mentors to solve complex engineering problems over the initial six week competition, using a standard kit of parts and a common set of rules. Using software from Autodesk -- including Autodesk Inventor, the world's best-selling 3D mechanical design software and best choice for AutoCAD users, and Autodesk 3ds Max, award-winning 3D modeling, animation and rendering software -- teams are able to design and build robots, and enter them in a series of design contests.

One of the largest of its kind, the 2006 FIRST Robotics Competition will include more than 1,000 teams with more than 30,000 participants from the United States, Canada, Brazil, Great Britain, Ecuador and Israel. The teams will compete in 33 regional events around the U.S. including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Denver and San Jose. The regional winners will then compete in the championship, to be held at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta from April 27 through 29. For more information, visit www.usfirst.org.

"Partnering with mentors, developing relationships and working as a team to achieve a common goal are elements for success both in engineering and life," said Dean Kamen, inventor, entrepreneur, and founder of FIRST. "It is the support of companies like Autodesk that allows FIRST to encourage students to learn about math, science and engineering and inspire the inventors and engineers of tomorrow."

According to Carl Bass, COO of Autodesk, "We are proud to sponsor the FIRST Robotics Competition and support the development of the next generation of scientists and engineers. As the leader in 3D, we are excited about helping stir the passion and excitement for math and science, and helping students become educated participants in the innovative world of 3D."

In addition to financial contributions, software grants and training with the FIRST Robotics Competition, Autodesk sponsors two design contests, presented at the championship event, awarding students who use Autodesk software to realize their ideas:

Autodesk Inventor Award

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

Autodesk Visualization Award

The Autodesk Visualization Award recognizes excellence in student animation that clearly and creatively illustrates the concept of "Ideas Realized." In competing for this award, the student teams will create a 30-second animation about how the FIRST Robotics Competition has helped them realize their ideas. Animations must be produced using Autodesk 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 seven 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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