



## Autodesk Helps Inspire Student Designers at FIRST Robotics Competition

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Company Provides Software and Resources to Tackle Design Challenges

ATLANTA, April 13 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Students from around the world will be competing at the 2009 FIRST(TM) Championship this weekend, aided by more than \$17 million in design software and resources provided by Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK). The FIRST Robotics Competition challenges high-school students to collaborate and build a robot in six weeks to perform a specific task, using a standard kit and common set of rules. Given today's complex economic and environmental issues, it is now more important than ever to foster innovative, real-world science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills.

This is the 18th consecutive year that Autodesk has supported the competition, which will be held at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, April 16-18. Since 1992, Autodesk has contributed approximately \$123 million in resources to FIRST programs to inspire students to pursue architecture, engineering and digital arts careers. FIRST participants are likely to help fill a serious employment gap that's expected to widen, as fewer students pursue engineering degrees and technical employees in the aging workforce begin to retire.

"Today's students are motivated to make a difference in the world, and we know they learn better when they're engaged in meaningful tasks," said Joe Astroth, Ph.D., Autodesk vice president of Learning and Education. "This unique program inspires excitement for science and math by showing that engineers can solve significant problems, making it a very rewarding career. As FIRST participants design and build a robot, they gain insights and skills they need to prepare for the engineering opportunities of the future. Finally, by working together to address a challenge, students learn important life skills, including collaboration, creative problem solving and teamwork."

Autodesk Encourages Teams with Design Competitions

In conjunction with FIRST, Autodesk is hosting two popular design competitions. The Autodesk Inventor Design Competition recognizes the team that builds the robot with the best mechanical design using Autodesk Inventor Professional software--a foundation for Digital Prototyping. The software, which is used by professional engineers, helps students to work together to visualize and analyze real-world performance before physically constructing their robot.

The Autodesk Design Visualization Competition awards the team that creates the best 3D animation using award-winning Autodesk 3ds Max and Autodesk Combustion software for modeling, animation and rendering. The animation must fit this year's theme using biomimicry to solve a design challenge. Biomimicry is a design discipline that seeks sustainable solutions by emulating nature's time-tested patterns and strategies to address human problems. Winners of these competitions will receive the Autodesk Inventor Award and the Autodesk Visualization Award. To view all of the entries, visit the Autodesk Design Competition page on the Autodesk FIRSTbase website.

More than 42,000 students on 1,686 teams from the United States and 10 other countries are participating in this year's FIRST competition. FIRST programs are operated by more than 85,000 volunteers worldwide, many of them professional engineers and scientists who mentor the next generation of innovators. For more information, visit the Autodesk FIRSTbase website, [www.autodesk.com/firstbase](http://www.autodesk.com/firstbase).

Autodesk Education Initiatives

Autodesk supports students and educators by providing powerful design software, innovative programs and other resources designed to inspire the next generation of professionals. By supporting educators to advance design education and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills, Autodesk is helping prepare students for future academic and career success. Autodesk supports schools and institutions of higher learning worldwide through substantial discounts, subscriptions, grant programs, training, curricula development and community resources. For more information about Autodesk education programs and solutions, visit [autodesk.com/education](http://autodesk.com/education).

About Autodesk

Autodesk, Inc., is a world leader in 2D and 3D design software for the manufacturing, building and construction, and media and entertainment markets. Since its introduction of AutoCAD software in 1982, Autodesk has developed the broadest portfolio of state-of-the-art Digital Prototyping solutions to help customers experience their ideas before they are real. Fortune 1000 companies rely on Autodesk for the tools to visualize, simulate and analyze real-world performance early in the design process to save time and money, enhance quality and foster innovation. For additional information about Autodesk, visit [www.autodesk.com](http://www.autodesk.com).

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