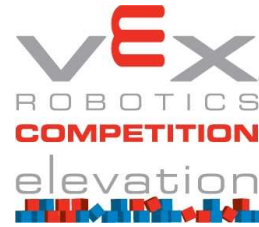


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## **NEW GAME *ELEVATION* TAKES VEX ROBOTICS COMPETITION TO THE NEXT LEVEL**

*Students Develop Valuable Skills through Hands-On Approach to Learning*

**Greenville, TX- August 19, 2008-** Dedicated to taking robotics competitions to the next level, VEX Robotics announces *Elevation*, a new game designed for middle and high school students interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). *Elevation* follows last year's popular *Bridge Battle* game and will be introduced for the 2008-2009 competition season. The new game for the VEX Robotics Competition is fueled by Innovation First, Inc., a leader in educational and competitive robotics products, and offers an engaging outlet for students around the world to test their robot building skills and compete against one another.

*Elevation* is played on a 12'x12' square field marked with eight (8) triangular shaped goals ranging in height from 3" to 21" off the ground and a 28" square ramp platform at the center of the field. Two alliances composed of two teams each, compete in each match, which consist of a twenty-second autonomous period followed by two minutes of driver-controlled play. The object of the game is to attain a higher score than your opponent alliance by placing cubes into goals, and "owning" goals by having the highest cube in a given goal. Points can also be earned by "parking" on the platform or by "controlling" the bonus cube. A bonus is awarded to the alliance that has the most total points at the end of the Autonomous Period. Also, for the first time ever, corresponding Programming Skills Challenges and Robot Skills Challenges will be part of many VEX Robotics Competitions to further stretch the competitive imagination of teams.

"We're excited to introduce *Elevation* to students new to the VEX Robotics Competitions as well as seasoned competitors," said Jason Morrella, senior director of education and competition at Innovation First. "We're also eager to see how *Elevation* will raise the stakes during this year's competition season. By competing in these games, students learn valuable life skills such as team work and problem solving, which help them to develop the skills needed to become the technology leaders of tomorrow."

More than 100 Vex Robotics tournaments will be held throughout the 2008-2009 season in the US, Canada, Asia, Europe, Central and South America. Teams interested in participating can register at [www.robotevents.com](http://www.robotevents.com) and those who register will receive an official VEX Robotics Competition Team ID Number and welcome package for the upcoming season. Once given an official VEX Team ID Number, teams will be able to

register for multiple VEX Robotics Competition events. Since space is limited, teams must register before events reach capacity. The list of all local and regional VEX Robotics Competition events playing the game *Elevation* and open for registration can also be found at [www.robotevents.com](http://www.robotevents.com).

Local organizers interested in hosting tournaments for schools and teams in their region are welcome to become VEX Robotics Competition partners. Groups interested in starting an event in their city can contact VEX Robotics at [events@vexrobotics.com](mailto:events@vexrobotics.com).

Each team uses the VEX Robotics Design System and works with teachers and mentors to build both autonomous and radio-controlled robot devices. The winning U.S. and international teams will go head-to-head with their top ranked peers at the VEX Robotics World Championship, held April 30th to May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009. The new location for the 2009 VEX Robotics World Championship with capacity for hundreds teams will be announced on September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

See [www.VexRobotics.com](http://www.VexRobotics.com) for more information on the VEX Robotics Design System and the VEX Robotics World Championship.

#### **About Innovation First, Inc.**

Innovation First, a privately held corporation, was founded on the belief that innovation very early in the design process is necessary to produce simple and elegant product designs. Innovation First began producing electronics for unmanned mobile ground robots, and is now an industry leader in the hobby, competition, education and toy markets. The company's award winning Vex Robotics Design System, VEXplorer, HEXBUG Micro Robotic Creatures and IFI Robotics span the education, consumer and business-to-business markets. Leveraging the company's core competency in electrical and mechanical engineering, the RackSolutions division works closely with all major computer OEMs to provide custom mounting solutions and industry-wide rack compatibility for data installations of all sizes. With an advanced in-house metal fabrication plant, distribution center, and office located together in a 13 acre complex in Greenville, Texas, the company is poised to continue on a rapid growth path. Please visit [www.innovationfirst.com](http://www.innovationfirst.com) for additional information.

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