



**Innovation First**

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**INNOVATION FIRST, INC. ANNOUNCES NEW VEX ROBOTICS PRODUCTS FOR 2008**

*VEX RCR Mini and VEX 802.11 Wi-Fi Competition Control System Provide Users with Advanced Robotics Options for Popular VEX System*

**February 7, 2008- Greenville, TX-** Innovation First, Inc., a leader in educational and competition robotics products, today announced the introduction of two new products for 2008 - the new VEX RCR Mini robotics platform and VEX 802.11 Wi-Fi Control System. The VEX RCR Mini provides a low cost robotics solution for elementary, middle and high school students and the VEX 802.11 Wi-Fi Control System enables simultaneous operation of hundreds of robots wirelessly. These new additions expand upon the company's popular VEX line of products, which helps promote science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education amongst students and users across the country.

"We have had great success with the VEX Robotics Design System and these new additions reinforce our commitment to VEX and the robotics community," said Tony Norman, president and chief executive officer of Innovation First. "VEX is currently used by tens of thousands of educators and hobbyists worldwide and now new and existing users alike will have the option to enhance their VEX experience with the 802.11 Wi-Fi Control System and VEX Mini."

**VEX RCR Mini**

The VEX RCR Mini, like the Vex Robotics Design System, is an open-ended robotics platform that includes all the parts and accessories inventors need to design and construct a radio-controlled robot. At less than half the size and one-third the cost of the VEX Robotics Design system, VEX Mini will be accessible to even more hobbyists and students at the high school, middle school and now elementary school levels interested in learning about robotics. Vex Mini will be sold as a 300 part kit including gears, motors, wheels, metal and hardware, with additional accessory kits available. The VEX Mini's quarter inch pitch is structurally compatible

with all half inch pitch full-scale VEX EDR and RCR robots, enabling builders to design more capable, dexterous and agile robots by mixing parts. The VEX Mini will debut at this year's American International Toy Fair in New York City, February 17-20, 2008, and will be available to consumers in August, 2008 and retail for less than \$100.

### **VEX 802.11 Wi-Fi Control System**

In addition to the VEX Mini, Innovation First extends its leadership in robot control systems with the introduction of a first-of-its kind, revolutionary new control system built on the Wi-Fi 802.11 standard. The patent for the new Control System is pending and the technology will offer a secure, affordable option for education and competition robotics users. The Wi-Fi controller will let users program their VEX robot wirelessly through any computer, including OLPC, running Windows, Mac, or Linux operating systems. The system also facilitates new features like robot to robot communication and even allows operators to drive robots remotely via the Internet.

"The new Wi-Fi controller is great for robotics competitions and classroom environments using ten or more robots because VEX users will not be bound by the typically low number of available robot radio frequencies for simultaneous use," said Jason Morrella, senior director of education and competition at Innovation First. "It will allow hundreds of robot operators to control their VEX robots at the same time in a designated space with no crystals, which will facilitate more fields and more match play by teams at events."

Existing radio control systems for the VEX Robotics Design System will be upgradeable to Wi-Fi via add-on accessories in August, 2008 in time for the 2008-2009 Vex Robotics Competition season. The Wi-Fi Control System will be available later this year.

"With the introduction of our new VEX World Championship event, it was important for us to offer a wireless control system that would enhance the competition experience," added Morrella. "Now the many organizations across the globe who have implemented their own local VEX Robotics Competitions with great success will have the option to allow more VEX users and robots to participate in the tournaments."

This year, winners from the local VEX Robotics Competitions will join more than 1,000 students from across the globe to compete in the inaugural Vex Robotics Competition World Championship at California State University, Northridge on May 1-3, 2008.

The game for the World Championship event, Bridge Battle, is available free of charge to any organization with the time, energy and resources to organize a robotics event of any scale. More information about Bridge Battle is available at [www.vexrobotics.com](http://www.vexrobotics.com).



**Photo Caption:**

Innovation First, Inc. introduces new innovative robotics products for 2008, including the VEX RCR Mini, an extension of the VEX robotics platform that is less than half the size and one-third the cost of the full-scale VEX Robotics Design System. Available in August, 2008 for less than \$100, VEX Mini comes as a 300 part kit with additional accessories available, which are compatible with the full-scale VEX System allowing robot builders to mix parts.

**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 and education markets. The company's award-winning Vex Robotics Design System, 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 ([www.RackSolutions.com](http://www.RackSolutions.com)) 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 offices 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.