

Contact: Claire Church, Cohn & Wolfe for Innovation First, Inc.
Phone: 310-526-5530
E-mail: claire.church@cohnwolfe.com



Autodesk®

Contact: Angela Simoes for Autodesk
Phone: 415-547-2388
E-mail: angela.simoes@autodesk.com

INNOVATION FIRST, INC. AND AUTODESK, INC. RELEASE NEW ROBOTICS CURRICULUM TO INSPIRE TECHNOLOGY LEADERS OF TOMORROW

*Autodesk VEX Robotics Curriculum Promotes Hands-on Learning by
Bringing Robotics and Digital Design Education into the Classroom*

Greenville, TX and San Rafael, CA– August 27, 2008 -- To spur greater interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in schools across the globe, Innovation First, Inc. (IFI), a leader in educational and competitive robotics products, and [Autodesk, Inc.](#) (NASDAQ: ADSK), the world leader in 2D and 3D design software for the manufacturing, building and construction, and media and entertainment markets, have released a new curriculum that is now included in the popular [VEX Robotics Design System Classroom Lab Kits](#).

Based on Autodesk [Inventor](#) software, the curriculum is designed to encourage students and educators to explore the exciting world of robotics by bringing real-world experience and hands-on learning to STEM teaching and lessons. Autodesk Inventor software is used by professional robotics engineers throughout the world.

"I'm so excited about this new curriculum," said Michael Martus, Career and Technical Education teacher at Pontiac Central High School in Pontiac, Michigan. "It is so important to keep students challenged and focused on STEM standards in a fun and engaging way. The students have a blast building VEX robots and learning digital prototyping skills with Autodesk Inventor, while I get to watch them have a great time learning STEM skills that will carry them well beyond high school."

The VEX Robotics system is currently used in over 2,000 classrooms and gives young people a fun, new way to learn about STEM subjects. By working together to create robots that perform exciting challenges, students also gain valuable problem-solving and team-building skills. The customized Classroom Lab

packages were developed based on feedback from teachers, schools and districts throughout the country that have integrated hands-on robotics programs into their classrooms.

Autodesk and IFI have more than 50 years of combined experience in robotics education programs and competitions. The new curriculum was incorporated into the VEX Classroom Lab Kit and provides a custom solution for robotics education that is flexible enough to be applied at multiple grade levels, including secondary and post-secondary. Designed to comply with STEM education standards, the curriculum contains a set of 17 units, each containing its own lesson, concept and activity. These units bring together the value of VEX Robotics designs and [Digital Prototyping](#), a practice that enables students to design and refine their robots before actually building them.

“The initial response since the announcement of this new curriculum has been wonderful,” said Jason Morrella, senior director of education and competition at Innovation First. “We’re excited to deliver powerful educational tools like the VEX Robotics Design System and Autodesk Inventor software for the technology leaders of tomorrow so they are best prepared for many of the incredible opportunities and careers that are waiting for them.”

“Robotics is an integrated and exciting way to teach and learn STEM – plus it’s fun,” said Paul Mailhot, senior director of worldwide education programs for Autodesk. “It is unique in this respect, and educational robotics is having a significant positive impact in STEM around the world. Autodesk has learned a lot from its more than 15 years of support for robotics programs. We think this new curriculum combining the VEX Classroom Lab Kit and Autodesk Inventor software will be accessible and relevant in a huge number of classrooms, inspiring and preparing many students to embrace STEM subjects and consider future education and careers in engineering and related design professions.”

All VEX Classroom Lab Kits are based on the popular VEX Robotics Design System, which can be used to create both autonomous and radio-controlled robotic devices and offer a fun, imaginative way for middle- and high-school students to develop crucial STEM aptitudes. Educators, coaches, and mentors all over the world teach students how to design and build robots using the design system and other VEX accessories.

VEX Classroom Lab Kits make it easy for schools to order by combining a VEX robot kit with all the basic accessories and batteries needed -- with the added benefit of a bulk discount. The Autodesk VEX Robotics Curriculum is included at no additional charge with the purchase of the Classroom Lab Kit. As an individual item, the semester curriculum is available for US\$199. Autodesk also includes one full license of Autodesk Inventor software with the Classroom Lab Four Robot Bundle Package. Two full Autodesk Inventor licenses are included in the Classroom Lab Eight Robot Bundle Package.

For more information about Autodesk Inventor and the VEX Classroom Lab Kits, visit www.vexrobotics.com/vex-education.shtml or [locate an academic reseller](#) by visiting the [Autodesk](#) website.

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 for additional information.

About Autodesk Education

Autodesk is committed to supporting students and educators by providing powerful 2D and 3D design software, innovative programs and resources designed to inspire the next generation of professionals to experience their ideas before they are real. By supporting educators to advance design education and 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 www.autodesk.com/education.

About Autodesk

Autodesk, Inc. is the 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're 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.

Autodesk, AutoCAD, Autodesk Inventor and Inventor are registered trademarks or trademarks of Autodesk, Inc. and/or its subsidiaries and/or affiliates in the USA and/or other countries. All other brand names, product names, or trademarks belong to their respective holders. Autodesk reserves the right to alter product offerings and specifications at any time without notice, and is not responsible for typographical or graphical errors that may appear in this document. © 2008 Autodesk, Inc. All rights reserved.