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## **INNOVATION FIRST, INC. AND AUTODESK, INC. CO-DEVELOP NEW CURRICULUM TO PROMOTE ROBOTICS AMONG STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS**

*VEX Robotics Inventor Curriculum to help Educators Interested in Bringing Robotics and Digital Design Education into the Classroom*

**Greenville, TX and San Rafael, CA– April 9, 2008** – In an effort to promote 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, has teamed up with [Autodesk, Inc.](#) (NASDAQ: ADSK), the world leader in 2D and 3D design software for the manufacturing, building and construction, and media and entertainment markets, to co-develop a new curriculum to be included in the popular VEX Robotics Design System Classroom Lab Kits. With Autodesk [Inventor](#) software at the heart of the curriculum, it is designed to encourage students and educators to explore the exciting world of robotics and bring real-world experience to STEM teaching methods. Autodesk Inventor software is used by professional robotics engineers throughout the world.

Autodesk and IFI, who have more than 50 years of combined experience in robotics education programs and competitions, collaborated with technology experts and teachers to design the VEX Robotics Inventor Curriculum. It will be incorporated into the VEX Classroom Lab Kits this spring and will provide a custom solution for robotics education that's flexible enough to be applied at multiple grade levels, including secondary and post-secondary education. The curriculum, designed to comply with STEM education standards, contains a set of 18 module units, each containing its own lesson, concept and activity. These units bring together the value of VEX Robotics designs and [Digital Prototyping](#), a practice used by manufacturers to optimize and validate their ideas before actually creating a product, helping to remove time and costs from the product development process, and get the "right" product to market faster.

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 VEX Robotics Inventor Curriculum will be included at no additional charge with the purchase of the Classroom Lab Kits. As an individual item, the semester curriculum will be available for \$199. Autodesk is also excited to include one full seat of Autodesk Inventor software with the Classroom Lab Four Robot Bundle Package. Two full Autodesk Inventor software seats will be included in the Classroom Lab Eight Robot Bundle Package.

“Studies have shown, and teachers have told us, that they need hands-on activities in the classroom to help students get engaged in all the important subjects of STEM,” said Jason Morrella, senior director of education and competition at Innovation First. “We’re excited that powerful educational tools like the VEX Robotics Design System and Autodesk Inventor software can help change the way students think about the design process and prepare for many of the incredible opportunities and careers that are waiting for them.”

All VEX Classroom Lab Kits are based on the popular VEX Robotics Design System, which helps students unlock the power of their imagination by designing and constructing radio-controlled robotic devices that can lift, throw, climb, gather and expand the boundaries of experimental intelligence. The VEX system is currently being 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 using feedback from teachers, schools and districts throughout the country that have integrated hands-on robotics programs into their classrooms.

“We are pleased to extend our current partnership with Innovation First with this exclusively co-developed project-based curriculum to motivate and inspire students and educators to explore the world of STEM through robotics and digital design,” said Paul Mailhot, senior director of worldwide education programs for Autodesk. “We believe that robotics is a highly engaging and effective way for students of all ages to learn the principles and practical application of engineering, science, technology, and mathematics, and to prepare them for future academic and career opportunities and success.”

For more information about Autodesk Inventor CAD and the VEX Classroom Lab Kits, please visit [www.vexlabs.com/vex-education.shtml](http://www.vexlabs.com/vex-education.shtml).

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

Innovation First, Inc., 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, Inc. 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. Innovation First’s staff are unmatched in their experience in supporting and running educational and competitive robotics competitions. 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

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.

### **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're real. By supporting educators to advance design education and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills, Autodesk is helping prepare students develop 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 <http://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 <http://www.autodesk.com>.

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