Section

1

Communication

Table of Contents

1   COMMUNICATION

1.1 OVERVIEW

This section provides teams with necessary information for contacting *FIRST* staff, using the *FIRST* logo, and other information regarding such topics as the Yearbook Page.

1.2 *FIRST* - CONTACT INFORMATION

You can reach *FIRST* via phone, fax, mail, and e-mail, or get information from our website at http://www.usfirst.org. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., EST. Refer to the sections below for the appropriate help resource. *Be sure to provide your team number on all communications.*

Mailing Address:	Phone Numbers:	Fax Numbers:
FIRST 200 Bedford Street Manchester, NH 03101	(603) 666-3906 or (800) 871-8326	Fax: (603) 666-3907 Engineering: (603) 666-0043 Finance: (603) 647-5772

1.3 TEAM SUPPORT

E-mail Address: frcteams@usfirst.org

Phone: (603) 666-3906 or (800) 871-8326 – **Press 0 for Operations Team Support / Operator**.

The Operations group is ready to help your team. If you leave a voice mail, make it short but detailed and include your team number, name, e-mail address, and phone number. A Team Support representative will research the question and return your call or answer via e-mail.

1.3.1 E-mails and Subject Lines

Our program requires many requests in writing, so e-mail may be your best communication tool and the best way to get a quick answer to your question. E-mails save money, time, and provide information for a researched, more accurate answer. Please include your team number and short reference in the subject line.

1.3.2 Please Do Not Duplicate Efforts

We ask that you do not contact or copy multiple persons about the same problem. We are a small group and mus avoid duplicating efforts. We can usually answer questions or requests within one working day.

1.4 INNOVATION FIRST, INC.

(Control System-Speed Controllers)

Contact Innovation First, Inc. for help with items such as: Operator Interface, Robot Controller, Radios, Speed Controllers, and Relay Modules. Remember to provide your *FIRST team* number in the subject line.

Tech Support Phone Number: (903) 453-0802

Tech Support E-mail Address: info@innovationfirst.com

Website: http://www.innovationfirst.com

1.5 *NEW*: THE *FIRST* STORE (PARTS)

After Kickoff, Innovation First Inc. (IFI) will host an on-line store on behalf of *FIRST*. The purpose of this store is to assist teams in purchasing excess Kit of Parts items from *FIRST*. IFI will have the *FIRST* Store located on its website (www.ifirobotics.com). Only *FIRST* teams will be authorized to purchase the listed parts. *FIRST* will establish pricing for all parts, which will include handling charges, but not shipping charges.

Contact Tom Watson at (903) 453-0800 ext. 204 for *FIRST* Store matters (at Innovation First, Inc.).

1.6 GETTING ANSWERS TO YOUR COMPETITION QUESTIONS

The *FIRST* Robotics Competition Manual is available on the *FIRST* web site at http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/doc_updt.htm. *FIRST* will update this page twice a week with new information and clarifications about competing at *FIRST* Robotics Competition events.

FIRST also provides an on-line forum for questions and answers (Q & A). It is accessible at http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/2006/qa.htm and has for each section of the Competition Manual (e.g. "The Game", "The Robot", etc.). Anyone can view questions and replies on this system. Only those team contacts with a special team username and password can post questions to this system. This username and password has been sent to the team's Main Contact.

To make it easier for FRC Team Rules Experts to post questions, we have redesigned the FRC Game Q & A forum so that Team Rules Experts may post directly to the moderators of the forum. Questions cannot be seen by others until a moderator accepts them.

The **Submit a Question** forum has been removed. Questions previously posted to that location prior to this change have been reviewed and the answers posted in the appropriate sections of FRC Game Q & A forum.

1.7 *FIRST* ROBOTICS COMPETITION WEBSITE

Visit *FIRST* Robotics Competition at its website at http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/

- *Check deadlines and dates*
- Find "Documents and Updates and Team Manual sections." http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/doc_updt.htm
- Find team-sponsored events after the season
- *FIRST* event information. http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/2006/rgevents.htm
- Fundraising support materials. http://www.usfirst.org/4vol/resourcectr/index.html
- Find answers to administrative concerns

1.7.1 Team Website Links

The website also provides links to FRC teams' home pages. If you have a team-related web page, you can post it via our Team Information Management System (TIMS) as part of the registration / maintenance process. Remember to keep your website up-to-date for the website award review and related deadline.

1.7.2 Team Updates

After the Kickoff*, Team Updates* provide rules updates, important information about parts, administrative reminders/deadlines. Our Team Updates schedule is:

- Tuesday by 5PM and Friday by 10AM. We work hard to meet these commitments. Unexpected circumstances may, on occasions, delay their publication.
- Additional updates may be released if necessary.

- Occasionally, *FIRST* will publish revisions to manual sections.

Teams often ask one person to read all *Team Updates* and make sure the right team members are informed about their contents. To find the updates on the *FIRST* Robotics website:

- Click the "Documents and Updates" button on the left side of the page
- Choose "Team Updates"

1.7.3 Recruitment & Public Relations Materials

You can find information on the *FIRST* website to enhance your team's recruitment efforts. Visit "About *FIRST*" for statements about the Impact of *FIRST*, testimonials, and *FIRST* financial information; and visit the Resource and Media areas for access to the documents you need to recruit new sponsors and volunteers.

http://www.usfirst.org/4vol/resourcectr/index.html

1.8 TIMS - SUPPLYING INFORMATION TO *FIRST*

(Team Information Management System)

The Team Information Management System (TIMS) is the on-line system to register your team and provide information to *FIRST* as the season progresses. Refer to the "Calendar of Important Deadlines" to check: http://www.usfirst.org/robotics/2006/frc_time.htm

When teams use the system properly, the system provides *FIRST* with necessary, up-to-date:

1. Team Names: Official, Nickname, and the 21 letter Short Name for the scoreboard
2. Team Contact information for important, team messages, shipments, and *FIRST* e-mail blasts
3. Team Partner (Sponsor) information
4. Event attendance information for each team (Kickoff, Competition Events, Team Socials, Forums)
5. Team's FedEx or UPS shipping account number. (Purolator for Canadian teams)
6. Team Yearbook Page area (Judge Info)

TIMS "Team Information" provides options for:

- Teams willing to mentor other teams
- Teams wanting mentoring
- Entering team website address/link

1.8.1 *NEW:* TIMS Access for Both Main and Alternate Contacts

At the teams' requests, we have made it possible for each team to have two TIMS access persons.

Your adult Main and Alternate Contacts are responsible for accessing the TIMS, keeping the information current, and providing necessary information by the set deadlines. Each can enter the system with his/her logon information and make additions and changes as they occur. Keeping the system up-to-date is critical.

1.8.2 *NEW*: International Teams

If your team is an international team, please be sure to supply your country code and city code as part of all of your phone numbers in TIMS. This is especially critical during Kit of Parts and robot shipment times because it is sometimes necessary to speak with a Shipping, Main, or Alternate Contact.

1.8.3 "Off Season" and Current Contact Information

Each team contact listed in TIMS is responsible for informing the Main or Alternate Contact of any changes or additions to his/her TIMS record. If the team's phone numbers and addresses are incorrect, bad things can happen. This is especially crucial during team travel times and during school vacations. Be sure to provide the Main Contact with a secondary address, home and cell phone numbers, and e-mail addresses so we can reach you. If any of the team contacts leaves the team, replace his/her information with new contact information, and delete the former contact from TIMS.

1.8.4 Mentoring & Team Organization

If you wish to sign up to mentor or receive mentoring through TIMS, make sure your Main or Alternate Contact edits his/her TIMS record and clicks "yes" to the question "Share this address?" (or the e-mail, or the phone) Find this in the primary address area.

Under "Team Information," make sure you answer the questions regarding mentoring by clicking the appropriate box regarding the following:

- ☐ We are willing to mentor other FRC teams
- ☐ We would like to be mentored by another FRC team.

1.8.5 NEW: Team Names –Official, Short, and Nickname Deadlines

Please read below for team name definitions, uses, and TIMS deadline. Enter the information in the TIMS "Team Information" area.

1.8.5.1 Your Official Team Name

The official team name includes sponsors and schools. We refer to them as Partners. This name is generated automatically when you enter the Partner information in TIMS, and appears in written materials, such as the *FIRST* Program Books. *Update TIMS with your partners whenever there is a change or addition.*

1.8.5.2 Other Team Names for Scoreboard and Play-by-Play

Our practice and match lists must be prepared early in the season. For this reason, we ask that you enter your short name and nicknames in TIMS by mid January.

Short Team Name: Once you have established your team partners (sponsors), remember to adjust your twenty-one (21)-letter maximum "short team name" to include them. Whatever you put in this field will appear on the scoreboard at each event. Remember, sponsors like and expect the recognition.

Nickname: Make sure to enter your team's nickname. The announcer uses team nicknames during the game when doing the play-by-play descriptions.

1.8.6 Judges' Yearbook Page

The Yearbook Page is a team overview page. It is your team's opportunity to share valuable information with *FIRST* and with the judges at the Regional and Championship events. Enter the information via TIMS under the "Pre-Event" information area.

The data you enter will provide important statistics about *FIRST* teams. These data are very valuable for planning events and very helpful in our efforts to procure funding. *FIRST* may use the robot photos you submit in the Awards Ceremonies.

1.8.6.1 Purpose of Yearbook Page

- Provides a common starting point for judging each team
- Helps provide judges with insight into each team's workings, history, goals, strengths, and robot
- Makes judging more efficient
- Provides team data for *FIRST* and its archives

1.8.6.2 Enter Yearbook Page Information

The submission deadline is February 22, 2006.

Enter this data via TIMS in the "Pre-Event Information" area.

Do not wait until the last minute: Many teams wait until the deadline date to start entering their information and have problems that they can't resolve by closing time. Since we face a strict printing deadline preparing for events, we urge you to start and complete these pages as early as you can. If you ask early, Team Support will have time to help. Our small staff cannot help if too many teams wait until the last days.

No Time Extensions: *FIRST* cannot grant time extensions to complete the information. The printing deadline is rigid.

1.8.6.3 Required "Pre-Event" Information

To prepare for this project, you may want to gather information about your team. As you gather the data, put it in your TIMS record. The following is an idea of the type of information you will need for this area:

- Number of years involved
- Name of the Student Leader
- Team Budget for the year
- Robot or robot and team photo
- Number of female and male students, engineers and technicians, teachers, parents on the team
- How many freshman, sophomores, juniors, seniors
- Teacher/Mentor information
- Percent of your school's student population receiving free or reduced-price lunch

Essay Portion – Please answer briefly. This section requires short written descriptions of the following:

- Team history
- Team goals
- *FIRST* impact on the team/community
- Community description
- Team strengths
- The most significant challenge the team overcame
- Robot game and strategy
- Team is most competitive for which awards this year?
- Funding sources
- Reasons for public awareness of your team

Photo: In the designated spot on the web page, insert a single digital photo of the robot, or the team and robot. Judges rely on these photos, and they help *FIRST* with media coverage and awards ceremonies.

Format: The Main Contact for each team will receive the necessary instructions for filling out the form via TIMS. To ensure proper archiving, carefully follow the directions.

1.9 NEW: AUTODESK CONTACT INFORMATION

Please refer below for contact information for various Autodesk areas:

General Autodesk questions:	Kelly Stanphill kelly.stanphill@autodesk.com
Autodesk training or purchase questions:	Anthony Theos anthony.theos@autodesk.com
General 3ds Max questions (<u>NOT</u> tech support):	Kevin G Clark kevin.g.clark@autodesk.com
Autodesk Inventor installation questions:	John Elliott Phone: (503) 692-8367 john.elliott@autodesk.com
To find a Autodesk education reseller:	www.autodesk.com/avar
Change software installation option:	(800) 225-1327

(From a network installation to a multiseat stand-alone installation)

Please watch for an Autodesk forum on www.chiefdelphi.com

1.10 EVENT-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

The *FIRST* Robotics website includes important information about specific events. We advise that you add to your FRC Manual informationabout the events you will attend. Critical items such as:

 Site Maps

Forms for pre-ordered lunches

Team social events

Shipping and drayageWe post specific information pertaining to Regional and Championship events on the website regarding site directions, team socials, pre-ordered lunches, and shipping and drayage. You will be able to download this information for the events you plan to attend. To find this information, do the following:

On the *FIRST* Robotics page, click on Regional Events or Championship, find your event, and click on "Site Info." or other links to pertinent information, such as pre-order lunch forms. Provide the information to your team people/subteams.

    a. Print the documents

    b. Distribute them to relevant team members

    c. Place them with your FRC Manual information

1.11 HOTEL INFORMATION - THE THS COMPANY

Each *FIRST* team must designate one person as the Team Travel Coordinator to manage this process. The THS Company handles hotel reservations for *FIRST* Robotics Competition events. All reservations are made on line at http://www.ths-frc.com/. Confirmations will come directly from THS.

The THS Company	866-536-6966
306 High Street	888-536-TEAM
Hackettstown, NJ 07840	http://www.thsweb.com/

1.12 *FIRST* LOGOS

You have numerous creative opportunities of designing your own identity. Every year we see great examples of how teams "brand" their efforts with websites, incredible team logos on robots, T-shirts, hats, banners, fliers, and giveaways. These branding activities are a wonderful way to include students from art, communications, computer, and language arts classes in your team effort.

As you manage your own promotion, you may want to incorporate the *FIRST* logo in what you do. Because our mark - the combination of the composite graphic element plus the *FIRST* wordmark - is registered, we have a few guidelines for you to follow when using the *FIRST* logo.

You can find the *FIRST* Logo with this url, http://www.usfirst.org/4vol/FRCresourcectr/graphics/index.html

1.12.1 Logo Use

We encourage teams to develop and promote team identity. It is a great way to help *FIRST* judges, announcers, and audiences recognize your team at the competitions, and it is also a way to help you create a "buzz" about your team in your community.

Positive Promotion: Use our logo in a manner that is positive and promotes *FIRST*.

Unmodified: Use the *FIRST* logo without modification. This means that you will use our name and the triangle, circle and square as you see it on our website or

letterhead. You can use it in red, blue, and white, or in black and white. Refer to the *FIRST* logo standards for additional details including placement, size, and color specifications and incorrect logo usage.

Logo and Standards: You can download the *FIRST* logo from our website in JPEG (for electronic applications) or eps (for printed applications) format. Go to http://www.usfirst.org/ and click on FRC Communications Resource Center in the Quicklinks menu. Select the "Graphics" Section.

Advertising Use Approval: All teams and sponsors must obtain approval from *FIRST* prior to incorporating our logo in any advertising. E-mail approval requests to Marian Murphy, murphy@usfirst.org or phone 800-871-8326, ext. 409.

1.12.2 Finding The Year's Competition Logo

Now that the game has been announced, you can download the logo for " **AIM HIGH** " from the *FIRST* Robotics Competition Communications Resource Center portion of the website under "Graphics" at the following link: http://www.usfirst.org/4vol/resourcectr/graphics/index.html.

1.13 PROVIDING CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP TO *FIRST*

Please contact Charlie Clement, Director of Development, for information regarding the opportunity to provide sponsorship at (603) 666-3906 or (800) 871-8326, Extension 412. You can also contact him via e-mail at clement@usfirst.org.

1.14 HOW TO VOLUNTEER FOR *FIRST*

Each Competition event depends on an abundance of volunteers with a broad spectrum of talents to support operating needs and competition demands. If you have time, we can use your help. Please visit the *FIRST* website page, "For Volunteers," to find out more about volunteer opportunities. You can register your preferences for events and volunteer positions via the *FIRST* Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS), an on-line registration system.