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# 2 Communication

A graphic consisting of a grey square with the word "Section" in a bold, black, sans-serif font at the top. Below the text is a large, white, stylized number "2" centered within the square.

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## 2.1 OVERVIEW

This section provides teams with necessary information for contacting **FIRST** staff, key vendors and others and how **FIRST** will communicate important season information. This section also contains help regarding the use of the **FIRST** logo, finding materials on the website, the Team Information Management System (TIMS) and tips on reserving hotels.

## 2.2 FIRST HEADQUARTERS - CONTACT INFORMATION

You can reach **FIRST** via mail, email, phone and fax or get information from our website. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, EST. Refer to the sections below for the appropriate help resource.

*Be sure to provide your **TEAM NUMBER** on all communications!*

<b>Mailing Address</b>	200 Bedford St, Manchester, NH 03101
<b>Email Address</b>	frcteams@usfirst.org
<b>Phone Numbers</b>	(603) 666-3906, "0" for team support (800) 871-8326, "0" for team support
<b>Fax Numbers</b>	(603) 666-3907 (Main) (603) 647-5772 (Finance)

## 2.3 TEAM SUPPORT

The Operations (Team Support) Group is eager to answer your FRC program and season related questions. Please call or email us with any questions you may have – we look forward to helping you!



### Emails and Subject Lines

Please write to [frcteams@usfirst.org](mailto:frcteams@usfirst.org) with your questions.

To facilitate a quick reply, always include your **Team Number** in the **subject line**.

### 2.3.1 Please do not duplicate efforts

We ask that you do not contact or copy multiple people about the same problem. Being a small group, we must work efficiently and avoid having more than one person working on the same issue. We can usually answer questions or requests within one to two business days. Please do not hesitate to contact us by phone if your question requires immediate assistance.

## 2.4 TECHNICAL RESOURCES

Information on the 2013 Control System, including software and hardware, as well as other technical resources, will be available after Kickoff. For more information, please use the [Kit of Parts homepage](#). The technical links are on the right side of the page.

## 2.5 ADDITIONAL SOFTWARE CONTACT INFORMATION

### **Autodesk**

Please go to [www.autodesk.com/FIRST](http://www.autodesk.com/FIRST) and join the Community to download Autodesk software products. Visit the Community often to check on new information and resources; to get your 2013 Kit of Parts modeled in Autodesk Inventor Professional 2013 (available after Kickoff); and/or to submit your questions and requests for technical support.

### **PTC Software**

PTC offers donated software to all FIRST teams, Creo® – CAD software, Mathcad® – Engineering Calculations software, and Windchill® – Project and Document Management software. Visit [www.ptc.com/go/first](http://www.ptc.com/go/first) for information on the free software solutions. If you cannot find answers to your questions from the above website, please contact [FIRSTsupport@ptc.com](mailto:FIRSTsupport@ptc.com).

## 2.6 FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITION WEBSITE

Visit the *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC) area on [www.usfirst.org](http://www.usfirst.org) where you can find answers to administrative concerns and link to other areas of support.

- Check deadlines and dates for TIMS, entries, grants, registration and payments, robot shipment, and awards submissions. <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/calendar>
- Find links to the “Competition Manual and Related Documents” page, the “Robot Control System” page, the “Robot Shipping” page, the “Season News and Email Blasts” page, , and other information at: <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/game-and-season-info>

### 2.6.1 Getting Answers to Your Competition Questions

Competition Manual - is available at:

<http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/competition-manual-and-related-documents> Sections relating to the game will be posted after Kickoff.

Team Updates – will be posted at: <http://frc-manual.usfirst.org/TeamUpdates>

After Kickoff, *FIRST* will post Team Updates online. Team Updates provide rules updates, important information about parts and administrative reminders/deadlines. Please note that some updates will result in *FIRST* publishing revisions to manual sections.

**NOTE: Please be sure to check these website locations often during the build season to ensure that you have the latest information!**

## 2.6.2 FRC Q&A Forum

After Kickoff, FIRST provides an on-line forum for questions and answers (Q & A). The Q & A system can be found here: <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/qanda>.

## 2.6.3 Email Blasts

Email blasts are important communications that *FIRST* sends to team contacts identified in TIMS. The email blasts remind teams of important deadlines, updates, and other timely FRC information.

*FIRST* archives the email blasts on the *FIRST* website at “2013 News and Email Blasts” webpage at: <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/emailblastarchive.aspx>.

*FIRST* will typically send out one FRC email blast on the Thursday of each week throughout the FRC Season and on Tuesdays during competition event weeks.

In addition to the FRC Email Blast, Rookie Email Blasts will be sent to rookie teams periodically on Tuesdays during registration and throughout the FRC season.

## 2.6.4 FRC Blog

Is located at: <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/blog> and should be read weekly for additional important updates from the Director of FRC.

## 2.7 TIMS - SUPPLYING INFORMATION TO FIRST

TIMS is the online system used by the Main and Alternate Contacts of the team to:

1. create a Team Profile;
2. register for events;
3. enter Kit and Kickoff Preferences;
4. enter Judge’s Information (for awards); and
5. accept students to the team, track their electronic Consent and Release Forms, print a Team Roster and assign students to submit for key awards and track their progress.

TIMS additionally provides options to allow teams to register themselves as a team willing to mentor others or for a team to identify itself as a team in need of mentoring.

## 2.8 JUDGES' INFORMATION

**The Judges' Information Section is the best way to provide an overview of your team to the competition judges. Please take advantage of this opportunity and provide this important information in TIMS.**

The Judges' Information is a team overview page. It is an opportunity to share valuable information and statistics about your team with *FIRST* and the judges at the events. This information is very important for planning events and very helpful in our efforts to procure funding. *FIRST* may use the robot photos you submit in the Awards Ceremonies. Enter the information under the "Judges' Information" section in TIMS.

The purpose of the Judges' Information page is to provide:

- a common starting point for judging each team;
- insight for Judges into the team's workings, history, goals, strengths and robot; and
- team data for *FIRST* and its archives.

Please refer to the team manual, Section 6 – The Awards, for more information about the individual awards.

## 2.9 EVENT-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Event-specific information such as agendas, site information, pre-order lunch forms etc. are posted under each event at: <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/regional-events>. Tip! Check back periodically as this page is updated in stages.

## 2.10 REGIONAL EVENTS AND CHAMPIONSHIP HOTEL INFORMATION

Steele Meetings, Inc. will once again be handling the hotel reservation system for Regional Events and the Championship. Please click on the following link for more information and to make your reservations: <http://www.firstchampionshiphousing.com/Home.aspx>.

## 2.11 FIRST LOGOS

There are numerous creative opportunities for designing a unique team identity. Every year, we see great examples of how teams "brand" their efforts with websites, team logos on robots, t-shirts, hats, banners, fliers and giveaways. These branding activities are a great way to get students interested in art, communications, computer and language

arts to join and work on the team.

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* word mark – is a registered trademark, we have a few guidelines for you to follow when using *FIRST* or FRC logos. You can find the logos and information about how to legally use them at <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/marketing-tools/brand>

## 2.11.1 Logo Use

Once the game is announced at Kickoff, you will be able to download this year's game logo at <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/marketing-tools/frc> (see link in FRC GAME Section).