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FIRST Robots: Aim High

Vince Wilczynski, Stephanie Slezycki



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Personal robots are about as advanced today as personal computers were on the eve of the first IBM PC in the early 1980s. They are still the domain of hobbyists who cobble them together from scratch or from kits, join local clubs to swap code and stage contests, and whose labor of love is setting the stage for a technological revolution. This book will deconstruct the 30 regional winning robot designs from the FIRST Robotics Competition in 2006. The FIRST Robotics Competition (held annually and co-founded by Dean Kamen and Woodie Flowers) is a multinational competition that teams professionals and young people to solve an engineering design problem in an intense and competitive way. In 2005 the competition reached close to 25,000 people on close to 1,000 teams in 30 competitions. Teams came from Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Israel, Mexico, the U.K., and almost every U.S. state. The competitions are high-tech spectator sporting events that have gained a loyal following because of the high caliber work featured. Each team is paired with a mentor from such companies as Apple, Motorola, or NASA (NASA has sponsored 200 teams in 8 years).

This book looks at 30 different robot designs all based on the same chassis, and provides in-depth information on the inspiration and the technology that went into building each of them. Each robot is featured in 6-8 pages providing readers with a solid understanding of how the robot was conceived and built. There are sketches, interim drawings, and process shots for each robot.

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