A news release should contain basic information that a reporter needs with enough detail to interest the reporter or editor in the story. Consider three types of releases (also see samples provided by the communications office):

- **General media release**: a summary of the message you want to distribute
  - This should contain the traditional who, what, where, when and why facts as well as contact information in case the reporter has questions.
  - Try to keep it short, with a maximum of two pages. If you send two pages, be sure to number the pages and indicate on the first page that the release continues and on the second page that it is the final page.
  - If your story is interesting visually, include a photo.
  - Include quotes to show the expertise or experience of your faculty member or student.

- **Media Advisory**: brief announcement of an event
  - An advisory is used to invite the news media to attend an event, so provide all the information they’ll need: the basics about the story, the times of the event, the place (with directions) and the name of a contact person they can ask for once they arrive.
  - Sometimes a media advisory can follow a news release. Send the release about a week before your event; send the media advisory just 24 or 48 hours before the event as a quick reminder. The news media usually do not decide what they’re going to cover very far in advance, because breaking news dictates their schedule.

- **Fact sheet**: accompanies a news release or media advisory
  - Don’t feel obligated to include a fact sheet. These are best used for complicated matters where a bulleted summary would be easier to understand or for events or stories that have many details that might get lost in the body of the text.
  - Make sure the fact sheet and the media advisory or release can stand independently. That is, include the basic information on both. Reporters are always in a hurry; if they leave without one or the other document, you want to make sure they still have the information they need.

Regardless of what type of release you decide to send, always:

- **Remember the audience**. The audience for your media release is NOT the reporter; it’s the readers or viewers for that particular news outlet. Think about what would interest them, and make sure that’s what you highlight in your release.
- **Write it the way you’d like to see it published**. For example, TV or radio stations will often send a photographer to an event but simply read from your news release, so think about the message you want to get out.
• **Think about timing.** If you have some flexibility in when you can send the release, find out if a certain day or week is better.
  o Ask the college communications office if it is sending any releases; it’s better not to distribute several on the same day.
  o Keep in tune with the news reports and be flexible. If on the day you plan to send out your release there is a big local or national story, hold off for a couple of days so your news isn’t neglected.

• **Date it.** Things get lost on reporter’s desks; you don’t want them to discard something if they can’t find a date and think your news is old.

• **Include contact information** for yourself and for the professor or student involved in the story, if that person is willing. If reporters have questions, you don’t want them to have to search to find you — more often, they’ll just move on to the next story rather than take the time to find what they need.

• **Give all the basic information.** Keep in mind that the reporter may know nothing about your story, so make sure you include all the details. Do everything you can to make the reporter’s life easier. Is there a website you can list for more information? Have you provided definitions of engineering or technical terms? Is there any history behind the story that the reporter needs to know to understand it? Remember to maintain a balance between giving as much detail as you can but keeping it short.

• **Double check.** Proofread and verify facts, times, names, locations, etc., before you send out a news release. Once it’s sent, it could be on the nightly news broadcast before you have a chance to send out a correction.

• **Save your news release as a PDF** in the smallest file size possible and use that as the attachment that you e-mail to the media; it’s generally easier for everyone to open no matter what type of computer they use. If your news is brief, consider putting it in the body of your e-mail rather than using an attachment.

• **Don’t** follow up and call a reporter just to make sure he/she received the release. This aggravates them. They’ll call or show up if they’re interested. Your release may even have all the information they need, so they’ll just go ahead and print or broadcast it. If you find out more details, or if things change after you send the release, that’s a good time to call and update them.

• If your release is about an event, make sure you have copies of the release available at the event. Often an editor will assign a reporter or a photographer to cover something but in a last-minute haste may not have time to pass along your news release.
New iShoe App Lets Fans Take the Game Wherever They Go

Students in Ohio State’s College of Engineering have developed an app for iPhone, iPad and iPod touch to give Buckeye fans an in-depth, real-time look at the home football games.

The app, called iShoe, is available now for free download in the iTunes App Store. It was developed and run by computer science and engineering students at Ohio State in cooperation with the Department of Athletics.

The App Store touts the iShoe features:

* Complete play-by-play coverage for every home game
* Accurate, full-color renderings for every drive
* Exclusive video replays for fans inside the ’Shoe during the game
* Real-time statistics for each team and the individual players
* Up-to-date team rosters, complete with pictures and biographies
* Schedules for current and previous season, including final scores and game times
* Drive-renderings, play-by-play and statistics for most previous home games of the 2009 season and 2010 season to date

Ohio State Athletics sends iShoe team members the same statistics feed provided to news outlets as well as the video feed from the scoreboard during the game.

At least two of the iShoe student developers sit in the Ohio Stadium press box during the games clipping the video of each play and associating it with each play as well as each player. The play video can be watched by all users of the app sitting in the stadium during game time. (Due to licensing agreements with ABC/ESPN and the Big Ten Network, video is not available outside of the stadium or after the game.)

Fans also can access iShoe features, except the video, on the app’s corresponding website, http://iss.osu.edu/iShoe.

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Ohio State iShoe app, p. 2 of 2

The iShoe app was developed by undergraduates Christopher Dean (project lead), Alex Stevens and Adam Zink as well as Michael Rojas, who graduated this spring. Stevens is leading another team to develop the iShoe App for Android.

The project is conducted under the guidance of Associate Professor Rajiv Ramnath, director of Ohio State’s Collaborative for Enterprise Transformation and Innovation: Partnership for Performance (CETI) at the Institute for Sensing Systems. Ramnath’s goal is to match students with business and industry representatives to develop computer and mobile applications through collaborative, large-scale and long-term interdisciplinary projects. CETI also provides opportunities to involve undergraduates in research and application development.

“Leading the iShoe team has been an incredible experience,” Dean said. “I have learned things about computer science that couldn't be taught in the usual curriculum and have gained a perspective that enhances my learning inside the classroom. Working with Dr. Rajiv Ramnath and having very skilled members working on the project made leading the team to success very easy.”

This season the game day operations for the website and the new app are performed under the supervision of doctoral student Thomas Lynch by students Dean, Stevens, Nicholas Rotonda and James Power, a computer and information science major.

Athletics takes care of all the marketing and licensing issues. James Walton, of the university’s Office of the Chief Information Officer, supplied the team with the necessary Apple licenses to develop on the iPhone.

Initially, iShoe was a website adapted under license from eStadium (developed at Purdue University) in a capstone course, with lecturer Igor Malkiman, by Di Cao, a graduate student, and undergraduates Timothy Nash, Michael Payne and Timothy Raptoulis. The group worked with Jim Null, director of information technology for Athletics, to develop the iShoe website.

The website was finalized during the summer of 2009 by a team led by Lynch and consisting of undergraduates Dean and Peter Dietz. During every home football game last season, Lynch, Dean and students Thomas Loh, an undergraduate, and Sheetal Ghardse, a graduate student, operated the site.

# # #

Media Contacts:
iShoe team:
(Friday, Oct. 22) Thomas Lynch, doctoral student (419) 304-6637
(Saturday, Oct. 23) iShoe team leader Christopher Dean, dean.836@osu.edu
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**Engineering Honors Students Hold Robot Competition**

Although the weather is warming up, St. John Arena will be cooling down to host the Ohio State University College of Engineering robot competition next week.

First-year engineering students from the Ohio State Fundamentals of Engineering for Honors Program will test robots they designed and built in a competition to simulate a mission where robots complete tasks at a research station in Antarctica.

From 4 to 5:30 p.m. Thursday, May 22, the students will set their robots in motion around a specially-built, 12- by 12-foot course to simulate a research station with instructions to launch a weather balloon and retrieve a sled of equipment left behind by research station workers out on the icescape. The robots, limited in size to 9 inches square and constructed of sheet metal, PVC pipe and Erector sets, must also locate and extract an ice core sample. These tasks must be completed within two minutes.

The competition requires each of the 60 teams of three to four students to design, build and program an autonomous robot using creativity and engineering principles. In addition, a significant portion of their assignment involves planning, managing and documenting their work on the project.

**What:** First-Year Engineering Honors Student Robot Competition  
**When:** 4-5:30 p.m., Thursday, May 22, 2008  
**Where:** St. John Arena, 410 Woody Hayes Drive, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio  
**Who:** 60 teams of Ohio State First-Year Engineering Honors Students  
**Why:** Student engineering teams will test robots in competition with other teams

**Editors:** Photographers and videographers are welcome to attend the event and take photos or video during the competition.

# # #
FACT SHEET

The Ohio State University College of Engineering
Fundamentals of Engineering for Honors Robot Competition
May 22, 2008, St. John Arena

THE COMPETITION

• The main objective for each team is to build a self-controlled, self-contained and self-propelled robotic vehicle that will travel over a well-defined course and complete the following tasks:
  o Begin the task by responding to a “starting light” in the floor of the starting area
  o Launch a weather balloon
  o Return a sled of equipment to starting area
  o Locate and extract an ice core sample
  o Return to its own starting area and signal it is finished

• Teams will be scored based on their design and how well the robot performs in both individual and head-to-head competition runs.

• Each team will have one minute to set up its robot before each run. Each run will last 2 minutes from the time the start light/signal is activated.

THE ROBOTS

• Size/Shape: Each robot, in its starting configuration, must be no larger than 9 inches by 9 inches and no taller than 12 inches.

• Parts: Robots are constructed of Erector parts, PVC pipe and adhesive, PVC sheet made into structural shapes, or a combination of these. Other structural materials including wood and sheet metal are also possible. A sensor kit was provided, which included a CdS cell, an IR receiver, an optosensor and two microswitches or touch sensors. The robots operate with motors and batteries.

• Judges: The judges for the event will be representatives of the companies that have sponsored the competition through donations. Those companies include Honda, Shell, National Instruments, P&G, Lockheed Martin, Eaton, Raytheon, Alcatel-Lucent, Northrop Grumman, ExxonMobil, Chrysler and Alcoa

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For more information about the college’s First-Year Engineering Program, visit http://feh.osu.edu.

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