



## Real World Design Challenge Fact Sheet

The Real World Design Challenge is an annual high school competition run by a public-private partnership with the goal of sustainably increasing the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) workforce. The partnership's goal of increasing the workforce extends beyond the scope of the competition itself. The partners are focused on working within the context of the American educational system to transform STEM education in the United States by providing professional engineering and learning resources to students and teachers.

The United States faces critical workforce needs in the areas of engineering and technology. A large percentage of the engineering workforce is eligible to retire. And it is this workforce that ensures out national security and global competitiveness.

During the 2008-2009 school year, a broad-based group of partners began addressing this workforce problem by creating the Real World Design Challenge. The partners bring a broad base of expertise from business, government, and academia. Every partner is donating time and resources. In fact, the 2009 competition brought more than a quarter-billion dollars in resources to schools. And at the current growth rate, the program's contributions to education will exceed \$1.25 billion in 2010 and will be nearly \$4 billion in 2011. These values are so high because students are provided with real professional tools and learning opportunities. But none of the partners is using a revenue model, and all of the companies have agreed to provide unlimited free perpetual licenses of professional software for the lifetime of the program.

These resources are intended to benefit STEM education outside of the direct scope of the competition itself. The partnership has been building on the core of the Challenge and working with state and local governments, where educational decisions are largely made, to broaden STEM education within the scope of the existing educational infrastructure. To reach the numbers of students necessary to fill the engineering jobs of the future, the partners have focused on an inclusive model by making the program scalable and free.

Both last year's and this year's challenges have been focused on aviation. In the future, the Challenge will expand to include other areas and industries. And we are in the process of expanding from the initial ten states that participated last year to 25 this year and 50 next year. This year's state Challenge will be issued September 14, 2009. The national competition will occur in March of 2010.