

By: April 25, 2008, Technology News Editor

## [Microsoft Introduces Worldwide Simulated Robotics Competition](#)

### *RoboChamps*

Microsoft is hosting a virtual robot smackdown via a new initiative debuted on April 25, 2008. [RoboChamps](#) is designed as a worldwide simulated competition that will bring the Redmond company's own robotics platform to the centerstage. Academics, hobbyists and developers are invited to take part in the challenges of RoboChamps, and to put Microsoft Robotics Studio at work in a simulated environment. In this context, the RoboChamps website is the best place to start, as it offers a wide range of resources, including Microsoft Robotics Developer Studio 2008 and Microsoft Visual Studio 2008 or Visual C# Express 2008, all made available for download by the Redmond company. "RoboChamps is built on top of the Microsoft Robotics Developer Studio (MSRDS) 2008 CTP, and uses that product's robust, physics enabled simulation environment to remove the barriers of entry that exist for many today. This simulated league provides individuals with immersive 3-D environments, simulated versions of robots, and compelling scenario-specific challenges where they can win real robots. Environments range from a maze to the surface of the planet Mars to downtown driving, to robot rescue, to soccer. The top four finalists will be flown to PDC, where the competition moves to the real world and participants apply their code to real robots," revealed [Christophe Fiessinger](#), Senior Technical Product Manager for Microsoft Office Project Server. Amaze (a mind-bending maze), Mars Rover, Urban (downtown driving), Robot Rescue, Sumo and Tournament are the simulated environments made available to challengers. Essentially, competitors will have to download the necessary software tools made available by Microsoft, choose a specific challenge and write the code that will make a robot complete it. In this initial stage of the competition, contestants will not need actual hardware, as all the environments are virtual. However, the finals at the PDC in October 2008 will require a hardware infrastructure, but Microsoft will take care of this detail by offering a CoroBot to the winner of the competition. "The audience for this is breadth, including professional, hobbyist, and academic developers - and all are eligible to compete and win real robots. MSRDS 2008 is .NET based, so between people having pre-existing .NET skills and simulation reducing the costs of entry, this is available to most people," Fiessinger added.

[RoboChamps: My robot is bigger than your robot](#)