Interview Blog

Intro:

In today's competitive world, all of our subteams play a crucial role in the success of any organization. To ensure that their strategies are effective, it is essential for them to understand the different perspectives of their target audience. In this regard, our marketing team has taken an important step by interviewing a few people both within and outside our team.

By doing so, they have gained valuable insights into what motivates people to seek interest. They have also been able to identify potential areas for improvement in our strategies and work. This approach has allowed us to gain a better understanding of the needs and preferences of our views and teammates, which will enable us to tailor our teams' efforts accordingly.

Furthermore, by involving members from different departments within our organization, we have been able to foster collaboration and teamwork. This has resulted in a more cohesive approach toward achieving our goals.

The decision by our marketing team to interview various individuals has proven to be a wise one. It has provided us with valuable information that will help us improve our strategies and ultimately achieve greater success as an organization and team.

Mechanical Interviews:

Our Mechanical team is broken up into 3 subteams, there is Control which initially focuses on programming and wiring, Mechanical works on actually building the robot, and Design designs of the robot. We interviewed team members in all of these sectors to see their views on robotics.

Most people in this sector really enjoy being in robotics because it is something they are planning to do in the future, it is a hands-on experience, and it is just genuinely fun and challenging to do. We learn and collaborate from not only ourselves but many other teams as well. Most of the responses we got did imply we needed to improve on a few aspects (like involvement, commitment, communication, etc) for better performance overall. The biggest lesson that the team got from this year was communication, effective working, teamwork, time management, problem-solving, and personal responsibility. Now, everyone's responses were different, and we did not interview everyone. Below are all interviews on the Mechanical side.

Common questions asked in the interview:
What is your position in robotics?

Do you plan to stay in robotics?
What main lesson did you learn in robotics?
How did you hear of robotics?
What changes do you wish to make in the future?
And what is your favorite part of robotics and your position?
Also, why did you choose your position?

These are their direct responses:

Karthik (Control team) (Sophomore):
1) I am currently a part of the control team that focuses on developing and managing the electrical and software facets of our robotics team.

2) Yes, I plan on staying on our robotics team throughout high school.

3) There are many lessons one can learn from an experience like FRC, but the most significant one for me was the value of teamwork. Learning how to effectively communicate, collaborate, learn, and work towards a common goal among a large group of peers, and the personal responsibility that stems from that, was definitely a valuable lesson for me.

4) Last year I had heard from fellow peers in our school that a robotics team here at Urbana High was forming.

5) There are numerous changes to be made as we are still a developing team fresh off our second season, but I think a stricter system for member accountability (everyone on the team is in a designated role committed to their contributions) and an improved project-based training system for newer members, where they can quickly learn and implement their skills, are a few changes that would be beneficial for our team in the future.

6) My favorite part of robotics would probably be seeing all the systems and work of the different sub teams come together in a fully functioning robot. Specifically speaking for my position, it would be watching the successful bug-free execution of my code on the robot/systems designed by the other team members.

7) I chose my position as I viewed it to be something that would be valuable for my future plans after high school, and also simply because it allows me to further explore a facet of technology that I am passionate about. I also felt that being a part of the control team would allow me to give my best contribution to the team.

Soorya (Mechanical and Drive team) (Freshman):

1. I am a mechanical member of Cryptohawks 8726
2. I plan to stay in the robotics club until I finish high school

3. I learned that there are multiple solutions to a problem
4. I heard of robotics through the school
5. upgrade the equipment we have and increase training
6. My favorite part about robotics is that we get a new experience or perspective and we always learn something new.
7. I chose to be in mechanical because I wanted to increase my mechanical skill

Anusha (Mechanical, arm subteam) (Sophomore):

I'm on the mechanical arm subteam (tech)
I don't really know, but I do enjoy robotics and I want to continue but I'll decide that next year.
I learned about being a part of a team, collaborating with people, and working together while also making friends
I heard it from the poster club fair at the beginning of the year.
I wish that it would be more organized like the schedule.
I love working with people and creating something. I like building and the mechanical aspect.
I chose this position because I like planning something and watching it come true after all the hard work put into it as a team.

Non-Tech Interviews:

Our Non-tech team was broken up into 3 sectors as well. There is Marketing where we advocate and do creative projects for the team, there is Outreach where they organize events and focus on team bonding as well as how others see our team, and there is Business where they focus on all the finance on the team.

The majority of non-tech people said that they loved being in this sector. They did mention that there needs to be more communication, more meeting deadlines, and more team bonding events. Over all these was a positive spirit to most of the responses we got.

Caris (members of Marketing and Outreach):
- I love working on the Marketing and Outreach Sub Teams for the Non Tech Side of Robotics.
- I think we should have more bonding events together and meet with each other more often
- My favorite part of Marketing would be handling the social media of the team and interacting with other teams

Jessica (member of Marketing and Outreach):
- I really enjoy working on Marketing and Outreach
- I think we could work on even more social media representation than what we have right now
- My favorite part of robotics is seeing the progression of our team and our robot over the many weeks each sub-team works on it

Richard (Business lead) (Senior):
I am the business lead/financial director on FRC team 8726.

I am a sophomore, and I plan on staying in robotics for the rest of high school because FRC is just such an amazing and unique program.

The main lesson I have learned in robotics is that us students can accomplish virtually anything as long as we work together.

I first heard of robotics at the UHS club fair in my freshman year. Members on the team back then set up a booth where students could join the Schoology group if interested.

In the future, I would love to be able to make the robotics team a nonprofit organization, whether that is through applying for a 501(c)(3) or affiliating ourselves with a booster club. Even though this is a time consuming process, I believe that it will be key to improving team sustainability because companies would have an easier time donating to us, and we have access to more grants for funding.

My favorite part about robotics is all of the people I get to meet each season. Every year there are many new members on the team, and not to mention that I get to meet many people from other FRC teams at events too. As a business lead, I love being able to exercise my communication skills by contacting companies and representing the financial side of the team.

I chose my position because I want to help the team's efforts to promote STEM and participate in robotics competitions, and that starts with getting the funds necessary to sustain the team.

Deven (team president) (senior):
Mechanical: I think it’s fine, communication between team operations and technical needs to be better but I like the synergy and flow that experienced members have with new members training sessions/exposure time needs to be more though

Non-tech: - I feel great about being on the Non Tech Side of robotics and I really enjoy the work I do on the Marketing and Outreach Subteams.
- In Non Tech, we could work on communication between not only members within each subunit, but members outside of their subunit also (ex. Mechanical to marketing)
- My favorite part about nontechnical would be being able to take pictures of others and capture important moments so that we can share them with others

General Public interviews:

Our team also decided to interview other students outside of robotics to get their views on what robotics is and how they can improve as a team. Many people have heard of robotics since the first year it was in our school (last school year, 2021-2022) and everyone has found that robotics

is a part of FRC and is encouraging STEM fields. The public really thought that robotics is a challenging club, and it is, but at the same time many really admire that these students in robotics overcome many of these challenges and face them to find a solution.

Person 1: David B.

Me: Hi David! Thank you for taking the time to talk to us. Can you tell us what you know about the First Robotics Competition (FRC)?

David: Hi! Sure, from what I've heard, I think FRC is a competition where robots are built and used to complete tasks or challenges. It's like a sports competition, but instead of human athletes, there are robots designed and built by teams of students. I believe it's a hands-on educational program that aims to promote science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills among students.

Me: That's a good overview, David! Do you have any idea how the teams in FRC are structured and what kind of students typically participate?

David: I'm not exactly sure about the team structure, but I think FRC teams are typically made up of students from high schools or educational institutions. There might be mentors or coaches who guide the students, but I think the majority of the work is done by the students themselves. I believe the teams are responsible for designing, building, and programming their own robots within a given time frame.

Me: You're on the right track, David! Can you tell us what you think the goals or objectives of the First Robotics Competition are?

David: From what I understand, the main goal of FRC is to inspire students to pursue careers in STEM fields by providing them with hands-on learning experiences. It's not just about building robots, but also about developing skills like teamwork, problem-solving, and critical thinking. I think FRC encourages students to apply their knowledge of science, technology, engineering, and math in a practical and competitive setting.

Me: Well said, David! Do you have any thoughts on how participating in FRC might benefit students in their future endeavors?

David: I think participating in FRC can have numerous benefits for students. It can help them develop a strong foundation in STEM skills, which can be valuable in their future careers, regardless of whether they choose to pursue a STEM field or not. FRC also provides opportunities for students to network with professionals in the industry, gain real-world experience, and learn about different career paths. Additionally, the teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving skills gained through FRC can be applied to various aspects of life beyond robotics.

Me: Thank you for sharing your thoughts, David! It's clear that you have a good understanding of the goals and objectives of the First Robotics Competition. Is there anything else you would like to add?

David: Not much else to add, as I mentioned earlier, my knowledge about FRC is limited. But based on what I've heard, it seems like an exciting and educational program that provides students with a unique and hands-on learning experience. I'm sure it's a great opportunity for students who are interested in STEM fields or robotics to learn, grow, and have fun while doing it!

Me: Thank you for your insights, David! We appreciate your perspective on FRC.

Person 2: Aditya I.

Me: Hello Aditya! Thank you for joining us for this interview. Can you tell us about your experience with the First Robotics Competition (FRC) and how you got involved?

Aditya: Hi! Sure, I've heard about FRC from some friends, and I've been following it online for a while. I find it fascinating how teams from all around the world come together to build and compete with robots. While I haven't participated in FRC myself, I've been keeping up with the challenges and updates from previous seasons.

Me: That's great, Aditya! Can you tell us what interests you the most about FRC and why you find it fascinating?

Aditya: Absolutely! What interests me the most about FRC is the intersection of technology, engineering, and teamwork. I'm amazed by the creativity and innovation that goes into designing and building robots to complete complex challenges. It's also inspiring to see how FRC encourages students to develop real-world skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and collaboration, which are valuable in any field.

Me: That's a great perspective, Aditya! Can you tell us about any particular FRC challenge or robot design that has caught your attention and why it stood out to you?

Aditya: There have been many interesting challenges and robot designs in FRC over the years. One that stood out to me was the challenge where robots had to navigate a maze-like field and retrieve and stack objects. I was impressed by the different strategies and approaches teams used to tackle the task, from using sensors for navigation to creative mechanisms for object manipulation. It was fascinating to see how teams came up with unique solutions to overcome the challenges presented by the game.

Me: That's fascinating, Aditya! Can you share with us any ideas or concepts that you think could be interesting to incorporate into future FRC challenges?

Aditya: As an outside observer, I think it would be interesting to see more emphasis on autonomous robot capabilities in future FRC challenges. It would be fascinating to see how teams utilize sensors, artificial intelligence, and advanced programming techniques to navigate and interact with the game field. Additionally, incorporating more environmental or societal challenges that require robots to address real-world issues could be a great way to make FRC more impactful and relevant.

Me: Thank you for your insights, Aditya! It's clear that you have a keen interest in FRC and its potential for innovation. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Aditya: I'm just amazed by the incredible work that FRC teams put into designing and building their robots, and the impact this program has on students' learning and personal growth. I'm excited to continue following FRC and see how it evolves in the future. It's definitely a program that inspires and encourages students to pursue their interests in STEM fields.

Person 3: Ansh G.

Me: Hello Ansh! Thank you for joining us for this interview. Are you familiar with the First Robotics Competition (FRC)?

Ansh: Hi! To be honest, I've only heard the name, but I don't really know much about it. Can you tell me more?

Me: Sure! FRC is a global robotics competition for high school students where teams design, build, and compete with their own robots. The competition challenges students to use their creativity, engineering skills, and teamwork to solve complex problems and complete tasks on a game field. It's a unique opportunity for students to gain hands-on experience with robotics and develop skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Ansh: That sounds interesting! I didn't know such a competition existed for high school students.

Me: Yes, it's a fascinating program that brings together students worldwide to showcase their talents in robotics and engineering. What are your initial thoughts or opinions about FRC?

Ansh: Well, I think it's a great initiative to provide high school students with hands-on learning opportunities in STEM fields. It sounds like a fun and challenging way to apply their knowledge in a practical setting. I'm impressed by the idea of designing and building robots to compete in a global competition, and I believe it could be a valuable experience for students interested in pursuing careers in STEM fields.

Me: Absolutely! FRC provides a unique platform for students to develop technical and non-technical skills, such as problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership. Can you share any ideas or suggestions for how FRC could be even more impactful or engaging for high school students?

Ansh: As someone who is new to FRC, I don't have any specific ideas at the moment, but I think incorporating more real-world challenges or applications could make it even more relevant and engaging for students. It would be interesting to see how robots could be designed to solve problems or address issues in areas such as environmental conservation, healthcare, or disaster response. Additionally, creating more opportunities for students to interact with professionals in the field and gain mentorship could also enhance the learning experience.

Me: Those are great suggestions, Ansh! FRC is always evolving, and incorporating real-world challenges and mentorship opportunities can certainly make it more impactful for students. Is there anything else you would like to add about FRC or your thoughts on robotics competitions in general?

Ansh: I think robotics competitions like FRC have the potential to inspire and motivate students to pursue their interests in STEM fields. It's a great platform for them to apply their skills and knowledge in a practical way and gain valuable experience that can benefit them in their future careers. I'm excited to learn more about FRC and explore how it can positively impact high school students' learning and personal growth.

Me: Thank you, Ansh, for sharing your thoughts! It's clear that you see the value in FRC and its potential to inspire and engage students in STEM fields. We appreciate your insights and enthusiasm.

Person 4: Fateen J.
Me: Hello Fateen! Thank you for joining us for this interview. I understand you have some knowledge about the First Robotics Competition (FRC). Can you share your thoughts on it?

Fateen: Sure, I've heard of it, but to be honest, I don't really see the big deal about it.

Me: Could you elaborate on that? What are your impressions of FRC?

Fateen: Well, I understand that FRC is a robotics competition for high school students where they design, build, and compete with robots. It sounds interesting, but I'm not convinced it's as impactful as some people claim.

Me: Can you elaborate on why you feel that way?

Fateen: Look, I appreciate the focus on STEM skills and teamwork, but I'm not sure how practical it is in the real world. I mean, how many of these students will actually go on to have careers in robotics or engineering? It seems like a lot of effort for something that may not have a significant impact on their future.

Me: I see. While not all FRC participants may pursue careers in robotics or engineering, many students find the experience to be valuable in developing skills like problem-solving, creativity,

and innovation. Additionally, FRC provides opportunities for students to interact with industry professionals and learn about potential career paths. What do you think about the potential benefits of FRC beyond just robotics?

Fateen: I understand the potential benefits, but I still have my doubts. I think there are other ways for students to gain similar skills and experiences that may be more practical and relevant to their future careers. FRC just doesn't seem like the best use of their time and resources.

Me: I appreciate your perspective, Fateen. It's clear that you have some reservations about the practicality and relevance of FRC. Is there anything you think could be improved in FRC to make it more appealing or effective for students like yourself who may not be actively participating in it?

Fateen: Honestly, I haven't really given it much thought. I'm not actively involved in FRC, so I haven't looked into it in detail. But from what I know, I just don't see it as something that would personally interest me or have a significant impact on my future endeavors.

Me: I understand. It's important to have different perspectives and opinions. Is there anything else you would like to share about your thoughts on FRC or robotics competitions in general?

Fateen: Not really, I think I've made my point. FRC may have its merits, but I'm just not convinced it's as relevant or impactful as some people claim. I have other interests and priorities that I find more worthwhile.

Me: Well thank you for lending us your time Fateen, and thank you for your insight into FRC as well!

Outro: