



Cobalt Horizons Responds to DARPA Grand Challenge Desert Field Test of Robotic Vehicles Offers \$2 Million Prize

Cobalt Horizons is competing in the Grand Challenge Competition to send an autonomous ground vehicle through a US Government sponsored 150 mile obstacle course in the Mojave Desert.

Cerritos, CA ([PRWEB](#)) September 25, 2004 - Cobalt Horizons announced it will participate in a Defense Department research and development initiative aimed at advancing robotics technologies for future military use. The initiative, known as the DARPA Grand Challenge, is a field test of fully autonomous ground vehicles to be conducted in the Mojave Desert on October 8, 2005. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), is offering a \$2 million prize to the vehicle that completes the course the fastest within a 10-hour period.

Matt Gaskill said: "Someday, robotics technology will allow us to accomplish missions that now threaten our fighting forces. We are thrilled to have a chance to contribute to this effort and to develop innovations of our own that could help us win the prize."

Gaskill added: "We have an exceptional team that is comprised of professional engineers from various disciplines including Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering, Stress Analysis, and Computer Science. Since announcing it will compete in the DARPA Grand Challenge, Cobalt Horizons has been hard at work designing a vehicle that can travel with no human assistance over the course's rugged terrain."

As part of their vehicle development effort, Cobalt Horizons seeks support from interested underwriters who could benefit from the widespread visibility the event will attract. "We welcome discussions with potential sponsors," said Matt Gaskill.

DARPA's mission is to pursue R&D in technology areas in which the payoff is very high and where success may provide dramatic advances in military capabilities. The 2005 event will be the second DARPA Grand Challenge. On March 13, 2004, 15 robotic vehicles attempted to navigate a challenging 142-mile route through the desert Southwest.

Ron Kurjanowicz, DARPA's program manager for DARPA Grand Challenge 2005, explained: "We were so encouraged by the promise and the progress of the first Grand Challenge, that we have decided to conduct the event again." Kurjanowicz added: "The energy and the sense of pride in our nation's heritage of innovation, risk-sharing, and team spirit is contagious. Excitement is already building for next year's event."

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