FRSee

VIRTUAL COLLABORATION NETWORK

Getting Started Guide

The goal of **FRSee** is to greatly increase the amount of collaboration that occurs within FRC by making face-to-face contact easy among a large network of teams. The FRSee network is primarily a build-season tool. Although you can use it any time of year, most teams will not be reachable during regular daily hours until build season begins.

What do you need to join FRSee?
- A computer with a webcam/microphone
- A broadband Internet connection
- Free Skype software

Complete the following steps to participate in **FRSee**:

1. Assign a computer to FRSee.

Arrange to have one or more computers at your build site equipped with Skype. This computer does not need to be solely dedicated to FRSee. Skype will run in the background while the computer is used for other purposes. Team members can also monitor your FRSee account from anywhere with any computer equipped with Skype.

2. Download and install Skype.

Why Skype? There are several good software options for making video calls, but in order for FRSee to work all members must be on the same service. Skype is one of the most popular and widely used video calling services. It is very easy to install and use, is lightweight, and is totally free. See the "Skype Installation and Setup Guide" on page 4.

3. Create your Skype account with the name: "FRC_XXXX"

It is important that you use the "FRC_XXXX" (ex. FRC_1986) format for your Skype account name. This way other teams can easily find you by already knowing your name. Teams will also be easier to locate in your contact list if they appear in numerical order with this format.

4. Register with FRSee.

Once you have created your FRSee Skype account, register by adding **"FRSee_admin"** to your contacts, and send the request. We'll add you to the team list, and send you back all the team contacts for the FRSee community. Please also send us an email with your team number, Skype name (in the format above), team name, and email address to **FRSee.mail@gmail.com** We'll use the email address you provide to make sure you always have the full team list, and other tips and updates.

5. Accept the FRSee team list to your Skype contacts.

Teams will not be visible to you until you accept them into your Skype contacts list. When you receive the FRSee team contacts from FRSee_admin, click "Add to Contacts" to accept each one into your Skype contacts. If you do not receive the contact list in Skype, check your email or visit www.teamtitanium.org/FRSee for the full FRSee team list.

6. Install a camera/microphone.

You do not need a camera to establish your Skype account, but having one during build season will give you the most benefit from FRSee. Webcams are very economical and can be added to a computer for as little as $25. Many newer laptops already have a webcam/microphone built in. Perhaps your school, mentor or a team member has a camera that the team can borrow for the build season. Cameras with an integrated microphone are the simplest to use. Tips on buying and adding a camera/microphone to your computer can be found on page 7.

<u>During the build season:</u>

1. Log into Skype during all your working hours.

Make it a habit to log into Skype at the beginning of each work day. Once logged in, Skype can run in the background and will not interfere with your other work. When your team is not working, members may also log into your account off-site. Having all teams "on call" as much as possible is important to making FRSee work well.

2. Keep your Skype contacts updated with the latest FRSee team list.

Always accept new contacts from FRSee_admin, and accept requests from other teams. Check your email or www.teamtitanium.org/FRSee to make sure you have the full team list. Keeping your contact list updated is the key to having access to the full FRSee community. You may want to designate a team member to be your "FRSee coordinator" to keep your contact list up to date.

3. Keep your FRSee computer where you will see/hear incoming calls.

Skype will give you an audio/visual pop-up when another team is trying to reach you. Have your FRSee computer where incoming calls will be noticed.

What can your team do with *FRSee*?

Ask questions and seek help, face-to-face, any time.

Internet forums like FIRST Forums and Chief Delphi are great for getting information in a day or two, but sometimes you need urgent help right now. FRSee gives you instant access to experienced and knowledgeable teams when you need it most.

Improve your "GP" credentials.

Looking for ways to demonstrate your support for other teams for your Chairman's Award submission or the Gracious Professionalism Award? FRSee gives you an easy method to help other FRC teams. Record how many times you assist other teams through FRSee. Become an active member that is known as the "go-to" team for help. Let teams know in your profile what your areas of expertise are, what your working hours are, and that you are ready to help. Develop a special relationship with another FRSee team and be their "virtual mentor."

Share your screen!

With Skype you can share your computer screen with the other party during your video call. Share views of programming code, show live CAD images, …anything on your computer screen can be seen by both parties.

Show off.

Sometimes you have a exciting new prototype, and interesting sketch, or a very cool part that you just can't wait to show to someone. The FRSee network let's you share what your up to with other FRC teams like yours.

Take a break and socialize.

Take a break from a long night or weekend of work by having a chat with another FRC team. Call other teams that will be at your Regional Event, and make friends before you meet in person.
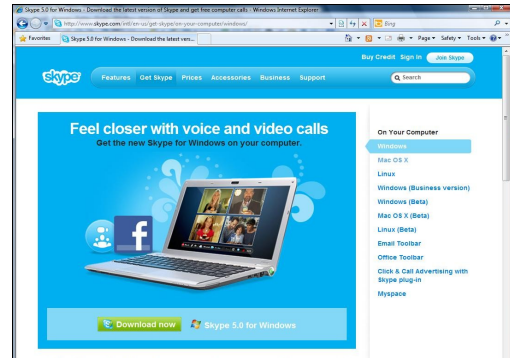
To download and install Skype go to:

www.skype.com

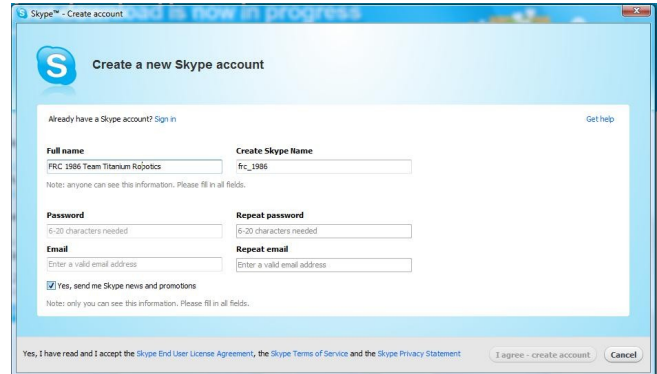Click on the "Get Skype" tab to choose Windows, Mac, or Linux. Click "Download Now"

Allow your browser to download the setup file, then hit "Run" to run the install wizard.

(You may wish to decline "Google Toolbar" or other unnecessary options during the installation.)

After installing, create your Skype account. Use the name format "FRC_XXXX" (with your team number) under "Create Skype Name"

You may enter a more descriptive name such as "FRC 1986 Team Titanium Robotics" under the "Full Name" field.

Already have Skype installed? Click "Don't Have a Skype Name?" to create the new account.
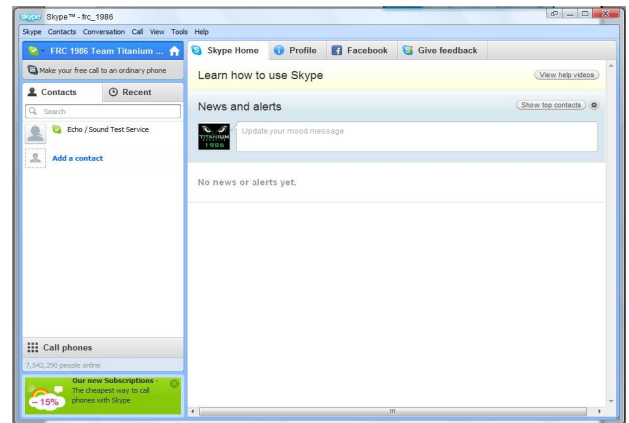
You can log into your FRSee team account from any computer that has Skype.

The Skype welcome screen gives you the option to start Skype whenever your computer starts, and to log in automatically when Skype is started.
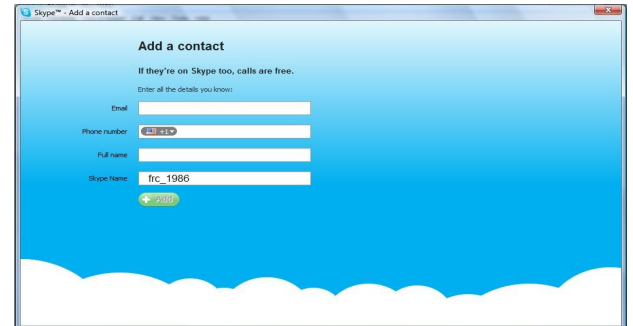
Adding Teams to your Contacts

After you register with FRSee, you will receive Skype messages from FRSee_admin with all the FRSee team contacts. Click "Add to Contacts" for each team to send them a request.

If you are adding a team manually, click on "Add a Contact" at the bottom of the Contacts panel.

Enter the "FRC_XXXX" name you are adding in the "Skype Name" field.

When Skype finds this team, hit "Add" to add the team to your contact list.

When you add a team to your contacts, they will receive a notice to accept your invitation. You will also receive requests from other FRSee teams. A team will appear in your contacts when you add them, but their online status will not be visible until they accept your invitation. Accepting invitations from all FRSee teams will allow everyone in the network to know who is online.
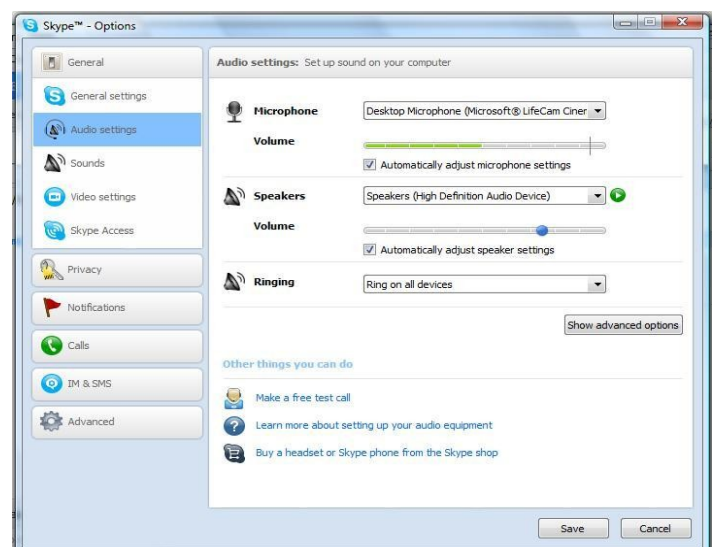
Checking Your Camera and Microphone

From the menu, choose: Tools >> Options >> Video Settings

Make sure your camera is selected, and that your image appears. If your camera is not working, try reconnecting it, and make sure its drivers are installed.

Choose "Audio Settings" to check that the proper microphone is selected, and that it is registering sound.

These settings are also available by clicking on any Contact, then selecting "Check Settings."

Making Video Calls

To start a video call with a team that is online, just click them on your Contacts list, and click the "Video Call" button. You will see and hear when they answer your call. If either party is not displaying video, click the blue video icon (camera) at the bottom of the view window to turn on video.

Audio Calls

Even if you do not have a camera, you can still make audio calls, receive video, and screen-share with another team. Click the team in your Contacts and hit "Call."

Searching for a Team

Search for a team the same way you would add them to your Contacts. Click "Add a Contact", then enter the "FRC_XXXX" name in the "Skype Name" field. If they have a Skype account for FRSee, they will appear so you can add them. If they are not found, they either have not joined FRSee, or have used a different name format.

Sharing Your Screen

During a call, you may share your computer screen with the other party rather than send camera video. Click the "Share" icon at the bottom of the view window, then select "Share Entire Screen", or "Select Window" to choose only a portion of your screen to share. A red border indicates the area being shared. To return to camera video, click the "Stop Sharing" icon at the top of the screen.

Sending IM's

To send an IM to any team that is online, click them in the Contacts panel, then type your message in the IM dialogue at the bottom of the view window, and hit "Send Message."

To send an IM during a call, click the IM icon at the bottom of the view window to display the IM dialogue, then enter and send your message.

Adding Profile Information

You can add profile information to your account such as your logo, location, email, team web site, phone number, or other information you would like to share. You may wish to let other teams know what hours you are normally online, or what topics you are interested in helping with.

From the menu, click "Skype >> Profile >> Edit Your Profile"

To add information other than the standard fields shown, use the "About Me" field.

Camera and Microphone Tips

There are many inexpensive options for adding a camera and microphone to your computer. Here are some tips when shopping for a camera:

Don't pay for excess resolution and frame rate.

There are several "HD" cameras on the market in the upper price range, but high resolution is not needed for Skype. Depending on your internet connection speed, only a low to medium resolution image will be transmitted with Skype, regardless of the camera. And don't pay for a high "frame rate," this too is limited by your connection speed. A medium quality webcam is adequate for most video calls.

An integrated microphone is simplest.

Many webcams have a microphone incorporated into the camera, and only require a single USB connection. If you will be connecting your camera each day or utilizing a laptop, this can make things simpler. If you do use a separate microphone, connect it using the same input port every time. Skype remembers the input and level settings for the microphone.

Microphone quality is as important as camera quality.

In an online video chat with multiple people, the quality of the audio can be just as important as the video. Some microphones can have a poor, muffled voice quality, and can make understanding the other party difficult. Some microphones have much better range than others for voices throughout the room. Consider the microphone quality when choosing a camera, and test it if you can.

Camera Software

If you are using your camera only for FRSee, you may wish to avoid installing the large software utilities that come with some cameras. Although your camera comes with a software disk, it may not be necessary in order to use it with Skype. Many cameras will work by simply plugging them in and letting your operating system auto-install the drivers. If you do not wish to install additional software, try plugging in the the camera to see if it works alone. If your OS reports that the camera is ready, it will work with Skype. If your OS asks for a driver location, try browsing the camera CD for the driver location, or download the driver from the manufacturer's web site.

Here are some links to popular webcam retailers:

http://www.walmart.com/search/search-ng.do?ref=+183814&refineresult=true&search_query=webcam&ic=48_0&search_constraint=0

http://www.amazon.com/Webcams-Computer-Add-Ons-Computers/b/ref=amb_link_7061752_12?ie=UTF8&node=172511&pf_rd_m=ATVPDKIKX0DER&pf_rd_s=gp-center-1&pf_rd_r=1F7QWGQ68GWXN7GDD22B&pf_rd_t=101&pf_rd_p=1259698482&pf_rd_i=541966

http://www.bestbuy.com/site/Webcams/cfcat/pcmcat170900050018.c?id=pcmcat170900050018

http://computers.shop.ebay.com/Webcams-/4616/i.html?_catref=1

http://www.newegg.com/Store/SubCategory.aspx?SubCategory=152&name=Web-Cams