



## **Tips To Increase Your Online Votes**

An important aspect of the selection process for the GIST Tech-I Competition is online voting. The support a team receives from their community is a major factor in selecting the finalists for the Competition. Therefore, here are some tips to help increase the number of votes you receive for your pitch.

Reminder: an individual can submit one vote PER DAY, so urge your supporters to vote for you daily.

### **1. Ask Friends and Family**

- a. Friends and family are a good source of votes, and are more likely to vote for your pitch on multiple days.
- b. A good strategy to remind your friends and family to vote for you every day is to ask them to make their home page the GIST Tech-I Competition Voting page for the duration of the contest, so they're reminded to vote for you every time they go online.

### **2. Leverage Social Media**

- a. For Facebook users:
  - i. Create a Facebook voting group, and add all friends and family you think would be willing to support you.
  - ii. You can remind them to vote daily by posting on the group page.
- b. For Twitter users:
  - i. Leverage Twitter's Direct Messaging system to directly contact your followers to vote for you.
  - ii. You can send out 250 DMs in a 24 hour period on Twitter, but you can only send one at a time.
  - iii. There are tools to help you send out mass Direct Messages at one time online.
  - iv. We recommend only sending 200-225 a day, so that you have Direct Messages available to thank those who have voted for you.
  - v. Avoid Direct Messaging the same people who don't respond repeatedly.
- c. For LinkedIn Users:
  - i. LinkedIn users are inclined to endorse each other for skills, therefore, they could be a great pool of support for you to draw from.

- ii. Create a post that explains your innovation, the Tech-I competition, and the benefits you'd gain from winning.
- iii. Include a link to the Tech-I voting page in the post.
- iv. Occasionally share information relating to the Tech-I competition to keep the competition, and your vote requests, on your network's radar.

### **3. Leverage Blogs and Forums**

- a. If you're active on forums and blogs, they can be a great resource to encourage people to support you.
- b. If you are not active on blogs or forums, you can follow the following steps:
  - i. Find forums that you're interested in, can be relating to the competition, but can also be other hobbies.
  - ii. Introduce yourself in an 'intro' or 'welcome' portion, without mentioning the competition.
  - iii. Many forums will have an off topic posts section where you can ask people to vote for you.
  - iv. Remember to publicly thank people for voting for you.
  - v. You can edit your signature line on the forum to include a blurb about the contest, including a link to the voting page.
- c. Write an article about the competition on a relevant blog, and ask for people to vote for you within the text.

### **4. Leverage Local Media**

- a. Research which platforms are most circulated/used in your region, and target those platforms directly.
- b. Reach out directly to local media – newspapers, magazines, news stations – and inform them of the competition and your participation in it. Often Tech-I candidates are able to get coverage in smaller markets.
  - i. Writing Op-eds or letters to the editor are good ways to get featured in newspapers.
  - ii. Attempt to tie your innovation to something relevant to the community or that has been trending in local news; this increases the likelihood of your post being published.

### **5. Best Practice:**

- a. **START EARLY!!**
- b. Create a marketing plan before the launch of the competition.
- c. Make your own commercial, video, or flyer that entices people to vote for you in a creative way.
- d. Try to avoid asking for votes on the weekend, since people may be away from their computers at this time.
- e. Include the link to vote for you in anything you send, and include it in your email signature.
- f. Be careful to not get flagged for spamming on any of these sites; review terms and conditions prior to directly messaging users.