

# RAMAGEDDON 4855



Business Plan



# Team 4855 - Ramageddon

## Business Plan

**Mission:** We will impact our students and community by encouraging STEM growth in our team while collaborating in a safe and inclusive environment.

### Team History and Growth

Founded in 2013, Team 4855 - Ramageddon, is based out of South Haven High School, located in South Haven, MI. The rookie team consisted of 14 students, two coaches, and two mentors. Since its inception, Ramageddon has experienced steady growth in students (Figure 1), mentors, sponsors, fans, and revenue. Our current team consists of two coaches, nine mentors, 17 students, and countless fans affectionately known as "Fanageddons".

With seniors graduating every year, the team places a strong emphasis on recruiting new members. We recruit students by word-of-mouth, giving presentations in all of our schools, hosting an annual ice-cream social and summer skills camp, and giving demonstrations at community events. Our efforts have been successful and as a result, we added 8 new students to the team this year. With all of these rookies, we rely heavily on our team leaders and veteran team members to pass along their knowledge in order to carry on the Ramageddon legacy. In 2019, we started a new FTC team, 16204 GOATageddon.

As the team's membership has grown, so has our knowledge of technology. During our first few years, the team's robots were low-tech: built with plywood, and held together with duct tape and a prayer. Four years ago, the team incorporated pneumatics and a swerve drive to complement our growing skill set in programming, coding, and CAD. Two years ago, we partnered with a new sponsor to engrave our team number in our robot's intake mechanism. Combining all of these skills has allowed the team to build robots that are able to compete at a more competitive level. In 2018, Ramageddon qualified for both the Michigan State and the FIRST Championship, a first in their history. At the Michigan State Championship and the FIRST Championship, Ramageddon was the captain of alliance seven in our division at both events and we made it to the quarterfinals in both events. In 2019, we qualified for the Michigan Championship for the second time and we were just 17 spots shy of qualifying for the FIRST Championship. In 2020, we won the Chairman's Award but unfortunately, we were unable to attend the Michigan Championship due to COVID-19.

After the excitement of our 2018 season, we had a large increase in membership; therefore, we implemented a formal leadership team to assist in training and overseeing the students on our team. The leadership team went through intensive training, taught by industry professionals, to ensure that they have the tools they needed to lead a successful team. We also developed a designated safety team to focus on our safety initiatives. The safety team developed a safety manual, injury log, safety posters, and held safety training for team members.

### Organizational Structure

Team 4855 is divided into two main teams, Business and Build, and those teams are broken down into several subteams (Figure 2). Regardless of their subteam, all members of Ramageddon are provided real-world experience with technology and team building. Our mentors are there to guide, allowing the students to do the hands-on work themselves, even if it means the students

make mistakes along the way. The students are encouraged to reach past what they believe to be possible and try something new every day. This is our mantra of **"Fearless Thinking"**. Being on the team is hard work for all involved, but thanks to effective communication such as daily huddles and team building activities such as our recent lock-in, Team 4855 has become a stronger and more close-knit team.

In order to ensure a sustainable future for the team, we engage elementary and middle school students as part of our recruitment program. One way we do this is by volunteering at a local elementary program called Hour of Code. At this event, we showcase our robot as well as our augmented reality sandboxes which gets kids excited about learning the topography of the Earth. We also incite excitement among middle school students by inviting GOATageddon team members to shadow us during our build season.

The manufacturing industry within South Haven may not be as large as our neighboring communities, but that is where Ramageddon has been given the opportunity to be innovative in our outreach by diversifying to other industries, such as hospitality, retail, real estate, and other small businesses. We reach out to these businesses by using a four-step process: 1) the sponsorship team delivers sponsorship packets to returning and potential sponsors, 2) they follow up with phone calls or emails, 3) if asked, the team gives a presentation to further explain our mission, and 4) we recognize sponsors publicly for their donation. This process, along with additional fundraising, has given Team 4855 the opportunity to maintain strong relations with sponsors, allowing us to grow financially.

## **Financials**

Between 2014 and 2016, we raised an average of \$8,240 each year. In 2017, the finance team revamped our sponsorship levels and applied our four-step process for recruiting sponsors which resulted in a 60% jump in revenue from the previous year, bringing us to \$15,650. In 2018, we raised \$24,500 and when the community learned that there was a chance we would not be able to attend the FIRST Championship based on finances, they came together to raise \$17,000 for our team within 72 hours allowing us to compete globally. In 2020, we raised over \$39,424 and this year, we have raised over \$20,000 (Figure 3). Sponsorships are our greatest source of revenue but we also rely on fundraisers to help offset our financial needs. All members are required to participate in at least one fundraiser such as selling fudge, and pop can drive. See Figure 4 for our annual budget which is based on district events and the Michigan State Championship.

## **Risk Analysis**

Each year, our team members conduct a SWOT analysis (Figure 5) to understand our current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. For the purpose of the business plan, we have identified what we believe to be the most important aspect of the SWOT.

Ramageddon's most prominent strength is our name recognition in the community thanks to our recent success. In the early years when our team visited potential sponsors, we had to explain who we were but now people know immediately who we are and they are excited to support us.

A weakness that our team faces is our town's economic structure. South Haven is a tourist town with few manufacturing or technological businesses. While living on the lake is beautiful, it also means that we have no businesses to the west who can sponsor us. One way in which the

team reaches out to new businesses is by attending the annual Business Expo hosted by the South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce.

The greatest opportunities for our team are our new FTC team. Having younger students involved in FIRST will be a pipeline for our team.

One of the biggest threats to our team is the impending closure of Entergy/Palisades Nuclear Power Plant, which is one of our team's largest sponsors. We also lost a major sponsorship from Albemarle after it was sold to a new owner who doesn't donate to high schools. We have been busy cultivating new relationships in order to replace this major sponsor.

## **Marketing**

We get our name out in the community by participating in year-round events and sharing our story with students from not only South Haven, but other school systems as well. In the fall of 2018, we spoke at an assembly at Bangor High School, inspiring their students and administrators to form Team 7809 Valhalla Nation. We mentored Team 7809 during the 2019 and 2020 season and we even rode together on a bus to the 2019 Michigan State Championship. Ramageddon members participate in the annual South Haven Cardboard Sled Race held during Ice Breakers Festival, the South Haven Fourth of July Parade, and the We Care "Warm Your Heart Island Sit". In 2019, South Haven celebrated its 150th birthday by hosting a community picnic. During the picnic, town leaders spoke about the city's history and at the conclusion of the event, our team drove our 2019 robot out on the stage and the Mayor introduced us as "The Future of South Haven".

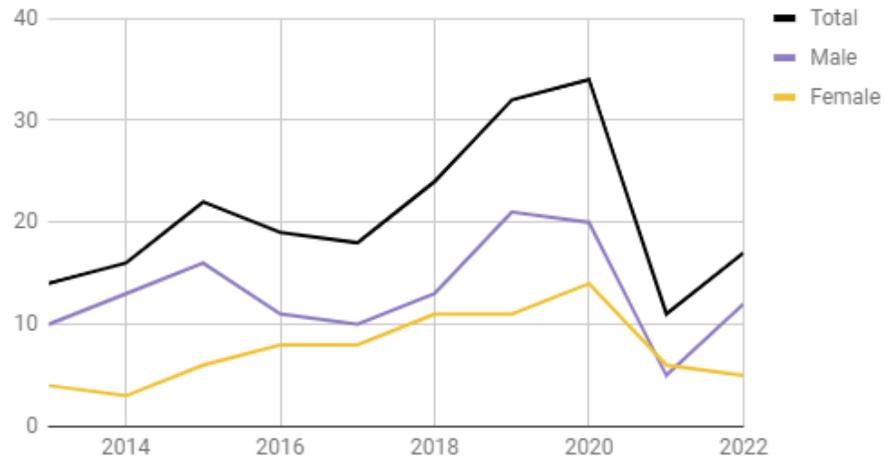
Our biggest event of the year though is our annual "Ramageddon Robot Reveal" which consists of a student-led presentation, our robot reveal, and a robot demonstration. Typically, over 150 people attended Ramageddon Reveal but because of COVID-19, we had a smaller turnout of 54 people at our 2022 event..

The business team created brand standards to ensure consistency throughout our documents, letters, presentations, t-shirts, flag, and our revamped website at [www.ramageddon.com](http://www.ramageddon.com). Our social media presence is strong on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. We have been retweeted and recognized by RoboZone multiple times, and we were featured in a clip in one of our school's promotional videos. Finally, the City of South Haven, the South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce, and the South Haven Visitors Bureau recently spotlighted Ramageddon in their 2020 Economic Development packets.

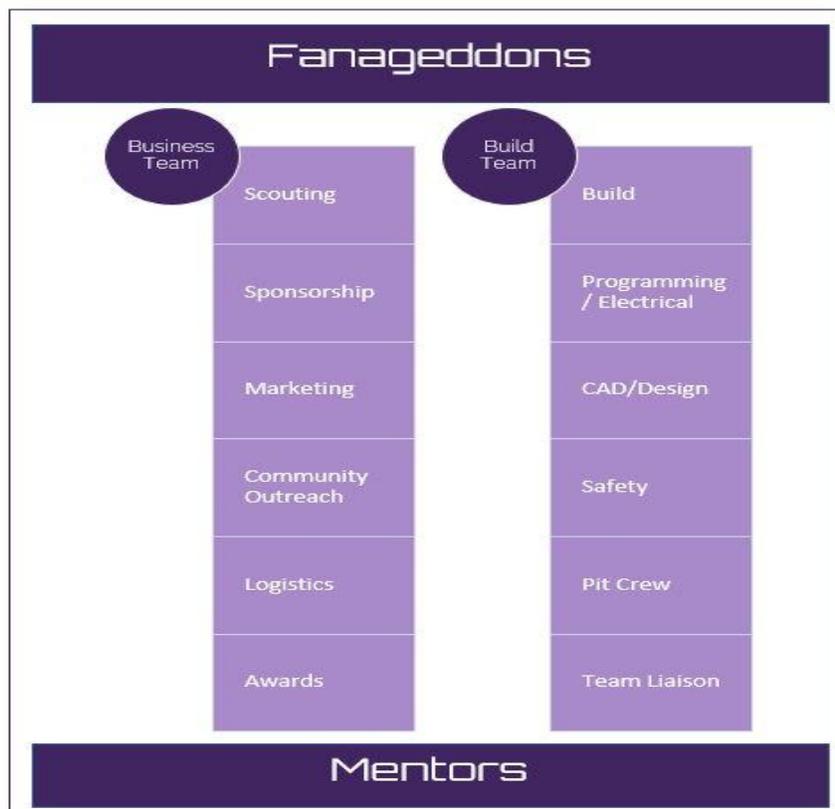
This season, we assigned a Media Captain who made it his mission to focus on improving our media content. In this past, our "videos" have consisted of pictures with music. We've learned that this is not the best way to go about making any video. With photos, only a specific moment in time can be captured. Videos are able to show what is actually happening as time passes. This helps show what we are doing and how we interact with each other and the robot. This year we are taking our video game up to the next level. We have decided to produce 4 main videos this year: A build season recap, an open house recap, a competition recap, and a season recap. The build season recap video has already been released and it was a hit at our annual Ramageddon Robot Reveal. Videos like these are important because they allow our team to show the community what we've been up to. Since community members generally don't come to our daily team meetings, this gives them a new opportunity to see the creation process of our robot. Also starting this year, we will be creating a competition video. This video will be tagged with the phrase, "a whole new angle," because it allows those who couldn't make it to competitions to see the highlights of the event up close whereas normally, this wouldn't be possible.

# Appendix

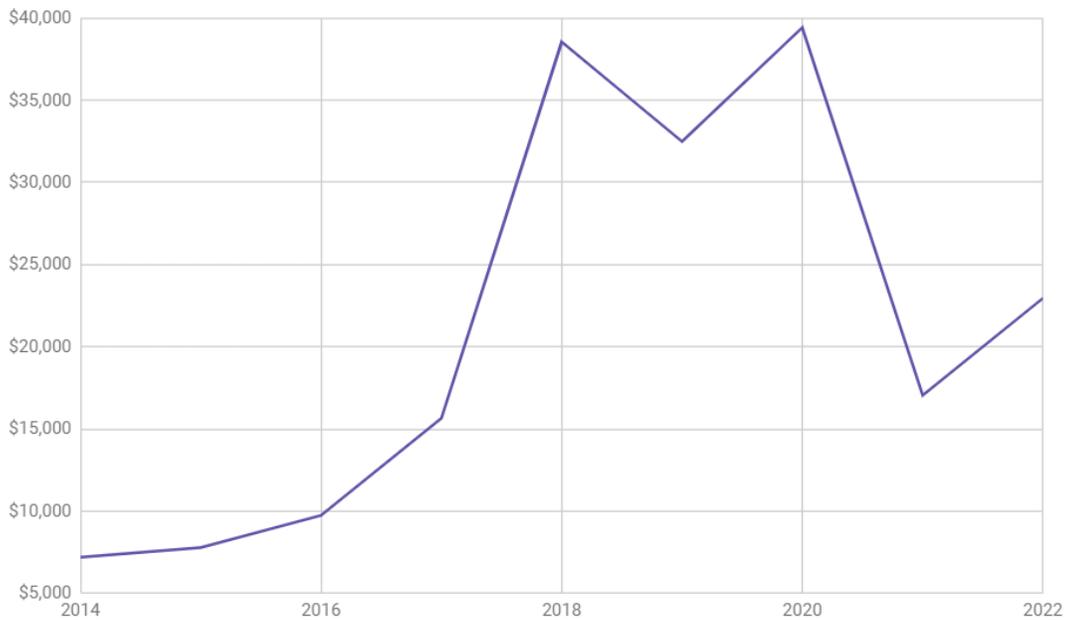
## Team 4855: Member Statistics



**Figure 1. Team Growth:** Like most teams, we experienced a decline during the COVID pandemic but we are starting to see an increase in membership.



**Figure 2. Organizational Structure:** Students in leadership positions are responsible for mentoring and training less experienced team members.



**Figure 3. Funds Raised Per Year (Includes Value of In-Kind Donations):** Due to the 2021 competition being virtual and because we still had funds in our account leftover from 2020, we did not have to raise as much money the last two years. Keeping a healthy fund balance allowed our team to survive financially despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on Qualifying for State Championship	
Expense	Annual Budget
<b>Build Team</b>	
Andy Mark	\$5,000.00
Menards	\$500.00
Rev Robotics	\$1,500.00
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$7,000.00</i>
<b>Marketing</b>	
Team Shirts	\$725.00
Signage	\$80.00
Supplies	\$200.00
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$1,005.00</i>
<b>Competitions</b>	
FRC District Competitions	\$5,500.00
FRC State Competition	\$4,000.00
Food	\$500.00
Hotel	\$2,500.00
Transportation	\$0.00
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$12,500.00</i>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$20,505.00</b>

**Figure 4. 2022 Budget:** This budget is based on attending three district competitions and the State Championship. Transportation will be provided by SHPS.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Name Recognition in Community</li> <li>● Growth in Students and Mentors</li> <li>● Mentor Guided, Student Driven</li> <li>● Fan Support (aka Sea of Purple)</li> <li>● Advanced Scouting App</li> <li>● Student Leadership</li> <li>● Swerve Drivetrain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tourist Town</li> <li>● Lake MI- No Businesses West of Us</li> <li>● No Teachers as Coaches/Mentors</li> <li>● Depth of Experience in Coding</li> <li>● No Practice Facility</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Alumni Outreach</li> <li>● FTC/FLL Teams</li> <li>● Mentoring Other Teams</li> <li>● Training/Orientation Program</li> <li>● Team building</li> <li>● New students - their network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Upcoming Entergy Closure</li> <li>● Albemarle Sold to Grace</li> <li>● Small Business Team</li> <li>● COVID/Shut downs</li> <li>● Rebuilding team/program</li> </ul>

**Figure 5. SWOT Analysis:** The team members and mentors conduct a SWOT analysis each year to determine our team’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

**Contact Us**

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