

## **Branding Space**

A strong majority of people here in America have a favorable orientation toward space. It's clear - people like space.

Contradicting that, however, is that despite highly visible and dramatic accomplishments, the American people's funding of governmental space activities has been essentially flat for over forty years.

The disconnect imbedded in these facts offers a look at just how much people support the category of space is currently missing. It describes a space culture gap. How do we narrow this gap between people's good feeling about space and their readiness to take action for its development?

There are things being done. Sir Richard Branson wants to take people to space. Kids go to space camp. Essay contests invite appreciation and thinking. Weightlessness is for purchase. A variety of outreach programs both in the government and the private sector dive head long into the challenge of spreading space. These efforts, while worthwhile, are not a space culture making; reaching only a small fraction of the space interested market/community. While it's all good, it's also not enough.

Compounding this challenge is the diversity of activities we call the space movement. There are large contractors for public sector programs, and all their subcontractors. There are entrepreneurs flying balloon machines in the California desert. There are space stores, and satellite makers. There are very wealthy individuals doing unique and progressive things. There is a university of space. There are prizes. There are centers for sending probes to other parts of our solar system. There are space programs in other countries. There are rocket makers of all kinds and sizes. There are telescopes. There are purveyors of media, and there are Armadillos. There are people who fight about the CEV. There are those who hold dual citizenship; one Martian. There are people selling land on the moon, and books, lots of books. Lots of pieces. Lots of pieces.

To the space enthusiastic millions, this array of space parts are nearly impossible to wrap their arms around, appreciate as a whole, and therefore connect with solidly. The limited moral and financial support for space reflects this reality. For the huge majority of people who like space, connecting to the whole, the fabulous and unfolding story of space accomplishment in our time, is just not happening. Space is liked. It is not embraced.

What's to be done then; to grow a 'culture of space?' We can brand space. We can brand space; as would any organization seeking and needing to increase how strongly people feel about the brand. A good brand for space invites new positive thoughts and feelings, inspiring new behaviors such as saying favorable things (word of mouth), joining organizations that reflect and support the brand, paying higher prices (in our case perhaps higher taxes as well), tolerating errors and shortfalls, and simply purchasing more branded stuff. The sum here is a growing fidelity to the brand; 'Space Pioneering'.

The brand for our age of space is ‘Space Pioneering.’; speaking to our unique, historical challenge. Space Pioneering. It’s what we do. It’s what we are. It’s all space activity, in all countries. It is a promise, a relationship, an image, and/or a unique position. It imbeds a collective and emotional human endeavor of enormous magnitude.

Space Pioneering, a brand for the broader culture of space:

- Demonstrates a purpose and values that stir people’s imaginations, tapping into their higher motivations,
- Stimulates self discovery, within ourselves and others, that this great adventure has been engaged, is ours to do, and that there is absolutely no turning back,
- Builds identification with it, lest risking apathy and even activism against its purposes,
- Is less of a marketing/communications tool, and more of a human resources activity,
- Believes that consumers know how to connect to a brand with character,

A tall order for certain, one ‘Space Pioneering’ fills well. It costs little or nothing to implement (unlike corporate branding). Common and widespread usage will develop its value. We have only to use it. Space Pioneering, as a brand, is a proud and inclusive statement of purpose. The payoff for developing its use is to contribute to the development of a richer space culture, and all the benefits that it brings.

This first age of space pioneering, begun only fifty years ago, will continue through the commercialization of the greater earth system (roughly 2050). By then the ground work for sustained exploration and settlement of the solar system is laid, and resources from space to assist Earth, are flowing? Until such time, all of us...all of us...are Space Pioneering. For what the few know, must grow.

Space Pioneering is the brand for our age.

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