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The World Space Fair.

This idea developed from my personal experience at the World Space Congress that was located in Houston a few years ago.

The WSC was a very well envisaged and executed show in which my company Apogee Books participated. The only problem I had with the show was when the public day, which was Saturday, was cut in half and closed early because some of the larger contractors didn't want to talk to the public. I was incensed with this debacle as I watched Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts turned away from what was an otherwise amazing exhibition.

Fast forward to an idea that has been fomenting with me ever since that day!

The problem that I see the tax paying public has with human or other spaceflight is that they don't understand it, they cannot participate (except to pay for it) and they have no idea of its impact or intrinsic value to their everyday life because largely it is invisible. We as a nation are being constantly pushed and prodded by other nations wishing to bypass our technological preeminence especially in strategic aerospace technologies. Just recently Japan and France agreed to develop a new supersonic passenger plane. China we know has its eyes set on the heavens. If we cannot inspire our kids to take up engineering now, then in 20 years time we might be buying our airplanes from other countries, those who have a plethora of engineers. I personally would not like to see that day arrive.

My idea is to popularize in as exciting a way as possible, the very concept of space exploration and to make space technology recognizable to Joe and Jane Public.

I envisage that once every two years, perhaps starting in 2009/10, a **World Space Fair** (WSF) would take place in one of the US major urban centers. Los Angeles would be as good a place as any to start. The fair would be as big and exciting as Moon, Mars & Beyond. It would take place in a major convention center and would be for the general public, not just space engineers.

The WSF would be anchored of course by a big tent NASA display which I would envisage to include a mock up lunar base as currently proposed, maybe a few rocket engines and perhaps even a mock up CEV. Robonaut would definitely be in attendance as well as other exciting developments that NASA is researching. (I have spoken to NASA about this concept and they are willing to participate.) I would also like to see a substantial spin off display showing people how NASA is developing new air filters, engines for cars, medical products and any of a thousand items that have affected our every day lives. Why even the first wide screen TV was in the MOCR in Houston.

Around this central NASA core I envisage a plethora of eclectic space exhibitors, primarily the major aerospace contractors who would use the WSF as a recruiting opportunity, not only showing off their space hardware but also their scholarships and employment opportunities. I would envisage the USAF and USN, ESA, Energia and JAXA having similar displays. Also in attendance would be the so called Alt Space crowd, consisting of displays of SpaceShipOne, the Falcon by SpaceX, maybe an inflatable space station mock up by Robert Bigelow's company. Beyond that would be a mixture of commercial entities showing off high tech products in space related ways. For example I would ask Bose, of speaker fame, to set up a sound proof room with a large plasma screen, I would require them to demonstrate to the public, using their

proprietary speakers, what a Space Shuttle lift off REALLY sounds like. Others such as Panasonic etc would show off HDTV of the space station or other exciting space videos.

Beyond this would be space advocacy groups such as The National Space Society, The Planetary Society, etc., all hawking their own visions of the future. Bear in mind that all of these groups would be expected to have a different display showing one space technology that has an effect on everybody's everyday life, GPS, Telecommunications, Weather Forecasting, Pollution research, Imaging, tracking, spy satellites, resource location etc.

Included in this group would be Challenger Centers, Space Camp and any other educational operator. They would have 6 DOF machines for kids to climb into, maybe a climbing wall to experience climbing a cliff on Mars in one third G, perhaps a tele-presence robot control of a Mars lander mockup and all types of other exciting educational space products.

Further out would be collections of vendors selling everything from T-shirts to space pins, patches, models, videos, memorabilia etc. I would even envisage an astronaut autograph signing station, do you know that some well known astronauts charge \$150 just for their signature and get people lining up to pay them. All of this would be part of the overall excitement and immersive experience of the fair. There could also be a music contingent with concerts by well known space aficionado musicians at local venues playing in the evenings.

The WSF would be open for four days, from Thursday to Sunday. Thursday and Friday would be the main schooldays and we would expect bus loads of kids from all of the schools in the immediate area. Scouts in uniform might get in for free. The weekend would be the main days and I feel that we could attract many different age groups by having notable media personae from each age group be available for either autographs, or to make short speeches. There are many famous people who live in the LA area who are very interested in space flight I feel given enough notice they would attend the event. That would attract even more customers.

This is just a very short explanation of what I am trying to achieve here. The whole operation would be revenue generating and therefore self perpetuating.

This plan is definitely audacious, but not impossible by any means and the end results just might be staggering in their breadth and scope.