

Space Mass Marketing Through the Ages

Despite the space race becoming a topic of history books, generational groups still express support for continued U.S. dominance in the field-whether it be the baby boomer generation (71%) or millennials (70%), according to [Pew Research](#). Films such as *Man in Space*, and commercials from Virgin Galactic and SpaceX, attempt to market space exploration to evoke funding and public enthusiasm for future endeavors. However, while the film *Man in Space* elaborates on the technicalities of spaceflight, the commercials expand on the audience's knowledge and indirectly address social and scientific progressions in the field. It becomes obvious that the key distinctions between how space travel gets marketed today, as compared to 1955, comes down to how accessible and achievable getting to space was at the time.

In 1955, **forward-thinking** television programs such as Disneyland's, *Man in Space*, marketed space exploration to kids and adults alike, ~~with the intent of~~ inspiring the generation with all the possibilities that could become realities. Such programs represented stepping stones that spiked national interest and propelled the pursuit of knowledge in the field. Because Disney could not rely on real footage of space to hold the audience's attention, the company strived to maintain a proper balance between comedy and education. The show not only included funny segments like Heinz Haber presenting a cartoon man smoking a cigar in space (20:09), but also very pragmatic ones, such as Willy Ley explaining the operation of a rocket motor, and how it contributes to Newton's law of motion (12:48). Additionally, since much of Disney's audience in 1955 did not have basic knowledge of space travel to draw upon for reference, Disney described ~~the steps and mechanics to achieving space travel more in-depth than any of the ads we see today. The last ten minutes of the film go into~~ great detail regarding the sequence of events that

would lead to the rocket's lift-off and ultimately land the astronauts in space. Although human spaceflight was unfeasible at the time, Disney still could stimulate nation-wide interest with their mastery of storytelling.

In comparison to the 1950s, Modern day aerospace companies such as SpaceX and Virgin Galactic promote space exploration by taking advantage of the technological advances and the predisposed knowledge that's available today. The video, "Become An Astronaut With Virgin Galactic," exercises its capability to incorporate footage and audio recordings from space to encapsulate the awe of the experience for the audience. Furthermore, Virgin Galactic implements interviews of astronauts, a technique that represents a milestone for marketing and one that was made possible because space exploration had become attainable. The commercial specifically depicts a woman discussing space (0:09), and another woman receiving an award (1:45), which projects the fact that space exploration hasn't only become more scientifically progressive, but socially progressive as well. This detail appeals to female viewers as it gives them somebody to look up to and be inspired by in the field of study. The video, "SpaceX Mars Mission Simulation," takes a differing approach by abandoning the use of real footage and audio recordings and instead employing technological advancements in the form of a realistic-looking simulation. While the simulation lacks a voice-over, SpaceX includes short captions on the lower left of the video to fill in the holes for the audience. For the most part, however, both the Virgin Galactic and SpaceX videos rely on their audiences to understand the fundamentals of space travel, while 1955 Disneyland's *Man in Space* meticulously explains these foundational aspects to the audience. Furthermore, Instead of simply promoting an interest in space among kids and adults, the videos from Virgin Galactic and SpaceX mainly target proponents of space tourism and the colonization of Mars.

The marketing of space exploration is essential to not only receiving enthusiasm and funding, but also in preserving Americans' support in the United States maintaining its role as the global leader in the field. Comparing space travel marketing through the ages allows one to contemplate how many more ideas will be implemented that were once only just theorized about. Whether the future entails the colonization of mars or the first women on the moon, one thing remains abundantly clear, space exploration may very well be the key to reminding us of our shared humanity-something that our world too often forgets.