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**THE MARS SHOW -
A goal-oriented global media event to finance the first Mars manned mission**

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INTRODUCTION

In the past years many technical proposals were submitted concerning a human mission to Mars. Such proposals were important since, due to the current hiatus from the official space agencies regarding Mars exploration, they pushed the state of the art, at least conceptually, concerning such event and, basically, kept alive the idea of human colonization of the planets and the solar system, unavoidable event if man wants to be an important player in future history.

But the several proposals had something in common, they were generated by private organizations and not by the official space agencies or governmental entities that have two negatives features:

- lack of financing
- lack of official backing

Such events lead to a basic conceptual understanding and obvious conclusions.

At the moment the possibility of a government-financed Mars mission through national space agencies is a very remote and improbable event since most urgent priorities are been considered. These facts lead to an inevitable conclusion: new ways of financing such mission should be explored by utilizing private participation. Private financing should reasonable come only through a profit making operation and not from improbable individual or company sponsorship system, also due to the magnitude of the money involved. One possible and profit-making proposal is to transform the entire Mars mission into a global media event to be submitted to international media networks.

In our media-hungry society such a plan, through its high global appeal and visibility for the specific historical and unique opportunities could help in obtaining the needed financing from sponsors of different type and interests. We can summarize the above in three easy concepts:

WHY- the need to privately finance the first manned mission to Mars through a profit making self-supporting operation

WHAT-The Mars mission as a global media event to be financed through its media rights

HOW-transforming the mission in a audience rich package to be sold to networks who will profit by selling commercial time in a highly popular global media event

THE SCOPE OF THE EVENT

The main scope of the event is to collect, during the scheduled time, enough financing to support the first manned mission to Mars. Secondary, but not less important results that could be obtained by the proposed media events could be so summarized:

- Familiarize a global audience with the concept of Mars mission and solar system colonization
- Galvanize youth to follow a scientific education in order to promote science progress, spread enthusiasm and revive the early space age spirit on the public opinion to sponsor and participate to ambitious space missions
- Promote the concept of space colonization as the next step in human history through the two-way participation of the audience who will be galvanized by the fact that they are part of history in the making

1-The media event

Such a media event, whose format must be carefully studied for the single events, phases of the Mars mission, countries and local audiences involved, could have some basic features that could be of undoubted interest to media networks in several countries.

The features are:

- maximum visibility through global audience reach
- maximum continuity due to a twelve-year long event
- historical and unique event
- international show involving all countries on Earth who could adapt the format to their specific requirements
- two-way participation from the audience
- star creation and others audience involvement effects
- continuing competition challenges through audience participation and milestones events
- audience participation through brainstorming sessions

Anyway the major driving force of the event would be the statement that at a result of the show a real manned first landing on Mars will take part and that the audience itself could be a major force in its implementation.

We can compare such an event with others of global reach and explore its unique features described above and its specific advantages. In the enclosed chart we can see that in a 12-year interval the major sport events in reality represent only a minor fraction of the time involved, in the overall schedule, and can generate a good percentage of audience. Comparing events and

multiplying audience reach by active days, in the 12-year interval we can see how the Mars Show potential can easily dwarf all other high visibility events representing a certain income source for networks if an adequate audience reaching format could be proposed. We can easily notice how single events, such as the Olympic games or The FIFA Cup, can by themselves collect in only a few days of exposure, the amount of money needed for a Mars mission. Such rights could easily achieve the goal of financing a manned mission, letting alone the bandwagon consequences that a credible Mars mission could promote in individuals and organizations who would be willing to donate skills, activities, know-how and equipment just to be part of a well publicized historic event.

2-phases of events\milestones

In order to understand the potential of the Mars Show, starting from the beginning of a manned mission proposal, we can divide the overall format in accordance with the actual plan for such mission. Such plan, in its overall schedule is visualized in the following chart. We can briefly subdivide the overall time frame involved in three major phases:

- 2.1- Preliminary phase, for the duration of about one year
- 2.2- Design and hardware manufacturing phase duration about nine years with two sub phases
 - 2.2.1 Design and prototype construction
 - 2.2.2- testing and simulations
- 2.3- Mission to Mars phase for the duration of about three years from take-off to return to Earth subdivided in:
 - 2.3.1- Take-off
 - 2.3.2- flight to Mars
 - 2.3.3- Mars Landing
 - 2.3.4- Mars activities
 - 2.3.5- Return to Earth

Each phase will have its own particular events and milestones, as an initial approach we can define the following but not limited to them:

Preliminary Phase

- Mission definition and goal
- Global organization by specific tasks
- Mars mission team selection through international participation of candidates
- Team organization through global web connected members

Such events as a global team selection and a global web related organization are real first of a future web related global society on a specific goal oriented mission and could be utilized as prototypes of a future advanced communications and information society. Such selections could generate competition spirit and high interest in the audience being related to candidates that can be considered future stars of the media event. Once the team and the organization are in place we can start with the real mission related events such as:

- mission alternative proposals

Single complete mission proposals will be presented by international teams of scientists, doctors, engineers, astronauts and any other needed expert including a coordinator, a communicator for the general public and celebrities as testimonials who will support each proposal. Each team and proposals must be backed by scientific, economic, cost and benefits, engineering and any other major information needed to win approval by peers as well as the general audience who must be educated in a way that could understand the general issues involved and help in the selection through intelligent choices. The communicator and the celebrities must play a major role in making technical proposals understandable to the general public. Such proposal selection, following the momentum and the competition generated by the previous team selection event will certainly generate controversy, strong competition spirit, attention and full audience participation.

Single proposals, as long as reasonable, feasible, and backed by reputable experts must not be discarded at a first screening but must be proposed in a continuous challenge posting one to the other till the final selection for the best two who will define the winning one and with the possibility of continuous improvement or modifications of the original ideas, with contribution of everybody including competing and discarded members of other teams, non team members or general experts from the audience. The scope is not to have a closed proposal by few team members but to get the valuable ideas of everybody who could be qualified and to incorporate it in the optimal solution. Such proposals will be presented with the intelligent audience participation that will remain the single and most important winning idea to get audience interest and following.

- audience participation

Once the proposal is selected, a detail implementation plan will follow and the first phase could be considered over. During this phase, to generate further interest, we could simulate crew selection tests utilizing the Big Brother formats in the Mars simulated facilities owned by the Mars Society in the Artic or in the Utah desert.

Phase 2-Design and Manufacturing

This phase will be subdivided, due to its very long schedule in several sub phases, to generate interest and to establish milestones that will keep the step-by-step approach to the final goal. Such step-by-step approach was successfully demonstrated by NASA for the Apollo mission to send the first man to the Moon.

Phase 2-1-design and prototypes

- Planning and scheduling

The first step of this phase shall be the planning of the single projects that have to be performed to reach the designed goal and a tentative schedule for each one of them defining the critical path and the parallel events including the milestones moments. Such a planning will define the Mars

team additional requirements and skills needed. First activity of this phase will be the new members selection of the Mars team and the single projects team definition. Each design team will have a leader and will be selected through a global process as performed during the first phase and a general project manager that, properly staffed, must coordinate the work between the single projects teams to avoid duplications, misunderstandings and to update on the general reference design.

2.1.1-preliminary design

- Project manager and staffing selection
- Design team selection
- alternative proposals
- cost estimates and scheduling
- recommended solutions
- go ahead to final design by single projects

2.1.2-Final design

During this phase additional members of the Mars team must be selected with updated procedure as in phase one.

- Project manager and staffing selection
- Schedule and coordination procedures
- reference mock-up based in preliminary design
- final design project teams and leaders milestones design review and single team performance

2.2.1-prototypes and tests

- simulations

During this phase additional members of the Mars team must be selected again with updated procedure as in phase one. A detailed project schedule with single specific programs must be Prepared members of each design team selected. Design performances could be monitored with milestones approaches. Design teams selected for each subsystem and activity. To keep the audiences interest updated formats will be prepared that will include Big Brother\Survivor simulations in Mars stations for crew selection.

- Tests and simulations of flight and equipment performance.
- Unmanned flight to Mars of probes to test concepts and prepare the mission

At the same time we can get additional interest and financing through specific issues such as: (a) names, sentences, pictures on a chip in Mars probes of people and audience, (b) First words by individuals

All of the above could be, for an affordable cost, offered to the audience and include in Mars probes in a DVD diskette to be left on the Mars surface. A detailed project schedule with single specific programs must be prepared members of each design team selected. Design performances could be monitored with milestones approaches. Design teams selected for each subsystem and activity

2.2.2-equipment manufacturing phase

During this phase actual hardware will be manufactured for the mars mission. Milestones include many activities that could be performed in conjunction with the release of the equipment such as:

- crew selection
- tests
- simulations
- emergencies simulation

This involves candidates under stress quiz to select people through know-how problem solving competition psychological profiles simulations as education for global audiences in sophisticated job selection techniques piloting and landing approaches through flight simulators as a competition between pilots candidates

- base construction on Earth

2.3-mission phase

This phase is undoubtedly the most audience appeal of them all. Here audience can watch the historical events that will be the end result of all their efforts during the past ten years we can divide such events in the following sub phases:

- 2.3.1- Unmanned mission for the landing of the future manned mars station, take off, flight, landing, deployment
- 2.3.2- Manned mission take -off
- 3.3.3- Manned mission flight to Mars, including all critical in flight milestones
- 2.3.4- Manned landing
- 2.3.5- Station erection and mars activities by crew
- 2.3.6- Take off from Mars
- 2.3.7- Return flight to earth
- 2.3.8- Earth landing and arrival
- 2.3.9- Post flight and debriefing activities
- 2.3.10- Follow-on flights

3-audience participation

In order to attract an interested audience several media techniques and proposals must be implemented, we can suggest a few such as:

- Two-way participation through every phase of mission development
- parallel events during flight
- brainstorming \debates\polls
- naming of base \main features\boulders\flags\logos\features on Mars
- big brother techniques for crew selection through simulations
- selection of first person to land on Mars
- first words
- emails to in-flight crew to be stored on Mars
- simulation of flight

4-targets

The media event, from our point of view must have a single main target, the media networks in the entire planet. At the same time we can define the potential sponsors in several types:

- general sponsors to acquire commercial space during the missions from the networks
- direct supporting sponsors, suppliers and \or qualified individuals who will donate work, services, hardware for the mission benefit to the Mars team

5-operational plan

A preliminary operating plan can be outlined as follows:

- 5.1- International volunteer task force to staff the effort through a specific organization chart with single tasks to form the Mars team
- 5.2- A strategic plan to define the scope, targets, goals and actions to be taken by the Mars team
- 5.3- define the organization or specific company that will manage the operation
- 5.4- Prepare a preliminary technical mission plan to be coordinated with the media events phases
- 5.5- Prepare a business plan for the entire operation as well as for the network proposal
- 5.6- Prepare a preliminary marketing plan
- 5.7- Prepare a network package proposal
- 5.8- Prepare a sponsor package proposal
- 5.9- Networks and sponsors prospect research
- 5.10- network presentations, adaptations and final negotiations
- 5.11- contract signatures

Once the above will be performed the first Mars manned mission can officially start.