

### Goddard Workshop on On-Orbit Servicing

### **Presentation by Hoyt Davidson**



Providing <u>Investment Banking</u> and <u>Advisory Services</u> to Companies and Investors in the Satellite, Aerospace and Wireless Telecom Sectors

# Market Opportunity

- Satellite monitoring
  - Deployment (20 new GEO satellites per year)
  - Fleet health (200+ GEO satellites)
- Satellite refueling
  - Life extension (20 GEO satellites per year reach end of useful fuel)
  - Launch dry (can save 40%+ on launch weight or do dual launch)
- Orbital transportation / transfer
  - Satellite relocation & de-orbiting (avg. 13 Geo belt relocations per year)
  - Rescue & recovery (avg. 1 satellite per year requires assistance)
- Satellite repair and maintenance
  - Life extension
  - Anomaly correction
    - Avg. annual failure rates: 4.4 component, 3.8 systemic, 0.3 deployment
- Propellant transfer and depot storage
- Orbital debris removal / mitigation
  - 19,000 > 10cm (but >95% LEO debris is Russian)
- On-orbit assembly (much further out, except for nanosat apps)



# NASA: On-Orbit Servicing Efforts

Almost 30 years of technology development and demonstration

Palapa B2 & Westar 6:

1st recovery and return

Hubble: Dec. 1993 – May 2009 1<sup>st</sup> repair & upgrade ISS:
Today
Robotic arm
(SSRMS)
Dextre & DPP
Robonaut 2

Skylab: May 1973 1<sup>st</sup> onorbit repair Maximum Mission: April, 1984 1<sup>st</sup> use of modular parts

Solar



# Other: On-Orbit Servicing Efforts

Most required technologies now demonstrated, except for debris removal and autonomous assembly

April 2005

1st autonomous
retirement
operations

DART:

Orbital Express (DARPA): March 2007 1<sup>st</sup> autonomous fuel transfer and major repairs DLR & MDA: Q1 2010 Announced orbital servicing missions (both delayed – TBD)

ETS VII (NASDA): Nov. 1997 1<sup>st</sup> autonomous rendezvous & docking XSS 10 & 11 (AFRL): Late 1990s 1st autonomous inspections & proximity operations

May 29, 2012 - Surrey Satellite develops nanosatellite with Xbox 360 Kinect controller and Google Nexus smartphone



# Financing Issues / Risks: General

- Significant normal business risks:
  - Technology development risks like high-tech
    - Requires highly trained STEM to execute
  - Generally very capital intensive
    - Often significant uncertainty in costs
  - Frequently involves long development periods
  - Significant regulatory burdens
- Plus numerous unique or heightened risks:
  - Catastrophic launch or in-orbit failures
  - Significant 3<sup>rd</sup> party liability risks
  - Difficult competitive dynamics:
    - International marketing restrictions (ITAR)
    - Highly subsidized international competition
    - Potential for direct or indirect U.S. government competition
- And, uncertain market demand
  - High government contract termination risks due to policy changes
  - Nascent or non-existent commercial markets biggest investor risk



# Financing Issues / Risks: Specific

	Technology	Market	Financing	Political/Reg	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party
Monitoring	Easy / Cheap	Large, Low\$	Low \$, Short T	Spying / ASAT?	High \$ satellites
Refueling	Doable	Uncertain	Med \$, Med T	Low	GEO sensitive
Transfer	Uncooperative?	Small, High \$	Med \$, Med T	Low	Low
Repair	> w/design	Uncertain	High \$, Med T	Low	GEO sensitive
Propellant	LT storage	Dual use/GEO?	High \$, Med T	Mission Arch.	Low
Debris Removal	Large Δv	Gov't only	High \$, Long T	Diplomatic	More debris?
Assembly	Complex	Gov't only	High \$, Long T	Space policy?	Low



## NASA Policy Issues

- Improve perceptions: NASA as a reliable commercialization partner
  - Publish a commercialization roadmap and adopt NASA-wide
- **Foster innovation:** Build technology base and expand solutions
  - Increase challenges, funded studies and STEM education support
- Support technology development: Prototyping through COTS availability
  - Phase 3 & 4 SBIRS, In-Q-Tel for NASA, super competitions, NASA facilities
- **Demonstration missions**: Prove new space systems & technologies
  - COTS/CRS type, free flight challenges, TDRS test bed, NACA like tech sharing
- Validate market demand: Serve as initial and repeat customer
  - Customer #1, anchor tenant, future purchase agreements, debris bounties
- Enhance capital investment: Reduce capital requirements and investor risk
  - Contracts, SAAs, grants, loan guarantees, tax credits, exclusive rights



# No Longer Just Operator & Insurer

Satellite
Owners/Operators

- Used to filing claims vs. risking servicing
- Plans for EOL/failures
- Value of life extension questionable
- Immediate back-up needed

- Need to get paid by Owner or Insurer
- Servicing option must be preferred over claim pay-out
- Need mission insurance

On-Orbit Servicing Industry



- Proven insurance model
- Do not want to own/operate
- Would insure servicing missions

Space Industry



### **Space Commercialization Lessons Learned**

### Technology Risks:

- Every space infrastructure development plan is high risk
- Launch and in-orbit failures do happen
- "Baby steps" are better than bold efforts

#### Market Risks:

- Lack of predictable market demand is key barrier to attracting capital
- Long development/deployment schedules heighten market risk
- U.S. government often needs to be anchor tenant or early dominant customer
- Having government as prime customer reduces control of business plan
- Commercial practices can produce considerable savings for government

#### Financial Risks:

- Delays are costly and can kill a project due to ROI hurdle
- Traditional aerospace contracting doesn't provide sufficient cost control
- Super angel support very helpful, but rarely enough
- Institutional investors are unforgiving and rarely revisit an opportunity



### **Space Commercialization Lessons (cont.)**

#### Competition Risks:

- Two is a big number in space, rarely is there enough profits to support three
- International competition can be subsidized and enjoy lower costs/regulation
- NASA/U.S. government may compete against you directly or indirectly

#### Political/Regulatory Risks:

- NASA and U.S. government can change policy & support abruptly
- Some purposely avoid any ties to NASA or government
- ITAR is a serious limitation of market opportunity
- Other regulatory risks are high, but manageable
- Use of NASA facilities challenging and often uneconomic
- Indemnification uncertainty is a key issue



### Conclusions

- Historic opportunity to foster vibrant U.S. on-orbit servicing industry
  - Much of technology already developed by NASA and others
  - In best interest of U.S. to commercialize to share investment & risks
- Commercial space interest exists, but investors see risks as too challenging
  - Capital is available if risk/reward can be brought in balance
  - New initiatives and ongoing NASA support will be required
- First challenge will be changing industry perceptions
  - COTS/CRS was an excellent first step
  - Lots of hard work ahead to change culture
  - Biggest unknown is internal & external political will to provide adequate budgeting

