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SPACEONEERS: ENABLING A NEW GENERATION OF SPACE PIONEERS

Abstract

Spaceoneers is designed as a hub to spur creativity and innovation within the space sector in Europe. We seek to demonstrate how space is ever-more accessible to a broad range of audiences to enable a new generation of “space pioneers”. We achieve this through a range of dedicated resources including articles, comics and infographics that seek to inform and inspire.

With 15000 monthly visitors, Spaceoneers has grown to be one of the one of the leading websites on new space ventures in Europe. In addition we have over 2000 Twitter followers and an engaging audience on social media. We highlight the many opportunities that are opening up in this ‘new space’ economy in Europe through our list of events and startup map. Our infographics provide a visual summary of the key facts and figures of the sector.

We are using both interviews and comics to create role models to inspire new audiences to the site. Through our Little Spaceoneers comic series we use storytelling along with humour and wit to show how the characters encounter everyday problems of starting up a space business. We engage audiences to see the future of space through their eyes, seeking to change perceptions along the way. Our in depth interviews give a close insight to the real pioneers who are enabling this future and inspiring others.

Over the past three years we have conducted over 40 interviews where we have spoken directly to “space pioneers” who are shaping the sector including CEOs, founders and investors. Here we identify the key challenges in the sector and the barriers faced by these real entrepreneurs. Investors including angel investors and venture capitalists also have provided us insights into what areas are attractive for them and how they predict the market is shifting in the industry. We have spoken to people from all corners of Europe – from Portugal to Estonia, Italy to Finland, UK, Germany, France and Poland – across a broad range of space applications from space hardware, launchers, to earth observation data, space debris removal, engineering, telecommunications, augmented reality and robotics.

In this paper we highlight the key learnings from our engagement with audiences on the Spaceoneers site. We pick out some of the common challenges faced by entrepreneurs and investors that transcend borders and cultures, putting forward recommendations on what is needed and how we change the language around new space in Europe.