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SPACE INVESTMENT TO ENCOURAGE TO GROWTH OF GLOBAL SPACE MARKETS

Abstract

Another Space Golden Age has begun with the SpaceX's Crew Dragon flight to the ISS from US soil last May after a nine year interval since July 2011. It is going to bring robust growth for human space activities, which could be leading to not only commercial LEO destinations but also the Cis-lunar and ultimately even Mars. Also, now is the age of more than 1000 smallsat launches per year since 2021. More than 1000 smallsats are now operated by one company, SpaceX's Starlink recorded Jan. 2021. Also a record number of small sat rideshare, which is 143 payloads, by Space X's Transporter-1 in Jan. 2021. Smallsats are now a social infrastructure and their applications and utilization are contributing to every industry as a solution such as data analytics, communication, IoT, PNT and so on.

In these circumstances of such prosperity for commercial space, VC investment in space venture companies has been continuing with dramatically increasing rates since 2015 when VC investment jumped up 10 times and more than the previous ten years. Even under the COVID-19 crisis, VC investment has never decreased but continues to break new records. Also, regarding to the exit phase of space investment, MA has been increased since 2009 especially the latest three years, and the MA in 2020 is the record year with over twenty MA per year. Furthermore, SPAC, which companies are Momentus, Astra Space, AST Science, Black Sky, changes the landscape of space investment in 2020-2021 after the first SPAC in the US in 2019 by Virgin Galactic. Now there are about two thousand space venture companies, with projections that more than 10,000 space venture companies created by the 2030's around the world.

Japan is the third country of number of VC investment in space venture companies after US and China according to the Start-up Space by Bryce Space and Technology. There are around one hundred space venture companies in Japan and a pretty good number of them have gotten VC funding. Corporate venture capital, CVC is one of the most characteristic traits in commercial space in Japan. Space development is now a burgeoning commercial growth industry. The status in Japan aiming for increased competitiveness in the global market has been advanced based on active investments and progressive government policies. VC and CVC investment funds facilitate these goals. This paper will show the investment trends both around the world and in Japan.