



The Language of Independent Intermediaries: How Astronauts' Tweets Support Entrepreneurial Opportunities to Transform Space into A New Marketplace

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Introduction

- An entrepreneur can easily be seen as the only actor associating with successful commercialization of an opportunity. However, it may not always be the case.
- Research Question: How do independent intermediaries support entrepreneurial opportunities to create new market categories?

Methodology

- Collected tweets from 36 NASA astronauts

Number of Astronauts	Total Tweets	Total Retweets	Total Likes	Time Range
36	19,115	4,673,885	11,105,959	2009-2017

- Applied text analysis using Python

Findings

Intermediaries are those 3rd-party individuals who are neither market participants nor customers in the process of market creation. In this study, astronauts share no economic stakes with entrepreneurs or customers of space tourism.

- Astronauts, as **intermediaries**, act as a catalyst for supporting entrepreneurial opportunity to form a new market category of space tourism in the following four ways:

Constructing value propositions

- Astronauts' tweets indicate two key attractions in space: microgravity and earth-viewing. They are the key services that the supply side should fulfill.



Entrepreneurs
(Supply)

Consumers
(Demand)

Forming awareness

- On average, one tweet from an astronaut attracts 245 retweets and 581 likes from the public. There is no better ambassador in terms of space travel.

Establishing boundaries

- Astronauts' five-stage space experiences (training, liftoff, in-space, reentry, and reflection) build boundaries for what space tourism business can provide.

Educating consumers

- New terms generated by astronauts, for example spaceart and space flower, bring novel meanings to average words and construct new realities. It is a process of education to the public about a new market category: space tourism.

Conclusion

- The language of intermediaries supports market creation by establishing boundaries and constructing values, and educating potential consumers about this emerging market category.

Impact

- By indicating the importance of astronauts' experiences in space industrialization, this research supports the mission of AAS to advance space initiatives and grow the space community.

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