

## Re: Space Exploitation

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Terry Goodrich wrote:

>

> > *At current prices, it would probably have to be something that can  
> > \*only\* be made in space (and that people will pay a lot of money for,  
> > like a cure for cancer).*

>

> *I agree, but what has there been that could only be made in space? I've  
> seen and read a lot about on going experimentation in material science on  
> the shuttle and ISS in material science, but it is mostly in relation to  
> space research for future flights. I hav'nt seen anything that has caused  
> some well heeled company to come out and say I've got to have that. And I  
> haven't seen anything developed through NASA that couldn't be produced on  
> earth, even though the idea might have been developed in orbit.*

>

> *And while I do see space tourism being the next big thing, I'm afraid its  
> only going to be for the very wealthy, possibly to someone who might finance  
> an expedition as such.*

>

Right now it's for the very wealthy. When we have fully-reusable launchers it will, initially, be for the wealthy. As the flight rate builds up, the fixed costs will be spread over an increasing number of flights, leading to further reductions in ticket prices, which will further increase the market, etc. After 20 or 30 years of bootstrapping we may get to the point where an upper middle class person will be able to afford a trip at least once in their life.

We've had the technology for fully-reusable launchers for about 35 years now. If we had selected a reasonably practical design for the Shuttle, we'd probably be at that point now.

> *Terry*