

Re: Business and commerce in space.

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"Martha Adams" <[mhada@xxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:mhada@xxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote in message  
[news:eO4Pj.5099\\$145.3565@xxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:eO4Pj.5099$145.3565@xxxxxxxxxxx)

Why Ceres? Would you place your first settlement there?

I think the attraction to Ceres is a kind of planetary chauvinism. Sort of like: "It's the biggest of the asteroids, therefore it's more like a planet and less like some little rock floating in space". But if anybody embraces asteroids, it should be for embracing the concept that smaller bodies are better than larger ones for having shallower gravity wells (reducing import and export costs).

Would  
there be an already-established business network among settlements  
more near Terra?

A sensible question. The near-Earth asteroids make more sense for exploitation than Main Belt bodies in the near-term. And even though the moon lacks certain elements available in asteroids, it will have the advantage of closeness to the initial market.

Some people try to answer the question of where the first space settlements will go by asking what place has the greatest availability of materials needed for life-support, and then calculate that this would be the surface of Mars. But the first space settlements will spring up wherever the initial business opportunities lie. Distance to the market is of primary importance (though in this case it's more a matter of delta-V than linear distance), and at the start of the process the only market in existence will be Earth.

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Regards,

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Mike Combs

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We must be staunch in our conviction that freedom is not the sole prerogative of a lucky few, but the inalienable and universal right of all human beings... It would be cultural condescension, or worse, to say that any people prefer dictatorship to democracy.

Ronald Reagan at Westminster Abbey, 1982