SpaceX to Send Tesla Roadster to Orbit Mars in Demonstration

SpaceX will be sending CEO Elon Musk's Tesla Roadster to orbit Mars in a demonstration of its new Falcon Heavy rocket design.

HAWTHORNE, Calif., April 20th, 2018 -- SpaceX will be demonstrating its new Falcon Heavy rocket design from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Base in Florida. The Falcon Heavy aims to achieve full reusability of its rocket cores, which in contemporary designs have to be decommissioned after one use. The Falcon Heavy rocket cores are equipped with artificial intelligence that aid in the navigation and landing in designated landing zones. If successful, the Falcon Heavy will be the most powerful rocket to date, capable of launching more than 140,000 pounds of cargo into space. Only the Saturn Moon IV of 1973 lifted more cargo into orbit

The payload of such a rocket is SpaceX CEO and Lead Designer Elon Musk's cherry-red Tesla Roadster. While demonstration mission similar to this one usually use a concrete or steel block as a mass simulator, SpaceX aims to launch something more fun and not without irreplaceable sentimental value. The Roadster will be manned by a mannequin sporting SpaceX's new space suit design, and be referred to as "the Starman." The mission aims to have the Roadster in a precessing Earth-Mars elliptical orbit around the sun.

The Falcon Heavy rocket will be the most powerful rocket to date, launching more than twice the weight of cargo into space as its runner up, and at one third of the cost. The cost effectiveness is derived from the reusable nature of the three rocket cores that make up the Falcon Heavy. The two side cores, or "boosters", are connected to the center core rocket at its base and at its interstage. The rocket cores total twenty seven Merlin engines and are capable of more than five million pounds of thrust.

The two side boosters are already flight proven and will be landing at on-site landing zones at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Base. The two landing zones have been dubbed LZ-1 and LZ-2. The first booster launched the Thaicom 8 satellite in May 2016, and the other booster supported the CRS-9 mission in July 2016. The demonstration of the Falcon Heavy will include the landing attempts of all three cores, with the much larger and untested center core landing on an unmanned barge stationed in the Atlantic ocean.

SpaceX wishes to remind the public that this is a test flight, and that the mission will be considered a success if any useful data is collected during the process. CEO Elon Musk has this to say, "[The rocket stage is] going to experience a lot of radioactivity and high energy particles. It's going to get whacked pretty hard. The fuel could freeze, and the oxygen could be vaporize, all of which could inhibit the third burn which is necessary for [the Tesla's] trans-Mars injection," reinforcing the fact that this is a test and demonstration flight.

Corporate Information:
Mission Statement: To enable the space flight capabilities necessary to make human life multiplanetary - or more specifically enable a self sustaining human civilization on Mars.
Website: https://www.spacex.com
Year Founded: 2002
Achievements: SpaceX designs, manufactures and launches advanced rockets and spacecraft. The company was founded in 2002 to revolutionize space technology, with the ultimate goal of enabling people to live on other planets.
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