

A Report on SmallSat Symposium 2019 in Silicon Valley

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SMALLSAT SYMPOSIUM™ SILICON VALLEY 2019

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Abstract

On February 4–7, 2019, the SmallSat Symposium 2019 conference was held at the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, CA, U.S., a city located in Silicon Valley. This symposium is held every year and is hosted by Satnews, a media outlet focusing on the dissemination of information regarding space business. This was the fourth symposium held so far. While Satnews has hosted other symposiums, such as the Satellite Innovation

Symposium (focusing on subjects relating to NewSpace and OldSpace), this symposium focuses only on subjects relating to SmallSat businesses.

On February 4, the “Workshop” event was held. This event consisted of four sessions, and about 50 people participated and held discussions at each session. During February 5–7, the plenary session was held, and all participants joined this session. About 200 people participated in the



first SmallSat Symposium, however, as the number of participants has grown after the yearly holding of this symposium, this year's symposium saw the registration of 950 participants. More than 20 people from Japan participated in this symposium. Previously, most of the Japanese participants were dispatched from a few big companies, with the purpose of collecting information; however, this time it seems that the situation has changed. At this symposium, it seems that every Japanese company has dispatched a small number of staff in order to conduct negotiations with particular organizations and/or firms. It has thus been established that the objective of this symposium is to provide opportunities for negotiations involving space businesses using SmallSat satellites. More than 60 companies and/or organizations had booths at this year's symposium.



Discussions

(1) A Tough Year for SmallSat Businesses

<<Omitted below>>

(2) Exits for Startup Companies

<<Omitted below>>



(3) Vertical Integration vs. Horizontal Affiliation as Pertaining to Earth Observation (EO) Satellites

<<Omitted below>>



(4) Promising Business Segments



Other Miscellaneous Comments

Recently, the weather has been very cold in this part of the U.S. Since the week previous to when this symposium was being held, the weather in Silicon Valley was struck with terrible cold. During the symposium, Monday and Tuesday saw thunder and lightning. Once inside the premises, this was of course not easy to realize; however, when on route to the site, everyone could notice the cold temperature, which was considered extreme weather for Silicon Valley. Usually, in February, the maximum temperature in Silicon Valley would go up to 15°C, but during the symposium, the maximum temperature was only about 10°C, and when on the way to the site and to the hotel (in the morning and evening), the temperature would only go up to about 5°C, at maximum.

On Thursday evening, outside the site, there was an outdoor event featuring food trucks. Trucks serving beer and wine were parked around; however, it was hard to enjoy the beer and wine due to the cold weather. The event started at 5:30 p.m., and therefore, everyone was already chilled to the bone. Thus, everyone gathered around stand-type heaters, and sales of beers were reported to be unsatisfactory. As shown in the photo, there are only a few people holding a paper cup full of beer. The author was not able to enjoy long conversation with anyone and left the site early.



If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact:

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