



VIRGIN GALACTIC UNVEILS SPACESHIP TWO, THE WORLD'S FIRST COMMERCIAL MANNED SPACESHIP

**Virtuoso® CEO Matthew D. Upchurch And Virtuoso's® Accredited Space Agents (ASAs)
Among The Select Guests Attending The World Debut of SpaceShip2 (SS2)**

MOJAVE AIR AND SPACEPORT, CA (December 7, 2009) – Virgin Founder, Sir Richard Branson and SpaceshipOne (SS1) designer, Burt Rutan, today reveal SS2 to the public for the first time since construction of the world's first manned commercial spaceship began in 2007. SS2 has been designed to take many thousands of private astronauts into space after test programming and all required U.S. government licensing and regulatory approvals have been completed.

As the official sales channel for Virgin Galactic throughout the Americas, Virtuoso® and select members of this leading luxury travel network were present for the unveiling event. The organization's CEO, Matthew D. Upchurch, who is also a "Founder" passenger with Virgin Galactic, headed the Virtuoso group attending the event.

The unveiling represents another major milestone in Virgin Galactic's quest to develop the world's first commercial space line providing private sector access to space. The spaceship draws on the experience developed during the successful flights of SS1 in 2004, which won the Ansari X-Prize for completing the world's first manned private space flights. The SS2 design will be refined and completed during an extensive test flying program to commence shortly, and it will be an entirely new vehicle capable of carrying up to six passenger astronauts and up to two pilot astronauts into space on a suborbital flight, subject to applicable regulatory approvals.

Matthew D. Upchurch has eagerly anticipated this day, having the dual role of "Founder" passenger, meaning he will be aboard one of the first 14 flights, as well as CEO of the organization hand-selected by Virgin Galactic to accept deposits for future flights of the spaceship from potential future passengers exclusively throughout the Americas.

Remarked Upchurch, "The unveiling of SS2 marks one of the most exhilarating advancements in the tourism industry for travellers who value travel for its ability to provide a new perspective on the world, a detachment from the ordinary, the ability to create a lifelong memory and growth as a human being. Both as a 'Founder' and the CEO of Virtuoso, I am honoured to have a role in this historical event, and proud of our members who have been selected by Virgin Galactic to represent this unique product. These Accredited Space Agents have the ability to help pioneer an industry, while bringing this life-changing experience to their clients."

The unveiling will take place at Mojave Air and Spaceport as darkness falls on the famous aviation and spaceflight location. SS2 will be attached to her WK2 mothership which was last year unveiled and named EVE after Sir Richard Branson's mother. In the future, WK2 will carry SS2 to above 50,000 feet (16 kilometres) before the spaceship is dropped and fires her rocket motor to go into space from that altitude. In honour of a long tradition of using the word Enterprise in the naming of Royal Navy, US Navy, NASA vehicles and even science fiction spacecraft, Governor

Schwarzenegger of California and Governor Richardson of New Mexico will today christen SS2 with the name Virgin Space Ship (VSS) ENTERPRISE. This represents not only an acknowledgement of that name's honorable past, but also looks to the future of the role of private enterprise in the future exploration of space.

Both WK2 and SS2 represent state of the art environmentally sensitive industrial development in their use of carbon composite materials technology, which has now been identified as a key future contributor to the increasingly urgent requirement by the commercial aviation sector for dramatically more fuel efficient aircraft. WK2 is powered by four Pratt and Whitney PW308A engines, which are amongst the most, efficient commercial jet engines available, making it a mould breaker in carbon efficiency. SS2 will be powered by a unique hybrid rocket motor, which is currently under development.

The twin fuselage and configuration allow for easy access to WK2 and to the spaceship for passengers and crew; the design also aids operational efficiencies and turnaround times. The mothership has now also completed a year of rigorous and successful first phase flight testing prior to today's attachment of SS2.

Commenting on the unveiling, Sir Richard Branson, Founder of Virgin Galactic said: "This is truly a momentous day. The team has created not only a world first but also a work of art. The unveil of SS2 takes the Virgin Galactic vision to the next level and continues to provide tangible evidence that this ambitious project is not only moving rapidly, but also making tremendous progress towards our goal of safe commercial operation."

Burt Rutan, Founder of Scaled Composites added: "All of us at Scaled are tremendously excited by the capabilities of both the mothership and SS2. Today is the culmination of a dream that began many decades ago, was stimulated by Paul Allen's funding of our X-Prize winning SS1 and then moved forward to commercial reality by Sir Richard and Virgin's visionary investment in a new future for space transportation."

SpaceShipTwo will be unveiled after darkness has fallen over the Mojave Desert to the sound of a space-themed anthem from Britain's biggest DJs, Above & Beyond. Fittingly titled "Buzz" the track will sample Buzz Aldrin's original moon landing dialogue. Following the naming by Governors Richardson and Schwarzenegger, the DJs will also perform an exclusive set at the celebration cocktail party which will follow and feature the first ever IceBar in the desert hosted by Absolut and the world famous Swedish IceHotel. All the guests will be protected from the desert cold by designer space jackets supplied by PUMA. Finally, to close off the celebrations, all the guests will have the opportunity to view the stunning night skies using specialist telescopes supplied by Ron Dantowitz of the Clay Observatory whose unique tracking cameras followed SS1 into space during the epic flights of 2004.

For further information go to www.virgingalactic.com

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About Virtuoso

Virtuoso® is the industry's leading luxury travel network. This by-invitation-only organization comprises over 300 agencies with more than 6,000 elite travel specialists in 22 countries in North and South America, the Caribbean, Australia and New Zealand, as well as over 1,000 of the world's best travel providers and premier destinations. The network's member agencies generate

over \$5.1 billion annually in travel sales, making the group the most powerful in the luxury travel segment. Their relationships with the finest travel companies provide the network's affluent clientele with exclusive amenities, rare experiences and privileged access. Virtuoso is the exclusive network of travel services and benefits provided by MasterCard® for participating World Elite MasterCard® programs. For more information, please visit www.virtuoso.com.

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