Odyssey Moon – An Entrepreneurial Model for Sustainable Commercial Lunar Enterprise.
R.D. Richards¹ and R. Khadem², ¹CEO, Odyssey Moon Ltd., 300 Interchange Way, Vaughan, Ontario, Canada, robert.richards@odysseymoon.com; ²Chairman, Odyssey Moon Ltd., c/o 15 - 19 Athol Street, Douglas, Isle of Man.

Abstract: Between 1969 and 1972, twelve humans walked on another world. After the most awe-some technological and psychological achievement of the human species, they left, never to return. Why? Was it a useless waste of human ingenuity on an Olympian folly? What caused humanity to abandon its first toehold on another world? More importantly, what is the basis to go back? What new forces and motivators are at play today that make the story a different one than the Apollo dead end?

Today there is a rebirth of interest in going back to the Moon among many nations. However while nations plan and strategize how to navigate the political minefields and conflicting national priorities that justify the value of the Moon to the everyday tax payer, there are some new private players not so constrained. They are the privateers; visionaries too, however their driving metric for going to the Moon is sustainable business and commerce. The announcement of the $30M Google Lunar X PRIZE on September 13th, 2007 has energized their imaginations and catalyzed a New Race to the Moon.

Odyssey Moon Limited is a private commercial lunar enterprise offering lunar services and products to aid humanity's sustained return to the Moon. Odyssey Moon will be sending a series of small robotic missions to the Moon in support of science, exploration and commerce in the coming decade. In December 2007, the company was unveiled as the first official competitor for the Google Lunar X PRIZE. It was also announced that mission design work had begun by the company's prime contractor, MDA Space Missions of Canada. The inaugural Odyssey Moon mission will involve a unique small robotic lander designed to deliver scientific, exploration and commercial payloads to the surface of the Moon.

On March 11th, 2008, at the 39th Lunar and Planetary Science Conference in Houston, Odyssey Moon Limited released a Request for Information (RFI) for a Payload Flight Opportunity aboard its inaugural "MoonOne" (M-1) lunar lander mission.

This paper outlines how a carefully planned private Moon mission could set in motion the technological, political, legal and regulatory precedents that will enable humanity to embrace the Moon into the world’s economic sphere.

Figure 1: Odyssey Moon "MoonOne" (M-1) lunar lander (artist conception)