

Space Trash Signs — Constellations made from space debris visualize the impact of space pollution

Coalition of private and public aerospace organizations introduces first astronomical constellations made from space debris, to educate about space pollution.

MUNICH, GERMANY, April 30, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- There are over 160 million pieces of human-made space debris in the Earth's orbit. Space pollution threatens to destroy satellites and other space infrastructure crucial for life on Earth, such as telecommunication, navigation, disaster management, environment protection, agriculture, financial services, and more.



Modern day constellations made from space debris reflect the reality of the Earth's orbits.

"There are some internationally agreed upon guidelines on debris clean-up and prevention. But none of these mechanisms has enforceability. If we don't change our behavior, space will become unusable."

— Dr. Moriba Jah, Chief Scientist, Privateer

The Space Trash Signs is a stunning visualization of space pollution that aims to increase public awareness for the topic ahead of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN COPUOS) session in June 2024. Launched with the support of aerospace companies and space agencies, scientists and universities, as well as activists, museums and media from around the world, the initiative proposes nothing less than new astronomical constellations — made from space debris. Each of these "trash signs" represents a different impact of space pollution, showing why we all should care about space trash.

For example: "The Broken Compass" signifies the loss of navigation services such as GPS, that would affect 6.5 billion people and make modern aviation impossible. "The Great 404", named

after the 'page not found' error in the web browser, signifies limited internet, impacting 43 million people who rely on satellite internet, potentially isolating whole communities.

"Since the dawn of time, humans have looked up to the stars for meaning. Space Trash Signs builds on this universal insight, to educate the public about space pollution — a topic that affects us greatly, yet no one talks about. It's our responsibility as communication experts to change that."

— Alex Schill, Chief Creative Officer, Serviceplan Group

The Space Trash Signs were identified in partnership with Privateer, the Steve Wozniak co-founded space observation company. Privateer collects over 800 million data points on objects in the Earth's orbit. This includes the position, speed, country of origin, parent object, size, shape, and even the estimate removal price. AI was then used to scan the data based on shape, source object, and location to identify the constellations.

"Privateer is all about increasing knowledge about our home, Gaia, through the lens of space. We're happy to support Space Trash Signs with our data and expertise in the mission to increase awareness for space pollution."

— Dr. Moriba Jah, Chief Scientist, Privateer

Space Trash Signs are brought to life through a [website](#), AR apps, and planetarium experiences. The website features all the signs, their data, background information and ways to act, such as signing the Zero Debris Charter facilitated by the European Space Agency and co-developed with more than forty space actors around the world.

"Experiencing Space Trash Signs in the planetarium makes the topic and the problem of space pollution even more accessible to the public."

— Dr. Susanne Hüttemeister, Director, Planetarium Bochum

"Space Trash Signs is a great way to raise awareness on what is going on in space and motivate more people to get involved. At OKAPI:Orbits, we have been advocating on space sustainability since since 2018, and we are very happy to have supported this initiative."

— Kristina Nikolaus, CEO and Co-Founder, OKAPI:Orbits

Experts from European Space Agency have recognized the important contribution of Space Trash Signs to raise awareness on the issue of space debris. Other prominent supporters include WARR, Astroscale, OKAPI:Orbits, Dark Space, Digantara, Astronomers Without Borders, and Deutsches Museum.

"We know how to solve this problem. What we need is public support to change policy."

— Alex Godfrey, Business Development Manager, Astroscale

"Space Trash Signs makes this huge problem of space debris tangible to the public. It's important

for ESA to recognize the role of such initiatives to educate people about space debris and unite us all for a zero debris future.”

— Dr. Quentin Verspieren, Space Safety Programme Coordinator, European Space Agency

Space Trash Signs was created by Serviceplan Innovation together with Moby Digg, Eat, Sleep + Design, Jürgen Branz, kimera, Non Zero, peoplegrapher, and Mediaplus Group.

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Shruthi Subramanian

Serviceplan Innovation

s.subramanian@house-of-communication.com

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