

Bootleg Postcards – The Unofficial Biography of Spirit and Opportunity

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Abstract

The Mars Exploration Rover science team broke new ground in 2004 with a policy of rapidly releasing all the imagery returned by the two vehicles onto the internet. Enthusiastic amateurs from around the world have since produced colour composites, mosaics, animations, route maps and software that has enhanced the outreach potential of the mission. This has helped maintain a high level of public interest over the four and a half year life of the mission to date.

The author presents a review of the resources made available to the public and highlights the resulting creations by enthusiastic amateurs. In concluding the author will propose a series of standards for future missions to capitalise on the capacity for creativity in the amateur community