

Brower Propulsion Laboratory: Its origins and Philosophy

BPL Background

Brower Propulsion Laboratory was officially created in 2007, although it operated for several years previously in secret. Recently relieved of the strictures of certain contracts, BPL has been able to reorganize itself publicly.

BPL originates, develops, and prosecutes space missions with little or no money and very little know-how. Its various departments, offices, positions, and assets are all represented by one person, for the sake of convenience.

BPL positions itself at the forefront of the aerospace industry in terms of its lack of resources and capabilities. Find out more or less at browerpropulsionlab.com

BPL Philosophy

Founded late in the 20th century, Brower Propulsion Laboratory was created to fill a niche in the aerospace field. While many large corporations and small companies have been formed to satisfy military, scientific, and prestige goals, none have yet been organized around the principal of disutility. The missions that BPL creates and carries out are developed in spite of the lack of many elements that other organizations find indispensable. For instance, the absence of a skill and knowledge base at BPL does not hinder its progress in the least. Similarly, the fact that BPL possesses neither assets nor appreciable income does not prevent it from completing missions. Having no staff or employees is not an impediment. The reason these things don't matter in the case of BPL, but would cripple any normal company, is simply that BPL is only motivated by doing. The basic goal of each mission at BPL is to do something. While this goal hovers in the background of every exploratory or inquisitive endeavor undertaken by individual or corporation, rarely does it maintain its prominence when compared with other motivational options such as profit, prestige, dominance, sustenance, mating, etc. BPL has become the leading innovator with this technique in the industry.

While an open ended motive such as 'to do' might seem too vague to provide any direction to a mission, it is in fact quite helpful when used in a reverse direction. Rather than providing a way forward, 'to do' becomes a reason resorted to when necessary. As an example, when a project doesn't work out because it explodes, or rusts away after years of neglect, BPL management can always retreat to the safe haven of 'having done something', thus completing the mission successfully. This projection and retreat cycle generates innovation and induces a perpetual state of disorientation, which opens the path to acquiring knowledge.

The 'to do' philosophy fits hand in glove with another principal of operation at BPL: autodidacticism. Knowledge is pursued, acquired, and



invented in the process of doing a mission, pieced together from myriad sources, and each mission is available to contribute to later missions. Eventually, a parallel universe of pseudoexpertise develops, useful only to BPL projects (and therefore inviolable, intellectual property - wise). The motto in our design department is "If you can't find the answer, just make something up. And if it doesn't work, change the question!"

The third leg of the BPL stool is the principal of soloanthropy. When every aspect of development and production of missions is located in one person, liability is limited and it saves on the expense of office birthday parties. One is spared the tedium of meetings and prattle. It also seems fitting that the emptiness and vacuum of outer space be suggested by the silence of the unoccupied corridors and offices at BPL facilities. Immersed in our work, sometimes it is only gravity that reminds us that we are still on Earth. Although a depopulated company can generate confusion on the part of potential customers who have to witness the transformation of the company founder into, say, the shop steward, the excellence of BPL products will always smooth those rough transitions. We like to say 'we put the person in personnel'.

