

Voyager 1, After Major Malfunction, Is Back From the Brink, NASA Says.

Hi, I'm Alex, and this is my response to the NYT article "Voyager 1, After Major Malfunction, Is Back From the Brink."

So, chances are you've heard of the Voyager 1 space probe mission. It's a space probe mission that's undoubtedly gained tons of fame. From being featured in *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* to taking some of the most renowned photos from space. It's also my favorite space probe!

Not only has Voyager 1 captured our interest in so many different ways, but it's also been a fantastic demonstration of engineering and human intelligence. The probe is now 46 years old, being launched in 1977. For context, that's the same year the Apple II was released. Fifteen billion miles away from Earth and running on technology that my generation has most likely never encountered before, the design of Voyager 1 is genuinely unbelievable. Not only is it the farthest man-made object with respect to the earth, but it's also the fastest traveling at a whopping 38 thousand miles per hour. All of Voyager's extraordinary aspects have shed light on many previously never-studied parts of space! Perhaps someday, Voyager will even help us communicate with intelligent extraterrestrial life as it carries a "Golden Record" that contains many sounds from Earth. All in all, Voyager 1 is pretty important scientifically.

However, it seemed to most that the old spacecraft would finally meet its end. Around November of 2023, Voyager's computers experienced a glitch that stopped them from transmitting data back to Earth. This was a devastating blow, but if you ask me, 46 years is ancient for a computer. Nevertheless, it seemed like this icon would be lost forever which was really quite sadening.

However, after months of quietness, NASA was slowly able to get Voyager to continue sending data to Earth from its scientific instruments. However according to the article, a few weeks ago, "the agency announced that it had brought the remaining instruments back online and restored Voyager 1 to its normal operations."

The whole story of Voyager 1 is just truly mind-blowing—a 46-year-old computer traveling 50 times the speed of sound outside of our solar system cheating death. I just can't express how crazy that is.