

66th International Astronautical Congress 2015

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Calling Planet Earth - Space Outreach to the General Public (6)

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CELEBRATING THE WORLD SPACE WEEK, WAY TO REACH A BROADER AUDIENCE

Abstract

2013 was a year we try out how the general public responded to celebrate, for the first time in Mexico the UN appointed World Space Week from October 4th to the 10th. We did a pilot test in 7 cities, out of 7 states. We approached the Congress to do the week's kick off ceremony that included the words of a former NASA Astronaut. The result was good for devoting just little more than one month in preparation; we had some seven to eight thousand participants over all cities and found it was received well. Many difficulties arose along the preparation, that helped us to get a better grasp of the general issues.

Therefore in 2014 we at the Mexican Space Agency's Outreach directorate took three months ahead of the date to have more time to knock on doors. We also put a web page with info, set up an e-Address and designed a visual image to round up things. We took several trips here and there, did some phone calls and many e-mails. The result was astonishing; there were 22 states out of 32 where some activity took place, more than 80 venues performing more than 800 different types of activities involving more than 75 thousand people participating all over the country. The first activity was an awards ceremony for the Space Art Contest celebrated earlier in the year, and ended with 2 Symphonic Concerts performing "The Planets Symphony" from Gustav Holst, at the University of México's world class Concert Hall. There were participants from many different origins; all the way from Kindergarden to Universities, and from government to ONGs and private companies.

We would like to share lessons learned, ups and downs and how we will use this experience to increase the numbers for year 2015.

The fun part of it, or not so funny I have to confess, was that we had no budget allocated other than our salaries, office and travel expenses. This year our goal is to achieve ten times more. We will be more than happy to share all these with you.