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Space Expectations: Involving the Public in Space Activities (2)

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ANYONE CAN BE A ROCKET SCIENTIST: COLLABORATION AND PARTICIPATION AT NASA

Abstract

NASA has consistently reached out to the public to communicate the findings of the U.S. space agency. However, in the last 7 years, NASA has taken an increasingly proactive role in collaborating with and encouraging the public participation in space exploration. From citizen ambassadors to open government forums, NASA's knowledge management and open government activities are focusing on inspiring and engaging the public in the passion of space.

By bringing content to where people are congregating online, NASA breaks the paradigm of forcing people to come to the agency. Instead, space exploration is set in context with the conversations people are having in their own lives–on Facebook, Twitter, Second Life, and YouTube. This paper will also discuss the successes NASA has had in reaching out to developers and scientists through the U.S. President's initiative on Data.Gov, crowdsourcing science to the public, and populating Google Earth, Moon, and Mars.

NASA's open government plan (http://www.nasa.gov/open/) provides a strategic framework around which many of these activities are organized to continue to push the envelop of public engagement.