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60+ YEARS' NVR MAGAZINE 'RUIMTEVAART': LESSONS LEARNED AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

**Abstract**

The magazine 'Ruimtevaart' of the Netherlands Space Society (Nederlandse Vereniging voor Ruimtevaart, NVR) has been published since 1951. In its history of over 60 years, spaceflight has evolved from theory to interplanetary missions and everyday applications. When the magazine was first published, Sputnik was still years in the future and articles discussed various possibilities and developments in technology and theory rather than actual projects. The majority of the members tended to be academics, resulting in rather technical and theoretical articles as well as abstracts of important papers from abroad. As spaceflight became a reality and the membership expanded and broadened, articles became less academic and more popular (an introduction in 1961 for instance proudly notes that the current issue of the magazine includes no formulas whatsoever). As the decades passed, more and more articles appear on topics other than space technology and exploration: Earth observation, telecommunication, space law, space medicine, commercial projects, spin-off etc. receive more and more attention. Growing emphasis is put on developments in The Netherlands itself, as the Dutch space industry expands during the 1970's and '80's. In the old days, study groups set up by the NVR often reported on their research progress in 'Ruimtevaart'. Nowadays, corporate members of the NVR are reporting on their professional projects, and the magazine is also an instrument to inform about national and European space policy.

The first years, 'Ruimtevaart' published articles in both Dutch and English, with the English articles mostly being reprints from important international scientific articles. Later on the focus changed to Dutch, with an occasional English article, but in recent years -mainly due to internationalisation of the workforce in the Dutch space industry and institutes- the number of articles in English is increasing again. The very first 'Ruimtevaart' contained information on the IAF and since then frequently updates on the IAF and IAC appeared in Ruimtevaart but also news on sister organizations in the UK, Japan, Denmark, etc.

With the coming of the Internet and its instantly available news from all over the world, the magazine also necessarily had to shift its focus from tracking all developments worldwide to analysis, overviews, background information and in-depth articles on national developments. At the same time 'Ruimtevaart' evolved from a stenciled couple of pages with few black and white graphs into the full-colour, well-illustrated magazine of today.

This paper traces 'Ruimtevaart's evolution as it successfully kept up with the changes in astronautics, membership and publishing. We hope that our lessons learned on how to deal with the information society could be of use for new space societies and maybe for other societies with a long history as well.