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"LOOK APP", A FREE IOS APPLICATION FOR SPACE EVENTS

Abstract

"Space Apps Challenge" is a two-day competition organized and sponsored by NASA. In April 2014 over 8000 people came together in 95 cities to take part in this challenge. The first-prize winner in Rome, "Look App" Project, was realized by a group of students from the Departments of Aerospace Engineering and Astronomy from Sapienza University of Rome and by three app developers from OverIT Company. This paper describes the activities of Look App team in the framework of competition, a unique opportunity to collaborate and work together with people of different ages, backgrounds and experiences. "Look App" is a smartphone application able to send notifications about astrophysical events and sky phenomena data such us moon phases, ephemerides for planets, gamma ray bursts, supernovae, ISS access and asteroids fly-by gathered from online scientific databases. The service automatically cleans and parses these data to give a user-friendly visualization. "Look App" provides exhaustive details for each category about name, description, observing time and URL source that can be shared on social networks. The application is currently available on the App store in the free version for iOS devices. The paper focuses on the "Look App" idea and purposes, with emphasis on its development and technical approach. Moreover, it outlines also the outreach programme and future purposes, in particular the application potentialities and new categories.