

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

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THE “X FACTOR”, EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF ESA’S COMMUNICATIONS IN THE NEW
SPACE AGE

Abstract

This is a follow up paper on the impact of the European Space Agency’s new communications strategy to adapt and respond to the need of the New Space Age, known as “Space 4.0” in Europe. While the previous paper presented at IAC 2018, the European Space Agency’s communication evolution toward Space 4.0, focused more on the necessity to change, this paper will focus on the Agency’s communication solutions and their impact on its target audience. The goal is to use a quantitative research method to evaluate the effectiveness of these initiatives and share the Agency’s lessons learned with the space community. In 2017, ESA began an internal review of its communication strategy to reply to Space 4.0 and to review its strategic vision and operations. Priority was given to a Content News-driven organisation including a new ESA Editorial Board and an ESA Newsroom having a strong multimedia and mobile focus. The result was a three-year strategy horizon, with an ambitious approach to reinforce the Space 4.0 vision and actively take Europe’s citizens on board. This plan originated new campaigns with innovative and flexible formats, such as the European Space Talks and new communication opportunities such as thematic weeks as well as ‘anchor’ events. It also expanded the scope of the Agency’s communication partnership and production capabilities. In 2019, Europe is preparing to discuss its next-generation ambitions in space, and address the challenges facing not only the space sector but also society as a whole. Government representatives will discuss how to finance and implement space programmes in Europe in a sustainable and efficient way at the ESA Ministerial Council, dubbed “Space19+”. This event will provide unique opportunities for space-related communication. The ESA Communication team will support Space19+ and continue to inspire, inform and interact throughout the year so that citizens can clearly understand that we have high ambitions in support of society for decades to come and participate in the achievement of common goals. This research will analyse the different tactics used in the new communication strategy and systematically quantify their impact on the general public. Their success will be determined comparing data from 2018 and part of 2019, provided that 2018 is representative of the start of the new communication strategy implementation and 2019 represent the completion of it. This approach will also provide a visualisation of the evolution of the strategy impact across the years.