

ESA on RAINNEWS24: A Case Study of Television Communication

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In May 2000, ESRIN the Italian establishment of the European Space Agency (ESA) started a collaboration with the television channel Rainews24. Born about 10 years ago, Rainews24 is the "all-news" channel of the Italian public television (RAI). It transmits 24 hours in a day and it is the most diffuse satellite channel in Italy. Each Thursday an ESA representative (Stefano Sandrelli) is interviewed by a professional journalist of RAI, as a 5-6 minutes deepening of the 5 p.m edition of News. The interview is further broadcasted in the late evenings of Thursday and in the early morning of Saturday. Interviews are largely informal and close to a dialogue rather than an academic point of view "from the space". They are strictly linked to the weekly news and prepared in the morning of the same day by the ESA representative in collaboration with two professional journalists of RAI. The subject is chosen among the most debated news of the week; video, images and animations are provided by the ESA television service and by press agencies (Reuters etc.). Moreover, even if they are focused on ESA activities, they are not advertisements: we deal with space and research as a human activity, so that doubts and criticisms can come out about our use of space. This outreach activity began as an experiment, but at this point ESA interviews have become a fixed appointment, waited from week to week. As a result of five years of uninterrupted collaboration, we have recently overcome 200 hundreds interviews and what is more is that about 30% of them are dedicated to pure astronomy, which is seen by Rainews24 as an open source of daily news.