

CASE STUDY

How BBC's 'Stargazing Live'
Used Affinio to Build
Astronaut Farewell Video

Affinio

BACKGROUND

Stargazing Live is an educational television program, focused on astronomy, that is televised in the United Kingdom. First appearing in 2011 on the network BBC Two, the show is now in its sixth season. Each season consists of three episodes that air over the course of three consecutive nights and cover topics such as solar eclipses, black holes, unknown galaxies, and the moon.

In May 2013, the ISS Multilateral Crew Operations Panel announced the assignment of Timothy (Tim) Peake, a British-born European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut, for a mission to the International Space Station in late 2015. The announcement made history as Peake would be the first British ESA astronaut to visit the International Space Station. With the announcement of Peake's departure to ISS, the BBC confirmed the release of two special Stargazing Live episodes airing on December 15, 2015 to cover the historic launch.

As the mission launch date of December 15, 2015 drew closer coupled with growing media attention, Stargazing Live wanted to find a way to create a sense of importance around the historic event; increase social engagement; and introduce a younger digitally-centred audience to their show.

CHALLENGE

Three weeks prior to launch, the Stargazing Live team decided to create a good luck video for Peake using user-generated content from highly-engaged fans that followed Stargazing Live, Tim Peake, and the ESA on Twitter. With a plan to tweet the footage from the Stargazing Live Twitter account on launch day, the video would share the importance of the event and celebrate audience members engaging with the story.

"We wanted to give Tim's biggest fans on social media a chance to tell the story of Tim's launch from their perspective and wish him good luck. The first Brit in space is a momentous occasion and we knew his fans, and the public, would want to feel included in this important moment in history."

- Jon Eastman, BBC Digital Storytelling

To get the project off the ground, the team at Stargazing Live needed to find the right people to reach out to for the planned video. The Stargazing Live team initially planned on manually identifying a few hundred followers in hopes they would be open to participating. However, the team learned that they needed to hone in on a core influential audience.

APPROACH

Stargazing Live approached the BBC Worldwide Audience Insights team to inquire about using social tools to narrow their search and find a core influential audience. The BBC Worldwide Audience Insights team, were early adopters and power users on the Affinio platform, introduced Stargazing Live to Affinio's technology.

BBC's Worldwide's EVP of Insight, David Boyle, explained the role Affinio played in helping Stargazing Live as "The platform is genuinely insightful and we knew it would provide the great data and actionable information for the Stargazing Live team."

Using the Affinio platform, the Stargazing Live team analyzed the Twitter audience of the European Space Agency (@ESA), Tim Peake (@astro_timpeake), and Stargazing Live (@BBCStargazing). The users were then segmented into unique interest-based groups. From these groups, Stargazing Live was able to extract the top 800 key influencers. Using this list of influencers, Stargazing Live contacted each user asking for their participation and submission of a self-created good luck video using their phone.

RESULTS

Stargazing Live received 90 videos from the Affinio generated influencer list. Fan videos were submitted from all over the world including England, France, Germany, Canada, and the United States. Using this user-generated content, Stargazing Live created a final video that was posted to the Stargazing Live Twitter account (@BBCStargazing) on the date of the launch.



Posted using the relevant hashtag, #BritInSpace, the video has generated over 300 retweets and 400 favourites to date.

Cover Photo Credit: Andrew Davies