

Image and narrative on marine scientific projects: The example of the Fixo³ project

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The European Commission identified three interested parts in the sharing of the marine scientific knowledge: Civil Society, Public Authorities and the Industry. Marine resources management, new economic opportunities, and the risks for humankind from the anthropogenic activities and climate changes are the main invoked reasons (Rom Rogers, 2015). Therefore outreach and communication are becoming fundamental aspects in most scientific projects. Big improvements have been achieved: communication professionals / companies are being hired or commissioned; innovation and creativity have been responsible for the creation of new and more successful products.

In a digital age as the one we are crossing now, communication relies in two basic tools: image and narrative. Every document, speech or report, every website, web tool or video follows visual and narrative codes. The analysis of how pictures and text/ stories have been used to communicate scientific knowledge (following analysis techniques from the information science - narrative analysis, design theories (Trumbo, 1999, 2000; Estrada, 2014) and other social and cognitive disciplines) can be useful to set future strategies on how to ameliorate communication and develop better outputs for scientific projects.

FixO3, a European Project on Ocean Observatories, deals with a complex and rather unfamiliar (from the wider audience perspective) subject. Which strategies were used by the outreach component of the project? What was the role of visual and narrative impact for the construction of its several outputs? Which are the main challenges for marine science outreaching in general? What can project managers and outputs developers learn from this kind of analysis?

References

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