

Hi everyone,

the year is racing to a close and we wish all of you a peaceful holiday season. This last newsletter in 2019 aims at inspiring you by reporting on a successful cooperation between a science YouTuber and an institution. Directly afterwards it sends you on the couch for some peaceful hours: We carefully selected some longer films for you – enjoy!

Thilo Körkel, Kerstin Hoppenhaus and Sibylle Grunze

What's going on

50.000 clicks per video or How to cooperate with a science YouTuber

Your institution's YouTube channel does not attract huge audiences? This is rather typical for any scientific or academic institution that does not do research in space or in the oceans or that produces only a few videos per year. What can be done to change this? One of the most obvious approaches to boost your impact is to partner with a science YouTuber who has a huge subscriber base.

VDI Technologiezentrum (VDI TZ), which acts as a funding agency for the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF), does exactly that. For years now, Eckhard Heybrock, head of technical communication at VDI TZ, has been running a cooperation with the German science YouTuber Cedric Engels. As producer as well as presenter Engels operates the successful channel [»Doktor Watson«](#), with some hundred thousand video views per month.

The story began, when VDI TZ invited some YouTubers to apply for a small film project. Engels was chosen – among other things, because his thematic interests were in line with scientific fields like photonics and quantum technologies which VDI TZ respectively BMBF wanted to be communicated in a younger community.

From this starting point a long-standing cooperation emerged and the partners developed stable routines in different common projects. »We have to invest only a small amount of time in our clips«, Heybrock says. The only control VDI TZ exercises is rigorously fact checking the spoken text. Engels confirms: »Once we have agreed upon the script I record it word by word without any further changes.« The final video is then published on the »Doktor Watson« channel. Typically a few ten thousand views can be expected. Some clips even count six-digit-numbers of visitors.

The financial support of BMBF is mentioned by Engels at the end of each video (for example [here](#) at 11:39; you may need to skip the ad). He also makes it transparent in the accompanying text which is displayed below the video. BMBF's influence on the content is limited, however: »I'm getting paid to cover a specific topic«, he says. The development of the concrete content is up to him.

Only thanks to paid cooperations Engels can run his small production company and

pay his employees. If he had to make a living by monetizing his clips with YouTube ads, he says, »the channel would just be a hobby«.

Cooperating with the public sector has some advantages, he adds, due to their different motivation: »Private companies focus on commercial aspects and want to be more in control.« Engels also works with the Max Planck Society (MPG). For their [#wonachsuchstdu-campaign](#) he tours through Germany, together with YouTuber MrWissen2Go. Their videos are published on MPG's channel. View numbers are relatively small there, but in the long run the videos are expected to increase MPG's subscriber base. To speed things up, Engels also publishes some of the clips on »Doktor Watson« and sends those who want to see more of #wonachsuchstdu to the MPG channel.

»Doktor Watson« also joined [»SN 1054«](#) to further boost his videos recently. This new network of German science YouTubers is operated by Christoph Krachten, presenter of [»Clixoom«](#), who counts more than two million video views per month. Krachten cooperates with the German popular science publisher [»Spektrum der Wissenschaft«](#) (declaration of interest: tk is an employee of »Spektrum der Wissenschaft«) and aims at producing »more and better science« for YouTube. If his efforts are successful, institutions may have even more reasons to cooperate with a science YouTuber in the future. (tk)

Videos only look good if you watch them

A must see: This year's favorite



»Albatross«
by Chris Jordan

This is not only a film, but also a piece of art, as we stated in our [Newsletter #6](#). Click on the picture or go to albatrossthefilm.com. (sg)

A classic: The »Christmas Lecture Archive« of the Royal Institution

It will take some time for the Royal Institution to publish this year's »Christmas Lecture« with mathematician Dr. Hannah Fry who will present [»Secrets and lies: The hidden power of maths«](#). Meanwhile you can choose from plenty of lectures from the [»Christmas Lecture Archive«](#) all the way back to 1968 (yes, it includes black and white films with a 4:3 frame ratio!).

If you have no patience for whole lectures you can check out the [»Highlights«](#) playlist. (sg)

Some fiction: »Hidden Figures«

The [Netflix biopic](#) about three African-American women who overcome bigotry and sexism to become the brains behind the launch of the first American astronaut into space is currently streaming in Germany. The film gives insights into space science and its history. (kh)

Not really science and crossmedia, but still worth your time

In our [Newsletter #8](#) we reported on the »Online Journalism Awards 2019«. We would like to recommend some of the films once again:

»[Breathtaking](#)« by Undark Magazine
»[Gone in a generation](#)« by the Washington Post
»[Visual Investigations](#)« by the New York Times
»[Human Terrain](#)« by The Pudding, a digital platform for visual essays
(sg)

Happy New Year



»The Science of Fireworks!«
by the Royal Institution
(sg)

Still want more stuff?

See (and read) what you've missed in [our newsletter archive](#).

»Science & Video« is a newsletter for science communicators. In »Science & Video« [Thilo Körkel](#) (tk), [Kerstin Hoppenhaus](#) (kh) und [Sibylle Grunze](#) (sg) pool their long-standing expertise in the field of science communication and moving images. We joyfully welcome the effects of digital disruption, are committed to defending high quality standards, and hope to be part of a future in which science communication via digital media has an increasingly powerful impact on society. Contact us at thilo.koerkel@nature.com, hoppenhaus@hgmedien.com, grunze@hgmedien.com.

IMPRESSUM

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