

Reflections on CERN's and ESA's communications

Arnaud Marsollier – Head Press & Digital

June 2023

Similarities and Differences

	CERN	ESA
Management	1 Directorate – 1 big project	10 Directorates – many projects
Structure	Single place Laboratory	Multisite Agency
Annual Budget	> 1 billion	> 7 billion
Public interest	High!	High!
Competitors	China?	NASA – China – India...
Project timeline	20 to 30 years	5 to 30 years
Local impact on the ground	huge	Very limited
Geostrategic value	Limited	High

Launching a 10 billion machine

James Webb vs Starting the LHC

Black holes are actually helping...



A few key principles

- Develop a strong narrative and story telling (better if you talk about the Universe)
- Don't be afraid on the fact that so many things can go wrong (that's actually an asset!)
- Use your partners / your networks
- Invest time and material (Webb launch was 18 months work, including 17 months of negotiation with NASA)
- Share it live and engage!
- Images are essential
- Webb (or even JWST), LHC, LEP, FCC... Or is it actually good to have a weird name...?
We have to think about a name.



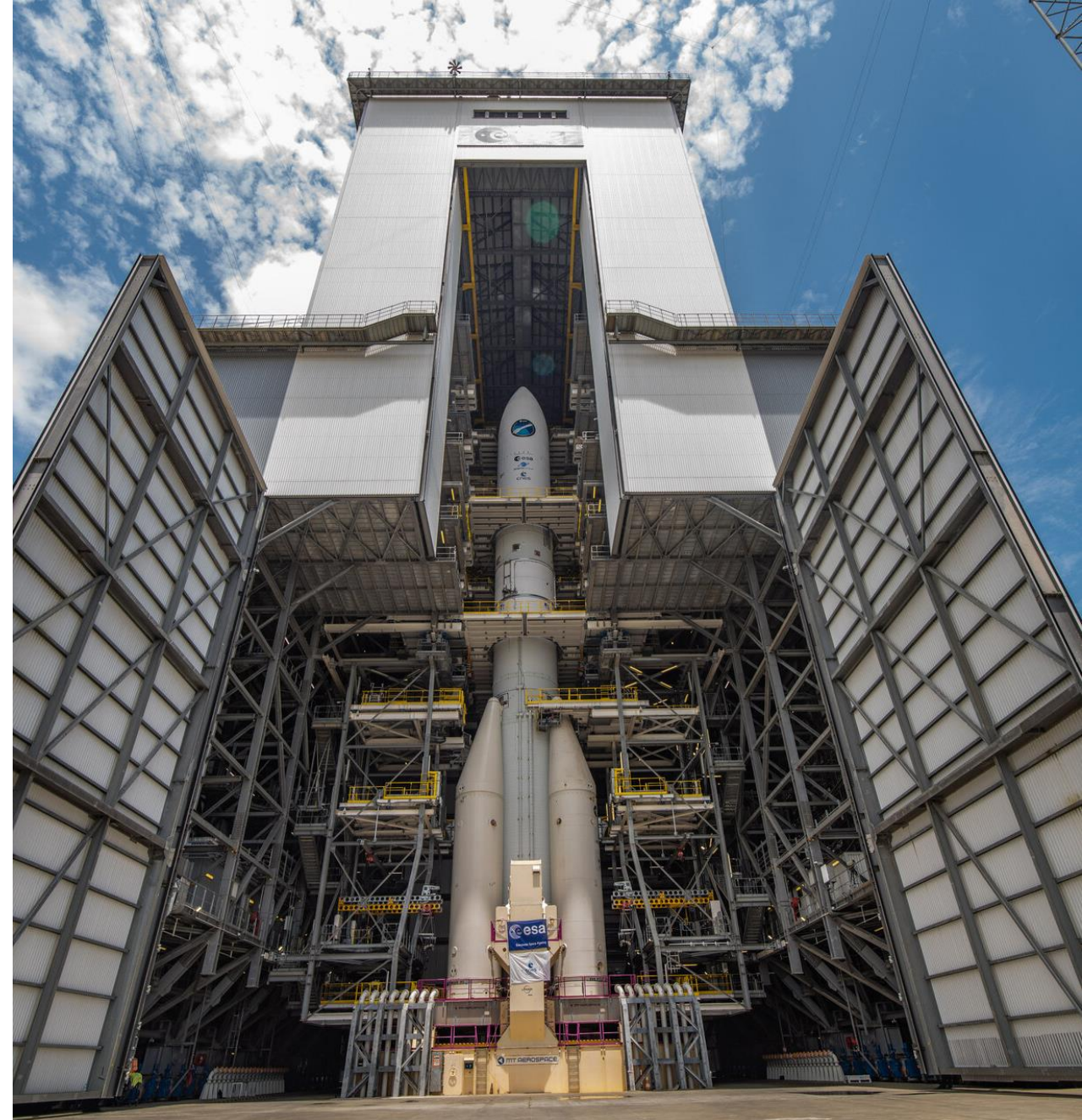
Branding matters

And it does not come for free...



Don't hide, face the challenge, lead the conversation

- . Long term project face technical, funding issues, delays... or other challenges
- . Hiding is not an option: transparency and proactive communications are key



What about long term massive projects?



- Don't be shy. If you don't push your project, nobody will do it for you
- Crisis can actually help...
- Competition is a driver
- Bringing the highest political level to the table is key
- Don't be afraid of big numbers ↓



Use your best spokespeople

...and make sure to align messaging to get one strong single voice



Use Public Survey to your advantage

- Polls can help understand the strength of public support... but can also be used to promote a project itself
- It is important to seize opportunities and Hijack news (when relevant of course)



Engaging politicians, neighbours, youngsters...

Some ideas from participative approaches?...

ESA High Level Advisory Group

- Former Ministers, Journalist, Explorer, NATO, UNESCO, WEF...
- Involve civil society influential people in designing recommendations on a big idea



Fermilab Community Advisory Board

- “The main mission of the board is to provide ongoing advice and guidance related to the future of the laboratory...”

Youth Sounding Board (UN / EU)

- Bringing the voice of youngsters





home.cern