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High Resolution Stereo Camera (HRSC) on Mars Express - a decade of PR/EO activities at Freie Universität Berlin

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Since 2003 the High Resolution Stereo Camera (HRSC) experiment on the Mars Express mission is in orbit around Mars. First images were sent to Earth on January 14th, 2004. The goal-oriented HRSC data dissemination and the transparent representation of the associated work and results are the main aspects that contributed to the success in the public perception of the experiment. The Planetary Sciences and Remote Sensing Group at Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) offers both, an interactive web based data access, and browse/download options for HRSC press products [www.fu-berlin.de/planets]. Close collaborations with exhibitors as well as print and digital media representatives allows for regular and directed dissemination of, e.g., conventional imagery, orbital/synthetic surface epipolar images, video footage, and high-resolution displays.

On a monthly basis we prepare press releases in close collaboration with the European Space Agency (ESA) and the German Aerospace Center (DLR) [http://www.geo.fu-berlin.de/en/geol/fachrichtungen/planet/press/index.html]. A release comprises panchromatic, colour, anaglyph, and perspective views of a scene taken from an HRSC image of the Martian surface. In addition, a context map and descriptive texts in English and German are provided. More sophisticated press releases include elaborate animations and simulated flights over the Martian surface, perspective views of stereo data combined with colour and high resolution, mosaics, and perspective views of data mosaics. Altogether 970 high quality PR products and 15 movies were created at FUB during the last decade and published via FUB/DLR/ESA platforms.

We support educational outreach events, as well as permanent and special exhibitions. Examples for that are the yearly "Science Fair", where special programs for kids are offered, and the exhibition “Mars Mission and Vision” which is on tour until 2015 through 20 German towns, showing 3-D movies, surface models, and images of the HRSC camera experiment. Press and media appearances of group members, and talks to school classes and interested communities also contribute to the public outreach.

For HRSC data dissemination we use digital platforms. Since 2007 HRSC image data can be viewed and accessed via the online interface HRSCview [http://hrscview.fu-berlin.de] which was built in co-operation with the DLR Institute for Planetary Research. Additionally HRSC ortho images (level 4) are presented in a modern MapServer setup in GIS-read format since 2013 [http://www.geo.fu-berlin.de/en/geol/fachrichtungen/planet/projects/marsexpress/level4downloads/index.html].

All of these offers ensured the accessibility of HRSC data and products to the science community as well as to the general public for the last ten years and will do so also in the future, taking advantage of modern and user-optimized applications and networks.