

A day in the life of a Video Producer

As Producer/Director at media company Agtel, I'm involved in some major science communication projects that enable me to combine my physics background with my interest in television production.

Today is going to be very busy as Science Week Ireland is in full swing and we're filming the launch of a telescope project for schools on behalf of our client, Discover Science and Engineering. I meet the crew at our offices at 8am and we transfer all the filming equipment to one of our crew vehicles before heading to our first location of the day. As Producer/Director, it's my job to lead the whole production and make sure that we film the right material to make a strong story when we edit the final video together. I've already spent the best part of a week planning the logistics of this shoot and what the finished story will look like – discussing things with the client at every stage to make sure that we give them maximum value.

Producing video projects is all about communicating sometimes complex concepts in a way that engages and even entertains the target audience. I find that the research skills I learned while studying physics at Trinity College Dublin really help me understand complicated scientific ideas quickly and convey them clearly. My experience of problem-solving with technical equipment during my Masters degree in nanotechnology also helps when I'm using our sophisticated camera and editing equipment.

We move quickly when we arrive on location to set up all the equipment in the best position. Once we've filmed all the speeches, we interview some of the key participants and then travel to our next location. This afternoon the Dublin Institute of Technology has invited a lot of young people from schools all over the city to have a go at dozens of colourful science demonstrations. After we've filmed a wide variety of experiments, we head back to the office and I move on to one of my other science projects.

One of the projects I'm producing is a series of educational DVDs for schools all over Europe by the European Space Agency. Today we're working on instructions for the astronauts – for every DVD in the series an ESA astronaut films experiments on board the International Space Station, and we also film the students in four schools around Europe doing similar experiments. It's very exciting to watch the footage from space of the astronauts floating around following your instructions!

With the crew procedures for the astronauts e-mailed to the clients for their feedback, it's time to head home at around six o'clock and relax in front of the television – although watching tv can sometimes feel like work...

Diarmaid Mac Mathúna

*'we're
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Diarmaid Mac Mathúna. Diarmaid has a BA degree in Physics and an MSc in Physics by research from Trinity College Dublin.