

Ralph Ewig, PhD – Biography

Dr. Ewig has 15 years of experience across all areas of space systems design, analysis, development, and testing. His expertise combines highly detailed knowledge in specialized areas with a broad understanding of all aspects of space system development, as well as relevant project management experience. To date he has authored over 30 publications on various aerospace topics.



Born and raised in West-Germany, Dr. Ewig immigrated to the US at the age of 20 to further his education. He holds three degrees from the University of Washington, with emphasis on space system design, plasma physics, and system optimization. During his studies he contributed to the Princeton National Spherical Torus Experiment (NSTX) and Helicity Injected Tokamak, and was lead engineer of the UW Nanosat program.

In 2000 he joined Andrews Space as a Space Systems Engineer and was later promoted to Principal Investigator and Project Manager. He was the Project Manager for the NASA Future Space Transportation Study (FSTS), and Principal Investigator for the Mini-MagOrion (nuclear pulsed propulsion) experiment program in partnership with Sandia National Laboratories. He developed advanced RLV performance analysis tools, worked with the FAA/AIAA RLV Safety Working Group, provided system engineering support, and managed successful proposal developments for contracts of up to \$15 million, spacecraft subsystem analysis for the NASA Alternate Access to Space station (AAS) program, and Project Manager / Technical Lead for the Andrews Space Concept Exploration & Refinement architecture contract under NASA's exploration program (Project Constellation).

In 2005 he became a partner in Holder Aerospace, providing consulting services on space systems and launch vehicle development and testing. From early 2006 until the end of 2008 he joined AirLaunch LLC as Senior Engineer, where he was responsible for the analysis and testing of the VaPak propulsion systems and performance analyst of the QuickReach launch vehicle under the USAF/DARPA Falcon program. Following the completion of the AirLaunch program at the end of 2008, he continues his activities with Holder Aerospace as a consultant for a wide variety of clients (NASA, DODO, DOE, and commercial). In addition, in 2009 he founded OpenAerospace.Org, a not-for-profit community webportal enabling space enthusiasts all over the world to collaborate towards the peaceful uses of space.

In late 2010, Dr. Ewig left Holder Aerospace to take a position as Mission Operations Engineer with Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX), focusing on the Dragon spacecraft for the NASA Commercial Space Transportation Services (COTS) program.

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