

Beyond Starlink: Understanding the Coming Waves of LEO Satellite Deployments

How many satellites are currently planned for
Low Earth Orbit (LEO)?

In Space Now

Starlink

SpaceX

USA

Internet broadband + D2D

SATELLITES PLANNED

34,864

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

12,612

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2019 (operational)

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpaceX (Falcon 9, Starship)

Reference: starlink.com



Starshield

SpaceX

USA

Military network connectivity

SATELLITES PLANNED

1,600

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

245

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2020

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpaceX (Falcon 9, Starship)



Amazon Leo (Project Kuiper) — Gen1 + Gen2

Amazon

USA

Internet broadband

SATELLITES PLANNED

7,736

(Gen1: 3,236, 2020; Gen2: +4,500, approved Feb 10, 2026)

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

398

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2025 enterprise beta; Gen1 50% deadline waived Jun 2026; full Gen1 due 2029

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

ULA, Arianespace, Blue Origin, SpaceX



Eutelsat OneWeb

UK / France

Internet broadband

SATELLITES PLANNED

660
528 (Next)

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

660
0 (Next)

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2023 (operational)

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Arianespace, SpaceX (post-2022
Soyuz suspension), ISRO (LVM3)

Different business model – wholesale. Eutelsat has announced “Eutelsat Next” as a new LEO constellation.



AST SpaceMobile (BlueBird / BlueWalker)

AST SpaceMobile, Inc.

USA

Direct-to-device cellular broadband (4G/5G)

SATELLITES PLANNED

~100

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

9

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

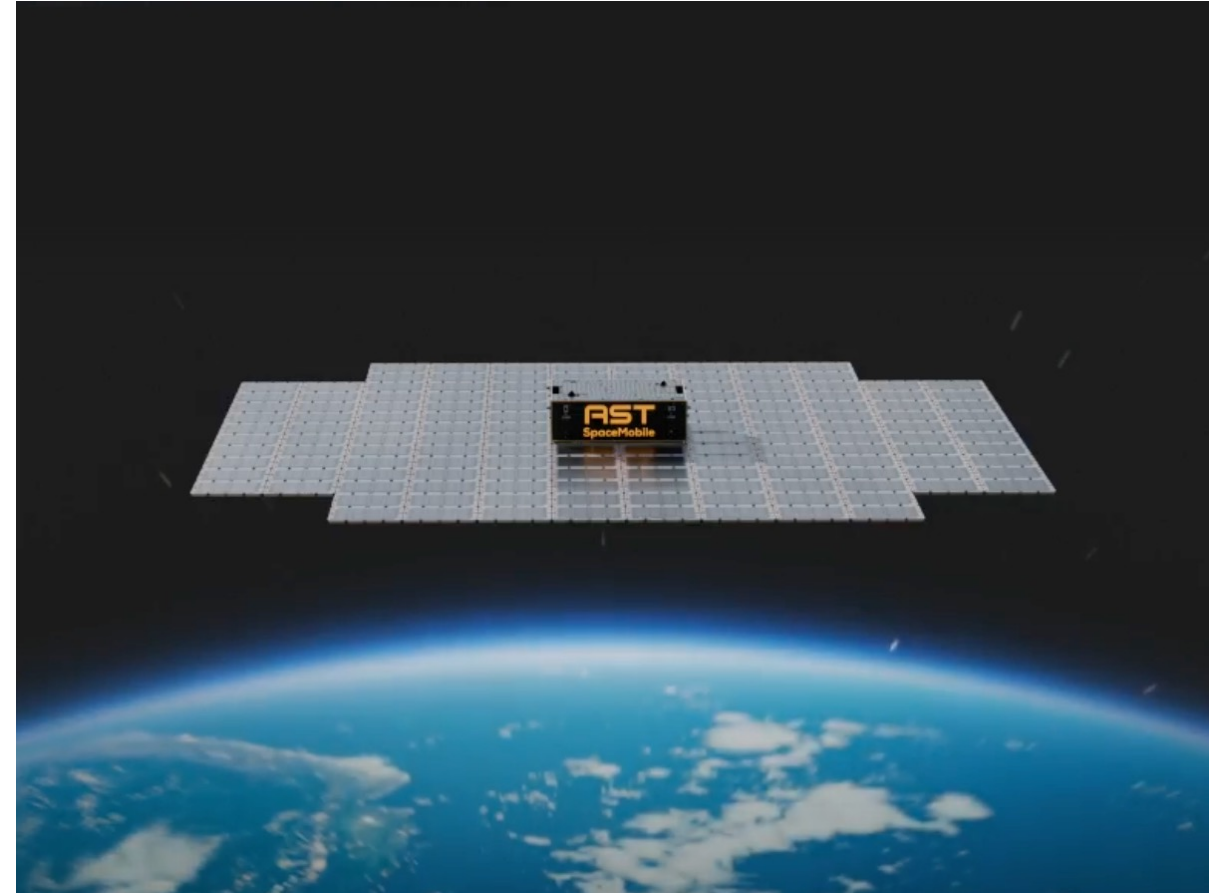
2026 (targeting scaled commercial service)

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpaceX (Falcon 9), Blue Origin (New Glenn)

Enormous satellites – the size of half a basketball court. Often the D2D partner for telcos not with SpaceX.

Reference: ast-science.com



Lynk Global

Lynk Global, Inc. (partnered with SES for MEO-Relay/investment)

USA

Direct-to-device (SMS, cell broadcast; voice/broadband planned)

SATELLITES PLANNED

2,000

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

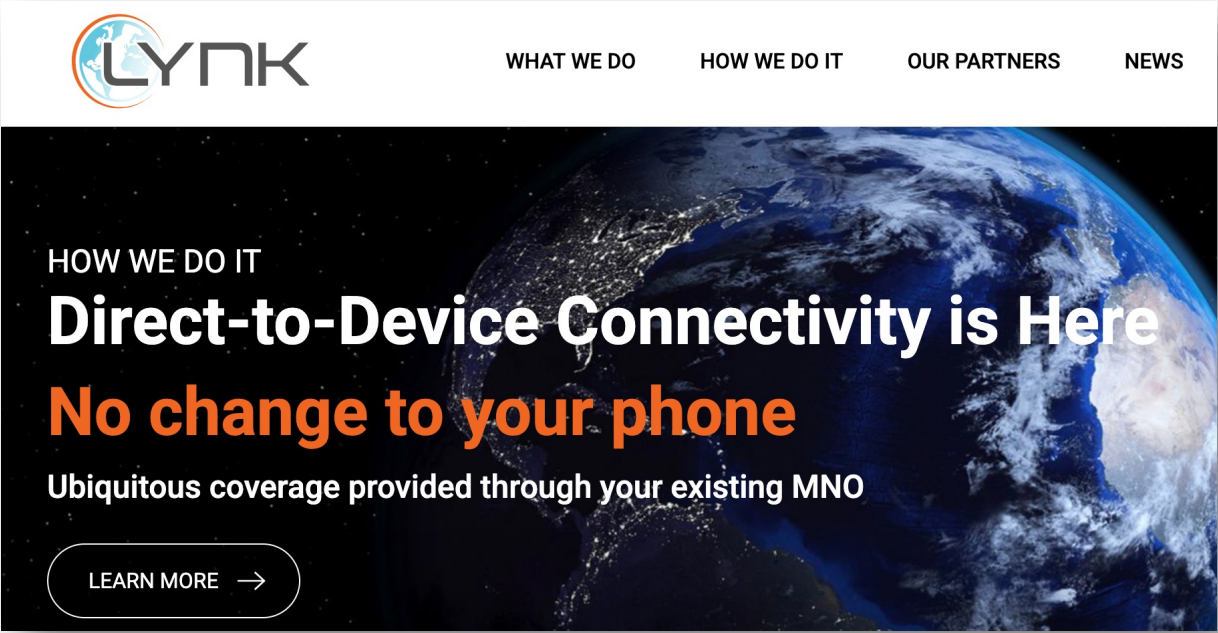
12

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2022 initial launch; voice/broadband targeted ~2027

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpaceX (Falcon 9 rideshare)



Globalstar (3rd Gen / C-3 System)

Globalstar (acquisition by Amazon announced ~Mar/Apr 2026, ~\$11B)

USA

Voice/data (Apple Emergency SOS backbone) + D2D

SATELLITES PLANNED

~85
1,946 (C-3)

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

97
0 (C-3)

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

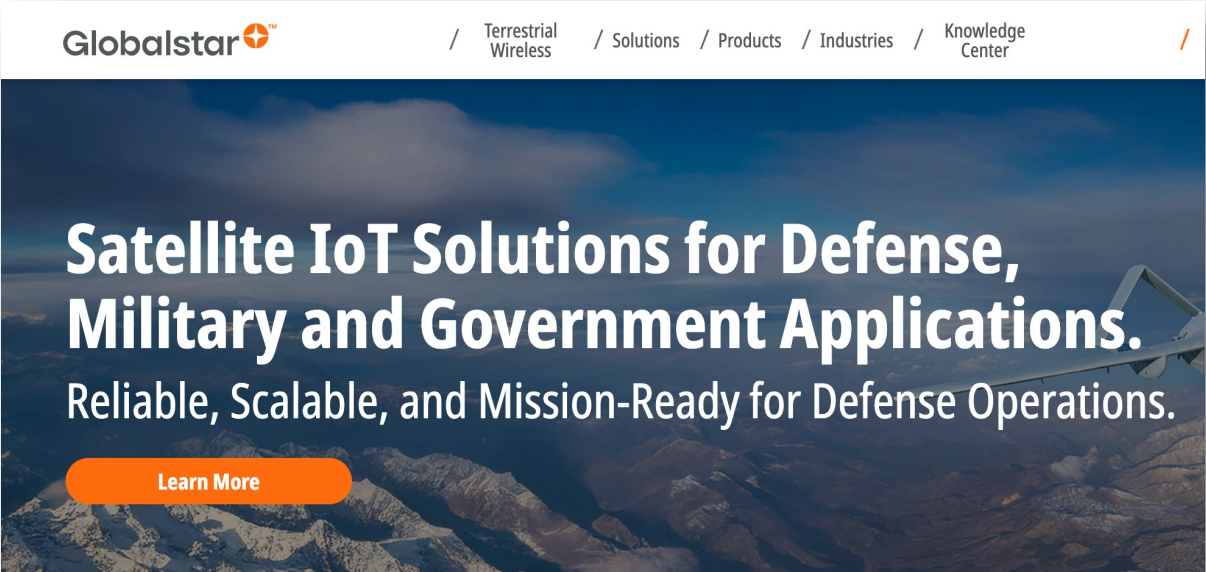
Ongoing (2nd gen operational); C-3 deployment ~2026

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Rocket Lab, MDA Space

One of the original LEO companies from 1990s. Major partner for Apple. Now being acquired by Amazon.

Reference: globalstar.com



Iridium (Iridium NEXT / Certus)

Iridium Communications (being acquired by Rocket Lab, ~\$8B, announced Jun 29 2026)

USA

Voice/data (L-band) + emerging D2D/IoT

SATELLITES PLANNED

75

(Plus unknown number for Project Stardust)

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

177

(started launching in 1997, many sats have expired)

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

1998 orig.; 2019 NEXT complete;
Project Stardust D2D layer ~2026

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpaceX (Falcon 9, for NEXT gen)

One of the original LEO providers from the 1990s. Now launching new service – and being acquired by Rocket Labs.

Reference: <https://irp.iridium.com/ntn-direct/>



A New Era of Satellite
Connectivity

Guowang (GW / Xingwan / SatNet / China SatNet)

China Satellite Network Group (SatNet), state-owned

China	
Internet broadband (state-run; possible military/dual-use)	
SATELLITES PLANNED	SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)
13,952	216
YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION	LAUNCH PARTNER(S)
2021	Long March 5B, 8A, 12, 6A rockets (CASC)

GuoWang Becomes China's Largest Constellation for Second Time With Wenchang Mission [Long March 8A Y5]

Meanwhile, the Long March 8A completes its fifth flight in its debut year.

 JACK C.
DEC 06, 2025

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Reference: china-in-space.com

Qianfan (Thousand Sails / G60 Starlink / Spacesail)

Shanghai Spacecom Satellite Technology (SSST) / Spacesail

China

Internet broadband (commercial)

SATELLITES PLANNED

16,000

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

239

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2024 first launch Aug 2024; phase 1 regional service ~2026, global ~2030

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Long March 6A, 8, 12/12B (CASC)

China enters race for LEO broadband dominance

by Jason Rainbow July 14, 2025



Rassvet ("Dawn")

Bureau 1440 (subsidiary of X Holding/IKS Holding)

Russia

Internet broadband (explicit Starlink alternative); also 5G NTN D2D/drone control

SATELLITES PLANNED

318 ... or ...
924

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

~21–22

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2023 first experimental launch; Mar 2026 first production batch; service ~2027

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Roscosmos launch services (Soyuz-2.1b, Vostochny/Plesetsk)

EURASIA OUTLOOK

Russia's Military Pivot to Chinese Space Tech: The Sinicization of Rassvet-1

Russia is seeking to replace the loss of access to captured Ukrainian Starlink satellites by expanding its Rassvet satellite program, using Chinese tech that creates a dangerous dependency on China.

MAY 05, 2026

6 1 4 Share



Planned

Starlink Gen3

SpaceX

USA

Internet broadband (VLEO, AI/enterprise-grade uplink capacity)

SATELLITES PLANNED

100,000

(new FCC filing; separate from Gen1/Gen2)

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

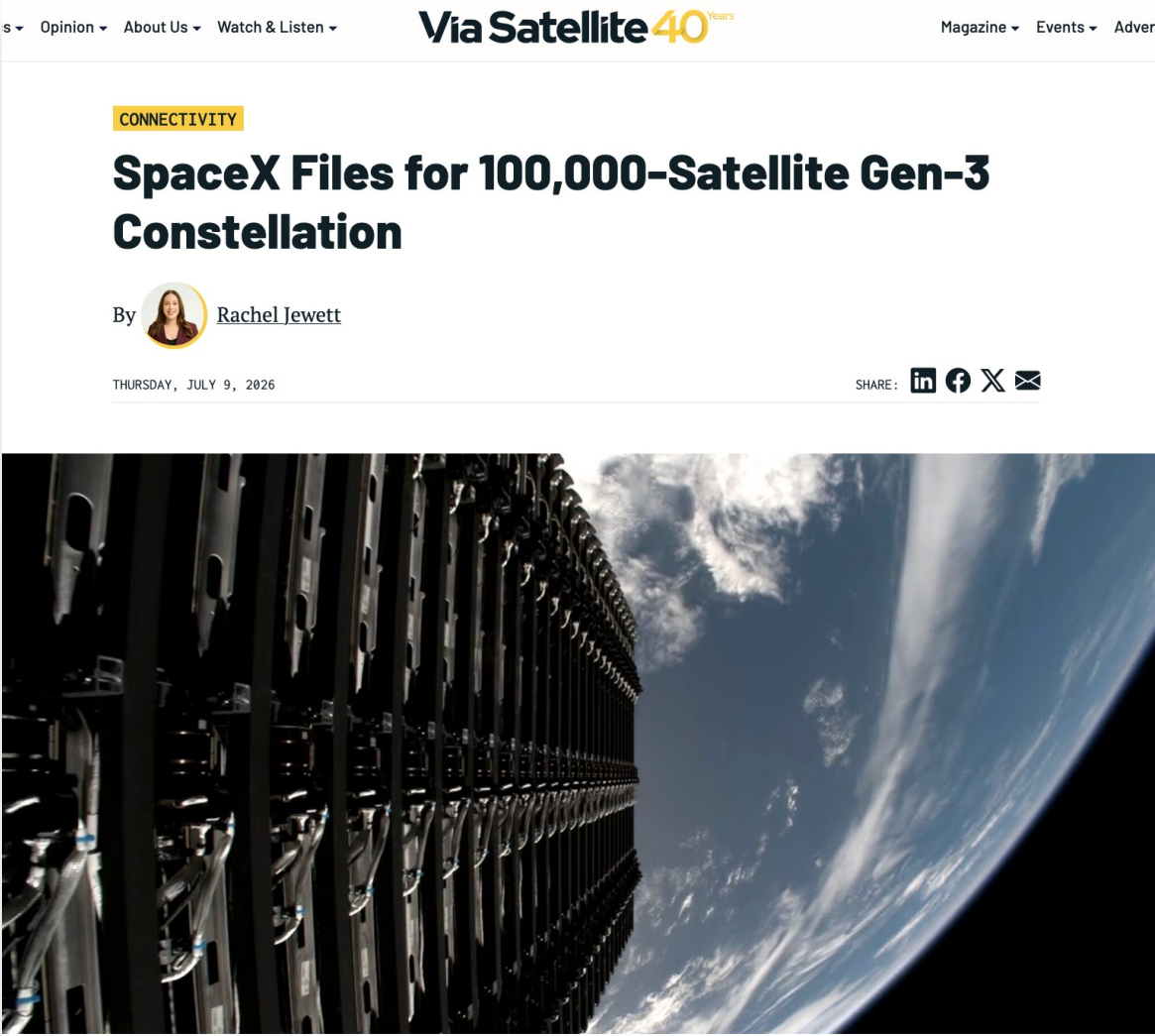
(filed Jul 6–7, 2026; not yet approved)

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

Requires Starship at operational cadence; framed as AI-era backbone for late 2020s

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpaceX (Starship required — 2,000 kg/satellite)



Blue Origin TeraWave

Blue Origin

USA

Enterprise/data-center-focused broadband (B2B/B2G, optically linked)

SATELLITES PLANNED

5,348

5,310 LEO
128 MEO

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

(announced Jan 2026; deployment begins Q4 2027)

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

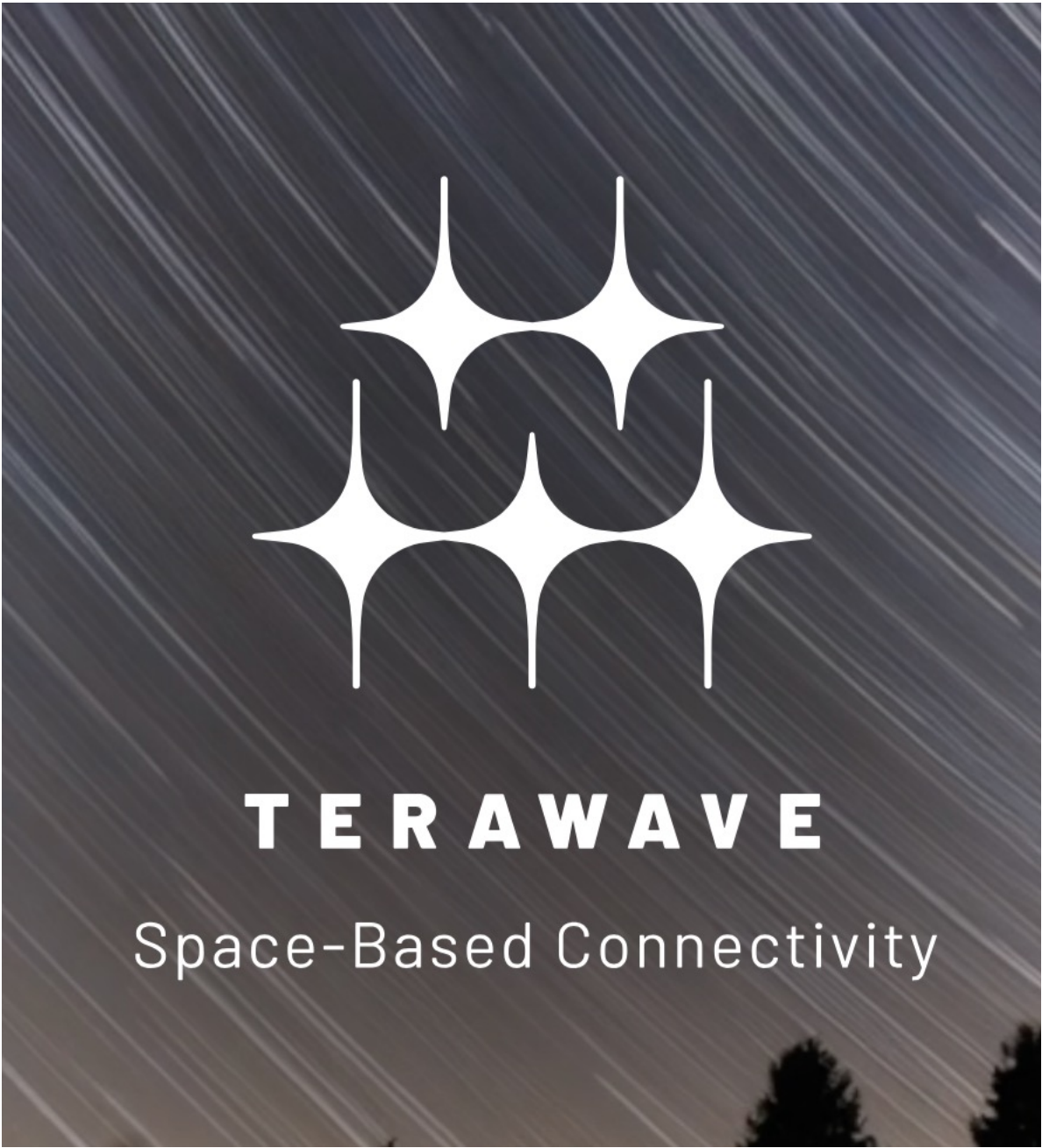
2027 (deployment begins)

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Blue Origin (New Glenn, in-house)

Optical download links to provide up to 6 Tbps

Reference: blueorigin.com



IRIS² (Infrastructure for Resilience, Interconnectivity & Security by Satellite)

SpaceRISE consortium (SES, Eutelsat, Hispasat) for the EU

European Union

Secure govt comms + broadband internet (multi-orbit: LEO/MEO/GEO)

SATELLITES PLANNED

282

(264 LEO + 18 MEO)

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

Initial services ~2029–2030 (delayed from original 2027 target)

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Unknown



Telesat Lightspeed

Telesat

Canada

Internet broadband (enterprise/govt/consumer; adding Mil-Ka defense spectrum)

SATELLITES PLANNED

198?
300?
1,600?

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

~Q1 2028 (global commercial service target)

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpaceX, Blue Origin New Glenn, others?

Significant funding from the government of Canada

Reference: telesat.com/leo-satellites



Go above and beyond
with Telesat
Lightspeed™

Don't compromise on LEO satellite services.
Take your mission-critical operations



Honghu-3

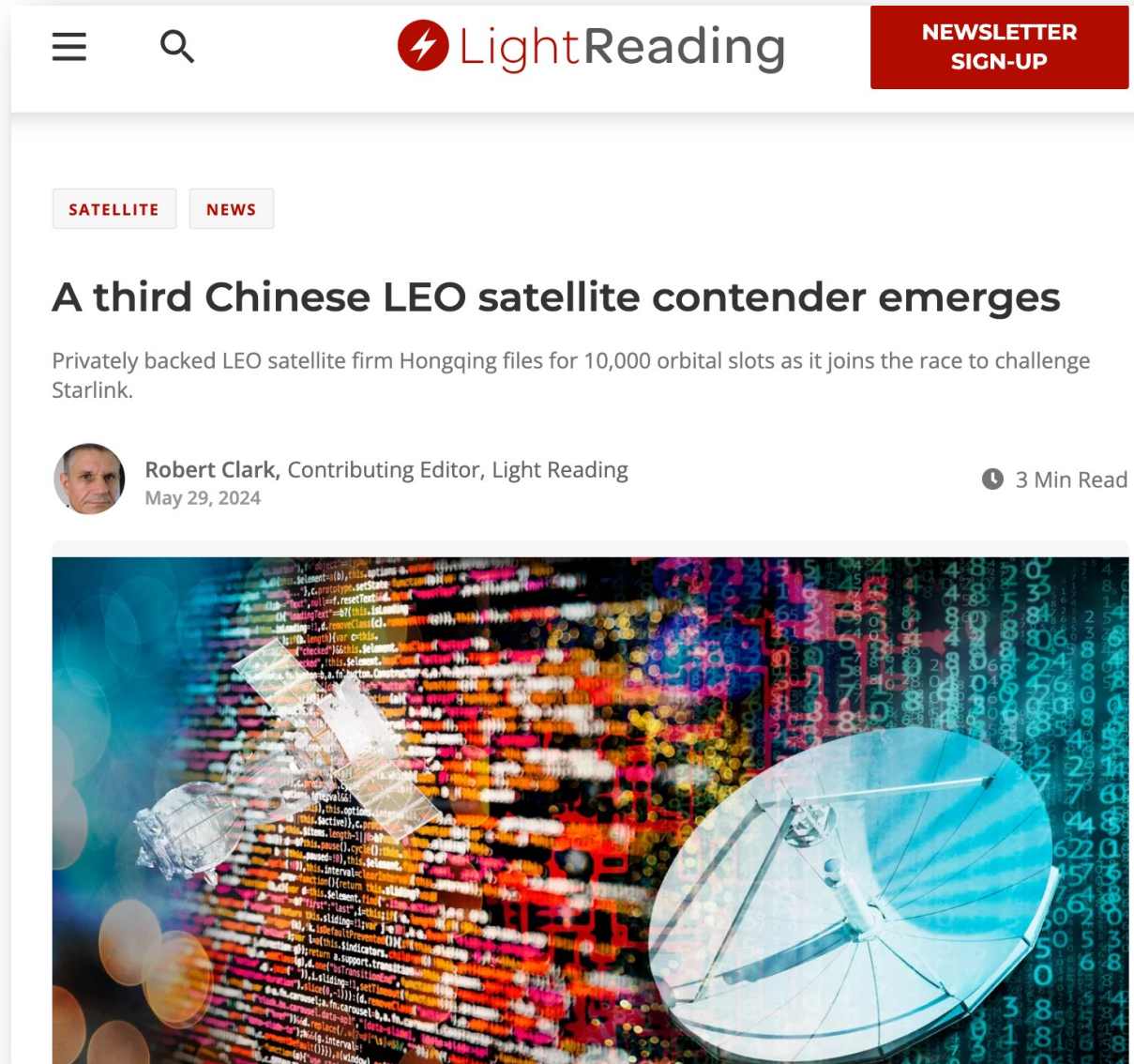
Hongqing Technology, 48% owned by LandSpace

China

Internet broadband + possible ISR/military applications

SATELLITES PLANNED

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)



Meridian Space

SpinLaunch

USA

Internet broadband (reflector-array antenna approach)

SATELLITES PLANNED

1,190

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2026 (first launch target)

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpinLaunch's own kinetic/suborbital launch system (in development)



Jio sovereign LEO constellation (unnamed)

Reliance Jio Platforms

India

Internet broadband + direct-to-device

SATELLITES PLANNED

~1,600

(proposal approved by IN-SPACe, India's space regulator)

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

Announced Jun 19 2026 at Reliance's 49th AGM; deployment "next 2–3 years" if approved

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Not yet disclosed (Presumably India's ISRO, given the "sovereign" focus.)

Reference: spacenews.com

Business Standard

HOME COMPANIES START-UPS RESULTS NEWS

E-PAPER DECODED OPINION

Home / Companies / News / Reliance Jio gets IN-SPACe approval for 1,600-satellite LEO network

Reliance Jio gets IN-SPACe approval for 1,600-satellite LEO network

Reliance Jio plans to deploy 1,600 low-Earth orbit satellites offering up to 5 Tbps capacity, with 20-22 ground stations to provide broadband and mobile satellite services across India



Logos Space

Logos Space

USA

Internet broadband (multigigabit, enterprise/govt; jam/interference-resistant)

SATELLITES PLANNED

4,178

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2027

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Not disclosed (FCC-approved)

Focused on private enterprise networks

Reference: logospace.com

CONNECTIVITY

Bringing LEO to Private Networks: Logos Space Engineering VP Explains the Constellation’s Enterprise-Focused Design

By  Rachel Jewett

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2026

SHARE:    



CTC-1 / CTC-2 (unnamed next-gen constellations)

Institute of Radio Spectrum Utilization & Technological Innovation

China

Internet broadband / 6G / security (unconfirmed; possibly incl. orbital compute)

SATELLITES PLANNED

96,714 (CTC-1)

96,714 (CTC-2)

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

Unknown/speculative — filings secure spectrum priority, not deployment commitment

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Unknown

CHINADAILY中国日报网

Home / Business / Technology

China files plans for 200,000-plus satellites with global body

By CHENG YU and MA SI | chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2026-01-12 18:07

China has filed plans for more than 200,000 satellites with the International Telecommunication Union, signaling a decisive push to secure orbital slots and radio spectrum as competition intensifies among major powers for access to low-Earth orbit.

According to filings published on the ITU's website, China has submitted applications covering more than a dozen satellite constellations, with individual systems ranging in size from not many more than 10 satellites to nearly 100,000.

The two largest constellations, CTC-1 and CTC-2, each comprising 96,714 satellites, were filed by the Institute of Radio Spectrum Utilization and Technological Innovation.

The institute, a newly established research and development body focused on radio spectrum innovation and commercialization, accounted for over 95 percent of the total.

Other bodies to have made submissions include the state-backed China Satellite Network Group

Reference: No confirmed official site

ORBITAL DATA CENTERS

Space-based AI compute constellations

SpaceX Orbital Data Center System ("AI1" / "Starmind")

SpaceX / xAI (merged entity, \$1.25T combined valuation, Feb 2 2026)

USA

Orbital data center / AI compute (solar-powered, Starlink laser mesh)

SATELLITES PLANNED

1,198,120

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

1

(AI1 satellite unveiled Jun 8, 2026);
pilot compute nodes on Starlink V3 in 2026

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2026 pilot testing; scale depends on Starship reusability/cadence

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpaceX (Starship, in-house)



Starcloud (formerly Lumen Orbit)

Starcloud, Inc.

USA

Orbital data center / AI compute

SATELLITES PLANNED

88,000

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

1

(Starcloud-1, Nov 2 2025); Starcloud-2 planned Oct 2026

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2025 first orbital GPU/LLM training demo; scaling through 2020s

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpaceX (Falcon 9); integrating Starlink Mini Laser crosslinks



Blue Origin Project Sunrise

Blue Origin

USA

Orbital data center / AI compute (relies on TeraWave as optical/laser backbone)

SATELLITES PLANNED

51,600

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

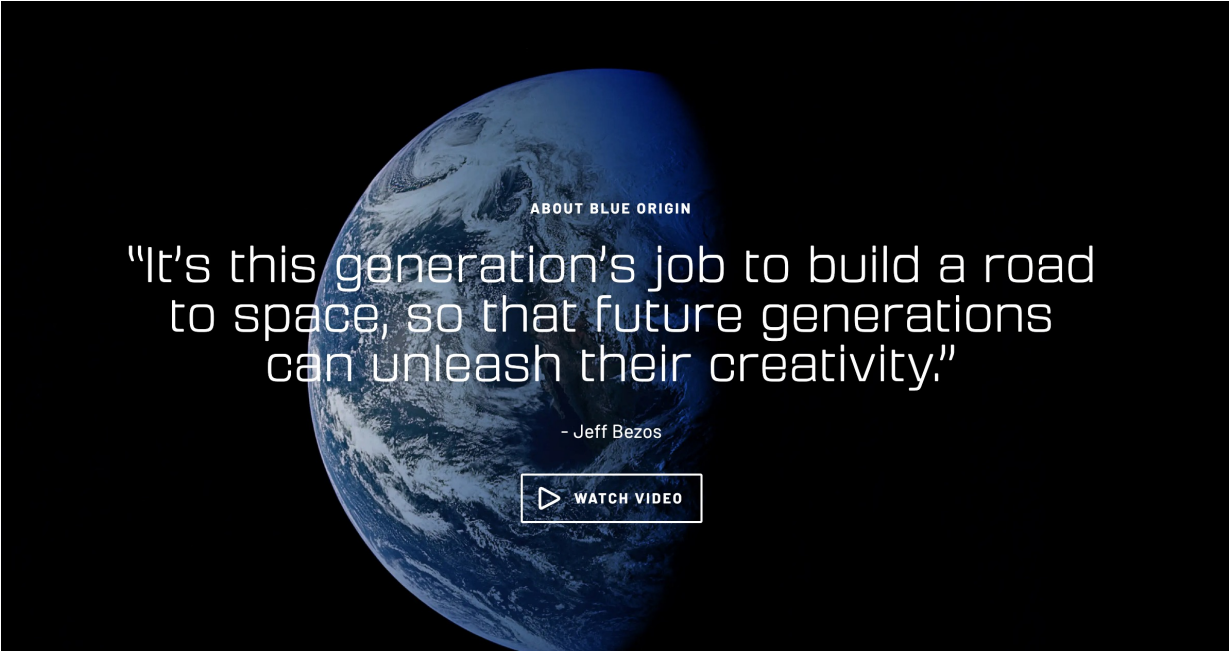
(FCC filing Mar 19, 2026); New Glenn has flown only twice

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

Timeline undisclosed; analysts suggest unlikely before the 2030s

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Blue Origin (New Glenn, in-house); backhaul via Blue Origin's own TeraWave constellation



Orbital (Orbital Compute, Inc.)

Orbital Compute, Inc.

USA

Orbital data center / AI compute (inference-focused; no ground comms of its own)

SATELLITES PLANNED

100,000

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

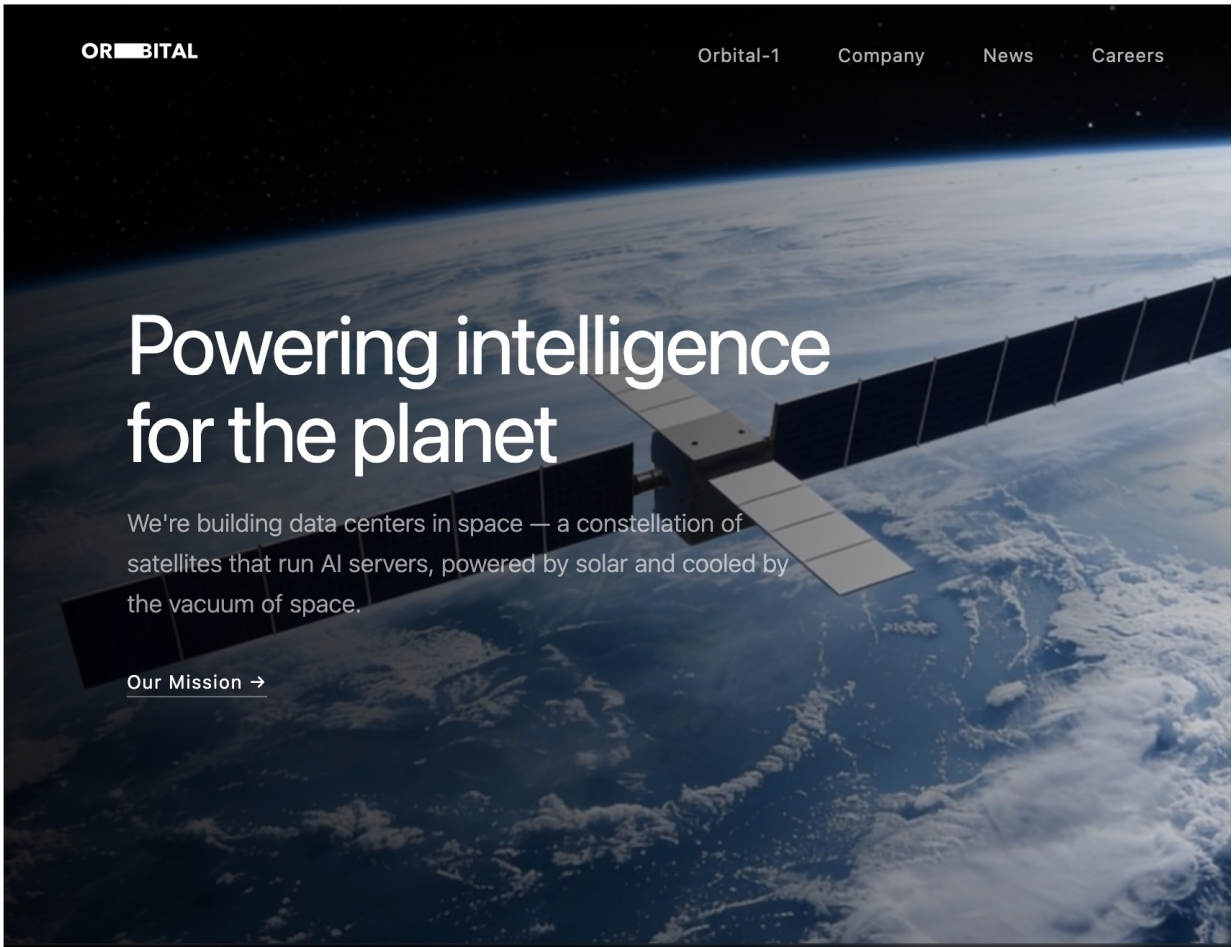
YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2027 demo mission; 2028 first full-scale satellite

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

SpaceX (Falcon 9, for 2027 demo); relies on third-party optical relay via Starlink/Kuiper

Reference: orbital.inc



Stampede

Cowboy Space

USA

Orbital data center (cloud computing, AI/ML, data fusion, cybersecurity)

SATELLITES PLANNED

20,000

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

Unknown

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Unknown

Reference: cowboyspace.com

SPACE NEWS



Commercial

Cowboy files plans for up to 20,000 orbital data centers

by Jason Rainbow
May 14, 2026



The Cowboy Space team has plans for vertically integrated infrastructure spanning launch vehicles, space-based power and in-orbit compute. Credit: Cowboy Space

Google Project Suncatcher

Google (partnering with Planet)

USA

Orbital data center (TPU-based AI compute)

SATELLITES PLANNED

?

SATELLITES LAUNCHED (~JUL 2026)

0

YEAR STARTED / PLANNED OPERATION

2027 prototype?

LAUNCH PARTNER(S)

Planet Labs (satellite bus/hosting)



Forbes

INNOVATION > CONSUMER TECH

Google Plans To Run AI Data Centers In Space With Project Suncatcher

By [Anisha Sircar](#), Contributor. © Anisha Sircar is a journalist covering tech,...

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How many satellites are currently planned for
Low Earth Orbit (LEO)?

2,345,078

36 : Total planned constellations
2334523 : Total planned satellites
10 : Total constellations with at least one launched sat
12687 : Total launched sats in all constellations
10263 : Total launched sats in constellation operational shells

46 : Total planned constellations
10555 : Total planned satellites
37 : Total constellations with at least one launched sat
1994 : Total launched sats in all constellations
767 : Total launched sats in constellation operational shells

Jonathan MacDowell

<https://planet4589.org/space/con/conlist.html>

How many will actually be launched?

(Entirely separate conversation about
the lack of launch options...)

Economic sustainability?
Space debris?
Kessler syndrome?
Environmental / climate issues?
Astronomy interference?

(Research needed...)

Thank you

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