

Virgin Galactic makes satellite launch service new company

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Virgin Galactic's California-based small satellite launch provider is now a separate company.

Virgin Group founder Sir Richard Branson announced Thursday that the new company headquartered in Long Beach is called Virgin Orbit.

The company has been developing an air-launch system for small satellites called LauncherOne.

The LauncherOne rockets will be released from a Boeing 747 jet named Cosmic Girl.

Virgin Orbit says it already has substantial launch orders for the system, which is in an advanced phase of hardware testing.

The new company's first president is veteran aerospace executive Dan Hart. He was formerly Boeing Co.'s [vice president](#) of government satellite systems.

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