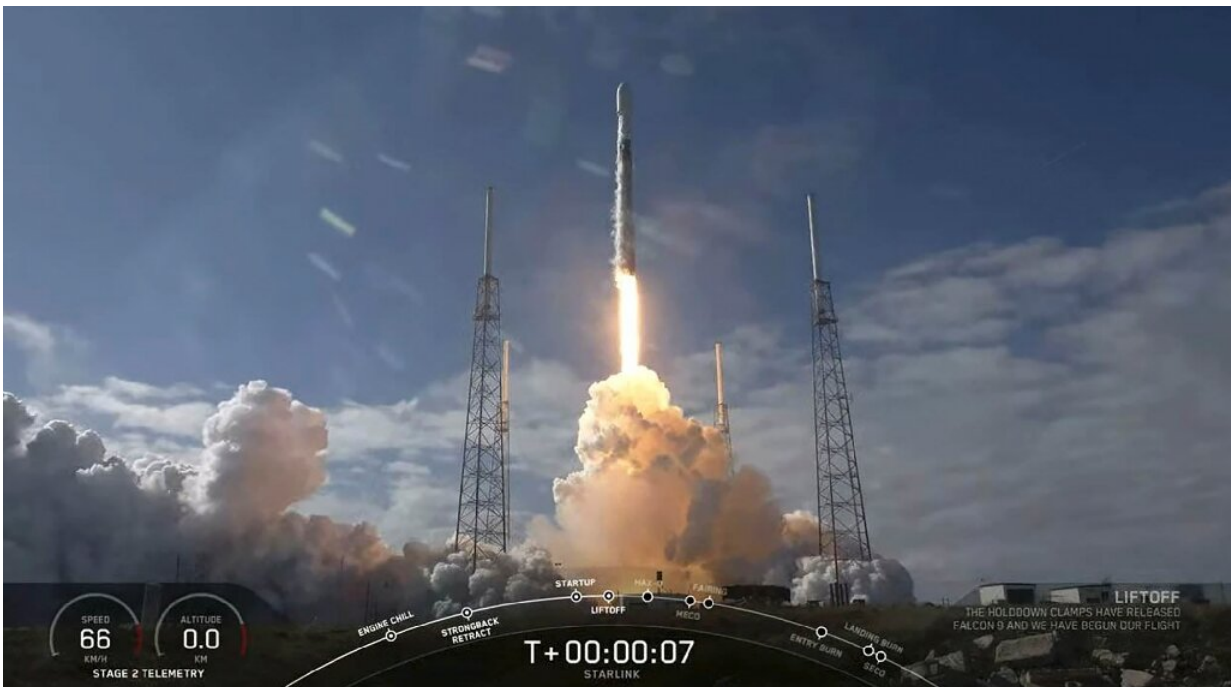


# Elon Musk dismisses astronomy concerns over Starlink network

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This video still image provided by SpaceX shows a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket as it lifts off to launch 60 new Starlink satellites into orbit from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida on February 17, 2020

SpaceX founder Elon Musk on Monday dismissed scientists' concerns that his company's Starlink constellation of internet satellites would obscure the view of the night sky, predicting the network "will not cause any impact whatsoever in astronomical discoveries."

Musk is trying to seize control of the future internet space market and has already sent about 300 Starlink satellites into orbit—with plans to grow that number, potentially up to 42,000.

Scientists raised objections after the initial batch appeared as a train of bright lights shortly after they launched last year, arguing they were a death knell for both optical and [radio astronomy](#).

Speaking at a [satellite](#) internet conference in the capital Washington, Musk said his company had already taken measures to reduce their reflectivity.

"I am confident that we will not cause any impact whatsoever in astronomical discoveries, zero," he said. "That's my prediction, we will take corrective action if it's above zero."

He said the issue only occurred as the satellites were "tumbling" as they raised their orbit, and that once they achieved their final flight path, the issue went away.

"I've not met someone who can tell me where all of them are," said Musk. "So it can't be that big of a deal."

But he added SpaceX was working with the science community to reduce the potential for reflection, including painting the antennas black instead of white, and placing a sunshade on the satellites.

The system is due to go live in the northern United States and Canada later this year and expand to global coverage by 2021.

Musk wouldn't be drawn on the cost to users, nor on precise speed, but said it would be enough to stream high definition movies and to play high-end video games without noticeable lag time.

He added that the user terminal would look like a "UFO on a stick" and would not require a specialist to install, unlike other home [satellite dishes](#)

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"The box will have just two instructions and they can be done in either order: point at sky, plug in," he said.

The dish would then automatically align itself to a target satellite.

Musk said the network was primarily targeted at a niche market of three to four percent of users who live in remote areas, and was therefore not a threat to traditional telecommunications companies.

He also dismissed the potential impact of next-generation 5G networks on his business model, saying that technology was excellent for high density cities but didn't have the range to do well in rural settings.

By contrast, space internet only works well in sparsely populated environments, he said.

Musk has said he was hoping to generate \$30 billion revenue a year, or 10 times what SpaceX is earning from its space launches, and plough the profits back into rocket and spaceship development.

Several rivals are also vying for a slice of the pie, including London-based startup OneWeb and giant US retailer Amazon, whose Project Kuiper is far less advanced.

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