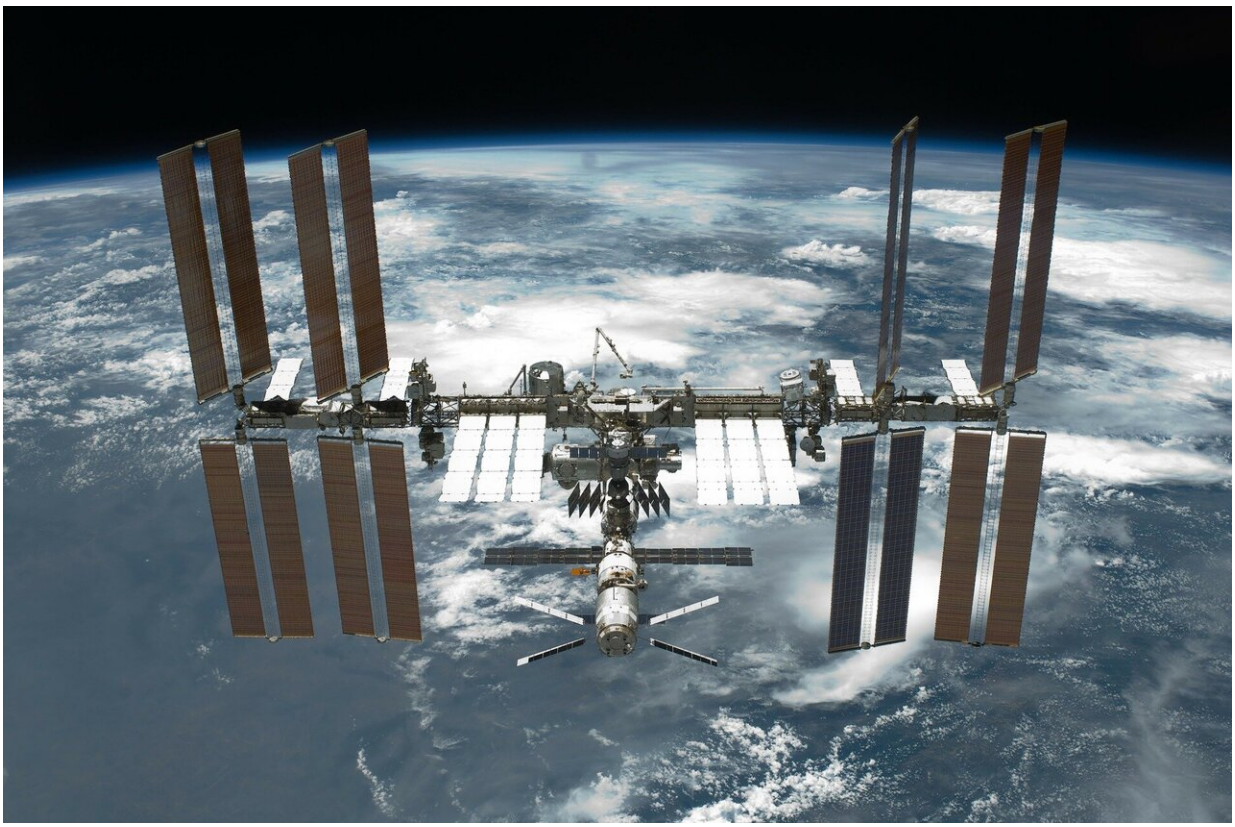
Colorado-based companies Voyager Space, Palantir join forces on national security work in space

March 25 2024, by Judith Kohler, The Denver Post



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Denver-based companies Voyager Space and Palantir Technologies have signed an agreement to work together on enhancing national security

capabilities in the commercial space realm.

A memorandum of understanding approved in February seeks to combine Voyager Space's more than three decades of space exploration and missions with Palantir's software technology and data analysis. The company's customers include the military, law enforcement and health care organizations.

"We are thrilled to collaborate with Palantir, exploring a diverse range of technologies and applications as we operate in a commercial space ecosystem," Marshall Smith, Voyager's chief technology officer, said in a statement.

Shyam Sankar, CTO of Palantir, said in a statement that the partnership represents a commitment to "advancing the frontiers of global commerce, civil, and national security capabilities" while reaffirming industry's role in bringing leading-edge technology to space exploration and security.

Voyager has a history of working on the International Space Station and is one of a handful of companies selected by NASA to design and develop commercial space stations. The ISS is expected to be retired in 2030. China's Tiangong space station is the only other one currently in operation.

"We are the only private company in the world that owns our own private real estate on the ISS. Everything else is owned by a nation-state," Matthew Kuta, Voyager president and co-founder, said in an interview.

The company has the Bishop airlock, which allows movement between the inside of the station and space, provides a research area and allows the release of satellites and other items into space. Kuta said Voyager has

conducted 1,300 missions to the ISS and deployed more than 340 satellites.

Whether it's the International Space Station or Starlab, the station being developed by Voyager and Airbus Defense and Space, a space station can provide a large power supply for a company such as Palantir to process data collected in space.

"There's a lot of data that is collected in space, but the plumbing is kind of jammed up. It's very difficult to transmit all that data back from space. The pipes are filled, essentially," Kuta said.

Working with a company like Palantir, well known for its artificial intelligence and machine learning technology, would facilitate processing in space, allowing for a more concise transmission of data to Earth.

"At Voyager, we have a lot of heritage in space station work, exploration work, the design and development," Kuta said. "But one area that it definitely made sense to partner with a company like Palantir was on the software side."

Kuta said the work with Palantir will be focused primarily on national security that could include other allied nations and partner organizations such as NATO.

"Voyager and Palantir have already done joint proposals to potential customers," Kuta said.

Palantir, which moved its headquarters from California to Denver in 2020, has sparked concerns at points because of some of its clients. Its work for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has been criticized by advocates for immigrants' rights even though the company disputed the idea that its software aids in deportations.

Some doctors, organizations and members of Parliament raised privacy concerns when Palantir was awarded a contract in 2023 to help overhaul the technology system of Britain's state-run health service.

"I think the key is to understand who the underlying customer for Starlab is," said Kuta, responding to a question about the controversies. "The underlying customer for Starlab is NASA, not the DOD (Department of Defense)."