

SpaceX shows off its blackened 'Dragon' craft

10 February 2011



Workers adjust cables in front of the SpaceX Dragon spacecraft during the launch of the new Tesla showroom in Washington, DC. Bearing brown and black scorch marks from its fiery tour in orbit in December, the Dragon spacecraft built by US company SpaceX went on display in the US capital on Thursday.

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The capsule, carrying no passengers, blasted off from Cape Canaveral, Florida and in a seamless practice run was able to enter orbit and re-enter the Earth's atmosphere without a glitch, a first for [commercial space travel](#).

"Luckily, I had nothing to worry about," said former NASA astronaut Ken Bowersox who is now vice president of astronaut safety at [SpaceX](#). "Now we just want everyone to get to enjoy it as much as we do."

The [space capsule](#) was set up in a white tent adjacent to the Tesla showroom, where electric cars that can travel from 0 to 60 miles (97 kilometers) per hour in 3.7 seconds were also

being shown off under the theme "American innovation."

The Dragon will eventually move to California where it will go on permanent display, and its design will be adapted for an upcoming mission to carry cargo into orbit, and later, crew for the [International Space Station](#).

NASA signed a 1.6-billion-dollar contract with SpaceX in December 2008 under the Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (COTS) program to provide 12 spacecraft with cargo capacity of at least 20 tons to resupply the ISS through 2016.

President Barack Obama hopes the private sector will help fill the gap that will open when the space shuttle fleet is retired later this year, and before a new generation of [spacecraft](#) is developed.

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