

SpaceX chief Musk confirms Internet satellite plan

11 November 2014



Elon Musk unveils SpaceX's new seven-seat Dragon V2 spacecraft, in Hawthorne, California on May 29, 2014

High-tech entrepreneur Elon Musk confirmed that he is working on a web of small, low-cost satellites that could provide wireless Internet around the world.

The billionaire behind auto-maker Tesla and the SpaceX program for private space exploration said in a message fired off from his Twitter account that SpaceX "is still in the early stages of developing advanced micro-satellites operating in large formations."

Musk provided no details, but promised an announcement in two to three months.

Musk is working on the project with satellite-industry veteran Greg Wyler, who spent some time devoted to a similar mission at Google, according to a report in the Wall Street Journal.

Musk said in another tweet late Monday that the Journal story was off-mark on several points.

Musk and Wyler are trying to devise a feasible and relatively low-cost way to put about 700 satellites, each weighing less than 250 pounds, into orbit to provide wireless Internet anywhere on the planet, the Journal reported.

The satellites would be smaller, more affordable, and more widely deployed than those currently in use commercially.

SpaceX's unmanned Dragon spacecraft splashed down in the Pacific Ocean in October carrying a heavy load of NASA cargo and scientific samples from the International Space Station that experts hope could yield significant results.

Dragon also carried crew supplies, hardware and computer resources.

The SpaceX vessel is the only spacecraft currently capable of returning from the ISS with cargo. Its last mission to the space station was in April.

NASA lost its ability to reach the [space station](#) alone when the shuttle program ended in 2011 after 30 years.

The US space agency has helped fund private companies in the race to restore US access to the ISS.

In 2010, SpaceX became the first private company to send a spacecraft to the ISS.

© 2014 AFP

APA citation: SpaceX chief Musk confirms Internet satellite plan (2014, November 11) retrieved 12 June 2021 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-11-spacex-chief-musk-internet-satellite.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.