Milbank

Space Business Review

Special Edition – Top Ten Space Business Stories of 2022.

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#1 - Invasion of Ukraine

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has far-reaching industry impacts: commercial providers Starlink, Maxar, Viasat, Iridium, BlackSky, Planet, Capella, HawkEye 360, Spire Global and others provide services using satellite communications and Earth observation systems to Ukraine, its partners and humanitarian organizations to support defense and relief efforts; planned launches of Soyuz and Proton vehicles are suspended and remain on hold due to changes in sanctions and export controls and corresponding reactions by Russia, causing delays for international commercial and civil customers; a batch of OneWeb satellites is stranded at Baikonur; and ESA's Rosalind Franklin Mars rover is delayed, with launch now expected no earlier than 2028.

#2 - Dawn of Direct-to-Mobile Connectivity

Direct-to-mobile connectivity breaks through in 2022: Globalstar enables emergency connectivity for Apple's iPhone 14; SpaceX and T-Mobile partner up with plans to connect handheld devices on the T-Mobile network to the Starlink system; AST SpaceMobile launches and tests its BlueWalker 3 prototype satellite; and Lynk Global receives FCC authorization to operate its planned constellation.

#3 – Consolidation for Scale, Customers & Revenue

Consolidation continues among both legacy and Newspace entities, as companies pursue scale, customers and revenue: Eutelsat and OneWeb agree to merge; Viasat purchases Inmarsat; L3Harris Technologies acquires Aerojet Rocketdyne and Viasat's Link 16 Tactical Data Links business unit; Kongsberg acquires NanoAvionics; Raytheon purchases Northern Space and Security; SES buys DRS Global Enterprise Solutions; Antarctica Capital acquires Descartes Labs; Anuvu agrees to purchase Signal Mountain Networks; and Redwire adds QinetiQ Space and so on

#4 – Heavy Lift Launch Demand Surges

Demand outstrips supply in the heavy lift launch services market, with forecasts indicating that unmet demand will continue through at least 2025. Amazon's Kuiper contracts for up to 83 heavy lift launches over a five-year period on Arianespace's Ariane 6, Blue Origin's New Glenn, and United Launch Alliance's Vulcan launch vehicles, the largest commercial procurement of launches in history, while SpaceX conducts 34 launches for its Starlink constellation.

#5 – Investment Continues in Unsteady Economy

Private placements proliferate despite economic conditions globally, as new venture funds, including Stellar Ventures' SV Andromeda Fund, UAE's National Space Fund, and Boeing/AE Industrial Partners' AEI Horizon X, begin investment activity and Advent agrees to buy Maxar in \$6.4 billion deal.

#6 – Civil Space Achievements

James Webb Space Telescope begins operations, Artemis I launches on the SLS, NASA's DART mission outperforms expectations, and China's Tiangong space station is crewed.

#7 – Constellations Deploy & More Coming!

Starlink and OneWeb continue to deploy, with roughly 3,335 and 500 satellites, respectively, now in orbit; SES/O3b launches first two mPower satellites; and Kuiper and Telesat prepare for deployment. E-Space, Astra, and others plan new constellations, while SES/O3b and Eutelsat/OneWeb work toward hybrid, multi-orbit networks. Who's and what's next?

#8 – SPAC Pause

Market conditions and new regulations overshadow the "SPAC track": only Satixfy and Intuitive Machines announce plans to go public via SPAC this year; Satellogic completes its SPAC merger; D-Orbit cancels its SPAC plans.

#9 – Key 2022 Commercial Launch Missions

Arianespace Ariane 5: MEASAT-3d, GSAT-24, KONNECT VHTS, Galaxy 35, Galaxy 36, MTG-I1; Arianespace Soyuz: 34 OneWeb satellites; Arianespace Vega-C: LARES-2; ISRO PSLV: EOS-04; ISRO LMV3: 36 OneWeb satellites; Russian Proton-M: AngoSat-2; Russian Soyuz: 3 Gonets satellites; Rocket Lab Electron: Strix β , Strix 1, 24 SpaceBEEs; SpaceX Falcon 9: Axiom Mission 1, Vigoride OTV, Sherpa-AC OTV, Nilesat 301, Globalstar FM-15, SES-22, BlueWalker 3, Galaxy 31, Galaxy 32, Galaxy 33, Galaxy 34, HOTBIRD 13-F, HOTBIRD 13-G, 40 OneWeb satellites, HAKUTO-R, 2 O3b mPower satellites, EROS C3, Transporter 3-5 and 34 Starlink missions; ULA Atlas V: SES-20, SES-21.

#10 – Notable 2022 Commercial Satellite Orders

Boeing: Nusantara Lima; Maxar: SXM-11, SXM-12; MDA Corporation: 17 Globalstar satellites; Thales Alenia: Intelsat 41, Intelsat 44, SES-26, Arabsat-7A, KOREASAT 6A; SWISSto12: Intelsat 45.

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