

Press Release

The sky's the limit: Salt and SpaceX's Starlink Team Up to Provide Continuous Connection Throughout Switzerland

Barcelona/Renens - 1 March 2023 - Salt, a leading European telecommunications provider based in Switzerland, has announced a groundbreaking agreement with SpaceX to provide continuous coverage through satellite technology. This agreement, first of its kind in Europe, leverages SpaceX's Starlink satellite constellation as much as Salt's mobile network to connect Salt's current and future mobile customers to Starlink satellites, providing them with enhanced connectivity and coverage.

Salt is the first telecommunications provider in Europe to announce such comprehensive connectivity, providing its customers with full coverage across Switzerland's territory. The partnership brings cutting-edge telecommunications services to the final frontier, allowing Salt to offer its customer base seamless usage, back-up coverage, and direct connections when roaming abroad via the networks of participating carriers. Customers can use the service without extra equipment or change to their handset.

Utilizing both SpaceX's Starlink satellite technology, a constellation of satellites in low orbit, backhaul and backend network paired with Salt's world-class network, Salt and SpaceX will together provide mobile access beyond the limits of traditional cellular networks, extending its reach to remote and currently underserved areas. Ending the struggle to cover the challenging Swiss terrain and topography, including mountains, valleys, and rural areas such as the Great Aletsch Glacier area in Valais and the Canton of the Grisons.

This innovative solution for reachability everywhere offers customers an unparalleled added value. The traditional methods of mobile telephony are enhanced by a completely new method. It marks a significant milestone in bridging the digital gap and enabling mobile access to people in hard-to-reach regions.

Mobile customers will be able to seamlessly use telecommunications services in Switzerland without having to change or add anything to their hardware, software or apps. This allows for full coverage at all times and in all places, as well as back-up network in cases of emergencies. Starting in 2024, customers will be able to stay connected and share their experiences from almost anywhere through text messaging. The service will expand to include voice and data coverage in 2025. The service will be free for customers on Salt's premium tariffs, be it on residential or business offers. For other price plans, the service will be affordable and available as an add-on option.

Salt and SpaceX also invite carriers worldwide to join hands with them in this initiative, to participate in such reciprocal access agreements to enable customers to roam globally on the direct to cell network on participating carrier networks and resulting in a further expansion of network coverage for all.

"We're thrilled to be working alongside Salt, and this is the first announcement of its type in Europe! We will leverage our shared vision for technology innovation to improve connectivity services for customers in Switzerland and globally. From Swiss mountains to valleys, customers can now enjoy continuous coverage wherever they may travel," said Sara Spangelo, Sr. Director of Satellite Engineering and co-lead of direct to cell program at SpaceX.

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"We are beyond excited to announce this agreement with SpaceX. We always strive to bring the best technology and innovation to our customers, and working with SpaceX is a major step forward in that mission." said Marc Furrer, Chairman of Salt. "With full coverage and seamless usage, this service will be a game changer for anyone who needs reliable telecommunications services: the sky is the limit!"

Photo: © Alexandra Csuport Photography

From left to right: Eric Wolff, CTO Salt – Pierre-Alain Allemand, NJJ Holding – Sara Spangelo, Sr. Director of Satellite Engineering and co-lead of direct to cell program at SpaceX – Joshua Robinson, Senior Partnership Manager – Jeff Ahmet, Principal Integration Engineer.

About Salt

Salt stands for innovation with attractive price for premium products in the Swiss telecommunications market. An excellent mobile network, the country's best performing internet connection (Nperf, 2022), attractive prices and customer-focused service ensure an outstanding experience for its business and residential customers. The company's services as well as its fixed and mobile networks are repeatedly awarded: very good mobile network (connect, 2023), best performing internet connection (nPerf, 2022), best broadband tariff (SIQT 2022), best universal provider for SME and residential customers (Bilanz, 2022), number one B-to-B mobile provider (SIQT, 2022).

Based in Renens (VD), Salt has two additional offices in Biel and Zurich. The company employs more than 1,000 employees and serves 1,448,900 postpaid mobile and 150,000 broadband customers online and in 103 Salt Stores across Switzerland. Salt currently offers 99.9% population coverage.

About SpaceX

SpaceX designs, manufactures and launches the world's most advanced rockets and spacecraft. SpaceX was founded in 2002 under the belief that a future where humanity is out exploring the stars is fundamentally more exciting than one where we are not. SpaceX is leveraging its experience in building rockets and spacecraft to deploy Starlink – the world's first and largest satellite constellation using a low Earth orbit to deliver broadband internet capable of supporting streaming, online gaming, video calls and more. Leveraging advanced satellites and user hardware coupled with deep experience with both spacecraft and on-orbit operations, Starlink delivers high-speed, low-latency internet to users all over the world.

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