

SpaceX's Starlink Might Soon Be Launching Wi-Fi for Fast Internet In Airlines

American aerospace conglomerate, SpaceX is working on building its satellite internet network Starlink a provider of that coveted fast quick in-flight internet connectivity.

According to The Verge, SpaceX's VP of Starlink and commercial Sales Jonathan Hofeller said the company is already in talks with "several" airlines.

"We have our own aviation product in development...we've already done some demonstrations to date, and looking to get that product finalized to be put on aircraft in the very near future," Hofeller said at a panel at the Connected Aviation Intelligence Summit on Wednesday,

Starlink is currently providing a beta service in select areas, mostly in the US and Canada, for USD 99 per month, after a one-time USD 499 equipment fee. The company currently has about 1,800 satellites in orbit and is steadily soon launching new batches, with the aim of reaching 'near-global coverage' in 2021.

However, airline connectivity is a bit of a different beast, as it cannot always rely on ground stations, for example, when the aeroplane is flying over the ocean. To provide connectivity there, Starlink's satellites will offer an amazing network that has to be able to connect to each other using laser links.

Hofeller said this will be possible on the next generation of Starlink's constellation, which is currently being developed.

In-flight Wi-Fi is notoriously pricy, and typically quite

slow. Hofeller said that Starlink will be able to provide a "great experience," something which current, geostationary systems cannot do. However, he did not say when, exactly, this could launch. "To be determined Hopefully sooner rather than later," he said.

As per The Verge, notably, Ben Griffin, VP of mobility services for Starlink's competitor OneWeb, was also there at the panel, and he said the company is targeting a similar service in the 'middle part of next year, maybe sooner.'