

Renens, 03.01.2024

First SpaceX Satellites with Direct to Cell Capabilities Launched, Paving the Way for Satellite-Powered Phone Connections for Salt Subscribers in Switzerland

After announcing the groundbreaking agreement with SpaceX to provide ubiquitous coverage through satellite technology in March 2023, Salt is pleased to announce that SpaceX launched the first Starlink satellites with Direct to Cell capability today. This inaugural launch will enable ground-level tests on American soil. This step marks a significant milestone in bridging the digital gap and enabling mobile access to people in hard-to-reach regions in Switzerland and in countries of participating carriers. Towards the end of 2024, Salt subscribers will also be able to stay connected and share their experiences from almost anywhere through text messaging.

In March 2023, Salt was the first telecommunications provider in Europe to announce a partnership with SpaceX to provide its customers with coverage across Switzerland's territory. SpaceX's successful launch today of the first Starlink satellites with Direct to Cell capability is the first step of a series that will allow Salt to offer its customer base seamless usage, back-up coverage, and the ability to connect via satellite when roaming abroad outside terrestrial coverage via the networks of participating carriers. Customers will be able to use the service without extra equipment or change to their handset, as long as the device is 4G capable.

Utilizing SpaceX's Starlink satellite technology paired with Salt's outstanding mobile network, Salt and Starlink will together provide mobile access beyond the limits of traditional cellular networks, extending its reach to remote and currently underserved areas and ending the struggle to cover the challenging Swiss terrain and topography, including mountains, valleys, and rural areas. In preparation for the anticipated launch in 2024 in Switzerland, Salt is engaged in close collaboration with Swiss regulators and those from neighbouring countries.

First Messages Over Satellite Available to Salt Customers in 2024

These first Direct to Cell satellites and the many to follow will enable first real-time text messaging tests in the United States. As previously announced, towards the end of 2024, Salt 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. This will enable users to benefit from full coverage in Switzerland, providing life-saving connectivity in cases of emergencies and serve as back-up in the eventuality of a power outage, for instance.

Satellite technology is a complementary solution to the traditional network, not a substitute or replacement and the services will be made available to Salt customers upon regulatory approval by the Swiss authorities. In preparation for the anticipated launch in 2024 in Switzerland, Salt collaborates with Swiss regulators and those from neighbouring countries. 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.

Max Nunziata, CEO at Salt, commented *"At Salt, our commitment to delivering unparalleled technology and innovation to our customers is unwavering. Today marks a significant milestone as Space X was able to launch its first Direct to Cell Satellites - the inaugural step in a transformative journey. This pioneering technology sets the stage for telecommunication operators to deliver a seamless network experience to their customers, transcending geographical boundaries and ensuring connectivity wherever they may be."*

About Starlink's Direct to Cell

The world's most advanced satellite constellation using a low Earth orbit, Starlink is now deploying satellites with Direct to Cell capabilities at scale. A growing number of global telecommunication carriers are already working with Starlink to ultimately deliver ubiquitous text, voice, and data wherever their subscribers can see the sky, all over the globe. Starlink's Direct to Cell works with existing phones and IoT devices with common LTE standards, requiring no changes to hardware, firmware, or downloading apps. Learn more at direct.starlink.com.

About Salt

Salt stands for innovation offering attractive prices for premium products in the Swiss telecommunications market. An outstanding mobile network (Connect, 2024), 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: best universal provider for large companies and residential customers (Bilanz, 2023), best broadband offer (Connect, 2023), outstanding mobile network (Connect, 2024), best performing internet connection (Nperf, 2022), winner regional fixed-network providers with "outstanding" rating (Connect, 2023), best broadband tariff (SIQT, 2022) and 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 1,575,400 postpaid mobile and more than 200,000 broadband customers across Switzerland. Salt currently offers 99.9% population mobile coverage.

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