Amazon's satellite internet, one step closer: the first satellites with which DIRECTV and SKY will provide the service in South America will be launched

On April 9th the mission will begin to deploy the Project Kuiper satellites into low orbit. Over 80 launches are planned to complete the constellation that will offer affordable, high-speed wireless connectivity in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Chile, Peru and Uruguay. Find out all the details.

Amazon has announced a series of launches starting this month to deploy the Project Kuiper satellite constellation, with which DIRECTV Latin America and SKY Brasil will develop the satellite internet market in South America, establishing a new paradigm of connectivity throughout the region.

The large-scale deployment of the satellites that will make up a low-orbit constellation is scheduled to begin on April 9, to provide a high-speed, stable and reliable wireless internet service for customers and communities around the world.

Amazon chose VRIO Corp. to deploy its exclusive satellite internet service in the region because of the company's leading position in the provision of technological solutions and its extensive deployment throughout the region via DIRECTV Latin America and SKY Brasil, present in 99% of the territory of the countries in which it operates.

“The launch of Amazon's Project Kuiper satellites represents a foundational milestone for a world-changing, top-quality service that will put an end to connectivity frontiers and provide a superior alternative for millions of people,” said Darío Werthein, president of Vrio Corp.

Werthein, who in 2024 signed a partnership agreement at Amazon's Seattle offices with Rajeev Badyal, VP Technology - Project Kuiper at Amazon, and Panos Panay, Leads Amazon's Devices & Services at the US giant, also commented that “the entry of this service into South America will introduce a competitor with clear competitive advantages, driving innovation, improving the quality of the internet and generating greater affordability for communities”.

Vrio Corp's mission to generate digital inclusion became a point of convergence with Amazon due to its alignment with the central objectives of Project Kuiper. As a result, this strategic alliance was sealed under the premise of providing new connectivity options for an affordable, high-speed and stable internet.

The details of a seminal mission

The first mission, named “KA-01” for Kuiper Atlas 1, will be launched on an Atlas V rocket from the United Launch Alliance (ULA) from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida, and will deploy 27 satellites at an altitude of 280 miles (450 kilometers) above the Earth.

This marks the beginning of a process that will require more than 80 launches to deploy the constellation of more than 3,200 Project Kuiper satellites in low orbit. The satellites launched on KA-01 represent a significant improvement over the two prototypes successfully tested in October 2023 during the Protoflight mission, as the performance of all on-board systems and subsystems has been improved, including phased array antennas, processors, solar panels, propulsion systems and inter-satellite optical links.

In addition, the satellites feature a dielectric mirror coating designed by Kuiper to reduce their visibility to astronomers on the ground. The Project Kuiper satellite payload will be the heaviest ever carried by a ULA Atlas V rocket, requiring the most powerful configuration of the rocket with five solid rocket boosters.

The genesis of a satellite constellation

Once the satellites separate from the rocket, the Kuiper team will take control of the management of the constellation from the mission operations center in Redmond, Washington.

The initial objective of the KA-01 mission is to safely deploy all the satellites into orbit, enabling them to maneuver independently and communicate with the team on the ground.

Subsequently, the satellites will carry out a series of automated steps to gradually ascend to their assigned orbit of 392 miles (630 km) and focus on the final objective of providing end-to-end network connectivity.