

ispace-U.S. 

ispace-U.S. to use RTX's Blue Canyon Technologies Spacecraft Bus for Lunar Far Side Communications Relay Satellites

*Microsatellite Buses to Support Mission 3 Operations and Future
Communications Activities in Lunar Orbit*



Colorado Springs, Colo., April 9, 2024 – ispace technologies U.S., inc. (“ispace-U.S.”), an American lunar exploration company, announced that RTX’s (NYSE: RTX)’s small satellite manufacturer and mission services provider, Blue Canyon Technologies, will design and manufacture two Venus-class microsatellites buses that will serve as a platform carrying lunar communications relay capabilities for ispace-U.S.’s Mission 3 scheduled for 2026.

The two Venus-class small satellites will fly to lunar orbit in two payload bays within the APEX 1.0 lunar lander. From there, the satellites will be deployed in lunar orbit before the lander

travels to the Schrödinger Basin, a large impact crater near the Moon's South Pole. While in orbit, the Blue Canyon-built bus housing the ispace-U.S. communications payload will serve as the data relay between the Earth and the far side of the moon, enabling rapid data transmission from the lander and its payloads. This communications link system is expected to be commercially available for other lunar activities in the future.

inspace-U.S. intends to utilize the communications system and data relay capability for multiple years for its own future missions as well as for services it plans to provide to other customers.

"Blue Canyon's previous success with the first interplanetary CubeSats to Mars for the MarCO program set a precedent for the realm of the possible. Since then, we've been expanding on that accomplishment and look forward to working on this new venture with ispace-U.S." said Chris Winslett, the General Manager at Blue Canyon Technologies.

"We are confident that Blue Canyon's technological capabilities, including peak-performance and flight heritage spacecraft solutions, will be instrumental in the success of our lunar mission," said Ryan Whitley, Executive Vice President of Engineering at ispace-U.S.

With this mission, ispace-U.S. will contribute to the Draper-led Commercial Lunar Payload Services initiative, which will deliver payloads for scientific investigations to the far side of the Moon in 2026. This project is a major step forward in ispace's efforts to realize its vision of providing high-frequency, low-cost transportation to the Moon.

inspace's APEX 1.0 lunar lander, designed to be one of the most capable lunar vehicles available, serves as the company's next-generation lander. The APEX 1.0 lunar lander, designed and built in the US, delivers enhanced capabilities leveraging lessons learned from the company's previous space-proven lander series. With 300 kg of payload capacity to the lunar surface in this first iteration, APEX 1.0 is designed to deliver ten times more payload to the lunar surface compared to earlier ispace missions. ispace-U.S. plans to progressively increase the APEX series payload capacity to meet evolving customer requirements, eventually reaching payload capacity of 500 kg to the lunar surface.

With dedicated satellite bays, APEX 1.0 is designed to deliver relay satellites to support direct-to-Earth communications from the far side of the Moon. This highly capable design also provides APEX 1.0 with the ability to transport orbital, stationery, and rover payloads to either the near or far side of the Moon. With advanced structural durability, reliability, and manufacturability, APEX 1.0 is expected to make consistent quality and performance at scale possible.

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About ispace technologies U.S.

ispace – U.S. is an American lunar exploration company providing transportation and infrastructure capabilities from Earth to lunar orbit and the surface of the Moon for government and commercial customers. ispace believes that the utilization of lunar resources is the catalyst to enabling human permanence and economic opportunity on and around the Moon and is committed to achieving this goal. The company’s U.S. headquarters serves as the central location for the development of its APEX 1.0 lander, which is being designed, manufactured, and launched in the United States. In partnership with Draper, this lander will deliver a suite of multiple NASA-sponsored science payloads to the lunar surface as part of the NASA Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) Initiative.

ispace – U.S. CEO, Ron Garan, is a former NASA Astronaut and a leading voice in the space industry. His executive team includes professionals that have served at the highest levels of the United States space program. For more information, visit www.ispace-us.com