

Space travel unravels as NZ prepares for 2015 launch

A Hong Kong listed company specialising in novel space service is set to launch a space ship called Traveller in New Zealand.

[James Henderson \(New Zealand Reseller News\)](#), on 25 November, 2014 03:20



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KuangChi Science, a Hong Kong listed company specialising in novel space service, is collaborating with Airways New Zealand and Pengxin International to launch a space ship called Traveller in New Zealand.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) to launch the Traveller was included in the Witnessed Exchange of Commercial Documents, before President Xi Jinping of China and Prime Minister John

Key, which featured at the Agri-tech Innovation Showcase in Auckland last week.

The MOU will see KuangChi Science collaborate with Airways and Pengxin in the "refinement and launch" in New Zealand during the first half of next year.

Airways New Zealand will support the launch while Pengxin will provide the launch site.

Dr. Zhang Yangyang, CEO of KuangChi Science, believes the balloons have the potential to deliver the internet to billions of people around the world who currently have no access, and at a moderate cost.

"It's a fascinating concept that has a number of potential applications, the most obvious being Wi-Fi access," he says.



"A number of other applications have also been suggested ranging from resource mapping, traffic control, shipping communications and disaster relief through to Search and Rescue activities.

"The balloons, which are equipped with transponders and fail-safe systems so their movement and altitude can be tracked and managed, provide a similar service to satellites but at a fraction of the cost."

Yangyang says the balloons remain in near space with self-generated solar power and are capable of recovery and task reloading.

In 2013 Google launched 30 balloons in New Zealand while Spain, the USA and Japan have also been involved in similar projects.

Yet with the launch date only months other, Yangyang admits the site for the New Zealand launch is as yet to be determined.

"Obviously there are a lot of logistical and aeronautical issues which need to be addressed before the launch which is why we are grateful for the support and advice of Airways New Zealand," he adds.