

Royal Caribbean may add Elon Musk's Starlink internet service to its cruise ships

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Royal Caribbean Group could soon offer Starlink internet on its ships.

The major cruise line operator said Tuesday that it is working with Elon

Musk's SpaceX in hopes of offering the satellite internet service on its fleet, according to Nathaniel Derrenbacher, a Royal Caribbean Group spokesman.

"We are working closely with SpaceX in an effort to evaluate the Starlink technology onboard," Derrenbacher said in an email to USA TODAY. "This experimental phase is part of our continuing efforts to ensure we remain the cruise industry leader in satellite internet capabilities."

The company first disclosed the partnership in a filing with the Federal Communications Commission on Friday, PC Magazine reported.

"Working with SpaceX Services, Inc., we believe we have identified a true next generation solution for our vessels that meets the rigorous technical and operational requirements commensurate with our growth plans," John Maya, Royal Caribbean Group's Vice President, Operational Excellence, said in a letter to FCC international bureau chief Tom Sullivan.

Starlink is not approved for use on moving vehicles, and the cruise company called on the FCC to move the process along, according to PC Magazine.

An "increase in marine vessel operations" had led to greater demand for satellite internet, Maya said, but supply challenges "resulted in negative guest experiences onboard, with bandwidth constraints that have slowed our desired business advancements."

"We believe our work with SpaceX, the first of its kind in the cruise industry will set the standard for other cruise operators and will mean a leap in terms of guest experience and [business operations](#) while at sea," Maya said.

In April, SpaceX secured a deal with Hawaiian Airlines, which said it would provide Starlink service on its planes for free, as well as small regional-jet carrier JSX.

Royal Caribbean did not answer questions Tuesday about when the service might be rolled out and whether it would be free to passengers. SpaceX did not respond to a separate request for comment.

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