



Orbex Prime

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## STARTUP UNVEILS A LIGHTER, MORE EFFICIENT ROCKET

 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

### UK startup makes a 3D printed rocket engine

#### Spotted:

UK-based Orbex has unveiled a [prototype satellite-launching rocket](#) that could change how rockets are designed. The prototype includes the world's largest 3D printed engine, the company says. The engine is a first for the space industry.

The rocket's [engine was printed in one piece](#) with no joins. This makes it 30 percent lighter and 20 percent more efficient than other small launchers, according to the company, as well as more resistant to pressure and extreme temperatures given the lack of welding and joining. The engine was created in partnership with [SLM Solutions](#).

The rocket, called Orbex Prime, runs on bio-propane, a clean-burning, renewable fuel that reduces carbon emissions by 90 percent compared to fossil hydrocarbon fuels. It is designed to deliver small satellites into earth's orbit and is scheduled to launch from Orbex's new facilities in Scotland in 2021.

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**Takeaway:**

Orbex Prime promises several innovations in rocket design. The company's focus on efficiency and use of 3D printing echo current trends in the space industry. NASA has already tested using 3D printers in space to manufacture parts for the space station. US-startup Relativity Space is trying to 3D print an entire rocket.