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NASA plans a major overhaul of its 'space Internet'

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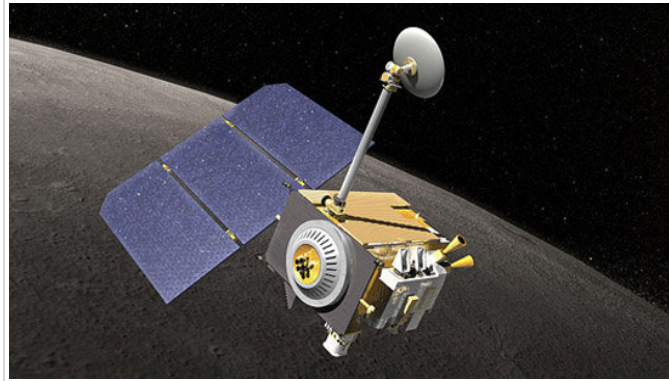
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A new plan by NASA will see the agency consolidating its Space Network (SN), Near-Earth Network (NEN) and Deep Space Network (DSN) into one unified system as the agency goes about replacing aging communications technology, some of which has been in place since the '90s.

As it stands right now, NASA doesn't have a unified communication infrastructure tying all of its orbital and deep space missions together. That's because each mission the agency plans is put together from the ground up, so communication equipment varies wildly. The International Space Station, for instance, "enjoys" a connection comparable to dial-up that's only a week old, while the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter is gobbling up over 450 gigabytes of data a day.

Besides improving communication and streamlining planning, better technology in place means a higher yield of scientific data gathered per mission. "Imagine what you can accomplish with a single mission instead of several spacecraft flying over several years to collect the data," Badri Younes told [Space.com](#). He's NASA's deputy associate administrator for Space Communications and Navigation, and it's his job to overhaul the aging communication systems. "It's like driving a 1960s Chevy that's beat up and losing paint while going at 90 mph," Younes continued, "and being pushed to convert that into a Lamborghini while driving 90 mph without losing a beat."

Sounds like he has his work cut out for him. Lucky for him, he has until 2018 to get it all done.

Space, via [PopSci](#)

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