

# **Global Optical Satellite Market: Analysis By Orbit Type (LEO, MEO, and GEO), By End-Use (Government & Defense, Urban Development & Infrastructure, Energy & Natural Resources, Agriculture, Environmental Monitoring & Climate Services, Forestry & Maritime, Disaster Management, and Others), By Region Size and Trends with Impact of COVID-19 and Forecast up to 2029**

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## **Abstracts**

Optical satellites, a class of satellites utilized for Earth observation, employ visible and near-infrared light to capture images of the Earth's surface. These images serve various purposes, including monitoring changes in vegetation, land utilization, and urban expansion over time. The global optical satellites market was valued at US\$2.53 billion in 2023. The market value is expected to reach US\$5.20 billion by 2029.

The increasing demand for high-resolution imagery for various applications such as agriculture, urban planning, environmental monitoring, and defense has been a major contributor to the growth of the optical satellite market. Optical satellites offer the capability to capture detailed images with high spatial resolution, enabling precise analysis and decision-making. Additionally, advancements in satellite technology, including improved imaging sensors, higher processing power, and enhanced data transmission capabilities, have expanded the capabilities of optical satellites, making them more attractive for commercial and government users alike. Furthermore, the growing accessibility of satellite data and services due to lower costs and improved data distribution channels has democratized the use of optical imagery, leading to an expanded user base across industries and regions. The market is expected to grow at a

CAGR of approx. 13% during the forecasted period of 2024-2029.

#### Market Segmentation Analysis:

**By Orbit Type:** The report provides the bifurcation of the market into three segments based on the orbit type: Low Earth Orbit (LEO), Geostationary Orbit (GEO), and Medium Earth Orbit (MEO). The LEO segment held the highest share in the market and is expected to be the fastest growing segment in the forecasted period. The demand for optical satellites in LEO has been increasing rapidly due to their ability to provide frequent revisits and real-time or near-real-time data. This capability is particularly valuable for applications requiring timely information, such as emergency response and surveillance. Additionally, advancements in satellite technology have led to the deployment of small satellite constellations in LEO, offering enhanced coverage and data availability at lower costs.

**By End-Use:** The report further provides the segmentation based on the following end-use: Government & Defense, Urban Development & Infrastructure, Energy & Natural Resources, Agriculture, Environmental Monitoring & Climate Services, Forestry & Maritime, Disaster Management, and Others. The government & defense segment held the highest share in the market, whereas the disaster management segment is expected to be the fastest growing segment in the forecasted period. In the government & defense sector, optical satellites are utilized for various purposes including reconnaissance, surveillance, border monitoring, and intelligence gathering. These satellites provide high-resolution imagery and real-time intelligence, enabling governments and defense agencies to monitor geopolitical developments, track military activities, and enhance national security. As a result, this sector accounts for a significant portion of the overall demand for optical satellite technology, driving innovation and advancements in satellite imaging capabilities. On the other hand, the demand for optical satellites in disaster management segment is increasing due to the rising frequency and severity of natural disasters, including floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, and wildfires. As governments and humanitarian organizations prioritize disaster preparedness and response capabilities, the demand for optical satellite technology for disaster management and emergency response purposes is expected to rise.

**By Region:** The report provides insight into the optical satellites market based on the regions namely North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, and Rest of the World. North America held the major share in the market. The increasing need for advanced satellite capabilities for national security, space exploration, and commercial applications is

driving investment in satellite manufacturing and technology development. For example, companies like SpaceX, based in the US, are launching large constellations of optical satellites. Moreover, the US government's substantial investment in space exploration and satellite technology, coupled with initiatives like NASA's Earth Observation Program and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's (NGA) EnhancedView Program, has stimulated the development and deployment of optical satellites for various applications.

Germany is one of the leading space actors in Europe together with France in terms of contributions to the European Space Agency. According to OECD iLibrary, in 2022, Germany's institutional space budget reached US\$1,839.5 million (?1,749.2 million), having grown 0.8% yearly since 2015 in real terms. Overall, the institutional space budget accounted for 0.045% of the German gross domestic product in 2022. The increasing institutional space budget positively impacts the optical satellite market by fostering innovation, research, and development of advanced satellite technologies.

Currently, India, within the Make in India initiative, is associated with a range of international bodies like the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), the United Nations Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN-COPUOS), International Astronautical Federation (IAF), International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) and Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), among others. This initiative has helped various organizations and universities operating within India to gain access to global education and knowledge base as the country has collaborated with international research, development, and education bodies like the Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS) and United Nations (UN) affiliated Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific (CSSTE-AP). As of now, there are more than 1,100 beneficiaries across 52 countries affiliated with the initiative, providing a global knowledge database to Indian organizations. Hence, the Make in India campaign's emphasis on collaboration with global bodies in the space sector enables Indian organizations to access advanced technology and expertise, fostering innovation and competitiveness in the optical satellite market.

#### Market Dynamics:

**Growth Drivers:** The global optical satellites market has been growing over the past few years, due to factors such as growing government expenditures for space programs, equity investment in the satellite industry, increasing demand for real-time and accurate geospatial data, increasing deployment of satellite constellations, commercialization of space exploration activities, favorable government initiatives, and many other factors. Equity investments provide funding for satellite companies to develop, manufacture, and

deploy optical satellite systems, including satellites, imaging sensors, ground infrastructure, and data processing capabilities. With sufficient capital, satellite companies can invest in research and development to enhance the performance, resolution, and capabilities of optical satellite technologies, making them more competitive and appealing to customers across various industries. Moreover, equity investment enables satellite companies to expand their manufacturing capacity, increase satellite production rates, and scale their operations to meet the growing market demand for optical satellite solutions. Additionally, equity investors often bring valuable expertise, networks, and resources to satellite companies, facilitating partnerships, market access, and business development opportunities that further drive market growth for optical satellites.

**Challenges:** However, the market growth would be negatively impacted by various challenges such as launch availability and costs, security concerns, etc. Launch availability and costs pose significant challenges to the growth of the optical satellite market, primarily due to limited access to launch vehicles and high associated expenses. The availability of suitable launch opportunities often lags behind the growing demand for satellite deployments, leading to delays in launching optical satellite missions. These delays can disrupt project timelines, prolong time-to-market, and impede the delivery of satellite-based services, impacting the competitiveness and profitability of satellite operators.

**Trends:** The market is projected to grow at a fast pace during the forecast period, due to various latest trends such as integration of AI & ML, advancements in satellite miniaturization, advancement in launch vehicle technology, etc. Advancements in satellite miniaturization have significantly contributed to the growth of the optical satellite market by expanding accessibility, increasing deployment flexibility, and lowering costs. Miniaturization allows for the development of smaller and more lightweight satellites which can be launched into space more affordably using rideshare opportunities or dedicated small launch vehicles. Additionally, miniaturized satellites often leverage off-the-shelf components and simplified designs, reducing manufacturing and operational costs. As a result, satellite operators and companies can deploy constellations of optical satellites at a fraction of the cost of traditional large satellites, making Earth observation and imaging services more accessible to governments, research institutions, and commercial entities.

**Impact Analysis of COVID-19 and Way Forward:**

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound and disruptive impact on the global optical

satellite market size in 2020, leading to production delays, supply chain disruptions, reduced demand, and logistical challenges. While satellite-based Earth observation remained essential for addressing pandemic-related challenges, the overall market experienced significant setbacks as a result of the unprecedented crisis. Looking ahead, emerging trends such as satellite-as-a-service models, commercial space exploration ventures, and public-private partnerships would shape the future dynamics of the optical satellite market, driving collaboration, innovation, and market competitiveness.

### Competitive Landscape:

The global optical satellite market is characterized by intense competition among key players aiming to capitalize on the growing demand for high-resolution imaging and data collection services. The key manufacturers in the global optical satellite market are:

Airbus SE

Israel Aerospace Industries Ltd

Thales Group (Thales Alenia Space)

Maxar Technologies Inc.

The market players employ various strategies to enhance their presence and market share, including strategic partnerships, collaborations, and agreements to expand their technological capabilities and geographic reach. For instance, at the end of 2022, Airbus signed a contract with Poland for the provision of two very high-resolution S950 optical satellites and access to Pléiades Neo imagery from 2023. Furthermore, the agreement encompasses the delivery of Very High Resolution (VHR) imagery from the Airbus Pléiades Neo constellation as early as 2023. Additionally, investments in research and development to innovate new satellite technologies, such as higher-resolution imaging and advanced data analytics, are common strategies to stay ahead in the market. For instance, Israel Aerospace Industries' EROS-C3, an electro-optical satellite, was launched in December 2022, using a SpaceX Falcon 9 launch vehicle, from the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, US. The EROS-C3 is one of the most advanced observation satellites in the world, thanks to pioneering technologies that enable very high-resolution images and for the first time using the multispectral camera. After launch, the satellite entered its planned orbit around the Earth and began transmitting data to the ground station.

## Contents

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Earth Observation Satellite: An Overview
  - 2.1.1 Introduction to Earth Observation Satellite
- 2.2 Optical Satellite: An Overview
  - 2.2.1 Introduction to Optical Satellite
  - 2.2.2 Types of Optical Satellite
- 2.3 Optical Satellite Segmentation: An Overview

### 3. GLOBAL MARKET ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Global Optical Satellite Market: An Analysis
  - 3.1.1 Global Optical Satellite Market: An Overview
  - 3.1.2 Global Optical Satellite Market by Value
  - 3.1.3 Global Optical Satellite Market by Orbit Type (Low Earth Orbit (LEO), Geostationary Orbit (GEO), and Medium Earth Orbit (MEO))
  - 3.1.4 Global Optical Satellite Market by End-Use (Government & Defense, Urban Development & Infrastructure, Energy & Natural Resources, Agriculture, Environmental Monitoring & Climate Services, Forestry & Maritime, Disaster Management, and Others)
  - 3.1.5 Global Optical Satellite Market by Region (North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, and Rest of the World)
- 3.2 Global Optical Satellite Market: Orbit Type Analysis
  - 3.2.1 Global Optical Satellite Market by Orbit Type: An Overview
  - 3.2.2 Global Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Optical Satellite Market by Value
  - 3.2.3 Global Geostationary Orbit (GEO) Optical Satellite Market by Value
  - 3.2.4 Global Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) Optical Satellite Market by Value
- 3.3 Global Optical Satellite Market: End-Use Analysis
  - 3.3.1 Global Optical Satellite Market by End-Use: An Overview
  - 3.3.2 Global Government and Defense Optical Satellite Market by Value
  - 3.3.3 Global Urban Development & Infrastructure Optical Satellite Market by Value
  - 3.3.4 Global Energy and Natural Resources Optical Satellite Market by Value
  - 3.3.5 Global Agriculture Optical Satellite Market by Value
  - 3.3.6 Global Environmental Monitoring & Climate Services Optical Satellite Market by Value
  - 3.3.7 Global Forestry & Maritime Optical Satellite Market by Value



3.3.8 Global Disaster Management Optical Satellite Market by Value

3.3.9 Global Others Optical Satellite Market by Value

## **4. REGIONAL MARKET ANALYSIS**

4.1 North America Optical Satellite Market: An Analysis

4.1.1 North America Optical Satellite Market: An Overview

4.1.2 North America Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.1.3 North America Optical Satellite Market by Region (The US, Canada, and Mexico)

4.1.4 The US Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.1.5 Canada Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.1.6 Mexico Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.2 Europe Optical Satellite Market: An Analysis

4.2.1 Europe Optical Satellite Market: An Overview

4.2.2 Europe Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.2.3 Europe Optical Satellite Market by Region (Germany, UK, France, and Rest of the Europe)

4.2.4 Germany Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.2.5 The UK Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.2.6 France Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.2.7 Rest of Europe Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.3 Asia Pacific Optical Satellite Market: An Analysis

4.3.1 Asia Pacific Optical Satellite Market: An Overview

4.3.2 Asia Pacific Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.3.3 Asia Pacific Optical Satellite Market by Region (China, Japan, India, and Rest of the Asia Pacific)

4.3.4 China Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.3.5 Japan Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.3.6 India Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.3.7 Rest of Asia Pacific Optical Satellite Market by Value

4.4 Rest of World Optical Satellite Market: An Analysis

4.4.1 Rest of World Optical Satellite Market: An Overview

4.4.2 Rest of World Optical Satellite Market by Value

## **5. IMPACT OF COVID-19**

5.1 Impact of COVID-19 on Global Optical Satellite Market

5.2 Post COVID-19 Impact on Global Optical Satellite Market

## **6. MARKET DYNAMICS**

### **6.1 Growth Drivers**

- 6.1.1 Growing Defense Spending
- 6.1.2 Rise in Orbital Launches
- 6.1.3 Growing Earth Observation Market
- 6.1.4 Equity Investment in the Satellite Industry
- 6.1.5 Favorable Government Initiatives
- 6.1.6 Increasing Demand for Real Time and Accurate Geospatial Data
- 6.1.7 Growing Focus on Environmental Monitoring and Disaster Management
- 6.1.8 Increasing Deployment of Satellite Constellations
- 6.1.9 Commercialization of Space Exploration Activities

### **6.2 Challenges**

- 6.2.1 Regulatory Hurdles
- 6.2.2 Launch Availability and Costs
- 6.2.3 Security Concerns

### **6.3 Market Trends**

- 6.3.1 Integration of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
- 6.3.2 Knowledge Transfer
- 6.3.3 Increasing Investment in Space Start-ups
- 6.3.4 Advancements in Satellite Miniaturization
- 6.3.5 Advancement in Launch Vehicle Technology
- 6.3.6 Integration of IoT with the Optical Satellite
- 6.3.7 Advancements in Capabilities

## **7. COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE**

### **7.1 Global Optical Satellite Players: Competitive Landscape**

### **7.2 Global Optical Satellite Players: Product Comparison**

## **8. COMPANY PROFILES**

### **8.1 Airbus SE**

- 8.1.1 Business Overview
- 8.1.2 Operating Segments
- 8.1.3 Operating Regions
- 8.1.4 Business Strategy

### **8.2 Israel Aerospace Industries Ltd.**

- 8.2.1 Business Overview



- 8.2.2 Operating Segments
- 8.2.3 Operating Regions
- 8.2.4 Business Strategy
- 8.3 Thales Group (Thales Alenia Space)
  - 8.3.1 Business Overview
  - 8.3.2 Operating Segments
  - 8.3.3 Operating Regions
  - 8.3.4 Business Strategy
- 8.4 Maxar Technologies Inc.
  - 8.4.1 Business Overview
  - 8.4.2 Business Strategy

## List Of Figures

### LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Optical Satellite Segmentation

Figure 2: Global Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 3: Global Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 4: Global Optical Satellite Market by Orbit Type; 2023 (Percentage, %)

Figure 5: Global Optical Satellite Market by End-Use; 2023 (Percentage, %)

Figure 6: Global Optical Satellite Market by Region; 2023 (Percentage, %)

Figure 7: Global Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 8: Global Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 9: Global Geostationary Orbit (GEO) Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 10: Global Geostationary Orbit (GEO) Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 11: Global Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 12: Global Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 13: Global Government and Defense Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 14: Global Government and Defense Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 15: Global Urban Development & Infrastructure Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 16: Global Urban Development & Infrastructure Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 17: Global Energy and Natural Resources Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 18: Global Energy and Natural Resources Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 19: Global Agriculture Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 20: Global Agriculture Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 21: Global Environmental Monitoring & Climate Services Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 22: Global Environmental Monitoring & Climate Services Optical Satellite Market

by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 23: Global Forestry & Maritime Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 24: Global Forestry & Maritime Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 25: Global Disaster Management Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 26: Global Disaster Management Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 27: Global Others Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 28: Global Others Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 29: North America Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 30: North America Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 31: North America Optical Satellite Market by Region; 2023 (Percentage, %)

Figure 32: The US Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 33: The US Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 34: Canada Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 35: Canada Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 36: Mexico Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 37: Mexico Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 38: Europe Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 39: Europe Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 40: Europe Optical Satellite Market by Region; 2023 (Percentage, %)

Figure 41: Germany Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 42: Germany Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 43: The UK Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 44: The UK Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 45: France Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 46: France Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 47: Rest of Europe Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 48: Rest of Europe Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 49: Asia Pacific Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 50: Asia Pacific Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 51: Asia Pacific Optical Satellite Market by Region; 2023 (Percentage, %)

Figure 52: China Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 53: China Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 54: Japan Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 55: Japan Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 56: India Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 57: India Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 58: Rest of Asia Pacific Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 59: Rest of Asia Pacific Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 60: Rest of World Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2019-2023 (US\$ Million)

Figure 61: Rest of World Optical Satellite Market by Value; 2024-2029 (US\$ Million)

Figure 62: The US Defense Outlays; 2021-2032 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 63: Global Orbital Launch Attempts by Region; 2020-2023 (Number of Launches)

Figure 64: Global Satellite Earth Observation Market Size; 2020-2032 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 65: Global Equity Investment in Satellite Industry; 2019-2023 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 66: Global Government Expenditures for Space Programs; 2021-2023 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 67: Global Government Expenditures for Space Programs by Region; 2023 (US\$ Billion)

Figure 68: Airbus SE Revenue by Segment; 2023 (Percentage, %)

Figure 69: Airbus SE Revenue by Region; 2023 (Percentage, %)

Figure 70: Israel Aerospace Industries Ltd. Revenues by Segment; 2022 (Percentage, %)

Figure 71: Israel Aerospace Industries Ltd. Revenues by Region; 2022 (Percentage, %)

Figure 72: Thales Group Sales by Segment; 2023 (Percentage, %)

Figure 73: Thales Group Sales by Region; 2023 (Percentage, %)

Table 1: Types of Earth Observation Satellites

Table 2: Types of Optical Satellite

Table 3: Global Optical Satellite Players: Product Comparison

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