

# Branson poised to beat Bezos into space

Richard Branson will be on board the first fully crewed test flight of his Virgin Galactic space plane, upstaging Jeff Bezos as the first rocket company owner to fly to space

**1 Air launch:**  
**White Knight Two**  
mothership releases  
**SpaceShipTwo**  
(VSS Unity)  
at 15,000m

## MISSION PROFILE

**2 Boost:**  
Unity's rocket  
burns for about  
70 seconds at  
4,000km/h

**3 Apogee:**  
Craft reaches  
altitude of 90km.  
Passengers  
experience five  
minutes of  
weightlessness  
and view of  
curvature of  
Earth

**4 Descent:** Wings  
return to original  
position to allow  
craft to glide

**5 Landing:**  
Craft returns  
to Virgin Galactic's  
**Spaceport  
America** in  
New Mexico

**Richard  
Branson**

### VSS Unity

Length 18.3m  
Wingspan 8.2m  
Pilots 2  
Passengers 6

**"Feathering":**  
Twin tails rotate  
upward to increase  
drag and control  
re-entry of vehicle