Saronic and Castelion to Demonstrate First-of-Its-Kind Maritime Hypersonic Launch Capability

Today, Saronic and Castelino announced plans to join forces to launch a hypersonic vehicle from an unmanned surface vessel. By integrating Castelion's Blackbeard with Saronic's Medium Unmanned Surface Vessel (MUSV) Marauder, the two companies offer a powerful, credible option to deter would-be adversaries.

A First-of-Its-Kind Integration

The collaboration between Castelion and Saronic marks the first integration of autonomous surface vessels with hypersonics, and stands to accelerate distributed hypersonic capabilities by pairing Saronic's autonomous surface vessels (ASVs) with Castelion's low-cost hypersonics. The companies, both founded in late-2022, are targeting a demonstration in 2027.

"Launching a Castelion hypersonic from a Marauder MUSV significantly changes the approach for any adversary calculating where and how the U.S. can strike," said Dino Mavrookas, Co-Founder and CEO of Saronic. "Deterrence is ultimately a function of capability, capacity, and credibility. Saronic and Castelion are working to increase all three by combining autonomous maritime and hypersonic strike capabilities that are more scalable, more affordable, and faster to field."

Hypersonic systems launched from unmanned platforms give commanders more ways to generate credible strike capacity

without relying only on scarce, expensive crewed launch assets. By distributing launch across a larger number of lower-cost platforms, the U.S. can increase magazine depth, create more operational flexibility, and present adversaries with more launch locations, trajectories, and timing challenges. This approach makes hypersonic forces harder to predict, harder to suppress, and easier to scale.

Building the Infrastructure to Get There

The path to at-sea launch in 2027 requires both companies to move beyond the limitations of land-based ranges and exquisite crewed maritime assets to accelerate the flight test cadence.

Saronic's ASVs have already made headway to solve the problem. In late 2025, Saronic supported a Castelion Blackbeard flight test by operating the 24-foot ASV Corsair as an autonomous at-sea telemetry collection and communications node. The two teams are now advancing joint risk-reduction efforts to support continued flight test operations and build toward a 2027 maritime launch demonstration.

"Blackbeard and Marauder will give our warfighters more shots, from more places, with fewer constraints." said Bryon Hargis, Co-Founder and CEO of Castelion.

Built to Deliver at Scale

Both companies have a proven record of rapid hardware and software iteration to achieve real-world results. Castelion went from clean-sheet design to more than 25 flight tests in under two and a half years. Saronic brought Marauder from design to on-water trials in under a year and is actively building three more hulls at its shipyard in Franklin, Louisiana. Both companies have invested in production infrastructure to sustain and accelerate progress made by rapid technological advancements.

Castelion is expanding production capacity to several thousand

Blackbeard missiles annually. Its Project Ranger campus, a 1,000-acre hypersonic manufacturing facility in New Mexico backed by more than $250 million in private capital, exists for one reason: to produce hypersonic systems at the speed and scale effective deterrence demands.

Saronic is executing a $300 million shipyard expansion in Louisiana that will add 300,000 sq. ft. of production capacity and is expected to be complete by the end of 2026. The expanded shipyard will provide the capability to deliver 20 Marauders annually. This is one facet of Saronic's overall strategy to scale production capacity; its Austin, Texas facility adds 400,000 sq. ft. of production capacity built to produce thousands of small ASVs per year, and Port Alpha — Saronic's planned next-generation shipyard — will serve as the foundation for a new era of American shipbuilding and a catalyst for revitalizing the U.S. maritime industrial base.

Together, these investments chart a clear path for the U.S. and its allies to field this combined capability at the scale and speed of relevance.