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Technology Takeover

The year is 2013 and chaos ensues due to the recent decision of the popular delivery service, “Amazon.” You may remember it? When Amazon announced that they were going to make some of their deliveries with drones, people could not believe it. News stories were made, and articles were written about the futuristic, or even impossible idea, of having robots deliver our goods. Today, though, we have made major strides/advancements in technology and we are now closer than ever to having drone deliveries becoming the new norm.

Today, drones are used more frequently for a wider variety of reasons such as photography/videography, mapping, racing, recreational use, and much more. People use drones rather than other methods when trying to save money or if conventional methods are impossible or unsafe for operations such as inspecting bridges or towers. Because of this, they are becoming easier for anyone to obtain. The number one use of drones for recreational pilots today is taking photos for personal use. Many of the establishing shots that you see in today’s movies and commercials are shot with the help of drones. Before drones, arial videography was taken with airplanes and helicopters which could be expensive and dangerous. Drones used for photography are quicker, nimbler, can get to hard-to-reach places, and can do it all from a safe location on the ground far from the drone itself.

But why stop at photography. Sure, today's drones might have started as fun little toys that you can take poor-quality pictures with. But now, we have realized their potential and evolved them into a wide array of shapes and sizes for any job. With advancements in drone technology, comes more opportunities and uses for these drones. Many drones today come with anti-collision technology built into them using infrared sensors. This way, you have your drone perform certain tasks, such as following an object, and it will be able to do so without hitting anything and without the need for a pilot. Other drones made today can have lights, microphones, interchangeable cameras, night vision cameras, and many other interesting options. Because the use of drones is growing in popularity and we are still experimenting with the possibilities of different uses, we can come across some oddball ideas that people may have not initially thought of. The idea of having defense drones that can warn off people with lights and sound or even a drone that flies inside the house and monitor the inside.

Some people, though, are hesitant to rush into this new era of drone takeover. The idea of having "home defense" drones flying inside of the house can be a scary thought when you consider the wellbeing of your pets or small children or any other valuables. It only takes a certain amount of time for something to fail to lead to something bad happening then the whole idea is thrown out the window. Having drones deliver packages opens a whole new slew of considerations and concerns which would alter our idea of normality. The danger factor that goes along with Amazon drones is quite significant. These aircraft would have to carry a load from a facility to houses where they would approach the home (whether that is on the ground or hovering above a dropping point), then proceed back to their home base to do it all over again. In a perfect world, it could happen, but there are human factors and drone factors that come into play. These expensive drones could be tampered with or destroyed by anyone who is near the

drop zone which would be incentivized by package stealing. One thing for sure is that there will have put a complex system with rules and regulations into place to make something like this possible.

There is even a drone racing league that allows high-speed drones to fly through a track with sharp twists and turns against other pilots. The DRL, Drone Racing League, is an international league where pilots fly custom drones in a first-person view on a 3-dimensional course at speeds up to 80 miles per hour. “First Person View (FPV) drone racing is a competition where pilots control drones equipped with cameras while wearing goggles that stream the live video feed from the drones so they feel like they’re flying from inside the drone”, states the Drone Racing League website. Though you may not have heard about DRL, the sport gets a surprising amount of support from sports channels and even receiving sponsorships/partnerships. In the Drone Racing League, 12 pilots must compete in 16 different courses to try and receive the grand prize of 100,000 dollars. The DRL just goes to show the wide spectrum of possibilities that drones may offer.

We are still going through growing pains, though, as drones have only recently become popular. Concerns such as privacy and overall safety have greatly affected the rules and regulations on how these drones are operated. Businessinsider.com states, “Senate Bill 80 mandates that drone operation complies with appropriate FAA requirements. It also classifies drone use over military and correctional facilities as a class 1 misdemeanor. Delivering contraband or drugs by drone to a correctional facility is a class 6 felony under this law. Finally, it amends the crime of unlawful surveillance to include intentional drone use to observe or record an individual in a way that violates their reasonable expectation of privacy, and forbids landing a drone on someone’s property without consent.” This is just South Dakotas end of the deal when

it comes to laws about drone usage. Not only are there drone regulations different in every state, but there are federal laws that overlook the entire nation. The University of Ohio states, “Even a small drone poses high safety risks to large planes and ground installations like fuel depots.” Not all drone accidents have to be caused by pilot error, a drone’s radio signal could be interrupted causing the drone to lose all control and fall to the ground. With more people buying drones today and with them becoming more and more accessible, we run into more problems at every corner.

Even though drones are going through their ups and downs I believe that they are good for society overall. Sure, we might not have a perfect system for some time, but that does not mean we cannot get there. Just like everything else today, we must adapt to the endless march of technology. Drones will appear more frequently in our day-to-day lives as time goes on, acting as tools to make human lives a little easier.

Citations

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