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Amazon testing drones for deliveries



Drone delivery - fact or fiction?

Amazon, the world's largest online retailer, is testing unmanned drones to deliver goods to customers, Chief Executive Jeff Bezos says.

The drones, called Octocopters, could deliver packages (...) to customers within 30 minutes of them placing the order, he said.

However, he added that it could take up to five years for the service to start.

The US Federal Aviation Administration is yet to approve the use of unmanned drones for civilian purposes. (...)

"We can do half-hour delivery... and we can carry objects, we think, up to five pounds (2.3kg), which covers 86% of the items that we deliver."

The service will be called Prime Air and comes as Amazon is looking to improve its efficiency to boost growth.

However, it still has to wait for permission from US regulators. (...)

"The drones do not currently have the awareness of their environment to be able to avoid flying into people. To deliver goods to people's homes for example in residential areas, the drones must overfly densely populated towns and cities, something that today's regulations prevent.

"Other things to consider are security of the goods during the transit. With no one to guard them the aircraft and package could be captured and stolen," An expert said. (...)

Zookal, an Australian textbook rental company, announced earlier this year that it would start using drones to make deliveries from 2015 if approved by Australia's Civil Aviation Safety Authority.

Australian law allows the use of unmanned aircraft for commercial use.

260 words

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