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CES 2015 (Consumer Electronics Show): Why the future of drones is up in the air

By Zoe Kleinman Technology reporter, Las Vegas

Tiny drones, selfie-taking drones, military drones, drones that fly themselves - the drone zone at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas is positively buzzing - in every sense of the word.

"Drones are arguably the most hyped product at CES," said Ben Wood, from analyst firm CCS Insight.

"A real minefield in terms of regulation and safety but as prices tumble expect to see them in a lot more Christmas stockings this year."

The Consumer Electronics Association, which organises CES, said the drone market should be worth about \$130m in 2015 - 50% higher than 2014.

In a few years the trade group expects it to be a billion-dollar market. [...]

The "selfie" drone

Hexo+ raised \$1.3m to fund its Unmanned Aerial Vehicle - a drone that will fly up to 60m above your head and circle around you, giving you an all-round aerial selfie.

It has a flight time of 15 minutes and will eventually retail for \$1,500. It can self-fly, but will auto-land if it goes out of range of your phone.

"You need zero skill," said shareholder Lug Giroud. "In our selfie culture, everyone wants amazing shots of themselves. "

The X3, by Hubsan, is small enough to sit in your palm.

What's it for?



"This is how we scare our friends," said a company representative. "It's an office toy - just a cool gadget," they said. "It was our most popular Christmas item from last year."

At \$200 it's quite an expensive office toy especially as it can only manage 10 minutes of flying time before needing a recharge.

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