



AMAZON UNVEILS NEW PRIME AIR DRONE PROTOTYPES

News / Airlines



Amazon revealed the latest prototype of drones it will deploy as part of its Prime Air service using the unmanned aerial devices to deliver packages in under 30 minutes.

According to details released Sunday by the online retailing giant, Amazon says the drones weigh 55 pounds and can carry packages weighing up to 5 pounds. The drones fly under 400 feet and use "sense and deploy" technology to dodge potential obstacles en route to its delivery destination.

"We are testing many different vehicle designs and delivery mechanisms to discover how best to deliver packages in a variety of environments," reads a statement from Amazon. "We have more than a dozen prototypes that we've developed in our research and development labs. The look and characteristics of the vehicles will evolve over time."

A video released by Amazon shows the drone scanning an area near the delivery address to find a landing spot, followed by a hatch opening from the bottom to drop the package. Amazon says they are testing drones in "multiple international locations."

The company says the service will launch once the company has "the regulatory support needed to safely realize our vision."

In March, the Federal Aviation Administration granted Amazon approval to fly drones for research

into the Prime Air service after first revealing plans to work with drones for deliveries two years ago.

Other companies are also exploring drones as a new method of package delivery. Earlier this month, Walmart sought permission from the FAA to start drone testing, while Google reportedly revealed during an air traffic control convention in Washington, D.C., that it wants to launch a drone service in 2017.

30 NOVEMBER 2015

SOURCE: USA TODAY

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