

LUFTHANSA AERIAL SERVICES DIVISION INKS DEAL WITH DRONE-MAKER DJI

News / Airlines



Lufthansa Aerial Services, a division of Lufthansa Consulting, today signed a deal with DJI to use the world’s leading drone-maker’s aerial platforms to develop commercial applications for its key customers. Using DJI’s drones and open onboard systems, Lufthansa will integrate hardware and software, manage operation of the technology and facilitate data analysis. The two companies will work together to optimize the technology for special requirements sought by Lufthansa Aerial Services customers.

“Lufthansa Aerial Services is a perfect partner for DJI for joint market development of commercial UAV-applications,” said Martin Brandenburg, DJI’s European Marketing Director. “The feedback from Lufthansa’s clients is of great value for the further development of our products.”

“The market potential of commercial drone applications is growing inexorably thanks to the continuously improving regulatory situation and speed of technological progress in the market and innovation that DJI as the global leader has initiated. This includes a variety of commercial applications such as for infrastructure inspection, measuring and monitoring purposes,” says Christian Hartmann, program director of Lufthansa Aerial Services.

Lufthansa Aerial Services e.g. recently completed a pilot project with a wind-turbine manufacturer, using DJI equipment to inspect rotor blades on wind turbines. The task previously required manual inspection using a steeplejack – a more-dangerous and time-consuming method. In addition to the safety factor, drones can collect data that can be used later for analysis, such as how frequently a rotor blade needs inspection and maintenance.

Lufthansa Aerial Services is also involved in aviation-industry projects at and around airports, as demonstrated through recent tests with Fraport and DFS on Frankfurt International Airport, but also carrying out joint inspections of Lufthansa aircraft surfaces with sister company Lufthansa Technik.

Beyond these mentioned example use cases, LAS also plans to deploy drones equipped with thermal-imaging systems that can facilitate day-to-day inspections of infrastructure, such as wind power and photovoltaic systems, electricity and railroad lines and pipelines laid above ground. Aerial technology also makes it easier to monitor crops, construction and extraction sites.

Though commercial drones are readily available, many of LAS’s key clients and manufacturers choose not to operate them by themselves, because it is not their core business. Many clients also prefer to outsource due to the technology’s complexity, knowledge of regulatory frameworks and quality and safety-management issues.

“Lufthansa will offer clients a one-stop UAV-shop,” says Andreas Jahnke, Managing Director of Lufthansa Consulting. “This includes everything from application consulting and drone operation with data analysis, to training and certification of drone pilots at Lufthansa Flight Training, or even the provision of drone insurance solutions through Delvag, Lufthansa’s in-house insurer.”

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