

Title: 10 Ways Drones Are Impacting the Construction Industry
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The fascination with drones hasn't waned, it's just moving into practical territory. Every day people find new ways to use these flying machines and the construction industry is catching on quickly. If you think about any task you have done in the past, you can probably determine a way to do it better, faster, and more cost-effectively with a drone.

Here are ten ways drones are impacting the construction industry.

#1 Land Surveying

Land surveying means tramping around a property, holding targets and making measurements. You had to rent costly equipment, and it took substantial time to survey a lot completely.

With a drone, you can look at a parcel of land and see the details of the landscape and surrounding area. You still need to walk it, but now you can make more accurate estimates and better decisions about a potential project.

#2 Observe Hard to Access Places

Some properties are hard to reach. Maybe there are no roads, or the ground is not stable. If it is forested land, you would have a hard time seeing anything but trees. Another possibility is inspecting a damaged structure without loss of life or limb.

Drones don't need a surface or roads to work well. Hooked to a video camera, you can see what the drone sees in real time as it hovers over a rocky outcrop or another area you can't walk. Drones also come in small sizes, perfect for flying through the hallways and rooms of a building after an earthquake.

#3 Speed Up Deliveries

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Just like a drone can fly up a hill without a road, you can use one to deliver supplies and materials where the roadways are less accessible. If mud is bogging down your vehicles, a drone can take the load for you. In some areas, drones also help lay brick, or 3D print required components while in flight.

You can also monitor deliveries from above, to ensure arrival and proper unloading and storing. Then the drone can be used for security surveillance to keep watch for thieves and vandals.

#4 Present Site Progress

Every owner is anxious to know how a project is coming along. The capability to show them instead of telling them can make a big impression. As always, a picture is worth a thousand words, and if you can help the owner visualize the progression of a project, you will have happy clientele.

If there are delays, a drone can help show those as well. There's nothing like an owner seeing something for himself to show you aren't slow deliberately. Besides, if you can show owners exactly how the project is going, they are less likely to show up at the site and cause a disruption.

Clients at a distance will be reassured by the ability to receive visual updates and images of progress.

#5 Monitor Job Sites

Besides showing owners the progress of a project, if you have multiple projects, you cut out miles of driving and hours on the phone by accessing a video feed from a drone hovering over each of the properties.

Not only will you be able to oversee everything more quickly, but you can also catch problems early and be more available to the rest of your staff. You can keep this activity under wraps, but you will probably encourage more trust if your workers don't think you are spying on them.

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#6 Monitor Workers

You need supervisors, but they can be expensive. Instead of hiring more bodies to watch workers work, use a drone to ensure everyone is following appropriate safety precautions and perform general surveillance.

If you have the misfortune to have someone who may be stealing from you or is not following proper protocol, you can watch with a drone and call an onsite supervisor if needed.

#7 Inspect Roofs

Roof inspections are tricky. Some roof designs are impossible to stand on. There is also the issue of putting your foot through a weak roof and juggling your camera, notebook, and other equipment.

A drone can hover as close as you need, recording every inch of a roof and streaming the video to your computer, taking photos, and allowing you to record everything digitally from the ground.

#8 Safety and Insurance

Construction insurance is out of sight and getting higher. Using drones to inspect and record activity, showing everyone following the correct safety protocols, you can document your crew's compliance.

- Check for misaligned columns.
- Watch an excavation to ensure processes are followed properly.
- Notify site management if you see something wrong.

The ability to use a drone for safety monitoring could get you a break on your insurance.

#9 Guide Construction Equipment

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While some construction equipment is equipped with GPS, drones can also act as the eyes of the machinery. One US company provides drones that collect visual cues and send them to a computer that creates the guidance for unmanned machinery. Remote construction management is quickly becoming the norm.

#10 Marketing and Promotion

You can use the aerial footage, both still photos, and video, as part of your marketing campaign. Create a montage showing a building rising out of the dirt in time lapse. Make a gallery of your most impressive projects. Show prospects the types of structures you build and encourage prospects to put you on the shortlist.

These same videos and images can be used in municipal presentations, and for task force viability documentation.

Using drones to monitor from above or at a distance provides a competitive advantage to your business. You can handle more projects in the same amount of time, monitor worker activity, and safety, and show your clients progress anytime they ask.

By including images and video in your marketing and promotion, you make visible what before could only be described in words. From guiding unmanned equipment to surveying parcels of land, a drone goes places where before, only a bird (or a very expensive helicopter) could fly.