

Procore Groundbreak 2017: Drones swarm market, companies seek solutions for new data sources

By Jimmy Marlin Epperson | April 6th, 2017

Drones offer construction firms a lot more than just going in the air to capture pictures and videos.

However, even though drones are a major boon for construction and real estate developers, they can also cause problems for companies, HingePoint CEO and Founder Bryce Finnerty said.

“Drones are another way to gather data. If you don’t set up your systems and software correctly, the drone’s digital assets are going to cause more unstructured data that’s going to be difficult to manage,” Finnerty said. “And if you don’t integrate it with the data you already have, it will be another screen or system you have to open to manage your project.”

Companies have begun developing software to gather data from drones and either make new BIM models or place the data in you existing model. During the annual conference Groundbreak 2017, Procore announced better integration with Construction OS. Several drone companies are already taking advantage of Procore’s new app store.

The companies are capitalizing on the safety and ease of drones and are hoping to organize drone data to benefit construction firms.

EarthCam has developed a geospatial mapping platform, resulting in a comprehensive analytical report. The data for this mapping platform comes from their stationary cameras that stream a live video of the project along with drone flyovers. By combining their cameras, cloud-based storage and distribution tools it gives construction companies robust BIM models.

“We’re flying drones and scanning the whole project and we’re putting together 3D models,” said Brain Cury, CEO of EarthCam. “Then we utilize that to do a webcam wrap. So then we’re wrapping live video around the 3D point cloud that we made.”

Benefits include a digital framework to attach construction webcam images, geo-tagged photographs, site plans and video analytics of the project that users can build upon throughout the entire construction process.

“You start with the point cloud. Once you have the point cloud you can map the images, 3d models and BIM models.”

Botlink specializes in becoming the link between drones and construction by enabling professionals to quickly capture data about the worksite. With their simple flight planning software, they can incorporate drones without the need of a drone expert.

It gives you more insight into job site progression. With Botlink’s timeline view inspectors or construction crews can see how the project has progressed over time.

“All the data you are capturing is consistent, you’re flying the same exact route every day instead of having to hand fly and manually capture images and waste your time moving those images around and organizing them,” said Will DeHoogh, drone developer at Botlink. “Instead Botlink stitches all the images together and if you’re doing an inspection you don’t you have to sift through video, you can just zoom in the area you are interested in.”

Dronomy transforms off-the-shelf consumer drones into powerful equipment, delivering the most precise and comprehensive data. The data is then converted into 2D and 3D models of the current project status that can be accessible anywhere.

“This type of information helps teams to be objective so everyone is on the same page,” said Gil Mildworth, vice president of Dronomy. “Construction companies when they build today invest a lot in 3D modeling in the architecture phase, but they are almost blindfolded in building their site the right way.”

HingePoint covers the AEC Industry and is the author of The AEC Industry 4.0 Report and the Autodesk Industry Report 2017. HingePoint helps construction and real estate development companies take control of their company’s information. We combine systems, software, and data so all company information can be seen and accessed from one screen, like a smartphone or computer.

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