

Sharing Experiences at The Commercial UAV Show



On 21 and 22 October 2014, the Olympia venue in London, UK, played host to the very first edition of The Commercial UAV Show. Around 55 exhibitors and 1,700 visitors arrived in London to learn more about UAVs and the various types of payloads, to network and to share their experiences. For geomatics professionals there was plenty to see and hear, both at the stands and at the seminars that were

being held during the event.

(By Wim van Wegen, editorial manager, GIM International)

Lucy Bradley from Terrapinn, organiser of the event, explained that The Commercial UAV Show responds to the need for an exhibition that serves parties with a desire for more knowledge and experience about UAVs. The diversity in backgrounds of the people attending the event reflects the organising company's own background, as it is specialised in organising exhibitions and conferences in a wide range of fields including oil & gas, telecoms & media, transport & logistics and agriculture.

From a geomatics point of view the different types of payloads – Lidar, photogrammetry, thermal imaging – made a visit to The Commercial UAV Show more than worthwhile, as did the great variety in the seminars and the highly interactive conference programme.

Exhibition

Among the highlights at the exhibition were Sabre's 20kg-class HL-48 Skyhorse UAVs which have been designed from the outset to have useful payloads (up to 10kg) with a flight duration of up to 1 hour. The company uses advanced composite materials and 3D printing techniques to lighten and speed up developments. A visit to the Delair-Tech stand also proved interesting: the company, based in Toulouse, France, is contributing to the geomatics community with its airborne sensing UAV packages, developed to monitor power lines, pipelines, railways, etc. The company's complete UAV systems also enable topographic mapping of large areas using UAVs.

Seminars

On the seminar floor, archaeology was a subject that resulted in some inspiring presentations. Paul Baggaley of Wessex Archaeology held a presentation on mapping archaeological sites with both fixed-wing and multicopters. He pointed out that the importance of UAVs as a tool for archaeological surveys is rapidly increasing, and he envisioned the need for Lidar on UAV and a geophysics kit on UAVs.

Jamie Quartermaine, Oxford Archaeology, held a presentation titled 'UAV, the archaeological perspective'. Focusing on photogrammetry, he mentioned both UAVs and the Russian company Agisoft as game-changers. Agisoft has caused a rebirth of photogrammetry, Quartermaine stated. Photogrammetry itself is a long-established survey technique that has been brought to life again by the arrival of UAVs, and this new approach has the potential to revolutionise survey practice, Quartermaine told the audience.

Plenty to do and to see at The Commercial UAV Show

Fabio Remondino, who was written various articles for *GIM International*, held a critical review of UAV technology in transition at the seminar theatre. His fellow countryman Antonio d'Argenio was also present with his company Panoptes, both at the exhibition and on the seminar floor. He took to the floor to explain to the audience more about geospatial aerial inspections at PV power plants.

Conclusion

All in all, The Commercial UAV Show was a well-organised, inspiring and widely accessible event showing significant promise for the future. Next year, the organisers aim to double the size of the show, which is scheduled to take place at the ExCeL Exhibition and Convention Centre on 20 and 21 October 2015. Bradley said she has high expectations for next year, given the huge response and many positive comments she has already received.