Aerial Robotics and Social Good Solutions

Sally French
Wall Street Journal
Bell Jet Ranger Helicopter, commonly used for news reporting
$700K-1.2 million initial cost + $649/hour
Yuneec TYPHOON Flight Aerial Videography Hexacopter in Color Box Surveillance Video Quad, Black (YUNTYH8BUS)
by Yuneec

$999.00

Get it by Wednesday, May 31

More Buying Choices
$999.00 new (3 offers)

FREE Shipping on eligible orders

Autel Robotics X-Star 4K Camera, 1.2-Mile HD Live View Drone with 1 Autel Robotics Battery(Li-Po with 4900mAh, 14.8V) and...
by Autel Robotics

$899.00 Prime

In stock on June 5, 2017

More Buying Choices
$899.00 new (3 offers)

FREE Shipping on eligible orders

DJI Phantom 3 Standard Quadcopter Drone with 2.7k Video Camera HD Video Recording + Genuine Propeller Guards + Self-tightening...
by Digital&More

$509.95

FREE Shipping on eligible orders

Show only Digital&More items

Show only Yuneec items
Good Morning America
Covering Protests

Photos from 2013 protests in Bangkok, Thailand over former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra
28,000

-Number of people at primary protest, according to news reports
But how can people use drones to FIND the story?
Drought

Lake Oroville

September 2015

February 2016
Erosion
Investigative Journalism

Dallas Meat-packing plant:

"I was looking at images after the flight that showed a blood red creek and was thinking, could this really be what I think it is? Can you really do that, surely not?"

EPA, TCEQ, and Texas Parks and Wildlife executed a search warrant.
Los Angeles Drought: Mayor caught watering lawn

- Due to severe drought, LA passed law limiting when lawns could be watered

- NBC sent intern to climb up a tree and gather video of lawn being watered at night

*Used a human to gather images
“The back yard sprinklers have been running on Tuesday night at (2 a.m.), at Saturday night at (2 a.m.). We have pictures of it,” Grover told the mayor.

“Pictures of my back yard?” Villaraigosa said.

“Yes,” Grover said.

“From where?” Villaraigosa said.

“From our cameras,” Grover said.

“From your cameras,” Villaraigosa said. “Well, we’ll check into it.”

“Will you get back to me?” Grover said.

“Yes,” Villaraigosa said.
We can air drone footage of the Los Angeles mayor’s backyard.

But what about a private citizen’s backyard?
Now to turn the tables...
The FAA banned drones from flying at the Standing Rock oil pipeline...

This weekend the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration issued a temporary flight restriction over the Standing Rock oil pipeline protest in North...

Oil pipeline: Trump's stock in company raises concern

View all

Flight Restrictions Over Standing Rock: Is The FAA Effectively...

Forbes - Nov 27, 2016

UPDATE: FAA Statement on Standing Rock TFR and access to drone journalists.

The Federal Aviation Administration carefully considers...

With phones and drones, capturing Standing Rock images the...

ConsumerAffairs - Dec 20, 2016

Though drone photographers at Standing Rock have complained for ... also requested from the FAA and was subsequently granted several ...

Police Shoot Down Aerial Drones Over Standing Rock Demonstration

The Real News Network - Oct 31, 2016

Protesters and protectors say the shootings of drones are aimed at undermining reporting on #NoDAPL. ... Police Shoot Down Aerial Drones Over Standing Rock Demonstration REGIS FERLAND: The FAA No Fly Zone was enacted today over ....

District Courts Continue to Challenge Trump’s Travel Bans.

Feds close airspace over pipeline protest

Minnesota Public Radio News (blog) - Oct 26, 2016

The FAA is closing airspace because of a news story that's happening on the ground.
This weekend the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration issued a temporary flight restriction over the Standing Rock oil pipeline protest in North Dakota, banning all aircraft except those flying in support of law enforcement. The FAA will make exceptions for journalists as long they get special approval beforehand.

Drones have been used to capture footage of police clashes with protesters attempting to block the Dakota Access Pipeline, which is being built a half-mile from the Standing Rock Sioux reservation and would cross under the Missouri River at Lake Oahe — the tribe's main source of drinking water.

Earlier this month drone footage of protesters being sprayed with water cannons in freezing weather went viral, but it was taken before the FAA ban. Now drone videographers are not allowed to collect aerial video of the ongoing protest at the campsite until Dec. 2, when the ban lifts. The FAA requires journalists to go through a process to get approval to fly a drone during the ban, yet it's hard to predict when a newsworthy confrontation between police and protesters will occur. No requests from media have been granted yet, according to an FAA spokesperson.
Drone journalism:

- Accessible, cheap and easy to fly

- Footage of breaking news situations is often shot by non-journalists, then sold to TV stations

- Often gathered by people who use drones for other purposes, including activism, public policy, environmental studies