

Amazon.com testing drone delivery service

4th December, 2013



The online store Amazon is testing a new method of delivering parcels to customers. It wants to start using drones to get packages to customers, in just 30 minutes. The drones

are small, remote-controlled helicopters called 'octocopters'. They look like toys. Amazon's CEO Jeff Bezos talked about them on the American TV show 60 Minutes. He said: "I know this looks like science fiction. It's not." He added: "We can do half-hour delivery...and we can carry objects, we think, up to 2.3kg, which covers 86 per cent of the items that we deliver." He joked that Amazon would not be able to deliver some things. He said: "It won't work for everything. We're not going to deliver kayaks, or table saws this way."

The new delivery system is going to be called 'Prime Air'. It could be in operation before the year 2018. Mr Bezos believes it will be good for the environment. "It's very green and it's better than driving trucks around," he said. The project still needs the green light from the U.S. government. The company is making sure the 'octocopter' meets all of the country's flying safety standards. Bezos said Amazon needed to keep finding new ways to stay ahead. He knows that companies can have a short life span and that other businesses can overtake them, especially those using technology. He only has one concern with his 'octocopters'. He said: "This thing can't land on somebody's head while they're walking around their neighborhood."

Sources: Sky News / CNN / USA Today

Writing

Will 'octocopters' be safe or dangerous? Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

online store / Amazon / packages / customers / delivery / science fiction / delivery / good for the environment / green / safety standards / neighbourhood / technology

True / False

- a) Amazon wants customers to get their orders in 30 minutes. T / F
- b) The drones Amazon is testing look like things children might play with. T / F
- c) Amazon's CEO Jeff Bezos said using drones is 100% science fiction. T / F
- d) Mr Bezos said the drones would be able to deliver things like kayaks. T / F
- e) The new service will be called "Air Amazon". T / F
- f) The drones will be better for the environment than delivery by trucks. T / F
- g) Bezos hopes the drones do not fall on people's heads. T / F
- h) The CEO said no other company can overtake Amazon. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. method | a. things |
| 2. packages | b. guidelines |
| 3. toys | c. send |
| 4. objects | d. beneficial |
| 5. deliver | e. parcels |
| 6. in operation | f. go-ahead |
| 7. good | g. way |
| 8. green light | h. working |
| 9. standards | i. time |
| 10. span | j. playthings |

Discussion – Student A

- a) Should everyone use drone delivery if it's good for the environment?
- b) Do you think all shopping will be online one day?
- c) What do some people dislike about shopping?
- d) What would it be like if all real stores disappeared?
- e) Do you think the drones might be dangerous?
- f) What will happen if the skies are filled with drones?
- g) What do you think of Amazon.com?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. testing a new method | a. for the environment |
| 2. start using drones to get | b. controlled helicopters |
| 3. The drones are small, remote- | c. on somebody's head |
| 4. this looks like science | d. that we deliver |
| 5. 86 per cent of the items | e. light |
| 6. It could be in operation | f. of delivering parcels |
| 7. it will be good | g. before the year 2018 |
| 8. The project still needs the green | h. fiction |
| 9. This thing can't land | i. life span |
| 10. companies can have a short | j. packages to customers |

Discussion – Student B

- How important is shopping to you?
- What was your best time shopping?
- Do you like online shopping?
- What do you think of Amazon's 30-minute drone delivery service?
- Do you think delivery by drone is science fiction?
- Would you use the drone delivery service or go to a store?
- Why do people like shopping?
- Who do you like going shopping with and why?

Spelling

- testing a new tmodhe
- rvegeinldi parcels
- emoetr-controlled helicopters
- get packages to ocuestsmr
- eiescnc fiction
- we can carry tjsoecb
- It could be in neiaoptro before the year 2018
- it will be good for the iotnmevenrn
- the country's flying efytas standards
- Bezos only has one ccrnoe
- keep finding new ways to stay aadeh
- especially those using holygconte

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. j	4. a	5. c
6. h	7. d	8. f	9. b	10. i

Role Play

Role A – Online shopping

You think online shopping is the best kind of shopping. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their kinds of shopping. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): window shopping, food shopping or shopping for presents.

Role B – Window shopping

You think window shopping is the best kind of shopping. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their kinds of shopping. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): online shopping, food shopping or shopping for presents.

Role C – Food shopping

You think food shopping is the best kind of shopping. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their kinds of shopping. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): online shopping, window shopping or shopping for presents.

Role D – Shopping for presents

You think shopping for presents is the best kind of shopping. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their kinds of shopping. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): online shopping, food shopping or window shopping.

Speaking - Shopping

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- online shopping
- shopping at markets
- catalogue shopping
- food shopping
- window shopping
- shopping at the mall
- shopping at sales
- department stores

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.