



# The Tribune Trends

## Drone realty

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THE recent announcement of India's policy on the use of Remotely Operated Aircraft Systems (ROAS) by the Directorate General of Central Aviation, has brought the spotlight on drone photography and its use in different sectors. The realty scene, too, is abuzz with talk on how this technology can be incorporated more constructively to compound business benefits. The new policy that will be effective from December 1 onwards, clears ambiguity regarding the definition of a drone and the flying restrictions related to different types of remotely piloted aircraft.

With decks being cleared for legalising the use of drones from December 1, real estate can now leverage this technology in many different ways

The fact that technology has seeped into the realty marketing is amply reflected in different tools used by developers these days. Drone imaging is currently trending in realtors' offices as well as on realty platforms across the board. While under Drone Regulations 1.0 the users have to acquire a licence and permission for flying a drone,



**VANTAGE POINT:** Remotely operated aircraft systems offer real-time view of an apartment and its surroundings to customers even before its completion. This low cost, trendy and innovative technology has several other uses for developers too

drones under 2 kg would not need the licence and permission. "The new policy is a positive development and it will ease out a number of issues for the developers as well the customers who can now get the latest and actual updates quickly for the projects that they like or have bought property in," says Pradeep Aggarwal, Co founder & Chairman, Signature Global and Chairman, National Council on Affordable Housing, ASSOCHAM.

Having effective pictures is the key element of the sale process and aerial photography is being used commonly now to give a bird's eye view of the property as well as of the surrounding features like markets, parks, etc. Customers also get to "feel" the view from a higher floor in a building which is yet to be completed. "Till now we were using this technology to showcase the

grandness of a project. Now that this policy has been legalised, it will be much easier to have shoots to showcase our properties", says Siddhartha Sood, Head, Marketing, Gaur's group. With ₹20,000 to ₹35,000 per day fee, it is also a cost effective promotional tool for developers, though with new regulations on licensing and permits, bigger developers are not averse to having their own equipment and operators in the near future.

### Wider area of operation

Talking about the different benefits of drone imaging Manoj Asrani, First Executive, Brick Asset Pvt Ltd, says, "Newer-generation drones can provide detailed aerial imagery in high definition. With the entire roofing surface in full view, a drone allows for an accurate analysis of conditions, free

### The many uses

- Promotional content
- Mapping & surveying
- Volume calculations
- Site surveillance & progress monitoring
- Asset inspection
- Enhancing worker safety

of missing data or human error, so that well-informed decisions can be made".

Generating regular and more detailed construction updates is another area where drones are being utilised by developers. "We can maintain a strict quality control in a much swifter and better way with more frequent assessment of the progress of work", says Prateek Mittal, Executive

Director of Chandigarh-tricity based Sushma Buildtech Pvt. Ltd. In case of bigger projects as well as projects in hilly regions also this tool can solve a number of tedious issues like mapping and contouring of land etc., adds Mittal while sharing how drones had been used for the group's upcoming project in Kasauli recently.

### Thermal inspection capabilities

Thermal inspection immediately identifies damages in areas that can't be seen or accessed via manual inspections, or even through a direct aerial view. "With thermal inspection capabilities offered in newer-generation drones, assessments can now yield even greater insights", says Asrani. For example, this technology is capable of flagging water pooling underneath a flat roof, issues with HVAC equipment and damage to a building's infrastructure. Drones with these capabilities can identify issues before they compound and have a more detrimental impact. "It enables proactive, preventive maintenance in problem areas", adds Asrani.

### Risk monitoring

Drone imaging can also be used to reduce collateral risk in a property as the lenders can have access to more detailed, regular and realistic assessment regarding a project. "From the investor point of view also this is helpful as the data generated can be used for risk monitoring on behalf of lenders", adds Dhruv Agarwala, CEO, Housing.com, Proptiger/makaan.com

Though Agarwala maintains that this technology will not be a major game changer for the realty sector, yet it is an important tool of the digital shift that is currently taking place in property market. Thus, with new policy clearing decks for the legalised use of new-age drones, there will be impact on the future of real estate marketing through deeper insights and analysis, more frequent surveys and a safer working environment.

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