

On the up and up at SkyTech

Staged at London's Business Design Centre over two days at the end of January, the second SkyTech exhibition and conference was undoubtedly a smaller affair than the consumer-oriented Drone Show held a month earlier at Birmingham's NEC, but it retains its attraction as a forum for professional users.

Organised by Charles Maxwell Ltd in partnership with SUAS (an industry group representing the UAV sector), Rheinmetall's Unmanned Systems Training Academy, and Flightpath Consulting, the event featured three conferences on the UAV Industry, drone applications, and UAV surveying respectively. Full details of presentations can be found at <http://www.skytechevent.com> and <http://www.drones-iview.com/>

The conferences were supplemented by beginner workshops and an exhibition supported by some 30 companies, including Leica Geosystems and Topcon, as well as by representative and regulatory bodies.

New developments unveiled at the event included Gimball from Flyability S.A., a spin-off from the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne. Claimed as the world's first collision-tolerant drone, its flight control algorithms developed during five years of research mean it remains stable after contacts and its patented rotating protective frame makes it safe to fly close to people.

With more and more UAVs taking to the air, a development from Antwerp-based UNIFLY could well prove a winner. Its SkyBridge Aviation Traffic Management system has been developed as an intuitive Cloud-based software platform that integrates seamlessly

with existing Air Traffic Control systems to enable safe drone traffic.

On the home front, QuestUAV from Northumberland showcased its latest platform. Intended for industrial-grade aerial survey and data analysis, DATAhawk is a fully autonomous drone offering easy and accurate acquisition of geodata for survey mapping and GIS professionals. It automatically converts high-res data into geo-referenced 2D orthomosaics, 3D models and point clouds and is claimed to deliver fast and reliable results.



QuestUAV's Carla Taylor with the company's new DATAhawk platform



UNIFLY's Koene Williame (left) and Jurgen Verstaen were busy promoting the new SkyBridge drone traffic management system

Now here's the Thing ...

If attendance was anything to go by, the inaugural Internet of Things (IoT) Tech Expo Europe event at London's Olympia exhibition centre must be counted a roaring success. With scarcely room to move at times in the venue's National Hall, many of the 5,000 who visited over two days in mid-February will have come to find out just how the IoT will impact on their businesses and professions. Others will have been

eager to scrutinise promising start-ups, of which there were many seeking investors.

While the range of solutions on show spanned manufacturing, transport & automotive, health, logistics, Government and energy, novel geo applications and developments were to be found among the 100 or so exhibitors, some examples of which we caught on camera.



Cambridge-based PurMetrix was demonstrating the beta version of a wireless solution that employs a network of small, robust, temperature sensors (held here by Hermione Crease) that converts temperature data into heatmaps and graphs. The idea is that facilities managers can use the battery-free sensor system to identify hotspots at precise locations, realise energy savings, and build the case for new HVAC investment



Anna Babarczy from DroneX, a UAV design and manufacturing start-up based in Bristol, was highlighting the company's custom-made platforms for commercial and scientific use. Already employed by video production companies, universities, architects and others, the company is developing a new innovative product that, according to Babarczy, will shake up the surveying market.



Showfloor presentations on topics ranging from smart cities to connected industries and from connected living to data and security were all well attended