

Dronedesk case study

UNIQUE DRONE USE-CASE

How Chris uses Dronedesk to support growth and partnership for **Aerial Ashes**



6 min read

Christopher Mace was creating a new service in the drone industry.

But he was facing a problem. Putting together plans for each flight was time-consuming and complicated. And the resulting plans were hard to share with customers, stakeholders, and partners.

Which is why he turned to Dronedesk.

What is Aerial Ashes?

Chris had spent 30 years flying helicopters for the RAF, conducting countless flights carrying both people and supplies.

And, on occasion, ashes.



"Somebody would contact us through the RAF Benevolent Fund about someone who had a connection with the Air Force years ago, a Spitfire pilot for example. And they would say the family have asked if you would scatter the ashes in this location while you're flying over it."

Chris realised that, if a few people wanted their ashes scattered from an aircraft, there might be more. And only a few of them would have access to an RAF flight.

So, when Chris left the RAF, he founded Aerial Ashes. He took some off-the-shelf equipment and carefully modified it, with full CAA approval, to properly scatter ashes. Soon he was conducting scatterings all over the UK, scattering ashes in locations as diverse as personal property to university campus, golf courses to race courses.



"One client remembered her parents walking dogs around the field that was at the back of the house. After her parents passed away, she wanted their ashes to be scattered in that field. Another gentleman wanted to scatter his wife's ashes over the North Sea because she was from Norway. So we flew the drone out to sea and released the ashes to drift over the sea towards Norway."

Aerial Ashes was in demand. But Chris was finding it difficult to keep all the paperwork together.



"I was struggling with keeping my notes. I put my location notes, airspace details, things like that in a file. It was clumsy and I was thinking I needed somewhere I could have all this information in one place."

And when Christopher came across an advert on social media for Dronedesk, he realised he'd found just what he needed.

Making flights easier

Our founder, Dorian, built Dronedesk to solve the exact problem Christopher was facing: to streamline the process of planning drone flights and keeping the information in one place.

So when Christopher started using Dronedesk to plan his flights, everything was much easier.



"The biggest pro for me is probably the record keeping. So whether that be an audit or whether it be a transfer of information to someone else, it's all in one place. Finding out who owns airspace, who has an interest on the land or whatever's going on there. There are numerous places that you can find that information, it's just a question of how easy it is to find and having everything together."

Manually planning a flight can involve hours poring over different maps and databases trying to find out what's going on in the airspace. Finding who you need to notify, who you don't, and where you can fly can take hours. Which is why Dorian put all that information right into Dronedesk.



"I'll put a pin on the map in Dronedesk and it steers me towards the airspace concern. I can see if I'm operating within somebody's flight restriction zone so I can contact the airfield. But I can also see airspace operators I'm not mandated to contact, but I still know it's the right thing to do."

Speaking of informing airspace operators, Christopher particularly appreciates the way Dronedesk not only contains information about ground and air activities, but also notifies other people about Christopher's own flights.



"I'm very cautious to make sure that we're not going to upset the general public. But also, because I come from an aviation background, it makes everyone safer when we share the fact we're going to be flying a 15 kilo drone from the beach between these particular times. Because if somebody else comes down to fly their drone there, they can immediately see that there are other operations in these areas. It makes it safer for everyone."

And Dronedesk puts all of the permissions, site maps, flight information, restriction zones, all in one place. And, more importantly, makes it easy for anyone to view and understand thanks to the job pack..



[Watch the video](#)

Sharing job packs

There's a lot of information linked to a drone flight. The client details. The operational statement. The site map. The risk assessments. Keeping all of that information in one place isn't easy, which is partly why Dorian built Dronedesk in the first place. But sharing that information is a challenge too, which is where the job pack comes in.



"Probably the best feature for me now with Dronedesk is the quality of the job pack. Once you've crunched all the information, you can create a PDF which has it all or you can cherry pick what things you put into it. When I'm working with a funeral director I often send a copy of that job pack and they're wowed by the detail. It reassures clients that you're a professional."

This sort of clear, comprehensive information isn't just useful for impressing clients. It's also vital for your audit trail should you need to demonstrate your operations are complying with regulations.

But it can also make it easier to get work.



"We have a contract with Co-op Funeralcare so they can offer our service to their clients. But when we were setting up this agreement, they were looking for some kind of audit process. I showed them the job pack and that answered all their questions."

And the job pack has a more day-to-day benefit. Part of Aerial Ashes offering includes multiple drones on a single flight, either one drone filming while the other drone scatters or scattering the ashes of more than one person (something they call a coordinated release). And coordination is indeed key; each drone operator needs to know exactly what they're doing and when.



"I planned a job in Brighton and put the job pack into a PDF format and emailed it to the other operator. When I met him on the beach at six o'clock in the morning, he'd already read the job pack. So he knew exactly what we were doing."



And, of course, with the growing success of Aerial Ashes, Christopher needs to find more drone operators to help fulfill the growing number of flights.

Supporting future growth

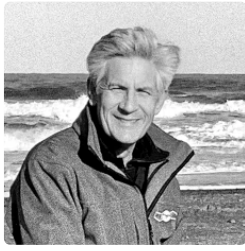
Christopher has seen Aerial Ashes through four years of operations and now it's time for more operators to enter the fold. And Dronedesk will help the team manage that by including team and equipment management information all in one place.

All the details of flights are logged, naturally, but Dronedesk also makes it easy to see everything from your team's operator IDs to drone serial numbers, maintenance requirements to certification renewal, hours logged to upcoming jobs.



"So where I see myself using the platform more in the future would be as a sort of big brother watching! I'll still use it for planning, but I'll also want to know a task has been completed, how many hours somebody's flown on that drone, how many hours they've got in their logbook. And Dronedesk lets me see all that and more."

We're so proud to have helped Christopher bring peace and closure to so many people, and we hope we can continue to help him for many more years to come. To find out how Dronedesk can help your business, get in touch today.



Christopher Mace [in](#)

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