SOLO VIDEOGRAPHER/PHOTOGRAPHER

How Oliver takes the stress out of flight planning for Different View Photography

`7 min read`

Like all sole traders, Oliver Dickinson was balancing the need to complete paperwork and plan his drone flights alongside finding new jobs and actually doing the jobs.

But a chance encounter with our founder, Dorian, on a job at Nightingale Hospital in Exeter would result in Oliver discovering a tool that would save countless hours of admin and make it possible to take on jobs he'd never have been able to before.

> *"I remember saying to him, 'It's been a nightmare doing this,' and I showed him the wad of paper I'd made for my risk assessment. He said, 'Try Dronedesk and I can guarantee you that would have taken half the time. And he was right!"*

And this chance encounter came at just the right time, because things were about to take off for Oliver.

Different View Photography: the right place at the right time

After years working as a teacher, Oliver had decided to pursue his true passion: photography. Oliver saw an advantage in offering drone photography to stand out from the competition, and his early work even helped him secure the People's Choice Award at the British Photography Awards. But Oliver had his eye on a new drone, and that drone would open some unexpected doors.

> *"The whole thing started by buying the right drone from the right guy, meeting the right people on the right tugboat. The right place at the right time!"*

The drone was the DJI Inspire 2, a drone that was both perfect for Oliver and also rather expensive! So Oliver looked for second-hand models that were in good condition. And he was in luck. More than he expected.

> *"The chap selling it was moving away and said he'd put me in touch with someone called Gary. And, in mid-August, Gary contacted me saying, 'I need you to film this autonomous ship coming into Plymouth. It's for a local company, but IBM provides all the technology that goes in the ship'"*

While working on the job, some of the IBM team took an interest in Oliver's drone and took his business card.

> *"Six weeks later, the Creative Director for IBM Europe called me saying, 'We want you to assemble a team to create footage for a documentary.' They gave me a budget and we spent four days producing it. And I paid everyone else far more than I paid myself so I could get the best people on the job."*

That documentary has had 200 million views at the time of writing (Feb-23), and helped open even more doors to clients such as ITV, BBC, and a production company working for Williams F1. Oliver's business is going from strength to strength, and Oliver attributes some of that success to not having to waste hours on laborious paperwork thanks to Dronedesk.

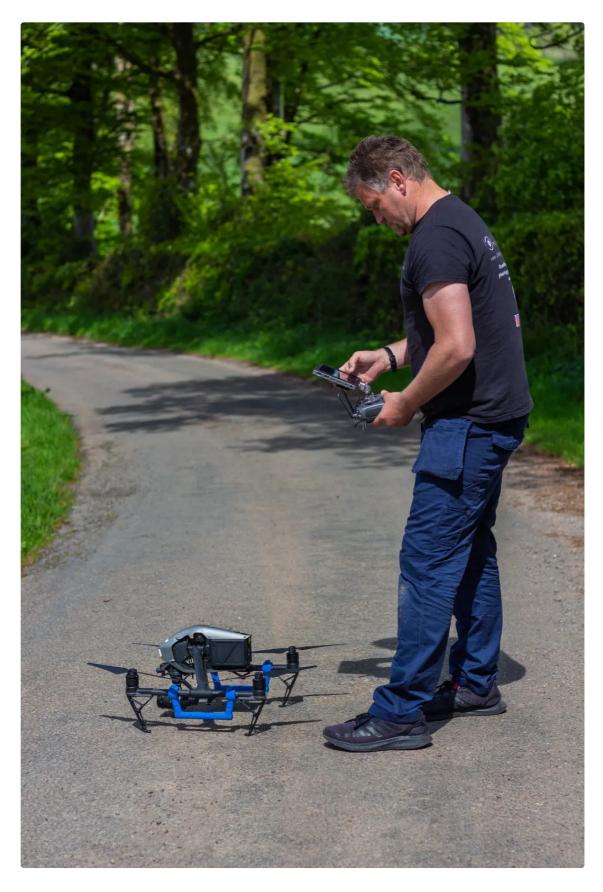### Taking the stress out of planning drone flights

> *"It takes the real pain out of planning. You feel a real achievement when you've got permission to fly in Hyde Park or near Buckingham Palace but to do all that planning by hand? That wouldn't have felt so good."*

The amount of time spent planning is a pain that Oliver, and thousands of other drone operators know all too well (it's why our founder, Dorian, built Dronedesk in the first place!). Hours spent collating information, filling in paperwork, and even duplicating forms is time lost. Dronedesk brings everything under one roof, making it quicker and easier to plan a flight by putting the information you need at your fingertips.

> *"I used to have to look up wind speed and weather on the BBC site, look up numbers for local hospitals and airports and the like. It takes a fair bit of time. You have to put a lot of energy into this thinking and planning. But Dronedesk automatically populates all that information for you. And it also provides maps that you can plan on and make notes, rather than you having to draw your own."*

When Oliver was filming for IBM, he was returning to the same location for four days in a row. Each flight would have needed its own plan, requiring laborious copying of the same data from one assessment to another, and wasting a lot of Oliver's time duplicating paperwork. The same is true of anyone performing multiple flights in the same location, which is why we've made it so much simpler with Dronedesk.

> *"If you're doing work in the same location on different days, you need to write for different risk assessments. And that takes hours, especially when you're first starting out. But with Dronedesk, you can clone the risk assessment with one click and just make adjustments for any changes."*

For Oliver, this is the key benefit of Dronedesk: it means he can spend less time on the planning, so he has more time for the actual flight, more time for himself, or even more time for sleep; after all, when a last minute job comes in, you don't want to be up all night planning the flight.

> *"I got a call at eight o'clock at night asking if I could be in Kent for eight in the morning. And I'm in Plymouth. So I asked for the postcode of the location, looked it up, and I had a plan within 45 minutes. Without Dronedesk, I realistically couldn't have taken that job."*

More than flight planning

And it's not just the planning that Dronedesk helps with. We also wanted to help reduce the time you spend on admin even after the flight is complete, which is why Dronedesk can automatically log data such as your flight times.

> *"I was literally having to go through a spreadsheet, note down every single place I've been, how long I've been flying. It was just taking hours and hours. But Dronedesk logs that for you, so when you come to renew your permissions, you can just literally export a log report in a couple of clicks and send off. So Dronedesk is such a time-saving bit of software."*

Oliver has also made use of Dronedesk's ability to keep all of his relevant details in one, easy-to-find location. Rather than hunting around his computer or digging through papers, Oliver's information is kept safe within our cloud-based platform, so he can find it wherever his is.

> *"It's been great for keeping all of the vital information in one place, all my permissions and insurance details and things like that. So when a client needs to know my pilot number and insurance details, I can just get it all from Dronedesk instead of hunting through files on my computer."*

Less admin, more flying!

Oliver has built a thriving business and we're proud to be helping him to save time and focus on what matters to him. A sole trader's time is invaluable, and they have to do almost everything to keep their business running. That's why we're glad to be able to save time for someone like Oliver and remove some of that burden!

> *"It just takes the stress out of everything. It saves you time, and arguably makes you more competitive when looking for jobs because you don't need to charge clients for all the time you used to need for planning."*

We also provide the same level of support to a sole trader like Oliver as we do to our bigger, corporate clients. Whether he's encountered a problem or simply looking for help using a new feature, Oliver's always found that we're ready to help him get the most from Dronedesk.

> *"I've been so impressed with it. I know how hard Dorian works. He's always on the other end of the line. He puts a lot into this and it's great service. It's very personable."*

If you're a sole trader or small business and planning your drone flights is taking up time that could be better spent elsewhere, try Dronedesk. We offer a free trial and a money back guarantee to all new users, so find out just how much time Dronedesk can save you today.

All quotes are from Oliver Dickinson - Owner of Different View Photography

Oliver Dickinson **in**

[Try Dronedesk FREE](#) with a 90-day 100% money back guarantee that you'll save time with your flight planning.