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Terra Drone, Unifly, and Aloft Technologies launch UTM development for AAM targeting global markets

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Terra Drone Corporation, a leading drone and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) technology provider headquartered inÂ Japan, has announced the launch of joint development with its Group companies Unifly NV and Aloft Technologies Inc. focused on UAS Traffic Management (UTM) (1) for AAMs targeting global markets.Â Terra DroneÂ has been making strides in its pioneering UTM business via strategic investments in Unifly, a leading UTM technology provider based inÂ Belgium, and Aloft, which has the top UTM market share in the U.S. This collaboration marks the world's first-ever (2) joint UTM development for AAMs by multiple companies with extensive track records in UTM implementation and operation. The three companies made the announcement at the prominent uncrewed system and robotics expo XPONENTIAL 2024 inÂ San Diego.

Terra Drone, Unifly, and Aloft are embarking on this joint UTM development to seize the opportunities presented by the rapid global progress in electric vertical take-off and landing aircrafts (eVTOLs), which are poised to revolutionize transportation. According to research by Morgan Stanley, the Urban Air Mobility (UAM) market is expected to grow to $1 trillion by 2040 and $9 trillion by 2050 (3). In the meanwhile, eVTOLs have been capturing the public's imagination worldwide through test flights and prototype showcases.

The three companies are uniquely positioned for joint UTM collaboration given their decade of experience in UTM development since the dawn of the modern drone industry. Terra Drone is the world's second-largest drone solution provider (4). Unifly has a world-class track record in UTM implementation at the national level in countries such as Canada and Germany. Aloft has an over 84% share of the UTM market in the U.S. (5), considered the world's largest market for drones and eVTOLs.

The companies proudly announce initiatives aimed at enhancing their existing UTM platforms, in anticipation of the upcoming surge in eVTOL aircraft and drone activities. The shared vision for the UTM platform is to enable safe and efficient flight operations for eVTOLs and drones in the foreseeable future. The platforms are designed with a strong emphasis on automation, currently boasting advanced planning functionalities and sophisticated NOTAM (6) parsing capabilities, underscoring our commitment to supporting AAM.

Recognizing the evolving needs of the AAM industry, they are dedicated to further extending their platform by incorporating additional functions vital for this sector. These enhancements, designed with automation at their core, will not only streamline operational efficiencies but also pave the way for the integration of their increasingly automated and sophisticated UTM technology into the design and operational framework of AAMs. Through these efforts, they aim to set new standards in UTM and to facilitate the seamless integration of eVTOLs and drones into the national airspace, bolstering the potential for the AAM industry.

In pursuit of this vision, Terra Drone, Unifly, and Aloft are actively seeking collaboration with a broad array of partners. This includes eVTOL manufacturers, eVTOL operators, vertiport (7) operators, aviation authorities, air navigation service providers (ANSPs), urban planners to seamlessly integrate AAM into city infrastructures, and educational institutions for research and development.

Through this groundbreaking initiative, the three companies aim to build a global UTM infrastructure that kickstarts the AAM industry worldwide. By forging strategic partnerships across these diverse sectors, they seek to create a cohesive ecosystem that not only supports the growth of AAM but also addresses the broader challenges of urban mobility, sustainability, and air traffic safety.