

Hermes trials self-driving robots in London

12-04-2017

Hermes, the consumer delivery specialist, is launching an innovative testing programme for the use of self-driving delivery robots in London. In partnership with Starship Technologies, Hermes will soon trial a number of parcel collections in the London borough of Southwark.

Hermes, the consumer delivery specialist, is launching an innovative testing programme for the use of self-driving delivery robots in London. In partnership with Starship Technologies, Hermes will soon trial a number of parcel collections in the London borough of Southwark.

This latest trial follows on from a project which has seen Hermes Germany and Starship Technologies test parcel delivery by robot in the Ottensen, Volksdorf and Grindel suburbs of Hamburg. Starting last August, three robots were deployed on the streets of the German city. Hermes will use the testing period to better understand how the robots could enhance the company's ability to offer an increased range of on-demand solutions in the future, as part of its ongoing commitment to providing value-added services. Initially, the trial will allow the delivery firm to offer limited thirty-minute time slots for the collection of parcels, either for items being returned to retailers, or for items being sent by small businesses or consumers via myHermes. Moving forward, the robots could offer Hermes greater scheduling and tracking capabilities.

The self-driving delivery robots offer a viable alternative to drones, especially in highly developed cities, towns and suburbs where

strict aviation laws are in constant operation. Each vehicle is 55cm high by 70cm long and incorporates a secured compartment where parcels with a maximum weight of 10KG can be transported, accessible to consumers via a link generated by a smartphone app. They have six wheels and can travel at speeds up to 4mph per hour. The robots can be used within a 2 mile radius from a control centre, where the vehicles are loaded and charged. The aim is for the robots to be 99% autonomous in the future, and can always be connected to a human operator via the internet and GPS. In the future, one operator can monitor several robots at the same time and can also take control of the robots if required.

Carole Woodhead, CEO of Hermes, said: "Starship Technologies is a highly innovative and pioneering firm. We are extremely pleased to utilise their expertise to explore exciting new ways that will further strengthen our portfolio of services and offer greater choice and convenience for customers. We can already see first-hand the success they've had with food deliveries in London, and we are excited to team up with them in a bid to revolutionise the home delivery marketplace."

Source: [Hermes](#)