



Alphabet Wing drone

## DRONE DELIVERY SERVICE STARTS IN AUSTRALIA

 WORK & LIFESTYLE

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**Spotted:** A company has become the first to start drone deliveries in Australia. Wing, which is an off-shoot of Google’s parent company Alphabet, had been testing the service since 2014. It recently received approval from Australia’s Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) to start deliveries. The service will initially be available in three suburbs of North Canberra, and will gradually expand to additional areas.

Users of the service can place orders through an app, with delivery made by a drone within a few minutes. Initial businesses who have signed up to participate include a chemist, a bakery, a chocolate shop, a gelateria, a coffee shop and a golfing supplier. The purchases are packaged in a special box, which is flown to the destination and then lowered to customers on a cord.

Although the trial was completed without a safety incident, residents of the participating neighbourhoods claimed that the noise from the drones was a constant annoyance. The CASA also imposed a number of conditions on the use of the drones, including that they must remain a certain distance away from those they are making deliveries to.

In addition to the drones, Wing has developed an unmanned traffic management platform that will plan clear routes and automatically “deconflict” aircraft. The company is also working to create quieter aircraft. Wing claims that its drones have a lower carbon footprint than delivery by truck. The company is also piloting the deliveries in Finland.

## Takeaway:

Drones have certainly come a long way since being thought of merely as surveillance products. While they are still being used **in innovative ways to improve security**, Springwise has also spotted them being used **to help build museums and improve other construction projects**. As is often the case with the expansion of new and popular technology, concerns exist. Drone deliveries should please those who cannot leave their homes or who cannot wait more than five minutes for a cup of coffee, but it remains to be seen how popular the service will be once the skies are filled with noisy, buzzing drones.