



Project Description

Our project was to build a drone that was completely operated with hand gestures. This means that we had to combine all of our Computer Engineering coursework to integrate all of the following things:

- Convolutional Neural Network
- Custom Flight Controller
- Wireless Communication
- User-friendly GUI

Motivation

Our motivation behind this project was mainly to improve the ease of use for flying drones. We understand that the RC remotes that come with drones can be very unwieldy and this offers a much simpler and more familiar way to control it. In addition, it allows for free range of motion for your hands while operating it, as you only need one hand to send the drone commands, and it will hover when it is not receiving any commands.



Frame undergoes background subtraction and binary thresholding



Drone receives command over Bluetooth



Onboard chip runs flight controller code to run the drone at appropriate speeds to achieve that maneuver

Conclusion

While we were unable to fly the drone in the end, we were able to meet all the requirements of our base product. This means that we were able to successfully implement a neural network that would recognize our 8 hand gestures, successfully build a friendly GUI to send those signals, communicate the command wirelessly over a range of 30ft, and build in a customized flight controller that would stabilize and move it based on the signal received.

The Team



Pranay Jay Patel (CpE) plans on working for a large tech company for a few years before going back to get his Master's degree in Business Administration, with the intention to start his own company in the future.



Bernardus Swets (CpE) is following the digital track and took on the role of researching the flight controls. He focused on looking into the digital signal processing designs and corresponding hardware. He also looked into the flight control algorithms. Having experience with linear control system, he researched what it would take to stabilize and balance our drone using PID loops.