

Unmanned Systems - Market Share Analysis, Industry Trends & Statistics, Growth Forecasts (2025 - 2030)

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Report description:

The Unmanned Systems Market size is estimated at USD 25.01 billion in 2025, and is expected to reach USD 46.76 billion by 2030, at a CAGR of 13.33% during the forecast period (2025-2030).

Increasing global defense expenditures, a focus on strengthening defense forces, and the growing use of unmanned systems for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and combat missions drive the market's growth. Defense forces are highly invested in developing and procuring unmanned systems over manned systems as they reduce the risks of soldier casualties and enhance accuracy during combat operations.

The growing use of unmanned systems in the commercial sectors, such as unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs) in firefighting and agriculture, unmanned sea vehicles (USVs) for underwater sea exploration and marine research, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for disaster relief, recreational uses, and photo and videography, will boost the market growth.

However, the lack of regulations and restrictions on flying drones beyond the visual line of sight in several countries worldwide has restrained the market's growth. Other factors, such as safety and security concerns and the scarcity of trained pilots, are also anticipated to challenge the market's growth to a certain extent.

Unmanned Systems Market Trends

The Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Segment to Witness the Highest Growth During the Forecast Period

The growing adoption of small UAVs for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and combat missions and rising

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spending on the defense sector may drive market growth during the forecast period. An increase in several start-ups and rising government funding to design and develop small UAVs for various commercial and military applications further boost the market growth. For instance, in October 2023, Teledyne FLIR LLC launched the latest edition of the Black Hornet nano-drone with upgraded sensors. The newly launched Black Hornet 4 is less than a foot long and weighs a fraction of a pound. It can fly for over 30 minutes and has a range of more than 2 kilometers (1.24 miles). It has a sensitive daytime camera, a thermal imager to capture videos and images, and a software-defined data system.

Also, in October 2023, Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense (MND) unveiled a plan to acquire 3,221 military-grade commercial drones from the country's private sector. The MND plans to spend approximately USD 175.57 million on five types of UAVs. These include land surveillance drones for the Navy, target drones for the Army, micro drones, ship-based surveillance UAVs for the Navy, and surveillance drones for all armed forces.

The civil and commercial sectors are also emerging as significant markets for UAVs as more and more industries realize the potential benefits of using UAVs for various applications, such as mapping, surveying, inspection, delivery, agriculture, media, entertainment, and public safety. According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), 338,614 of the 872,248 UAVs registered in the US are registered as commercial UAVs. The agency forecasts that the size of the commercial UAV fleet in the US could jump to as much as 858,000 by 2026.

Asia-Pacific is Expected to Generate the Highest Demand during the Forecast Period

Asia-Pacific is expected to show remarkable growth during the forecast period due to robust investments from countries like China, India, and Japan in unmanned systems. This growth is attributed to a rise in defense expenditures by the countries in this region and favorable regulations to use unmanned systems in the commercial sector.

Various Asian countries such as India, Japan, and Indonesia are currently working on using unmanned aerial vehicles to transport cargo and parcels. Rising procurement of advanced unmanned systems from India, China, Australia, and others due to rising cross-border conflicts, increasing terrorism, and political unrest among neighboring countries drive market growth across the region. Similarly, unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs) are being developed in South Korea, China, and Japan, among others, to assist their defense forces with a range of manual handling tasks such as field equipment and casualty evacuations and moving heavy loads.

For instance, in September 2022, Japan-based Drone Fund (DF) tied up with Aerodyne India Group to invest in manufacturing facilities and is planning to invest USD 40 million in India's unmanned aerial vehicle ecosystem. In addition, in August 2023, as a part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy, the Indian government approved the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. It allocated a fund of INR 120 crore (USD 14.5 million) for three years to develop UAVs and UAV components. Such development will drive market growth across the region.

Unmanned Systems Industry Overview

The unmanned systems market is highly fragmented, with many suppliers providing unmanned platforms such as UGVs, UAVs, and USVs. Some of the key players in the market are Lockheed Martin Corporation, BAE Systems PLC, The Boeing Company, Teledyne FLIR LLC, and Northrop Grumman Corporation. These OEMs provide all types of unmanned systems, which help the companies capitalize and expand their geographic presence and diversify their cash flows. The primary factor is product innovation, which aids companies in getting new contracts from the defense and commercial sectors. In addition, the mergers and acquisitions of local companies with major companies allow them to expand their product portfolio and market presence. In July 2023, SZ DJI Technology Co. Ltd announced the DJI Air 3 drone launch. The Air 3 has an f/1.7 primary camera with a focal length of 24 mm and an f/2.4 telephoto lens with a focal length of 70 mm.

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