

Problem Brief: Design of a Drone Delivery System

You are a part of a team for a new company that specializes in package and food delivery using drones. Your new company is the first entrant in a market. To be successful in the market, your company must maximize profit by designing and implementing a drone fleet.

An example of an initial customer location map is shown in Figure 1. The houses represent customer locations. Yellow houses represent package demand, and red houses represent food demand. The number on the top of each house represents the food and package demands in the unit of pounds. The grey building shows the company's new warehouse where the drone system will be managed. Each customer can order either one package or one food order. Each package must be delivered within 24 hours, and each food order must be delivered within 4-6 hours from the start of the day. Your customer locations and demands may be different based on your session.

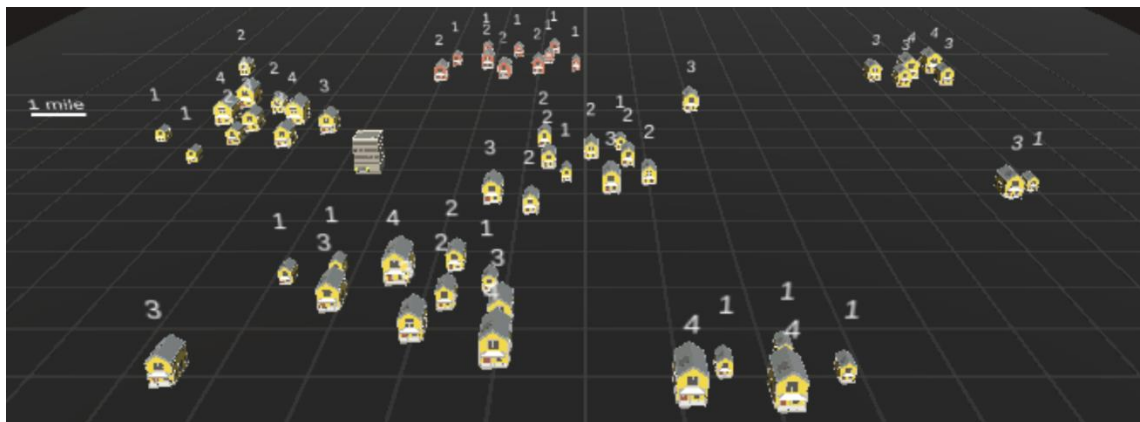


Figure 1 – Initial Customer Location Map

Your company has an initial budget of \$15,000 to build and operate a drone fleet. As part of your business strategy, your company can choose to provide service to any customers on the map you want to acquire. Your company will receive \$100 in profit per each pound of package delivered and \$200 in profit per each pound of food order delivered.

The duration of your design session will simulate one business year. Your session will be broken into two equal time periods (20 min), and each time period will simulate one typical day in the six months.

Throughout the experiment, team members may receive suggestions from a *process manager* (who is external to the team) to consider during problem solving.

Team Structure

- There will be five people on your team, and each person will be assigned one role.
- The arrows in Figure 2 below represent the communication channels between members on your team.
- Team members will communicate through a text-only chat tool during the design sessions. Team members are not allowed to communicate verbally.

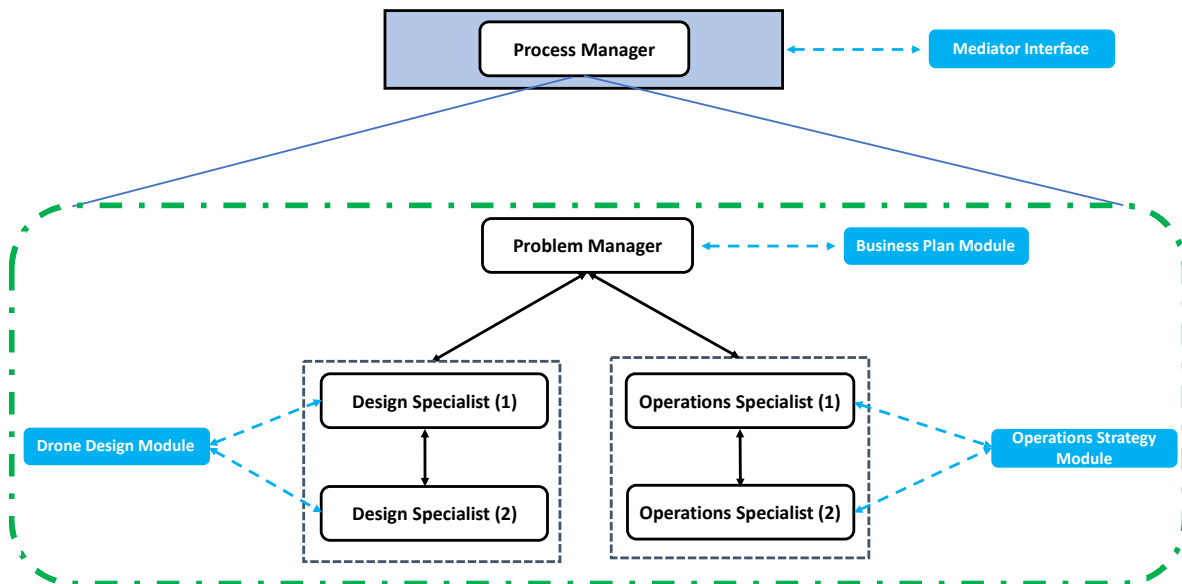


Figure 2 – Example of your Team Structure and Communications Links. **Operations Specialists** can communicate with each other through ‘Operations’ channel in the chat tool. Similarly, the **Design Specialists** can communicate with each other through the ‘Design’ channel. The **Problem Manager** can directly communicate with each discipline (operations specialists and design specialists) through the respective manager channels (the ‘Operations Manager’ and ‘Design Manager’ channels).

Team Roles and Capabilities

The two **Design Specialists** are responsible for designing drones using the Drone Design Module and submitting completed designs to the operations team.

The two **Operations Specialists** are responsible for developing operation plans by generating delivery routes with designed drones to deliver parcels.

The one **Problem Manager** is responsible for handling the company budget, choosing the customers using the Business Plan Module, and communicating its progress. The Problem Manager serves as the bridge of communication between the design specialists and operations specialists. The Problem Manager can decide to approve or reject the operation plans.

Depending on their role, team members have access to one of three interface modules:

- The drone design module enables members of the design team to construct drones. Designers can check the drone feasibility, assess the cost, and assess the performance of the design by running a simulation.
- The operational strategy module enables the operations team to determine an operation plan that aligns with the company's business strategy, and the customers' constraints. This module rapidly evaluates routes and schedules, and provides estimates for time-to-deliver, the number of vehicles required, time on/off station, among others.
- The business plan module enables the problem manager to construct and simulate their market plans. The market plan includes the number of customers for whom service should be provided, the locations of the customers, and the type of incentives each customer requires.

Your Company Role: Design Specialist

The **Design Specialists** are responsible for:

- Communicating the design requirements and design results with your team,
- Designing drones,
- Submitting completed drone designs to your team.

Drone Design Module – Design Specialists

Using the **Drone Design Module** designers can:

- Construct drones by adding building blocks such as connecting rods and proper components,
- Check the drone design feasibility by running a simulation,
- Assess the cost and the performance of the design,
- Submit feasible drone designs to your team.



Figure 3 - Drone Design Interface