**Identifying Aircraft from above**

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We all know what an aircraft looks like, but does a computer? A seemingly simple task that can be carried out by individuals at age two, poses a complex problem to modern technology. Machine learning is a relatively new field with little research but already boasts claim to many applications such as driverless cars and face recognition systems. The development of object recognition is the center of many companies’ business models and objectives, making aircraft identification such an interesting topic to research.

Existing images of ground and aircraft are pre-processed using Histogram of Gradients to create feature descriptors. Feature descriptors describe the orientation of a gradient within an image subsection. Support Vector Machines are passed feature descriptors with labels for training. Once training is completed, the support vector machine accepts a test set and returns predictions. Large image search takes a large image and looks within a smaller area for aircraft. Search area parameters are provided by the user.

The results obtained from cross validation show an accuracy of 100% when identifying standalone aircraft. However, when searching for aircraft in larger images, accuracy drastically decreases to around 55% as some aircraft are overlooked. After optimization, the system used to identify aircraft can be applied to other identification problems with possible military and commercial uses.