



December 8, 2015

## **ICAS PRESENTS PINNACLE AWARDS TO OUTSTANDING AIR SHOW INDUSTRY PROGRAMS**

**LAS VEGAS** - The International Council of Air Shows (ICAS) presented platinum and gold Pinnacle Awards to 10 outstanding air show programs in six categories today in front of nearly 1,000 industry professionals during a special awards luncheon at its 48<sup>th</sup> annual convention.

The ICAS Pinnacle Awards program recognizes performer, support services and air show organizer programs that demonstrate ingenuity, achievement and professionalism. The award presentation seeks to make these ideas available to the greater air show community around the world to advance the industry and stimulate positive change.

This year's recipients displayed a mix of technical and non-technical solutions, practical application and marketable enhancements to the air show experience as well as individual brands.

"We began the Pinnacle Awards program in 2014 to seek out and recognize our industry's best and most innovative ideas," said John Cudahy, ICAS President and CEO. "What we saw today are ideas and programs that are useful, practical, marketable, and most of all, things that can be adopted and adapted by every performer, event organizer and support service provider to enhance their business and bring air shows and aviation to the greater communities in which they do business."

A panel of air show industry subject matter experts assessed each entry based exclusively on the information contained in the submitted entry packet. Each submission was considered on its own merit and scored individually on its purpose, innovation, feasibility, project planning and documentation, and overall execution.

This year's ICAS Pinnacle Awards recipients are:

### **MILITARY PERFORMERS**

#### **Platinum Recipient - Canadian Forces Snowbirds, Tank Cam**

In its 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, the Royal Canadian Air Force Snowbirds earned the Platinum Award in the Military Performer Category for a device that they introduced during the 2015 air show season. To generate increased interest in aviation and promote their public affairs mission, the team installed a new device, the "TankCam," on the lead aircraft to capture close-up, high-definition video of the team in flight, for both training and public relations purposes.



The breathtaking, never-before-seen views generated throughout the year improved not only safety in flight, but also air show entertainment and the team's connectivity with the general public. The smoke tank camera pod system provides two significant advantages.

For training and evaluation purposes, the new device provides close-up views of team members during training and performances, a perspective not generally available from ground-based cameras.

When combined with ground-based filming, the tank cam provides more detailed analysis of every performance and has greatly improved the effectiveness of post-flight debriefs.

The tank cam has also helped with the team's public relations efforts. Videos taken from the TankCam have been extremely popular on the Snowbirds' social media platforms, contributing to the squadron's mission of showcasing the skill, professionalism and teamwork of the members of the Canadian Forces. Tank cam footage of a 15-aircraft formation involving the Snowbirds and U.S. Navy Blue Angels taken earlier this year has received 500,000 views.

## **CIVILIAN PERFORMERS**

### **Platinum Recipient - GEICO Skytypers, "In Formation" webisode series**

In a world full of other noise, performers working to build their brand are engaging with the public and providing unparalleled access to their fans.

To build their brand, the GEICO Skytypers have put the power of the internet to use with the creation of their "In Formation" series. These "webisodes" enable air show fans and curious bystander alike to feel like they are a part of the team and see its inner workings.

Ranging in length from four to ten minutes, these episodes are released every three to four weeks throughout the season to keep fans connected with the team.



The series has also helped the Skytypers showcase their sponsor. GEICO sees direct value as its conversion rate to new policies and renewals for air show fans and spectators is significantly above that of non-fans, and the team's social media connections grow every time they release a new episode. The webisodes have allowed the team's fans to get a peek behind the curtain, giving viewers inside access to the team and the air show industry.

### **Gold Recipient - Greg Colyer, Ace Maker Airshows, Overall Business Plan**

There is perhaps no more elusive goal for an air show performer than profitability. Greg Colyer has generated and used a tool for getting closer to that goal faster. During his first six years in the air show business, Colyer has made both minor and major adjustments to the way he conducts his business that, together, have put his goal within reach.



He has tweaked his marketing and advertising materials to raise his visibility throughout North America. By establishing a clear brand and putting that brand in front of event organizers early and often, he avoided the sometimes long introductory period that most new performers are forced to endure.

And Colyer also made a more significant change: he bought a second airplane and restored it to look just like his first T-33. This means he can be anywhere in the U.S. easier, faster and more economically. Instead of leap-frogging one jet across the country at 350 gallons an hour, and having to pick just the right shows to make a trip work, now all he has to do is decide if he's available on any given show's date. Though Colyer's fixed costs went up for hangar space, insurance, and

maintenance, his flight hours and fuel costs have dropped, offsetting any increases and securing Ace Maker Airshows' long-term profitability.

## **MILITARY AIR SHOWS AND OPEN HOUSES**

### **Platinum Recipient - Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort, South Carolina, Transitioning Personnel Sponsorship Recruitment Program**

Military downsizing is pushing more service men and women into the civilian workforce. Between three Navy and Marine Corps installations in Beaufort County, South Carolina, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors transition out of active-duty service each year. They are leaving the military with tremendous skills in aeronautics, logistics, leadership and management. Many would prefer to stay in the local area, but with limited employment options, most leave for opportunities elsewhere.



The MCAS Beaufort Air Show has helped bridge the gap between community employers and transitioning military members. By developing unique sponsorship opportunities for recruiters to attend the air show and meet with job seekers, show organizers involved two influential, local organizations: Gulfstream Aerospace and the Transitional Workforce Educational Assistance Collaborative, or TWEAC.

In 2015, Gulfstream Aerospace's commitment to veteran employment led them to bring their recruiting department to meet with transitioning service members on-site at the event.

TWEAC fully-sponsored an active-duty pavilion where service members and their families could view the event in a premier area with covered seating and light refreshments. The TWEAC Executive Director and a representative from the local community college were on-site during the show to offer guidance about their services.

Not only did these unique sponsorship arrangements provide an additional \$12,500 in revenue to the MCAS Beaufort Air Show, but they proved to be equally beneficial to our transitioning service members looking for employment and to the local community.

## **MID-SIZE CIVILIAN AIR SHOWS (More than 15,000, less than 35,000 spectators)**

### **Platinum Recipient - Minnesota Air Spectacular, Artificial Show Line**

Constructing an artificial show line can take significant time and many volunteers to install and remove. In Mankato, Minnesota, the area needed for the artificial line would directly impact nearly five acres of crops, add thousands to costs, and stress community relations.



The Minnesota Air Spectacular organizers came up with a unique solution to use an agricultural sprayer to apply athletic paint to create the flight line that reduces the costs, reduces volunteer man-hours and improves pilot safety.

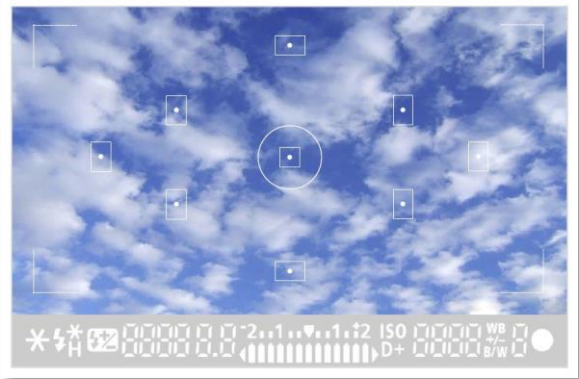
A large agricultural sprayer can lay down a 90-foot wide stripe in one pass, visible to a pilot from 10 miles away. And, because newer sprayers are equipped with precision navigation systems, the stripe could be accurately located and applied in a straight line without the use of a surveyor. After the paint is loaded by two people, one person can apply the paint and create the line in less than a half a day. The paint lasts about two weeks and slowly disappears by natural weathering, again saving additional man-hours in clean-up. This common-sense innovation saved the show thousands of dollars, hundreds of man-hours and enhanced pilot safety.

### **Gold Recipient - Duluth Airshow, Air Show Photography and Videography Primer Course**

As a local television station completed work on a 60-minute air show documentary, organizers of the Duluth Air Show found that some of the aviation still photos and video footage were flawed. To solve the problem, air show organizers hosted a professional photographer roundtable and developed a primer on how to effectively shoot air shows.

In the process, they developed a classroom photo and video program, creating a new revenue source and an important learning opportunity for aspiring photographers and videographers. Then, for an additional fee, organizers developed an exclusive access photo tour which created another unexpected revenue source.

### Airshow Photography Primer



By creating the “primer course” and working with professional, well-known aviation photographers and videographers, the Duluth Airshow was able to develop an educational tool and saw a significant increase in both amateur and professional photography and videography at the show. In the process of developing these educational options, they were able to create three separate revenue sources, including the educational Photography Primer Course fees, Photo Tour Ticket sales, and DVD sales as a result.

### **LARGE CIVILIAN AIR SHOWS (More than 35,000 spectators)**

#### **Platinum Recipient - California Capital Airshow, Year-Round Community Engagement Program**

Using educational programming as a tool to increase community engagement in a local air show is a significant and positive step forward all by itself. But the California Capital Air Show has used this education initiative as a tool to bring focus and attention to their event all year long.

The show’s year-round programs have helped to change the community’s perception of the air show industry as something much more than weekend entertainment, but also a hands-on STEM classroom that introduces the community’s youth to the challenges and opportunities available through education and training in science, technology, engineering and math.



A show within a show, interactive exhibits and displays such as Space & Aviation LaunchPad, Dream Big Pavilion, Lift Off to a Learning Adventure, and *Positive Altitude: A Chance to Give Back* have

grown substantially each year. By clearly identifying demand through feedback forms and spectator surveys, the show developed programming that attracted more families and encouraged them to stay at the show longer. Sponsors jumped in to support these initiatives and provided funding to create more attractions...which attracted even more families.

California Capital's activities not only make a difference in the lives and futures of young people, but the show's STEM programming has increased visibility for the event, reduced advertising and marketing costs, and increased show attendance. And along the way, California Capital has played an important leadership role within the air show community, showing the industry another way in which its events can be used to motivate and inspire.

### **Gold Recipient - Alliance Air Productions, Community Outreach Campaign**

The air show community's most successful events are those that form a strong, meaningful connection with the communities in which they are held. The Bell Fort Worth Alliance Air Show is consistently one of the air show industry's very best. And, show organizers are focused on continually improving its community relationships.

Together with a local marketing agency, the Alliance team developed an innovative community outreach campaign, which furthered the air show's impact with local school districts and community organizations while also educating the general public about aviation's impact on North Texas.

By identifying regional school districts with which to partner and focusing on districts with growing or established career education tracts in aviation, the Alliance show developed a program centered around aviation-based activities for students, and special media relations opportunities for educators.



To build excitement, the team coordinated school event discounts and behind-the-scenes tours for partner groups, leveraged sponsor relationships with the North Texas aviation and aerospace industry, and organized a special school day at the event's Friday practice show.

The education-based community outreach program helped generate more than 50 million media impressions, attracted national media attention and record attendance on the show's opening day, and is being featured in *District Administration Magazine*, the most widely received, most regularly read publication for K through 12 district-level school leaders nationwide.

### **SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDERS**

#### **Platinum Recipient - Doc's Friends, B-29 "Doc" Restoration and Kickstarter Campaign**

After sitting in the Mojave Desert for 42 years, the restoration of this magnificent B-29 Superfortress began in 2000. Since then, thousands of aircraft parts have been donated and refurbished, and more than 300,000 volunteer hours have been invested toward bringing "Doc" back from the brink of destruction. The effort signifies the culmination of 70 years of history, passion for aviation, and expert marketing.

During the last two years, Doc's Friends, a Wichita-based non-profit organization, has led the final stage of the restoration effort. But additional funding was needed to finally put the aircraft back in the air. So, with the specific goal of increasing support for this program among the general public, Doc's Friends launched a Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign to raise more than \$137,000 in less than a month. They supported this unique fundraising drive with an unprecedented promotional campaign that included press releases, website content, social media posts, and advertising. Within 30 days, the campaign had raised nearly \$160,000 from more than a thousand different supporters, half of whom were engaging in the project for the first time.



It now appears likely that Doc will finally return to the air early in 2016. Although specific plans for the aircraft have not yet been finalized, Doc will serve as a traveling museum and exhibition. Because of the inspirational effort of many different people spanning two decades, millions of people around the country will be able to see Doc in person and gain a richer understanding of the sacrifices America and Americans made during the Second World War to secure freedom.

### **Gold Recipient - Ten Five Productions, Live Airshow, The App**

Ten Five Productions' entry will change the way spectators experience air shows and it comes in the form of a mobile application called Live Airshow.

Beta tested at this year's West Star Aviation Grand Junction Air Show, over 5,000 spectators downloaded and used the app during the two-day event. Proprietary camera systems were installed in the aircraft of five performers. Then, during their routines, the system fed video through an on-site network, and users literally saw what the performers were seeing in real-time. No lag. No delay.

Through the app's scheduling information, users can follow a link to the streaming video of the current performance. The app provides spectators with live point-of-view streaming, scheduling, static display, sponsor and vendor information. Air show organizers can also use the app to reach spectators before they leave for the event by providing up-to-the-minute directions, traffic and parking information to cultivate a positive experience from beginning to end.

