



December 7, 2016

## **Outstanding Air Show Industry Programs Earn Pinnacle Awards**

**LAS VEGAS** - The International Council of Air Shows (ICAS) presented platinum and gold Pinnacle Awards to 13 outstanding air show programs in seven categories Wednesday, December 7, in front of nearly 1,000 industry professionals during a special awards luncheon at its 49<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. This year's recipients have implemented and executed ideas and programs which bring greater recognition and awareness, effectiveness, efficiency and overall improvement to air shows. The presentation seeks to make these ideas available to the greater air show community around the world to advance the industry and stimulate positive change.

“Some common themes arose during this year’s Pinnacle Awards judging process: community, engagement, cooperation, collaboration, awareness,” said John Cudahy, ICAS President and CEO. “We saw examples of those words in action today. The Pinnacle Awards are designed to make our industry think about how we can realize our goals, and sometimes the simplest idea can change an entire industry.”

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.

The 2016 ICAS Pinnacle Awards recipients are:

### **MILITARY PERFORMERS**

#### **Platinum Recipient - Captain Maciej "Match" Hatta - Video Production and Promotion**

Captain Hatta has produced videos that have achieved over 4.3 million views on Royal Canadian Air Force Snowbirds-related videos in 2016 alone and over 4.4 million views in 2016 across multiple Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter streams. He produced nearly 50 videos in 2016, with over 215 hours spent shooting, editing and producing. Since joining the Snowbirds in 2013, he has spent over 550 hours producing over 100 videos that have been viewed over 6.2 million times. Some of his videos have played at large assemblies such as the Canadian Football League’s Grey Cup, and two NHL games.



Captain Hatta joined the Snowbirds in 2013 and brings 2,000 hours of military jet flying experience to the team. Currently, he flies the Number 3 jet in the Inner Left Wing position. His instincts for public relations and marketing enables him to use his video production talent for the benefit of not just the Snowbirds, but the other Canadian demo teams and some civilian performers, as well.

He spends each night tirelessly editing videos completely voluntarily, after working full days, which has taken the team and the RCAF to unprecedented recognition. There is no “team videographer” or

any military financial support for what Captain Hatta does. He has done everything on his own to market the team and raise its profile as a world-class precision military jet team.

## **CIVILIAN PERFORMERS**

### **Platinum Recipient - Greg Shelton Airshows - Nighttime Wing Walking**

Members of the airshow community are in a unique industry where innovation is key. Spectators want to be wowed, and air shows deliver, which is why they continue to come back. Greg and Ashley Shelton, of Greg Shelton Airshows, firmly understand this. As a result, they have made their performance more exhilarating, innovative, and marketable, by adding a few simple lights.



The Shelton's recognized a trend of more air shows adding nighttime performances to their lineups. Many performers have embraced this trend, adding lights or pyrotechnics. They have gone one step further and created a suit with LED strip lighting so that Ashley can be seen waving and moving while atop Greg's wing. Such a performance has never been accomplished until the Reading Air Fest 2016 in Reading, Pa.

Greg and Ashley strive to make their performance not only more marketable to air shows, but also to help air shows get more people in the gates. By adding something new and different, they have given event organizers one more exciting tool to use to increase attendance and revenue. By demonstrating innovation and creativity they have given event organizers more ammunition to add to their lineups.

### **Gold Recipient - Commemorative Air Force B24/B29 Squadron - Air Power History Tour**

For as much as the industry has leapt forward in recent years, the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) B24/B29 Squadron has enabled aviation and history fans to go back and remember yesteryear. The air show industry always seeks new ways to attract new fans. The CAF has executed yet another unique way to interest people in the air show industry, history and aviation in general.



The Air Power History Tour represents a change up to modern air shows, harkening back to the barnstorming days of the 1930s, when a sole aircraft would come to a small town and buzz the main street, do some aerobatics and then land in a local field to give paid rides.

The Tour travels the country, often to small towns that cannot afford or support their own air show. Arriving with four to 13 WWII aircraft from the CAF and other warbird organizations, an "air show in a box" arrives at the location and sets up for ground tours and Living History Flight Experience rides for the local community. They charge a modest entry fee and the public can roam the ramp, and tour through each of the aircraft on display. By bringing a diverse array of aircraft, there is usually an aircraft in which just about anyone could afford to fly.

Because of the ride flights, the air is always abuzz with a takeoff, overflight, or landing - giving the appearance of an "air show" without the expense and complications of waived air space or an aerobatic box. Because of the dedication of the CAF members who travel, there is a professional execution at every stop - and often there is a local partner who shares in the benefit. As a result, along with the goodwill, the host organization shares in the profit with a commission from the Tour. In fact,

the Tour has visited over 30 different cities each year for the past three years and generated over \$5 million dollars in revenue. The generated revenue not only benefits the B-29 FIFI and B-24 Diamond Lil, but also local warbirds invited to attend the stops.

The Tour will travel for weeks or months at a time, operated almost entirely by CAF member-volunteers. The Colonels of the CAF spend their time, energy and money touring with these airplanes, all in an effort to keep these aircraft flying, through the funding generated by the tour stops.

It is through this program that spectators around the country become air show fans without ever attending a formal air show.

## MILITARY AIR SHOWS AND OPEN HOUSES

### Platinum Recipient - Rhode Island National Guard Open House and Airshow - Trains to Planes Program

The Rhode Island National Guard Open House and Air Show took on the challenge of easing parking and traffic head on by engaging with several state and local agencies.

The show organizers worked with the Rhode Island Department of Transportation and the Mass Bay Transit Authority to provide free, state sponsored train service from two locations, using existing infrastructure, to transport spectators into Quonset Air National Guard Base.

Following the 2015 show, show coordinators reached out to RIDOT to propose the idea of bringing spectators in via the existing rail system. Through weekly meetings and coordination with multiple state agencies including RIDOT, MBTA, Amtrak, Rhode Island Airport Corporation, Quonset Development Corporation, Federal and State Law Enforcement, the Transportation Security Agency, and Seaview Railroad, among others, the “Trains to Planes” concept was born.



Each day, three trains to and from the show were made available to the public specifically to transport people to the show. The departure locations were at conveniently located train stations and free, secure parking was available at both locations. Security details were in place at pickup locations to assure all passengers were aware of restricted items before arriving at Quonset. Show coordinators ensured the debarkation point at Quonset met all Americans with Disabilities Act requirements for on and offloading train passengers and provided easy access to the show for all arriving passengers.

Leading up to the show, the train service availability as well as schedules were advertised through local television and radio stations, press conferences, RIDOT, Air Show, and media station websites, existing RIDOT highway signs, and social media accounts. During the show, coordinators utilized social media and worked with the announcer to keep passengers coming and going on schedule.

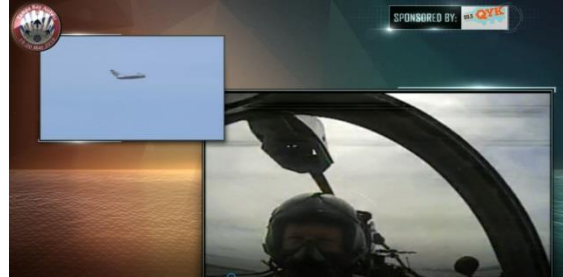
The inaugural “Trains to Planes” program transported 3,800 people in and out over the course of the weekend, eliminating over 1,000 vehicles each day from the traffic pattern. This free transportation service not only reduced traffic flow in and out of Quonset, but also afforded a new transportation opportunity to potential spectators who were previously unable to attend.

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation has already committed to providing train service to the 2017 show and plans to offer even more trains to and from the show. This new and innovative free public transportation option has positively affected both the show and the surrounding

communities and only begins to scrape the surface of what this organization seeks to do to better connect the air show with the public transportation systems the community has available.

### **Gold Recipient - MacDill Air Force Base presents Tampa Bay AirFest - The Enhanced Air Show Experience**

Every modern air show is faced with the challenge of improving the overall air show experience through the integration of evolving technologies. Ensuring the patron 100 feet back from the crowd line receives an identical experience to the patron closest to the runway is critical to ensuring an outstanding experience. These concepts were the driving force behind the development and execution of a revolutionary “infotainment” system at MacDill AFB presents Tampa Bay AirFest 2016.



In coordination with OSA Media Solutions, Reality Check Systems and TrellisWare Technologies, Tampa Bay AirFest provided an unparalleled air show experience in which spectators were provided an up-close view of the action with large-scale video walls that live-streamed aerial and ground performances and behind-the-scenes content interlaced with real-time graphics.

The system was comprised of two 40 x 20 foot all-weather high-definition jumbo LED screens and production capabilities for video capture and output and a custom graphics package and technology for distributing live content to the video walls in addition social media software for showcasing spectator Tweets. They provided live in-cockpit and mobile camera video streaming to give spectators an immersive real-time experience where they felt like they were a part of the performance. With so many angles on the action, the system was able to not only highlight the acts currently performing, but also the performers who were up next; keeping the audience engaged at all times through the use of split screen technologies.

With multiple angles on the action, they were able to get reactions from the crowd as well as performers, plus, they invited the crowd “into the show” by turning the camera on the audience.

The system was used repeatedly throughout the weekend to broadcast lost children and parents (including photos uploaded from patron cell phones), vehicle parking issues (including animals left in vehicles in parking areas), and most importantly to evacuate the flight line during a severe inclement weather event. After initial attempts utilizing the audio system failed to quickly evacuate the flight line, the video wall technology was harnessed to project real-time weather radar activity and messaging directing evacuation. Having prepared in advance to utilize the screens for mass-messaging requirements such as an active shooter, emergency response, or aircraft crash, they were able to quickly employ the technology to expedite the movement of spectators to safety as well as enhance the show experience for everyone in attendance.

### **SMALL CIVILIAN AIR SHOWS (Less than 15,000 spectators)**

#### **Platinum Recipient (tie) - Cape Girardeau Regional Air Festival - Good Times, Good Vibes, Great Air Show**

Air show performers travel the country, living out of hotel rooms and courtesy cars, eating fast food on a tight schedule. In the hustle and bustle, there is typically very little down time for them to just relax. The Cape Girardeau Regional Air Festival prides itself on making their performers feel like they are at home. The organizers slow things down and let their Midwestern hospitality set the tone for good times, leading to a great air show.

For early arrivals, a significant tradition begun many years ago offers a home cooked meal for their performers and support staff. Everyone is invited out on a farm where one of the show's veteran volunteers prepares a comfort food feast with chicken and dumplings, macaroni and cheese, fried chicken, and more. The evening is completely informal, allowing everyone to relax and get to know each other.



Also, show staff has started taking performers to the local Wings, Etc., which is another experience. From a wing eating contest, to who can eat the hottest sauce and get their picture on the Wings "Wall of Fire," organizers provide another opportunity for the performers to be informal, wild, and care free while enjoying each other's company.

These traditions may seem small but what sets each air show apart is its experience. Organizers want their performers, military and civilian, to share their memories from Cape Girardeau with others, and in turn make performing at the show desirable.

Memories like grown men racing mini aircraft replicas made out of wood add to the experience and fun. For the 2016 air festival, volunteers constructed mini replicas of the Canadian Forces Snowbirds and the 2016 Canadian CF-18 that the teams raced on media day. It was completely impromptu and brought an extra element to a normally routine media day.

Once the props have stopped turning, and the planes are in the hangar, show volunteers join performers, staff, and friends for an evening full of fun, libation, and karaoke downtown along the Mississippi River where a local pub hosts free beer, food, and song where the echoes of "Top Gun" can be heard through the streets of Cape Girardeau.

### **Platinum Recipient (tie) - The Highest Air Show on Earth - The Destination Air Show**

Community economic impact is one of the biggest selling points of bringing an air show to town. Robert Evans, show director for the Highest Airshow on Earth, has built out the concept of "destination air show," which brings visitors to the community not just for the day, but for an entire weekend, building incredible revenue for community businesses and the town. A remote show, located over Lake Dillion in Dillon, Colorado, at an elevation of 9,000 feet, The Highest Airshow on Earth takes place the second weekend in June when the ice is barely off the water and before tourist season begins.



Because the tourist season doesn't really begin until after Father's Day, Bob realized he could use the air show to drive traffic to the town on an "off" weekend, filling hotels, restaurants and stores. Beginning in 2012, the Highest Airshow started with a miniscule budget and a 45 minute show and set the record for the world's highest over-water air show. That first year was really a proof-of-concept to verify that the team could do a show at 9,000 feet with a 60 mile round trip to an airport. Since then the show has grown in depth and attendance. By 2014 the show filled every parking space south of the state highway. In 2015, Bob developed a bussing and parking plan to utilize parking nearer to the interstate and in adjoining communities. In 2016, the parking, the hotels and restaurants were full. The food vendors were sold out by 11:00. The show was a full two hours with both civilian and military performers, a complete display area and a concert following the show.

Vendors now contact the show to be part of the event, volunteers are overflowing and the town of Dillon has increased the budget every year. As everyone knows putting on the show is the easy part. Paying for a show is the tough part. As the Dillon Marina manager for 20 years, Bob knew everyone in town. He reached out to friends and business owners pointing out the value of being part of the event. For example, the first year the local car dealer sold two cars from displaying at the show. The next year; four.

The concept of a destination air show isn't necessarily new, but The Highest Air Show on Earth has taken the concept and built a day at the airport and into a weekend in town.

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

#### **Platinum Recipient - Lynchburg Regional Air Show - Use of Technology to Enhance Airshow Management and Command and Control**

The Lynchburg Regional Air Show management group planned their May 2016 event with safety at the forefront - the major challenge being site-wide communications. Without a concerted effort to provide coordinated communication, management realized that even with exemplary staffing and planning, including emergency response, parking, and crowd control, efforts could and likely would still fall short without the ability to reliably and rapidly transmit information.



They created the LRA Command Center based on extensive use of supporting technology. The Center worked hand-in-hand with law enforcement and public safety entities and included air show personnel from transportation, parking lot operations, Ham radio operators, master control, Command and Control teams and public safety personnel. Housed in two 40-foot technical trailers donated by AREVA, a local nuclear technology company, the trailers contained work stations equipped with computers and video screens, live weather radar, and multiple screens synced with remote cameras set up to cover the entire air show landscape in real time, including parking lots, gates, and crowd locations.

An enhanced connection enabled access to weather radar, social media postings, traffic cameras, and provided support for multiple gate ticket readers. A VOIP phone system utilized by all air show personnel provided outside line access to negate the lack of cell phone connectivity at large events. They enabled direct contact with the show announcer through real time text messaging via a screen from the command center, which allowed the announcer to make important safety announcements to the crowd without the added distraction of audio notifications from a radio system while performing his narration.

Ham radio operator volunteers roamed the crowd as customer service liaisons in golf carts equipped with GPS using their own VHF repeater and radios, reporting back to the Command Center any problems or emergencies. The cart locations were displayed on screens in the Command Center so that air show management could dispatch the volunteers to specific locations or situations. The LRA website included a link to a button labeled Emergency, which if clicked would convey the GPS coordinates of the individual to emergency responders.

Unexpected severe inclement weather resulted in nearly all on-site parking lots being underwater before the show's second day, resulting in last-minute parking changes and crowd coordination that would have been impossible without the synchronization of the command center. The Lynchburg Regional Air Show employed this creative compilation of multiple cutting-edge technologies, all

made possible by strong community support from local businesses and tech-savvy individuals committing their time and energies to the benefit of not just the show, but also the spectators eager to enjoy a day out at the biggest event in town.

### **Gold Recipient - Duluth Air and Aviation Expo/Kern and Kompany - Duluth Airshow to Duluth Hot Air Balloons**

The Duluth Airshow is unique. It's held every other year, but, has an office and full-time staff operating year-round even on off years. The challenge is generating revenue on the off years to keep staff employed when air show funds aren't coming in to pay them.



Based on the need to generate revenue and retain their employees on the off year, show organizers looked at all facets of aviation and realized that there was one area that was aviation-related, but could not be done at their airport due to restrictions. They decided to create a standalone event to fulfill three purposes.

First, generate additional funds on the off year to help lessen the burden to keep the air show staff employed. Next, create an offshoot of the Duluth Airshow, so even though they didn't have an air show, they could still keep the air show front and center in people's minds. And finally, provide a small perk to the air show sponsors as an added value for partnering with the event. Based on those three things, the "Duluth Hot Air Balloon Festival" was born.

The Duluth Hot Air Balloon Festival exceeded the organizer's goals. The free event, imagined as a one day event, became a three-day festival that attracted 20,000 spectators complete with its own spin-off events. The area's craft brew industry was serviced by featuring a craft beer village that initially was conceived as a sampling event, but also a way for the brewers to also be vested in the event and make money. Then they created two sound stages for live music, more than 50 arts, crafts, and food vendors, helicopter rides, all on top of the ballooning events consisting of tethered hot air balloon rides, moon glow event, ring of fire, and finally the launches of the balloons.

Based on this success, they absorbed other community events to provide added layers of activities including the Kiwanis Club's Free Family Kite Fly Event which gives out more than 5,000 free kites to kids. And, the popular Color Run 5K, which became part of the festival, generated additional revenue. In its first year the event met the minimal funding show organizers needed, and returned a profit above what they had envisioned.

This year they branched out to solicit new sponsors and partnerships which now includes Subaru as a major partner, and a host of other community partners who were not necessarily interested in sponsoring the air show. The unforeseen benefit is they now have more sponsors and partners who were not initially interested in the air show, and they generated enough funding to cover staff costs, as well as to add additional funding to the air show budget.

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

#### **Platinum Recipient - Bell Helicopter Fort Worth Alliance Air Show - Digital and Social Media Marketing**

Building off of digital marketing efforts in 2015, the Bell Helicopter Fort Worth Alliance Air Show wanted to elevate its digital presence through a combined organic social media and paid digital

campaign. The goals were to use social media platforms to 1) boost awareness of the air show to other parts of North Texas, 2) increase email subscribers, 3) target sales through email addresses and 4) reinforce the show as a community-wide event showcasing the aerospace and aviation industry.

The show engaged Cooksey Communications to develop a digital marketing strategy to target current and future followers and subscribers. The team developed a variety of engaging cross-promotion contests for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and leveraged its paid media and digital media efforts through an interactive social media game call Spin to Win, implemented in 2016, that was used to entice people to play for a chance to win an air show related prize. The game also was used to enhance brand awareness and to capture players' email addresses.

Using creative elements developed by Cooksey, the Spin to Win game centered around opportunities for players to win tickets to the air show and drive awareness. To participate, people had to provide their name and email address. The addresses were automatically added to the current subscriber list. The team promoted Spin to Win through posts on the air show's Facebook and Twitter as well as through Facebook advertising, a Texas Motor Speedway e-blast and a WFAA-TV e-blast to their subscriber lists, and numerous digital ads and banners on numerous digital advertising platforms.



The game ran for three weeks from September into October and received a total of 56,525 game visits, 10,729 plays and 5,932 unique plays. A special air show discount code for parking was provided to the game players through e-blasts, followed by social media and 10 separate e-blast promotions to the general public to promote the show.

With the help of cross-platform social media posts and contests, the Spin to Win game and multiple weekly e-blasts to subscribers, the air show had roughly 80,000 attendees and achieved overwhelming results. Their email subscriber database increased by 300 percent to a total of 8,117 from early July to October; of this, 69 percent (5,594 subscribers) of the email addresses were collected from the game. Facebook likes increased by 21 percent to 31,540. Twitter followers increased by about 14 percent to 3,514 followers. Instagram followers increased by 165 percent to 1,860. From October 2015 through the 2016 air show, their total social media following increased by 200 percent.

At the end of the campaign, the Alliance/Cooksey team's social and digital media execution raised awareness to millions of people in the Dallas/Fort Worth Area and engaged tens of thousands.

### **Gold Recipient - Cleveland National Air Show - Snapchat Success**

In order to improve the long-term sustainability of air shows across the globe, it's imperative that the industry attract and engage a younger audience in unique and relevant ways.

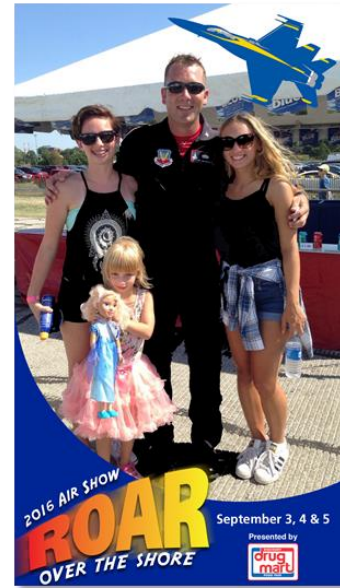
Launched in 2011, Snapchat is a free mobile messaging app used to share photos, videos, text, and drawings. Snapchat On-Demand Geofilters were released in 2016 to allow businesses and consumers to create custom overlays for their event or location based within certain geographic parameters. Users can choose spaces as small as an office, or as large as several city blocks.

Snapchat is the second-most used social media platform among millennials and is the fastest growing platform in the market to date. Younger audiences want to share their experiences online, so it's essential for the success of our industry to meet young consumers where they are: social media platforms.



The Cleveland National Air Show entered the relatively untapped Snapchat Geofilter market in September with the release of their custom overlay during this year’s event. It took engagement to a new level by allowing their patrons to create and interact with content in their own way.

These things are cost effective and easy to execute. Filters start at just \$5 and can be created anywhere, any time. The process is simple: submit your image, choose your dates, and select your location using satellite maps. Snapchat only requires 24 hours to approve the content. The 2016 Cleveland National Air Show filter was submitted about two weeks in advance of the show. The filter included the 2016 theme “Roar Over the Shore” as well as a Blue Angel F-18. The filter was accessible to anyone inside the air show grounds, which totaled over two million square feet. Each filter ran for nine hours each day of the event and the total cost was under \$700.



Over the course of the three-day event, the Cleveland National Air Show Geofilter was viewed nearly 105,000 times and was used over 3,000 times. The custom Geofilter was not only shared within Snapchat, but also across other social media platforms resulting in additional exposure and reach to a new audience and new air show fans.

## SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDERS

### Platinum Recipient - ADC Group, Inc. - Project Management Software Implementation

In a growing business, it’s important for companies to decide first the objectives of leveraging technology. The ability to maintain a high level of efficiency while transforming business processes can be a daunting task, especially during the hectic time leading up to, and during, the air show season.

Imagine having conflicting copies spreadsheets containing critical customer tracking information; or having access to data limited to just one person or not having all of your necessary data in one place. Life becomes unnecessarily difficult and makes conducting business extraordinarily tedious.

ADC Group’s ambition for moving ahead isn’t just to grow, but to provide top-flight service to all of its sponsors and exhibitors, while making sure the process worked. To accomplish this, ADC implemented a project management software tool called daPulse, which enables its employees to do everything online and in their app collaboratively because all of the information is available to all of the team members whenever they need it.

In ADC’s setup, each air show receives its own board, with multiple groups formed within each board. The list of potential sponsors and exhibitors are all listed in one group, with each year’s sold sponsorships listed in separate groups.

Each group contains “pulses” which are each a separate company with all of their distinct information. Within each pulse, they can make notes, add Facebook-like status updates, as well as update customized individual columns with current information. Their customized columns, track

information like contact names, addresses, sponsorship dollars, as well as sponsorship benefits management. With a quick glance, ADC can tell which companies have turned in their PA announcements, certificates of insurance, and each of their payment statuses. With everything in one location, it is easy to not only manage their air show responsibilities, but because all of ADC's team members have access to every board, each of them stays intelligently informed.

In an ever increasing digital world, having instant access to correct information about current projects across multiple platforms and devices is becoming more important and ADC Group has taken a huge step forward in an increasingly complex industry.

### **Gold Recipient - Precision Exotics - High Performance Ground Entertainment**

Bringing new demographics and new customers to air show events is a multi-faceted undertaking. Sometimes it means adding a STEM Expo, a KidZone, monster trucks, bands, or celebrities. In the ever-evolving world of air shows, the industry's events are not solely about aviation, they are about creating a unique entertainment event that the community can look forward to year after year. Precision Exotics has successfully integrated "car events" into "aircraft events" which has proven to attract new crowds to the air show industry and put a new twist into how and what the industry can market to attract and inspire a new generation.



A few years ago, Precision Exotics began to offer a ride and drive experience unlike any other. To attract customers, they produce and distribute their own advertising to local communities, completely separate from the air show's advertising, and what happens is akin to whisper-down-the-lane. Those who buy a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to drive a high performance Lamborghini or Ferrari, almost always come with additional guests. Now "car people" along with their guests become paying customers at the air show; an entirely new customer set that might not have existed if not for this alternative form of entertainment being a part of the event.

An example of Precision Exotics' marketing power occurred this year at the 2016 TICO Warbird Airshow. They organized a one of a kind, never before seen event featuring an A-4 Skyhawk versus a super car that attracted an additional 1,000-plus spectators. In fact, one of the event's participants stayed through Saturday and purchased more than 20 VIP chalet tickets so clients could experience the air show.

Air shows have realized the rewards of this alternative form of marketing and entertainment because Precision Exotics actually returns liquid funds to the show. Done through partial proceeds from their ride and drive sales, they have been able to return over \$25,000 in actual cash to different venues.