

Electronic Logbook Solution Triples Visibility with ABCI

Pilot Partner, an electronic logbook solution designed to enhance or replace the paper logbook, is a labor of love for Founder & President Ken VeArd, who invented the product as a way to maintain his own pilot logbook, gaining quick acceptance with pilots just like himself.

“When I first started in 1997, there was very little out there,” said VeArd. “I showed my flight instructor and he suggested I polish it up and sell it. I sold 2500 copies and that paid for my private pilot’s license.”

Since then, he has reinvented the app adapting it to today’s modern technology and is using social media to spread the word because the industry is now ready to trade in the 20th Century technology for an electronic version.



Pilot Partner is a perfect example of how companies can increase both sales and engagement by using online marketing and word of mouth. It is a truism that you have to engage the community before it will engage with you and between Facebook and its aviation-related communities he has built a devoted following who advocate for Pilot Partner as effectively as he does.

“I use pilot forums such as AOPA’s members group or local pilot groups,” said VeArd. “I don’t have a big marketing budget so that provides the best solution. I’ve always been a do-it-yourself marketer having done every ounce of software and every marketing piece because it was more passion than a true business. My marketing budget remains minimal so I had to be smart and entrepreneurial using social media as the center point of my marketing.”

That friendly, offer-help-and-advice was very successful and today VeArd is building the company into what he calls a lifestyle business – one that will support him but at the same time gain that work/life balance he is seeking. But he continues to use social media as his main marketing tool.

The great thing about “stealth marketing” – providing free advice without hitting them over the head with your product – is it comes from the heart and is designed not as a mercenary bid for business but a genuine desire to be part of building a community of like-minded people. Quite simply, it is people helping people.

ABCI’s work created extremely high visibility which tripled my exposure and the number of people signing up for our Pilot Partner App <https://pilotpartner.net>. The number of engaged customers also went up significantly. Traditional aviation companies, such as small avionics shops or maintenance organizations, who need to outsource their marketing efforts, should consider ABCI because they are really smart in using technology for marketing. They would do wonders for small firms who just opened shop. It brought a lot of marketing awareness and, even with my vast experience, I found ABCI very valuable. It is an incredible resource. Ken VeArd, Founder & President, Pilot Partner.



“Pilots in these online forums frequently ask if there is a good solution for an electronic log book and I responded with information on electronic logbooks,” said VeArd, who is an integral part of the Austin tech scene with his Pilot Partner affordable subscription plan. “I now have a network of about 20 to 30 people who have joined me in advocating for Pilot Partner because they are also my users. I’ve done different things like Facebook advertising but this is by far my best marketing tool. When they see an electronic logbook question they talk about Pilot Partner. It is all about building a relationship. I am ecstatic that I have people who have paid me a little money so they can log flights the way I do.”

VeArd is also a perfect example of how participating in media can boost business. He heard ABCi President Paula Williams on the AvGeek’s podcast and by the time it was over he was on the phone with her discussing how the marketing company could help him.

“I’m up against tough competitors with big market shares who have full-time marketing teams with big budgets and am very gratified I’ve developed a product that people prefer to their products,” he said. “Working with a marketing company is a long game. You can’t just turn it on for a month and expect results. This is something you have to keep doing. While I’ve stepped back from ABCi for budget reasons, I really believe in them and hope to start working with them again because I’m someone who knows how to do it but I don’t have the time.”