

HOME-BASED AND FLYING HIGH

John and Betty Obradovich live in Pauma Valley, California in a golf course community serviced by a small airport. As owners of Pilot Publishing, Inc., this works out perfectly. But this is not a business they started, it is one they bought when they found an opportunity that fit their experience and interests.

The Obradovich's had always been involved in publishing in one form or another. Betty was experienced at typesetting. John ran a pre-press company with 35 employees, supporting magazines such as Road & Track, Architecture Magazine and others. Their children were raised and the pressures of John's company were getting old. Pre-press was capital intensive and handling a large staff was taxing, so he sold the company and remains a sales representative.

As a private pilot, John happened across a book called Bahamas & Caribbean Pilot's Guide. He evaluated the idea of publishing such a book and out of the blue, called the owner to see if he would like to sell out. As it turns out, the owner was just as interested in selling as they were in buying. John said, "never be afraid to ask about buying a company you want. In my case the book was already selling so it was a proven product. We were the right people to take that product and make it better."

Taking on the book and improving it was risky. They took some big chances. With their knowledge of pre-press and typesetting they completely revamped the book, making it more comprehensive, taking color photos for insertion, and making it a full color printing. It meant the print cost increased significantly, raising the purchase price by 30%. The risk paid off. Customers loved the revised book and they sold out of their print run, \$250,000 worth. It had become so popular that when they bumped into the entourage of Jimmy Buffett's band in the Caribbean, each of the pilots had purchased the book.

Now John and Betty continue to travel the region, take pictures, contract writers for articles, and sell advertising. Encouraged by their success, they're investigating expansion into similar publications.

Bahamas & Caribbean Pilot's Guide sells for \$44.95. For more information call Pilot Publishing at (760) 742-2001 or (800) 521-2120 or write to 1900 Fern Lane, Glendale, CA 91206. HBM