

# WHO ARE THESE GUYS?

Hank and Matt Kozub, the father-and-son team that started Aircraft Sales Inc. 10 years ago, aren't apologetic about making a decent living from selling high-end used aircraft to well-qualified buyers. The way they see it, the Pristine Airplanes refurbishment process fills a vacant market.

"A lot of traditional aircraft brokers tell us they can do what we do, but our process wasn't built in a day. We went through numerous paint shops, numerous avionics shops and many employees before we figured out our system," said the younger Kozub, who began his career in 1999 by doing what many brokers do—flipping so-called wash-and-wax-airplanes from a tiny office in a T-hangar.

The team's first refurbishment project was on a Cessna 182 bought on the cheap, and on speculation, because it had original paint, interior and avionics. The elder Kozub admitted that the refurb process took far too long (nearly a year), but it sold in under 10 minutes to the first buyer who looked at it.

"When our second refurbished 182 sold in the same manner, we knew we were on to something here," he said.

Ten years and hundreds of aircraft later, the Kozubs take pride in their high-end clientele. Many have traded airplanes back in to the inventory for step-up aircraft.

"The people that come to us aren't looking for a bargain aircraft. Instead, they know they're buying a service and are willing to pay a premium for it. Our customers are used to getting what they want, when they want it. We just smile and give it to them," said Kozub.

He has plenty to smile about. In an otherwise lethargic used aircraft market, business remains brisk.

