

From the Sidelines



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Mini-helicopter & camera produce unique photos

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT MANAGERS and other administrators and turf managers are now able to obtain images that showcase their fields without relying on planes or standing on the top row of bleachers. Traditional aerial shots are usually taken from 1000 feet above the ground.

A company called Aerial Pros uses a small helicopter equipped with a camera that hovers around 100-200 feet above the ground, which makes for good angles for photos.

Managing partner of Aerial Pros, Anthony Salerno, says the results can be instant. "Our clients can be present during photo sessions and can 'direct' our pilot's maneuvers to best showcase the particular angle or view that is desired," he says. "A video downlink provides live images via an LCD screen during the photo shoot. Following the shoot, we provide our customers with a set of edited photographs or video to meet their particular needs. Photos can be cropped and digitally enhanced to improve the final result. This allows us to be very creative with their images.

"Our company is completely mobile and can be driven by van or shipped anywhere in the U.S. Our concentration has been in the Northeast but we are able to service the West Coast as well."



WEST POINT has restricted airspace, lots of red tape to get permission to fly the helicopter there.

Salerno operates the remote-controlled helicopter and a professional photographer takes the photos.

"This customized set up allows us to maneuver into any position and hover as long as necessary to take pictures from all angles," Salerno says. "Our specialty is low altitude, close-in photography and video that cannot be obtained from full size aircraft."

The cost of remote controlled aerial photography varies on each job based on the complexity and scope of the photo shoot. Free quotes are available. See www.aerial-pros.com.

The idea for Aerial Pros was formulated in 2009, born out a successful sports contractor's desire to produce high quality aerial photographs of their finished projects. Frustrated for years by the difficulties encountered when using full-size aircraft and concerned with dangers involved when using man lifts and bucket trucks, the firm searched for a better solution, Salerno says. The answer was found by combining a remote controlled helicopter with a remote controlled high resolution digital camera.

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