oming from a background as a commercial pilot, Rob had always been interested in flight and aviation.

"I've always played with model airplanes and I had a model helicopter that I needed to buy some parts for. Linda and Lwent into an out of the way little model and hobby shop and it was there we saw a very crude version of what was to be the beginnings of a commercial/consumer aerial robot," he said.

The first aerial robot prototypes were made up of aluminium curtain rods screwed together to form a cross with and a camera wrapped in foam and cable tied to the underneath. There was a very crude RCB board with some sensors and that was it. "This was the very very beginnings of what is now a multibillion dollar industry around the world.

"Back then there were forum sites where geeky characters were hanging out and experimenting with the technology.

"As soon as I saw that proto type, there was a light bulb moment, so I started following what was happening and became one of those geeky characters myself."

It was here that Rob and Linda became interested in the physical airframe structures and began experimenting.

"Things were falling out of the sky all the time at the start. They would only fly for a maximum of four to five minutes carrying a tiny little point and shoot camera.'

Rob and Linda focussed on using carbon fibre, a lightweight vibration absorbing material, whilst everyone

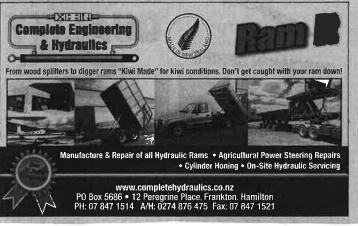


else was still using aluminium. Rob we were ready to start it as a business taught himself how to use technical for aerial photography." design software and started drawing up airframe structures.

could get crystal clear high resolution images and video from cameras hanging underneath these crafts. At that point we had a bit of a eureka moment and

Some of their hand made prototypes were photographed and put online. They "We hand-made our own airframe were soon flooded with enquiries and designs and got to the point where we people began to offer large sums of money to buy them.

"At that time it took us three months to complete one. We decided if we could machine make them we could







about 60 distributors — mostly start-up change in direction for us and soon online. Within three months we had we launched the business Droidworx sell them commercially. That was a

companies — from around the world."

is constantly motivated by the vast choosing Raglan for the lifestyle, to to move to New Zealand in 2010; possibilities of what these aerial robots before they got too big. Rob says he launch their business Aeronavics Ltd Wales so Rob and Linda decided operating out of a house in New South At this stage the company was

> can do, and how they can contribute to prosperous environment a safer, more sustainable and more

such as precision agriculture and other critical commercial applications for aerial photographers are now being infrastructure inspection." used for search and rescue, mapping and "What started off as hobby machines

company which started a year after them companies making similar products, on a specialised market. Another like a boutique manufacturer, focussed Aeronavics Ltd has stayed small, more In comparison to some overseas

WHEN TIMES ARE HARD, WHY SPEND

month aimed for the consumer market. pumping out 30,000 plastic drones a has grown into a billion dollar company However Rob says he couldn't do that.

going to grow big and get rich and markets who use the technology as a and focus on professional, specialised and things that are useful and add famous, but it is much easier for me to tool — meaning we weren't instantly value so we chose to go down this path inspired by creating quality and beauty short while and end up in landfills. I am that makes plastic things that will last a "I couldn't be a part of a company

opportunity for situational awareness, and more. There is the immediate farmers to check on fences, stock, water leaving your front porch. For a lot of monitoring operations without actually "Farmers are using them more

sleep at night.

troughs and leaks takes up a lot of time also eliminates the need to take risks and this is a time sawing device, and it quad bike accidents." to reduce injury and even deaths due to on quad bikes — utilising the technology

the ground around them. cameras on these aerial robots which the level of nutrients in the plants and scan crops and gather information about Farmers can also use multi spectral

of months, is our most advanced craft robots that you invest in - it's a high performance utility tool designed to last the craft as an upgrade. We build flying be invented, we can just attach them to and hi tech smart add-ons continue to Our new range, launching in a couple you have a tool for a good few years. yet and is future proof. As new sensors "If you buy a machine off us today,

