

# Doug and Tracee Baker

Cocoa Beach, Florida



[Explorer Multimedia, LLC](#)

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## *Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Doug and Tracee Baker:*

When Doug and Tracee Baker launched Explorer Multimedia in September of 2015, neither thought the business would one day be their full-time occupation. At the time, Doug worked in radio advertising and sales. He had 15 years experience working in the Brevard County market with no intention of leaving his job. Tracee, who has a Civil Engineering degree from The Florida Institute of Technology, had recently started doing some graphic design for one of the radio stations Doug worked with. Their transition from employees to business owners started with one single event.

"One of my radio clients needed help with putting on a large event," Doug said. "It started with Tracee helping him with social media and then morphed into her taking over his graphic design needs. He eventually

hired me to help with acquiring sponsorships for the event. About a year into it, after doing the event work on the side, I left radio and started working with him full-time. It was a once a year event, but the work was all year long. That started in late 2012. By 2015, we officially formed the LLC and started taking on other clients."

By the fall of 2016, Doug and Tracee landed another large client. Thunder On Cocoa Beach, one of the largest Super Boat races in the country, hired Explorer Multimedia to help with event sponsorships and graphic design. The husband and wife team, with Doug focusing on sales and Tracee on graphic and website design, proved to be a very synergistic partnership. Doug would land the sponsor and Tracee, utilizing her creative and technical skills, could do most of the graphic design work requested by the sponsor.

In the early part of 2017, Doug and Tracee identified a new opportunity to expand the business. There was a gap in the market and they knew how to fill it. Also, because of lessons learned from the economic downturn of 2009 and the seasonal nature of events, Doug and Tracee knew the importance of diversifying their services.

"The magazine concept started with a bottle of wine," Doug said with a laugh. "Tracee was part of a book club. She showed up late one night to a session because our son was performing in the orchestra and the show ran late. When she arrived, the ladies said 'I wish I would have known that he was in the orchestra. We would have gone'. That's what really sparked the whole idea of doing a publication that features stories and events local to Cocoa Beach. There was an existing publication that covered all of Brevard County, but nothing specific to Cocoa Beach.

Also, the existing publication wasn't direct mailed. Our idea of mailing the magazine directly to households was and continues to be unique."

After months of preparation and acquiring enough advertisers to cover the cost of production, the first issue of Cocoa Beach Explorer was released in August of 2017. The magazine features local content, including articles written by the Mayor of Cocoa Beach, live music events, featured stories of local businesses, a 'Community Corner' section dedicated to local non-profits and more. The concept received such positive feedback and embrace by the community that, in December of 2018, Doug and Tracee launched Canaveral Explorer, a similar publication geared towards the city of Cape Canaveral.

Looking ahead, Doug and Tracee have identified other communities in Brevard County that might embrace a similar publication. They've reached out and are working to gauge the level of interest of various municipalities. As Doug pointed out, he and Tracee specifically picked the name 'Explorer Multimedia' with the idea of taking it to multiple markets down the road.

Doug and Tracee offer up some great advice for aspiring entrepreneurs.

"Life isn't always about taking the safe road," Doug said. "Nothing significant was ever made or created by taking the safe way. If you believe in yourself, you have to be willing to take a chance. Otherwise, you'll look back and wish you would have. Before you take that first step, do your due diligence and be open to learning." Tracee added, "Plan, plan, plan and be flexible."

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