

AVSIM Commercial FSX Utility Review

Electronic Flight Bag



Product Information

Publishers: [AivlaSoft](#)

Description: Flight simulation flight information utility with network capability.

Download Size:
87 MB

Format:
Download

Simulation Type:
FSX

Reviewed by: [Chase Kreznor](#) AVSIM Senior Staff Member - November 20, 2011

Introduction to AivlaSoft, GmbH

It is with great privilege to introduce the AVSIM community to AivlaSoft, GmbH. AivlaSoft (pronounced EYE v'la soft) was founded in 2009 by *Urs* von Aesch. He has acquired over 25 years of experience in developing systems programs and business applications in several programming languages like: Assembler, Visual Basic and about 8 years in .net/C#. Travis Guy joined the AivlaSoft team shortly after and assists with coding, customer support and beta testing. The beta testers also include holders of private pilot's licenses and airline transport pilot's licenses.

What is Electronic Flight Bag (EFB)? As the name suggests, it's a virtual flight bag filled with quick references which are purely electronic and paperless. No more printing out procedure plates, check lists, radio frequencies and ILS information. This program is an intuitive all-in-one utility for a pilot to use from flight briefing to shut down. EFB runs alongside FSX either on the same computer or on a networked computer.

AivlaSoft started with many ideas in mind for the flight simulation community and put EFB as their primary focus upon realizing the enormous amount of coding and effort to achieve the end product. Urs was working seven day weeks for two years and finally developed the very first version of EFB. A tremendous feat noted by Urs was to achieve the depiction of procedures.

There are plans in the works for a version 2.0 of EFB to include a complete re-design and entirely new features. Urs was unable to comment any further on the new features as it was too soon to reveal any of them. I am very pleased to have been extended the opportunity in reviewing this program and sharing my experiences with the world.

Installation & Documentation

EFB's installation procedures are involved, but not so much to be burdensome. Urs spent a long time making the program as easy to set-up, without much user input, as possible. EFB installs two programs: DataProvider and DisplayUnit. In summary, DataProvider runs silently in the background and it provides data to DisplayUnit. DisplayUnit is the program you will be referencing and serves as your EFB.

DataProvider will always be installed on the machine that runs the flight simulator. DisplayUnit may be installed either on the same machine as the flight simulator or a machine within the network of the flight simulation machine. It's important to note that because you will be switching back and forth from your flight simulator to EFB you will need to run flight simulator in a windowed mode.

To that end, a user is faced with two installation scenarios which may or may not require further involvement and configuration. First, the single machine setup. This is for a user that only wishes to run EFB on the same machine as Flight Simulator without any additional steps to get the program fully functional. In my opinion, for an individual with limited experience in networking this might be the best option. Even if a limited user wished to venture and tried the network setup, the installation documentation really lays the process out in an easy to understand tutorial with screen shots.

Test System
Computer Specs
Alienware Area 51
Asus X58 P6T Deluxe
Intel QuadCore i7 3.0ghz
12 GB RAM
500 GB HDD
NVIDIA GTX 280 1024mb
NVIDIA GTX 280 1024mb (SLI Disabled)
HP 2009 20" LCD x 2
Creative SB X-Fi Sound
TrackIR 5 Pro
TrackClip Pro
Windows 7 x64
Direct X 11
FSX Acceleration
PMDG 737 NGX
Flight Test Time:
65 hours

Second, one may choose a multiple machine configuration utilizing network communications for the DisplayUnit and DataProvider to communicate with one another. I attempted not only the single machine configuration, but also the network configuration and didn't find it too difficult to setup. I'm not a network expert and feel comfortable saying any customer should be able to easily follow the tutorial with its clear and informative steps.

I learned it's extremely vital to read and familiarize yourself with the manual and the way the EFB functions (which is explained in the manual) as it needs to communicate and update itself with the flight simulator if any scenery changes are made (for obvious navigational and informational reasons). Neglecting to run the quick update in the DataProvider after any scenery add-ons or changes can result in the EFB failing due to conflicting information.

I noticed the documentations provided with EFB are in both English and German. The documentation is very easy to follow and very informative and to the point. Most steps are accompanied by a relevant screen shot further detailing the process. The program requires a machine running Microsoft net Framework 3.5. EFB relies upon NaviGraph data which is included at no charge (one cycle) during installation courtesy of NaviGraph.

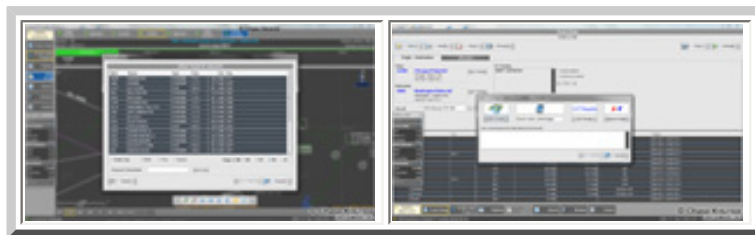
In conclusion, the documentation was very helpful and detailed everything a user needed to get up and running as quick as possible. I was very impressed with Urs ability to code such a unique program with such limited user configuration to make it easy and available to the masses.

EFB User Interface

The EFB User Interface is truly of an intuitive design and easy to learn and engage in. The program runs aside Flight Simulator meaning you will have to switch windows to view what's going on. Provided you have Flight Simulator in windowed mode and FS set to not "pause on task switch" you shouldn't have any issues switching back and forth rapidly. I didn't notice any performance drops or increases from windowed mode to full screen mode.

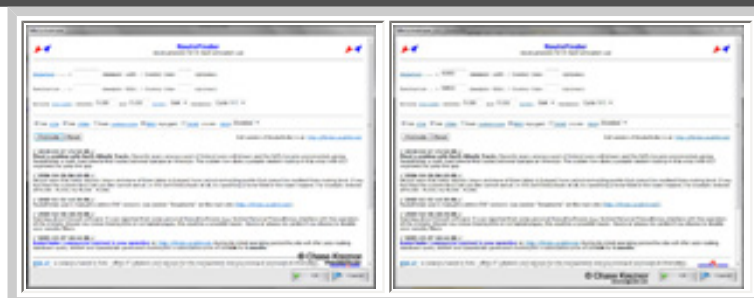
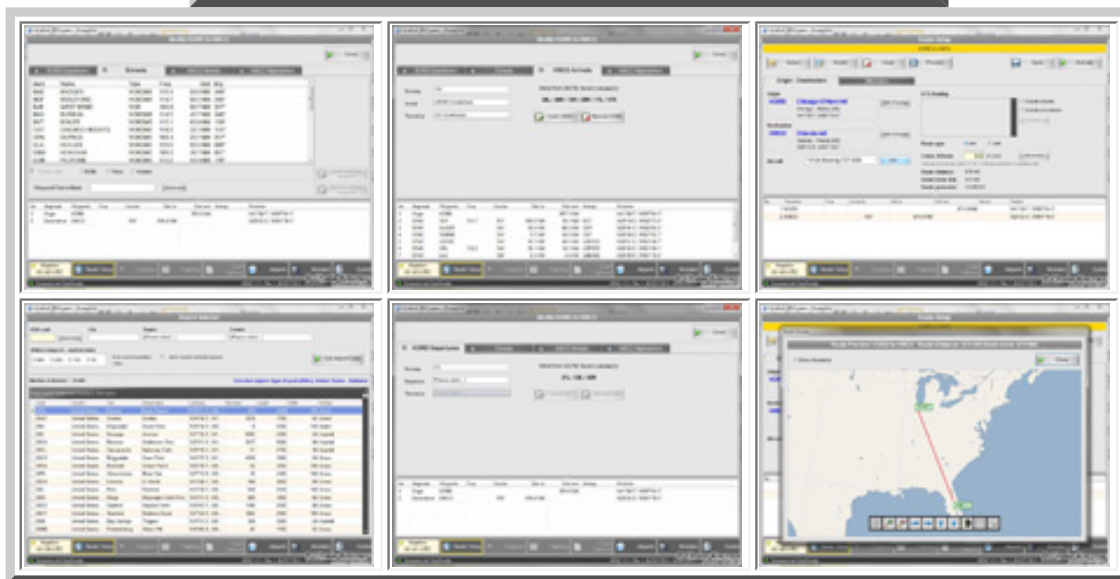
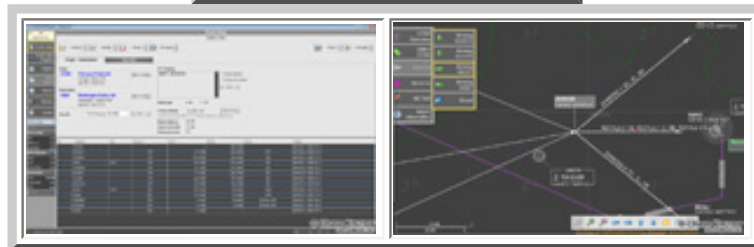
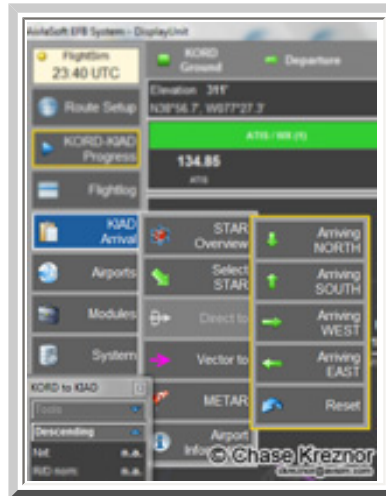
Flight Planning – In terms of flight planning with EFB, the customer has multiple options. Import from a third party (FSBuild, Flight Simulator X, Route Finder, VATroute, etc) or manually configure a route using the waypoint finder. I found EFB to work beautifully with FSBuild, but in a pinch I use Route Finder without having to open extra programs.

EFB streamlined the process of finding and selecting a route by allowing you to navigate to RouteFinder or VATroute via their program window. Now you can find a route, and simply press "OK" to import what either Route Finder or VATroute built as a preferred route. In example, from KORD (O'Hare) to KMCO (Orlando) at FL330, Route Finder built the following: KORD DCT CADIZ J89 IIU J99 V XV J46 AMG STAR KMCO.



EFB speaks this language and will automatically build a graphical route depicting these very procedures. Then it's up to you to plan your SIDS/STARS before or during flight operations. On the

topic of SIDS/STARS, it's a blessing to have such an easy to use and configured program as EFB. If you're new to SIDS/STARS, this program will help guide you into selecting the best possible procedures for take-off and landing. One example of the user friendly approach in planning includes the user being informed of what runways the wind favors, what SIDS to select for the respective departure and the same for the STARS for arrival.

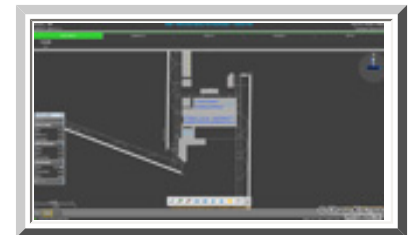




Upon finishing your flight planning, all you have to do is select where you want your flight plan saved (in example, Flight Simulator X and PMDG NGX). Then you save and activate the plan. The plan will be automatically loaded into FSX if you're already flying (no need to "Load Flight Plan"). For third party add-ons, like the NGX, the output will be a (.rte) file which the CDU/FMC will understand and import as a co-route.

Let's say you decide at the last minute to change your arrival to a nearby airport or maybe you want to eliminate a certain waypoint—it's as easy as removing it within EFB then selecting save and activate. You don't need to edit your route in Flight Simulator or in the NGX's CDU. It's already done before you can even switch back over to Flight Simulator from the EFB window. As you can see, that really increases convenience and ease of use not just for EFB, but also Flight Simulator and its add-ons (and even the default GPS).

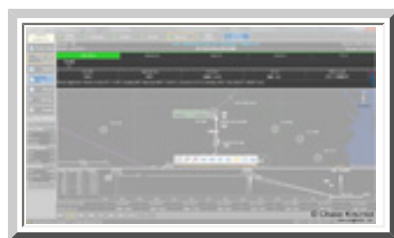
Charting – EFB features an all-in-one charting ability respective to each part of your flight. For instance, when you're on the ground at your departure airport, open up EFB and look at how the chart displays the airport diagram with your location and heading marked. The taxiways and runways are labeled as well so this serves as a valuable tool for taxi route planning. You can even tell EFB which taxiways you (or ground control) want you to use and the taxiways will be highlighted within EFB to reference during taxi. No more annoying progressive taxi ruining the realism of your high quality airport sceneries.



During departure you will see a zoomed in area of the airport you're departing from with the same real-time flight tracking. Winds and its direction are also displayed on this map.

During cruise you will see a zoomed out perspective of your flight plan with real-time flight tracking.

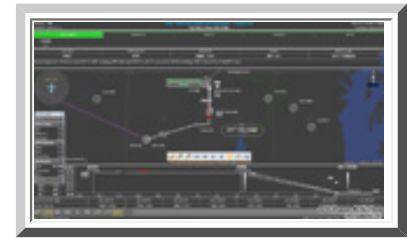
Your top of descent is marked on the map and there's also a new chart perspective initiated for arrival. It's very easy to get the overall picture of your arrival and begin to plan your approach from this diagram. The EFB, as explained above in flight planning, is a convenient tool to select your STARS. You can instantly visualize the procedures you selected and be prepared with vital information immediately (such as runway course, ILS frequency and runway length).



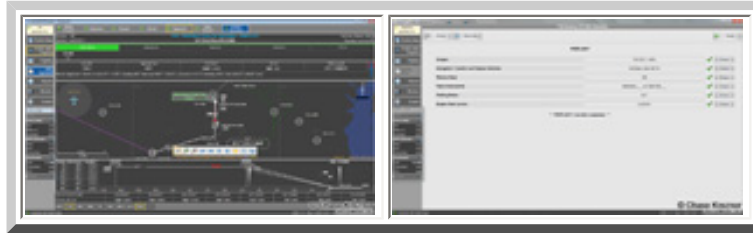
On the charting window your communication frequencies are also displayed for one click operation. As soon as you click on the frequency it's automatically programmed in the cockpit with no further steps needed.

One of the most stunning features of the EFB is the ability to see a real-time chart of your approach not only with STARS but also with your altitude. A vertical profile is made available to you to see where you are and where you should be on your approach. All information made available to you on a standard paper approach plate is available digitally.

In a missed approach scenario, instructions on what to do are in bold letters and easy for new pilots to understand.

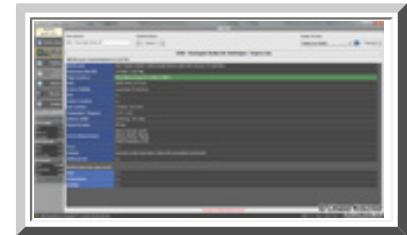


Checklists – EFB allows you to either import a community created .xml checklist file or to create your own checklist which can be referenced and tracked during flight.



METARs – A live METAR (d'observation météorologique pour l'aviation régulière or "Meteorological observation message for routine aviation") can be queried within EFB with either Flight Simulator as the data source or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) as the data source.

Airport Information – With the click of a button you will be able to query all the airports in your Flight Simulator database to see the general airport information. This includes the basics like runway types, runway lengths, frequencies, courses, airport location, etc.



Conclusion

Overall, I was very impressed with the features and functionality of the EFB. I feel like this is the type of add-on any flight simulator pilot should have in their collection to further supplement the realism of flight simulator and also to make a more efficient planning and reference experience within flight simulator.

EFB, at the time of this review, is priced at CHF 69.00 or USD \$76 roughly. This is in no way a cheap add-on, but because of the functionality and the user friendly systems employed within the EFB, that price is very reasonable. Furthermore, with respect to the amount of time Urs and Travis spent with this program ensuring the best and smallest details, it's a wonder this add-on isn't double that price!

I sincerely hope this review helps shed some more light on the amazing Electronic Flight Bag.

What I Like About The Electronic Flight Bag

- Quick and easy to learn;
- User friendly layout;
- Quick access to relevant information;
- Real-time flight tracking and winds;
- Easy to plan and configure SIDS/STARS with available charts;
- Easy to import flight plans with one click;
- Airport diagrams with labeled taxiways and runways;
- Friendly and professional staff available to assist;
- Fun to use and works great alongside flight simulator!

What I Don't Like About The Electronic Flight Bag

- I wish there was a way for this program to run within Flight Simulator so I could enjoy Full Screen mode.

Printing

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[AivlaSoft Electronic Flight Bag](#)

[\(adobe acrobat required\)](#)

Comments?

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