Simulator WORLD

Euro Truck Simulator 2
The new version of ETS
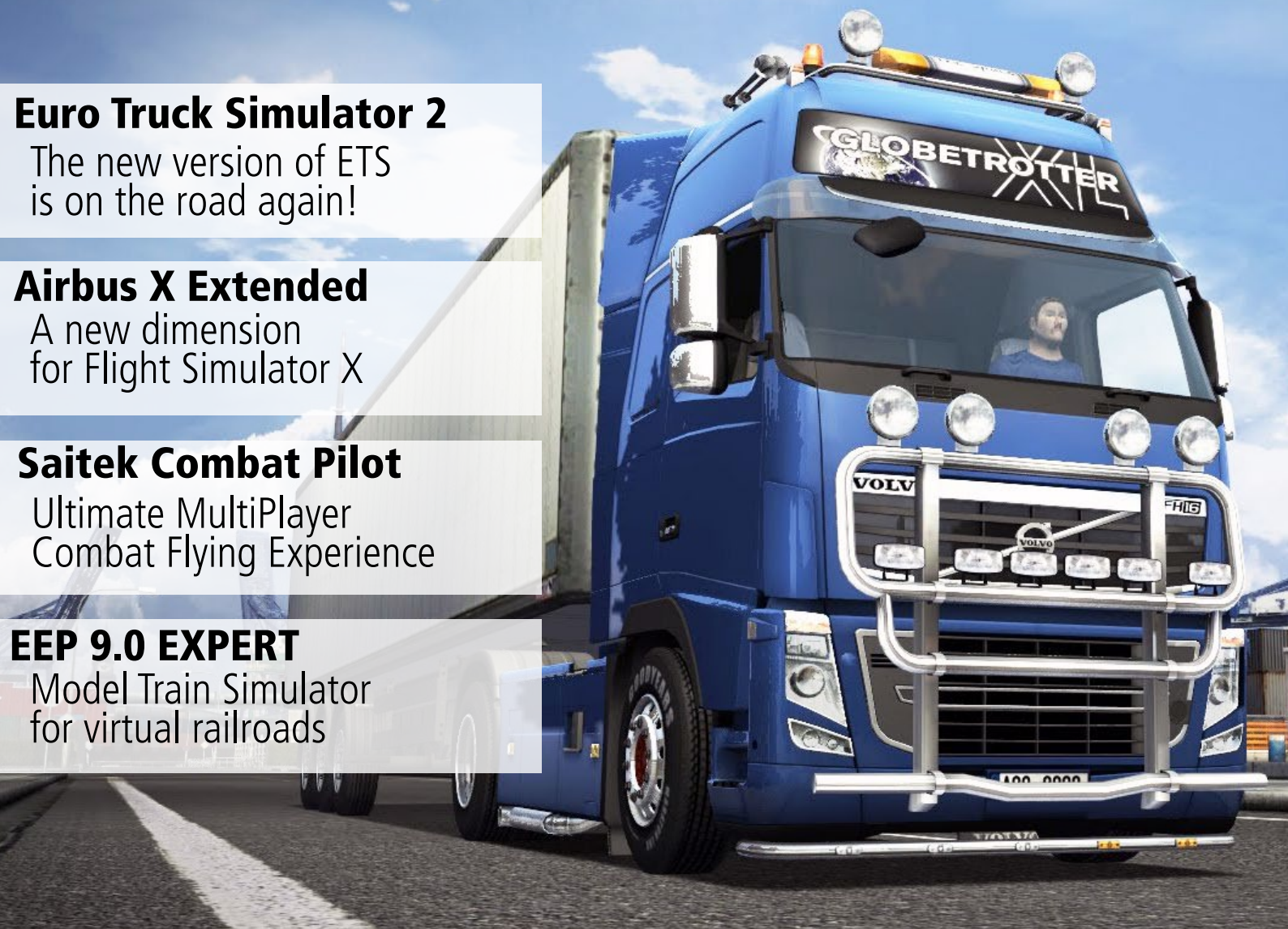is on the road again!

Airbus X Extended
A new dimension
for Flight Simulator X

Saitek Combat Pilot
Ultimate MultiPlayer
Combat Flying Experience

EEP 9.0 EXPERT
Model Train Simulator
for virtual railroads

EEP 9.0 EXPERT

Airbus X Extended

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Airbus X Extended

Euro Truck Simulator 2

Saitek Combat Pilot

EEP - Eisenbahn.exe 9.0

Signal Box-Simulator

Simulation

Simulator WORLD 2nd Edition...

Dear readers!

The latest edtion of Simulator WORLD continues to offer news and reviews from the world of PC-Simulation!

A highlight in flight simulation is the new Airbus X Extended for MS-Flight Simulator X and Prepar3D.

Whoever is not yet a fond of flight simulation, now has the perfect opportunity to enter the world of flight simulation with this fantastic and technologically elaborated aircraft.

Combat Pilot from Saitek is the new multiplayer experience for fans of military flight simulation. Simulator WORLD takes a look behind the scenes and gives you an overview, about what you can expect from this challenge!

For model railroad simulations, the new version EEP - Eisenbahn.exe 9.0 is available in an optimised and enhanced edition. Now featuring 64-bit technology and operation of large virtual layouts.

Our British author James Woodcock takes you on a journey through the world of simulation technology.

I hope you enjoy our latest release of Simulator WORLD!

Frank Moellenhof
Chief editor Simulator WORLD
moellenhof@simulatorworld.de

REX Essential Plus and Plus w/Overdrive

REX Essential Plus and Plus w/Overdrive for FSX and Prepar3D are the latest enhanced Essential versions with many new fixes and features. The feature list with additions and updates seems endless, but with a new second weather engine mode, the party can start. More info via:
www.realenvironmentxtreme.com

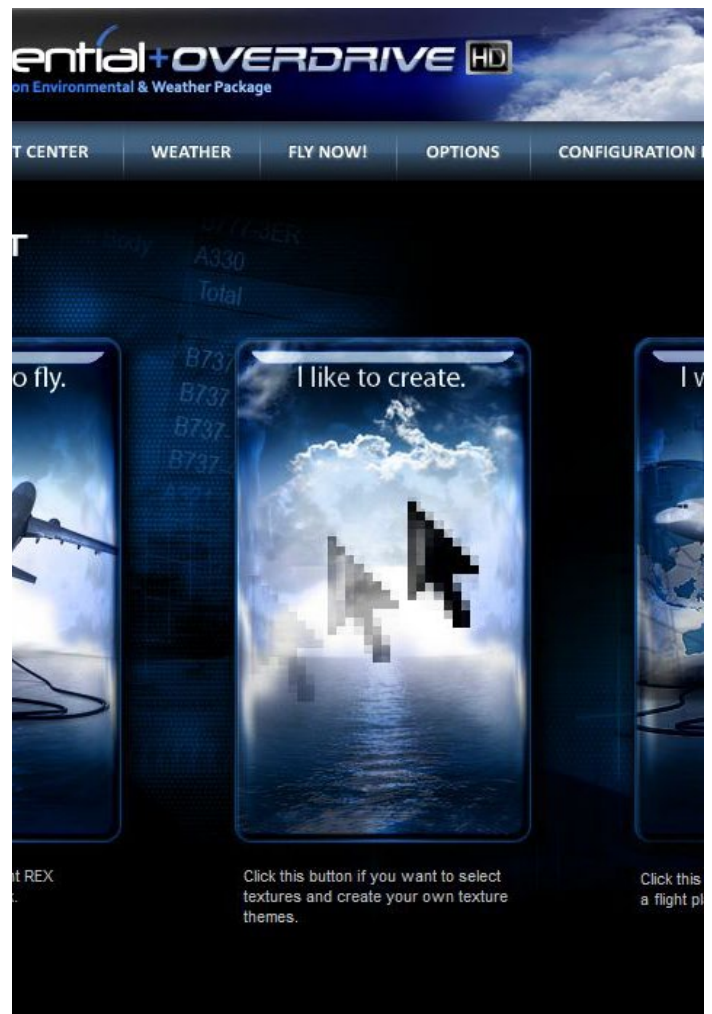## Aerosoft's New Mega Airport Helsinki

Mega Airport Helsinki Vantaa is the excellent work of the A-Flight team in breathtaking quality for FSX and Prepar3D. Due to new rendering techniques, the scenery offers superb quality without effecting performance. Enjoy the highly detailed day & night and seasonal textures. More info via:
www.aerosoft.com

Carenado C337 Skymaster HDSeries

A special aircraft for a special platform! Carenado's C337 is a high quality GA aircraft with many features like 3D gauges, original HQ digital sounds, GNS430 equipment, original Auto Pilot and much more. The C337 is fully compatible with X-Plane 9.6+, as well as X-Plane 10.11+. More info via:
www.carenado.com

ChrisTrains NS Models for TS2013

For "Nederlandse Spoorwegen" (NS) fanatics, ChrisTrains offers many high quality passenger trains like the DDZ/NID, ICMm, DD-AR and IRM Regiorunner. All trains and wagons work with TS2012/2013. Furthermore, ChrisTrains also offers Dutch gravel wagons and a Class 2200 locomotive. More info via: www.christrains.com

Stream's J94 "Memories of Maerdy" Pack

Looking for something special, something historical? Then go for the J94 locomotive from Rail-Simulator. The J94 includes 8 different locomotives, weathered liveries and two different control options. The package also includes a small colliery route running between Maerdy and Tylorstown. More info via: www.railsimulator.com

Dutch Classics 5 NS 1100

Always wanted to drive a Dutch 1100 locomotive? Now you can with the Dutch Classics 5 1100 package. Rebuilt for Railworks TS2012 with great attention to detail. Included are the simple and expert modes, original sound effects, quickdrive scenarios and much more.
More info via: www.dutch-classics.nl

Brigde Project

Take on the role of a bridge architect and construct amazing bridges across a variety of gaps. While construction knowledge is not a necessary requirement, you'll eventually learn what not to do when you see your bridge topple over in a triumphant display of carnage! Unless you like that sort of thing, then have at it and create some mayhem! More info via:
www.excalibur-publishing.com

Farming Giant

The legacy of the critically acclaimed Giant games, already continued by the successful „Train Giant" highlights the popular Agriculture theme up to a new level in „Farming Giant", presented by UIG Entertainment. More info via:
http://www.uieg.de/index.php/en_home.html

Feelthere's Tracon! 2012

Based on Tower! 2011 and customer feedback, feelthere developed from scratch Tracon! 2012. It provides you with flight strips, air radar screens including weather radar. Advanced AI and Speech Recognition technology, Tracon! 2012 will allow you to experience being a real air traffic controller. More info via: www.feelthere.com
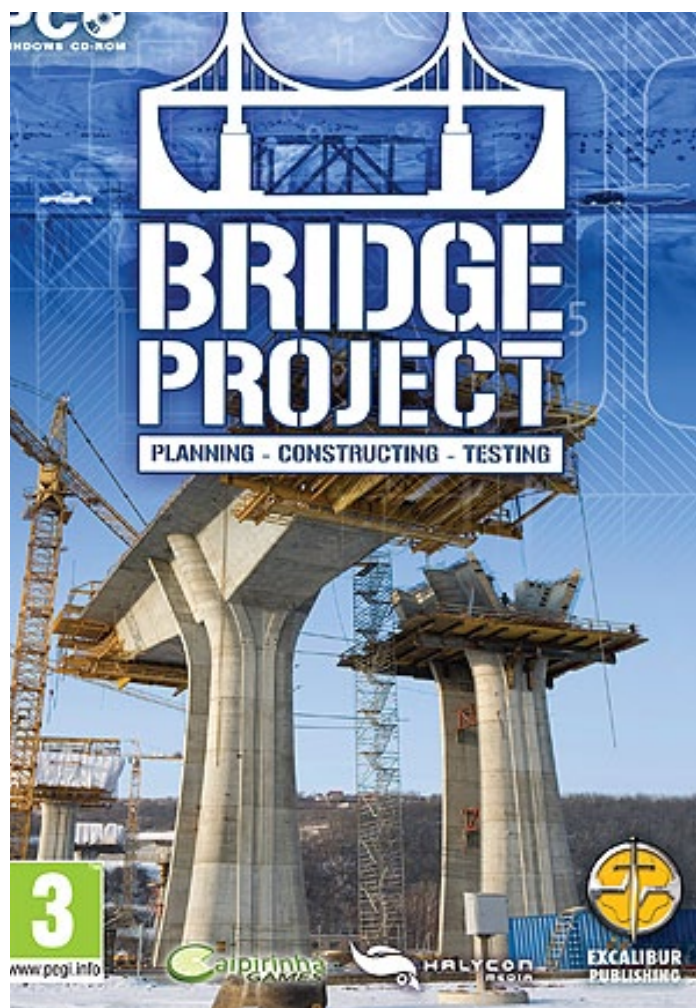
Flying Tigers Group - Part I

…. the world's most active conglomerate of Virtual Airlines

For those who aren't familiar with Virtual Airlines, let's briefly tell you what a Virtual Airline can do for you. A Virtual Airline (VA) in general and specifically the Flying Tigers Group (FTG), offers their members the ability to be a part of an airline of your choice.

A Virtual Airline allows you to log your flight hours, to be a part of the online flying world, to fly online with others whether you're flying a passenger, cargo or a historical aircraft.

Everything within a Virtual Airline is possible and when there's a need for you to improve your flying skills, VA's often include various tools for you to accomplish just that.

The Flying Tigers Group is one of the oldest of VA's still organized and flying. It is the gateway to virtual airlines from around the world. The advantage of the FTG concept is that the semi-independent connected virtual airlines share a common database, operating procedures and resources.

Another advantage of the FTG joined virtual airlines is that you can fly all of their destinations and thus not bound to only one airline's routes.

That said, let's highlight some of the airlines that are currently connected to Flying Tigers Group … Air France, Delta, Emirates, Malaysia, Qantas, Singapore Airlines, Swiss, United, Lufthansa etc. I won't say the list is endless, but many exotic airliners are included too.

For now, let's stay close to home and present FTG member Lufthansa.

FTG LIVE ACARS

General   Details

LH416 Igor Papic (v3.1)
LH1322 (EDDF-DTTA) : Climb
737-500 @ M0.63
FL210, GS 385kt
REG/D-ABIA *Greifswald*

FTG member Lufthansa VA

Lufthansa VA or Lufty VA is a VA that uses basic rules for their pilots to keep the learning curve low and together with their custom made ACARS pro-

gram, you can enjoy online flying as it's supposed to be.

After logging in, the Lufty website offers three sections;

- Flight Training
- Flight Desk
- Crew Center

The Flight Training section keeps you up-to-date with fleet information, flying procedures, general guides, tutorials and much more. To make you feel at home, Lufty offers you links to many freeware and payware developers/publishers to obtain your favorite aircraft.

The Flight Desk offers members various flights, routes or aircraft they desire and are available within the Flying Tigers Group. They even include cargo operations and historic flights, but if you want to go for "As Real As It Gets" then Lufty VA offers you real flight data of National and International Lufthansa flights.

The Crew Center is the portal for everything that has to do with your pilot profile, pilot roster and promotion.

Lufty VA supports many platforms to fly on such as Microsoft FS2004 and FSX as well as X-Plane. Online flying is done both on IVAO and VATSIM and for flight logging you use their own developed FTG ACARS software.

Afraid of using FTG ACARS software? Don't worry! Lufty VA offers their pilots interesting videos and a comprehensive manual.

Curious?
Have a look the Lufty VA
www.flyingtigersgroup.org/Lufthansa or visit the Flying Tigers Group www.flyingtigersgroup.org

Circus World

Ladies and gentleman, children of all ages! The spotlight is on you as a travelling circus needs your management skills to grow into the greatest show on earth! Hire performers, purchase side shows, perform budget management and invest in bigger tents as you make your way across the UK, France and to New York!

Fortunately, Excalibur Publishing has made it their mission to give the public their desire to run a magnificent circus in a virtual management simulation title called 'Circus World'… You're welcome!

As Excalibur's first in house developed video game, no expense has been spared to replicate the career of a circus manager. Dozens of features have been added including the ability to hire performers, purchase sideshows and experience the dread of taking out an expensive bank loan! More info via: www.excalibur-publishing.com

Mega Airport Dusseldorf

Mega Airport Dusseldorf by the German Airports team is now available as a download! Germany´s third ranking international Airport with two parallel runways is the largest and primary airport for the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region - the largest region in Germany. More info via: www.aerosoft.com

City Bus Simulator Munich

City Bus Simulator Munich announced

On a virtual ride through the Bavarian state capital

Aerosoft, the simulation expert and publisher based in Paderborn, announces the City Bus Simulator Munich and thus gets one of Germany's most important large towns as a simulation on your computer at home.

Releasing in December, the developers team at "TML-studios" provides all enthusiasts a great bus simulation with the possibility to drive by the most famous places in Munich and virtually explore its museums and sights in a highly detailed "MAN Lion's City Bus".

Featuring a large number of operable elements, the driver's cabin seems more authentic than ever and the specifically developed vehicle management system guarantees an enormous level of realism.

Every player can choose between optional and automatic error activation and if or to what extent malfunctions on your vehicle are simulated. Tuning enthusiasts have a chance to customize a lot of settings and thus adapt the engine perfor-

mance to their individual driving behaviour. As you know, bus enthusiasts are not alone on the streets of Munich.

The interactive Traffic Director ensures traffic conditions change dynamically and generate varied situations for the driver.

In order to make the players familiar with more than 43 original sights and characteristic municipal buildings, which have been designed with a lot of attention to detail. The City Bus Simulator Munich features a realistic recreation of the famous museum line 100.

Original announcements made available by the town of Munich round off this impressive presentation.

City Bus Simulator Munich will be commercially available from 6-12-2012 for Eur 29.99 each.

Info via: www.aerosoft.com

Airbus X Extended

For Flight Simulator X and Prepar3D

Aerosoft's Airbus X Extended … A New Dimension!

It's been quite a while since Aerosoft released the Airbus X, a well-developed high quality FSX aircraft add-on. If you thought that this add-on couldn't be further improved, then you were wrong! Aerosoft didn't sit still, improving their Airbus X to new and higher standards of Flight Simulations. So, what are those improvements? What can you expect?

The Airbus X Extended team created and re-vamped the Airbus A320-200 Series. According to Airbus "The A320 Series is the founding member of the best-selling Airbus single-aisle Family. The A320 will be the first version in Airbus' single-aisle product line to be delivered with the new "Sharklets" large wingtip devices, which are designed to enhance the Eco-efficiency and payload-range performance of the A320 Family."

Although there's much more to find at the Airbus A320 Family website, let's focus on the Aerosoft Airbus X Extended model.

The re-modeled Aerosoft Airbus X offers many impressive improvements such as:

- Completely rewritten FADEC (Full Authority Digital Engine Control) simulation
- Completely rewritten high resolution ND (EFIS Navigation Display) that is able to show routes with SIDs, STARs and much more
- Complete rewrite of the MCDU resulting in a MCDU that can handle all routes and VNAV mode
- Completely rewritten FMGS,
- Completely rewritten the AP systems
- Updated the Virtual Cockpit with less polygons yet more detail and better frame rates
- Added several liveries and one more aircraft model
- Some external model tweaks
- And finally ….. low pricing with high FPS

The External Model

The walk-around inspection of the simulated A320-214 Series, fitted with CFM engines, gives you an idea of the magnificent quality as well as a good eye for detail.

The Airbus X Extended is full of tiny details like the high resolution Main Landing Gears (MLG) with all real parts simulated. Together with the MLG itself, all other related parts are modelled with extreme precision.

But there's more! Fuselage, tail and wing decals are all in place as well as the yellow mooring hooks on top of the wings and placards on the external

passenger door frames telling you how to open and close a passenger door. Let's not forget the aircraft system antennas, engine cowlings, thrust reverser blocker doors, inspection panel and so on.

Since we're dealing with an A320E, all of the aircraft have added the large curved winglets or sharklets. And this is just the tip of the "Airbus X Extended" iceberg.

Finally, talking about details, when doing my ground inspection with FLAP and SLATS extended, I've got a good view of the wing trailing edge inside. This area is fully modelled with plenty of components and hydraulic lines.

The Virtual Cockpit

In one word … impressive! Not only because of the way it looks, but with all the improvements and with the help of new technologies, an even better and higher frame rate. It seems as if you're sitting in a real 3-dimensional cockpit.
The only thing that's missing is the smell of new cockpit. Zooming and panning in the VC is suddenly a pleasure. And just as on the outside model, nothing is forgotten.

Even at panel locations inside the VC where you don't expect it, you'll find the knob or that switch as in the real aircraft.

Although the paper printer on the pedestal isn't printing any paper, it looks real, but this "reality" doesn't stop at the pedestal. No, you'll have this real feeling also with the main instrument panel, overhead panel, side panels and sliding window.

They will all give you that feeling. Let's give you another example. Opening a sliding window is very smooth and when the window moves in an aft direction and hits the locks, you'll hear the typical licking sounds.

The same is applicable when switching OFF an engine. All typical sounds are implemented. Overall there's a lot to explore in this high quality VC.
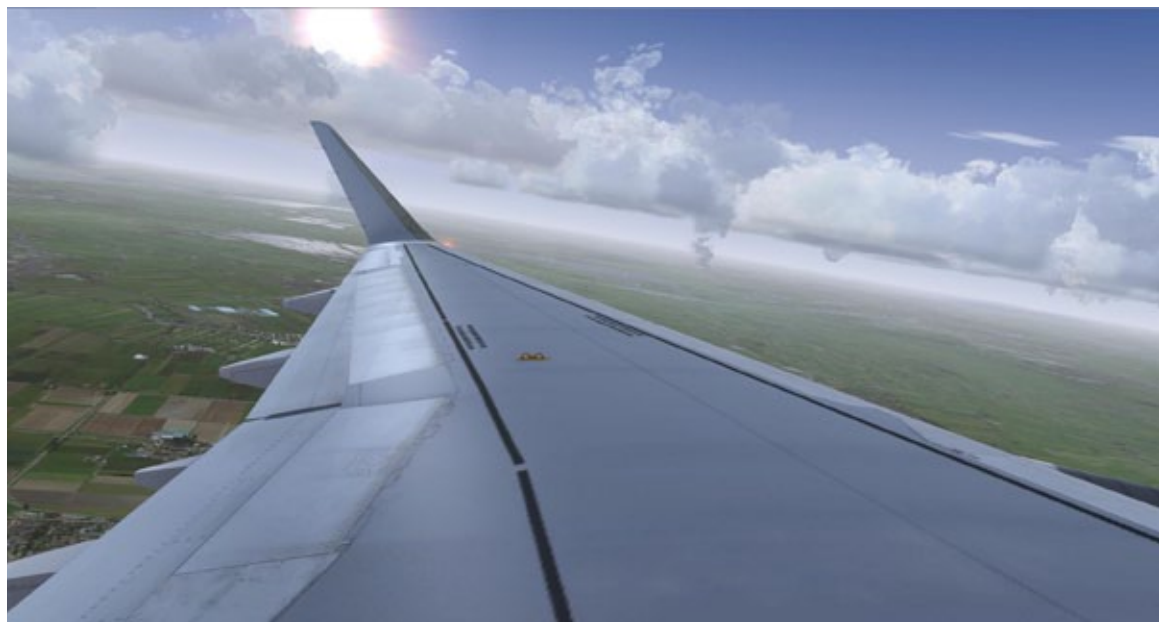
How to Fly the Airbus X Extended?

To fly the Airbus X Extended, you must have connected some kind of controller. Of course, a joystick would be the best, but it can be flown with a control wheel device as well. Furthermore, it's important to have a throttle device connected. Again, which and what type isn't important, as long as FSX detects it as a throttle unit.

Now for some real fun, which starts during taxiing to the assigned runway. The take-off is even more impressive, as is the initial climb and the further climb to your cruising altitude.

Of course you can do it all by hand and leave the

The A320 will be the first version in Airbus' single-aisle product line to be delivered with the new "Sharklets" large wingtip devices. ▶

▶ A pleasure to look at and a masterpiece for Flight Simulation: the Airbus X Extended cockpit.

Even tiniest details have been modelled for the main gear of Airbus X Extended. ▶

AP and A/THR OFF or you can decide to select only the A/THR. That's one less item to worry about.

But let's go back to the take-off. Yaw or rudder control is so realistic. When using your pedals or twisting the yoke, a gentle yaw is introduced. Without any problems you can keep the Airbus on the centreline, even at high speeds.

This gentle Airbus X Extended behaviour continues when you rotate the aircraft and while climbing to your initial assigned altitude. It flies so easily, but at the same time so realistically.

Making a turn to a new heading is very smooth and gives us the right feeling. Once you've decided that flying with just the A/THR is enough, you connect the AP and, if entered, a flight plan will bring you to your destination.

All in all, this is a very realistic simulation with all the basic systems implemented that are used in day to day operations. According to Aerosoft "In the previous Airbus X version we did not spend much attention to non-standard procedures like serious emergencies." That said, the Airbus X Extended" will bring you to new heights!

Angelique van Campen

Infobox

S y s t e m   R e q u i r e m e n t s :

- Windows XP/Vista/7
- Flight Simulator X (SP2)
- CPU: 2,6 GHz (Duo / Quad core suggested)
- 2048 MB RAM
- GPU: Geforce® ATI Radeon® with 512 MB RAM

Price 39.99 € (Box-Version)
available at: www.aerosoft.com

Euro Truck Simulator 2
On the road again

Man . . . and their machines . . . 320 PS. With the Euro Truck Simulator 2 you can once again get going. Published by ronomedia, it sets a new benchmark for this kind of genre. It is not just a driving simulator for trucks that moves your 40 ton truck along European freeways, romantic country roads, inner-city side roads, but also includes management tasks and organisational talent that provides a lot of diversion.

The virtual world offered in this game includes Europe with Germany in its centre. All neighbouring countries with the exception of Scandinavia are featured including Great Britain.

The main menu is designed in a user friendly way and looks like the Windows desktop. The background always shows a truck, if available the flagship of the company – your truck.

On the right hand side from top to bottom you see the tabs for your personal profile, your own truck and the company that you founded.

At the very bottom of the screen symbolised by striking, accurate icons, you find the menu items for the game. Euro Truck Sim always saves the current game state and returns there. Game states are only necessary for backup purposes in case you would like to try something new.

In order to start earning money, the player has to accept freight contracts. The trucks are made available by a fictitious carrier that hires the player for a contract. Having arrived safely at the destination, you get your money less fines resulting from speeding, driving in the wrong direction, causing an accident or delays.

Once you have saved enough money after numerous trips, you can finally buy your own long-desired truck. The dealers are spread all over Germany and Europe and over the course of the game your navigation device and the European map registers all your visits. It would take you more than 100 hours to drive all the routes once.

Once you have chosen a favourite truck, you can go there virtually and look around the show room. The cheapest model starts at 98,000 Euro. After the purchase, you find the truck on your company's compound and you can take it for a first ride. You probably should drive very carefully as damage costs time and lots and lots of money.

For me, viewable damage on your truck is not perfect whereas the environment and trailer are affected accurately. If this had been also realised for the truck, a huge step ahead towards "complete realism" would have been made. The handling, however changes dramatically with a damaged truck. In case of severe damages, the engine dies off and the truck becomes stubborn.

An improved graphics engine compared to its predecessor simulates images like in reality during sidelight. ▶

Elektronic goods from Frankfurt/Main to the Netherlands, Amsterdam. Coutry specific roadsigns are distinctive for ETS 2. ▶

Narrow motorway exits require all driving skills. ▶

By now, steering with the keyboard and the mouse can be fine tuned in the options and is very satisfying. For those of you spending hour after hour in your truck, getting a real steering wheel is recommended.

In addition to money, you gain experience points with every trip that can reach up to level 14 in your profile. Reverse parking with a trailer at your destination will get you several experience points.

The more experienced players and professional truckers among you should not have any problems using the rear-view mirror. This certainly is the most difficult task in this business. If you do not feel like attempting this, just press "Enter" and you can save yourself the trouble.

With a growing amount of points, you get higher in the ranking and can distribute additional bonus points for special abilities. The latter is often decisive as to whether an item for the truck can be purchased. The more experience the driver has, the more he earns from a contract.

Some contracts that have a price per kilometre can only be accomplished safely and in time with certain tuning parts. Then again, others demand special abilities from the driver. Otherwise the contract will not be awarded.

Equipment does not only contribute to an im-

proved performance, but also certain things that make a simulated truck a real truck which is an individual nameplate in the front even for the co-pilot. Nicely realised.

In order to buy a second truck and hire an employee, you need to have space in the garage of your hometown. If it is not enough, you will need to invest and thus expand your company gradually. The entire European continent is available where you can open more branches with garages.

It was a very nice idea to have the driver experience tiredness. After hours of driving, time and kilometres are shortened by a factor 10, the driver closes his eyes, he experiences tunnel vision as the screen all round turns black.

If he does not consider the advice, he will be repeatedly asked in short intervals to look for a parking lot and take a rest for nine hours.

If it is an urgent contract, the driver has to decide whether he wants to drive overtired and risk an accident or rather arrive late at the destination. Resting-places, besides a cemetery, are parking lots for trucks or hotels in the cities.

In addition, you will have to keep an eye on the fuel display if you do not want to take an unexpected break. In case this happens, maybe even resulting from a write-off, you can call a towing

service via the navigation device by pressing "F7". Of course, you will need to pay for this.

The radio installed in the cockpit of your truck plays mp3-files in the user's Euro Truck subdirectory. This encourages the feeling of really working in the company's truck and just switch on the radio or CD-player to relax on the long ride from Salzburg to Kassel while approaching the final destination on a wet freeway.

If you are visiting a town for the first time, you will see an announcement on the screen. I can say that, for Hanover, Nuremberg, Dusseldorf and some other towns, the program suggests a déjà-vu with the help of the town silhouette which definitely works in favour of them.

Within a town, you usually find one garage, various places for the night and at least two carriers that provide you with further contracts.

One negative aspect is that the many approach roads a trucker has to take to get on the freeway are very similar to each other. Two or three variations per country would have been nice.

Also, the town centres could have offered a bit more diversity and things to explore. But who knows? There might be updates or add-ons that fill these "black holes" on the European map and in the town centres.

After update 1.13, you will not find any DAV trucks as rondomedia partnered with DAF, MAN, Scania and Renault. Almost every truck featured in the game is a real model.

The 3D-terrain and environments are all designed very realistically. There is a large amount of forest with a hilly terrain around Nuremberg and a view on the Limestone Alps from Salzburg.

When crossing a border, the customs posts, now featuring EU-symbols and national flags, turn into supply areas with a parking lot and perhaps a gas station.

Traffic lights and signs are adapted to each country and driving on the left in Great Britain.
By the way: In order to get to Great Britain, you need to take the ferry Calais or Dover/ Folkstone or the train under the Channel. An interesting quirk when you first drive the terminal area in Calais or Dover/Folkstone.

The inner towns are crowded by people that look unbelievably real, but as I previously said, there are still some black holes holes to fill.

The program runs stable. Until now, after 7000 kilometres of driving on my profile, the program never crashed, but beware: Euro Truck seduces you and becomes addictive. You are constantly drawn to your truck.

André Rogalla

Infobox

S y s t e m   R e q u i r e m e n t s :

- Operating system: Windows XP (SP3)/Vista/7
- Processor Dual core CPU 2.4 GHz
- 2 GB system memory
- Dedicated graphics card with 256 MB memory (GeForce 7600 GT-class equivalent or better)
- DirectX 9 compatible sound card
- DirectX 9.0
- 1.5 GB of free hard drive space

Available from:
www.excalibur-publishing.com

Saitek Ultimate MultiPlayer Combat Flying Experience

What is Combat Pilot?

Saitek Combat Pilot is the ultimate multiplayer combat flying experience. A.I. controlled ATC, custom UHF communications, electronic kneeboards, military career selection and tracking, a fully integrated weapons suite, carrier operations and a realistic, interactive combat experience. In short:

• **The first true multiplayer combat FSX experience**
• **Instant online access to a controlled environment**
• **Live chat on UHF and within the Pilot's Lounge**
• **Fly in a virtual squadron with qualified pilots**
• **Advanced flight training, carrier ops and check rides**
• **Live munitions and weapons training**

Let's first figure out which steps you will need to follow to become an experienced Combat Pilot. The first things you should know is that Combat Pilot is an ongoing experience with updated training, planes, weapons, and adventures as time passes. Initially, the program consists of:

- Flight training Operation
- Fighter Lead-In

Flight Training Operations

It all starts with Flight Training Operations otherwise known as FTO. FTO is the first instalment in the Combat Pilot series and represents initial flight training required for all Combat Pilot Members

prior to combat operations within the Combat Pilot Community.

The primary goal of FTO is to instruct, evaluate and rate Combat Pilot Cadets, which prepares them for the challenges of combat aviation. FTO includes Primary and Advanced Flight Training for all Strike or Carrier Strike pilots. FTO provides:

• **A controlled true multiplayer environment with live chat**
• **Over 25 nations from which to choose a career**
• **Training on CP-T-6Bs, CP-T-38Cs and CP-T-45Cs to earn your wings**
• **Graduation to Fighter Lead-in School in preparation for deployment to combat operations**

From the first moment, you begin as a cadet, you will be given an opportunity to be promoted, receive citations and earn awards.

Fighter Lead-In

Upon completion of the Flight Training Operations, you will, as a newly commissioned strike pilot, report to NAS Fallon for fighter lead-in training in the CP-AT-6B. You will:

• **Learn basic air-to-ground and air-to-air tactics**
• **Receive training in basic rockets, guns, and sidewinder missiles**
• **Participate in online flying with your squadron**

• **Be immersed in intense training programs and challenging check rides**

Fighters

During your FTO and fighter lead-in program, you will fly different aircraft such as the CP-T-6B. It's a single-engine turboprop used for primary flight training in FTO as well as weapons training in Fighter Lead-in. Another option is the CP-T-45C, which is a single-engine, carrier-capable transonic jet used for advanced training and for Carrier Qualification. And finally, there's the CP-T-38C. This supersonic aircraft is used for advanced FTO training at Sheppard Air Force Base, Wichita Falls, Texas, USA.

Get the Right Equipment

To be a successful combat pilot, you want to fly-with first class equipment. Therefore, Combat Pilot is compatible with most major flight simulation hardware. It is not designed to be played with a mouse and keyboard. As the makers of Saitek Pro Flight equipment, the Combat Pilot development team recommends the following equipment: Saitek flight sticks X52, X52 PRO, or X-65F.
Furthermore, they recommend a throttle separate from the stick with a minimum of 15 programmable switches. Using Saitek's Multi Panel, will give you easy access to all autopilot functions including auto throttle. Last but not least, Saitek's Flight In-

strument Panel (FIP) with support for 6 new displays, will allow you to track all your plane´s operations and movements. Not to be forgotten … for the communication you can optionally use the Tritton stereo headset with microphone.

Fighters, training, assignments, but is there more?

Many features are constantly added to Combat Pilot. An example is the CP-AT-6B weapons, which are used in Fighter Lead-In. Strike and Carrier Strike pilots must complete Fighter Lead-In prior to reporting for combat training in their assigned / selected strike aircraft. Training flights include air-to-air with guns and Sidewinder missiles and air-to-ground with guns and rockets. Flights will include an introduction to low level night vision goggle strikes.

Another interesting feature is the interactive ground crew, which aids pilots with aircraft launch and recovery for both airbase and carrier operations. There's only one goal … to make it as real as it gets!

If you are not happy with the fighter plane selection, then there is light at the end of the tunnel. Work is in progress on a CP-FA-18D fighter which is to be included with a future Combat Pilot release, Combat Training Operations, CTO.

The Combat Pilot menus ▶ allows you to select a career, mission, and much more.

The CP-T-38C Northrop ▶ Talon during an advanced training flight.

When you're ready, this ▶ will be Your T-38C Talon cockpit!

Connecting to the Combat World

Connecting to the Combat World with your Combat Pilot call sign, you can connect yourself to the Multiplayer Combat World. Via this menu driven system you create, or select your previously created career, and then select a server, that will assign you to a base where you can: enter the pilot's lounge, go to the the learning center, select the administrative office, select and brief a mission and much more. Lets briefly highlight the Servers, Base Operations, Pilot's Lounge and Missions.

The Servers

The servers give you instant access to your environment. Server selection is based on a number of criteria, which include some variables. Members may also search for individuals based on call sign or you can go directly to a specific server. The VIEW button may be used, once a server has been selected to evaluate more detailed information before making a selection.

Base Operations

Your multiplayer experience starts at Base Ops! After server selection, Combat Pilots will be placed inside their assigned Base Operations, giving them a variety of options including the Pilot's Lounge, Learning Center, Mission Selection, and Administration Office.

Pilot's Lounge

This is the place to locate and communicate with your friends that are assigned to that base! The Pilot's Lounge and ready rooms are available for communication and briefings between the pilots currently assigned to the base or those in transit. Pilots will use Combat Pilot's voice communications to contact each other. All pilots will be listed by their call sign.

Mission Selection and Briefing .. time to fly!

Basic training and check rides are flown in a standalone Simulator (you cannot die or lose experience points). Training Flights are flown in the real Combat Pilot world in your aircraft with all elements that may apply to actual flight, including combat.

Are you ready?

There's no time to lose. The Multiplayer Combat Pilot community is waiting for you! Sign-In, Fly and Fight!

Angelique van Campen

Info and registration for Saitek Combat Pilot:
www.combatpilotseries.com

EEP - Eisenbahn.exe 9.0 EXPERT
Model Train Simulator for virtual railroads

The oldest and one of the most stable programs for train simulations is called EEP, formerly known as EEEC – Eisenbahn.EXE European Class which has been the market since 1999. Its version 2.43 was my first train simulator. In this early version everything was silent until months later a so called "soundlok" was released as a bonus and added the first steam locomotive sounds.

The current versions of EEP 9.0 Pro and Expert basically have no limits as to sound and graphics and has turned into a model train simulator that offers the following possibilities for the creation of a virtual installation in a small room:
The user watches and monitors his model train with 2x 80 cameras, modifying his scenery and track plan in the 2D and 3D editor and presents them once finished. In contrast to reality, you can drive as many 44er tender locomotives as your computer can handle.

Bob is in demand – EEP is a train simulation for the builder.

Complete installations like In Vino Veritas and Euro Vmax and several tutorials are handed to the buyer. Here, he can copy working methods and subsequently use them for his own debut.

If you prefer autonomous model trains, you will find solutions for circuits and contact points that initiate events when the camera should be swit-

ched. One possible reason for this could be that there is a locomotive performing a u-turn on track 13. With the help of the model track plan, it is no problem to create such an installation using the editor. There is also the possibility for the first attempts to use the four complete installations and change those up.

The manual in pdf-format details the basic philosophy that the more significant part of the planning still takes place in the 2D view whereas driving operations and surveillance are more important in the 3D editor.

Small installation for the first steps

After I finished reading the manual to use the various possibilities of EEP 9.0, I created a small layout. At first, laying the individual rail parts with a given length seems to be complicated. But after having delved deeper, you discover the huge amount of hidden possibilities and variations. Mirroring and copying of previously laid rails, prebuilt rail objects like points and DKWs with preset angles and junction radiuses are ready to be used and ensure a fast completion of a middle rail yard of a station.

At the beginning a small layout is certainly the right choice. The saying "an installation is never finished" should not be valid anymore. A small installation including the materials featured in the main game is opened after a short training period.

As of recently it's possible ▶ to drive with in the new models with fully functional 3D cabins – here, the switches do not have any function.

The old „Silberlinge" in ▶ the local train cyan version of the 90´s.

Additional models like ▶ the VT08.5 DB are available via the Trend-Shop.

Some novelties in 9.0

The block function for landscaping to save and copy is not only useful within one installation but also allows copying segments from one installation to another, for example, mountains and valleys with all relief data and the used textures. Finished standards can be saved and used for later installations.

In order to fill the scenery with life, EEP recently started using kinematically animated models like escalators or advertising banners with predetermined motion sequences.

Furthermore, there are even more cameras available. In addition to static and dynamic ones, mobile cameras can be used that can even simulate the depth of focus and focal length of a reflex camera.

Nomen est omen, you can define a route for them in order to change a location.

A reworked menu with an interactive fade-out of unused options, enhanced performance thanks to an optimised graphics engine and 64-bit capable for those with 4GB or more memory.

Modelling like crazy or just enjoy

Beyond the automatic operations, especially with bigger installations that are impossible to operate

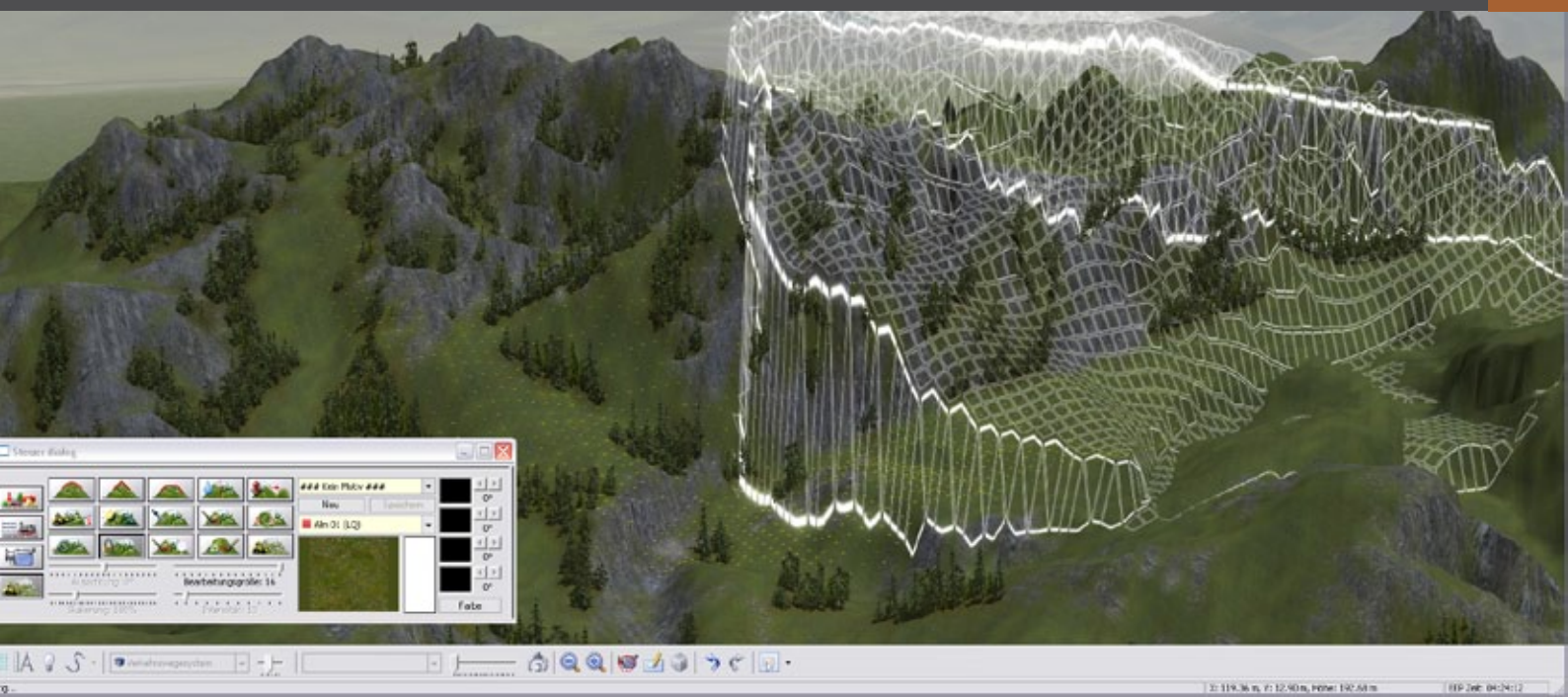alone, there is still enough time for self-appointed shunting duties.

The user can be dispatcher and train driver in one. As dispatcher he manually releases the route that is used by the unscheduled freight train driven by the train driver on the main route. The models deserve appreciation as they each have taken 100 hours of development. Unfortunately, there is still no control panel that is easy to operate.

An installation in EEP is rather designed for automatic operations. To control it professionally and enjoy watching the installation, you will need integrated cameras by EEP.

Surveillance cameras for your model train or "Big Brother is watching your model train"
Static cameras are used to look into a busy station or supervise a 12 track staging yard. The latter can be provided with an automatic that can be switched on and off.

Not only is the surveillance is important but also the second type, the dynamic cameras that have a fixed position and follow a moving object, which is outstanding feature of the 9.0 expert version. That way you can realise the beloved train passages in a station.

The recording on film, which follows the example of film directing, is new. This is where the afo-

rementioned mobile cameras are used. They can be fixed on a route where the trains are passing through later on.

In order to present the whole installation, it is possible to record the automatic operating procedure and present it to other train enthusiasts. Here, the improved recording methods of 9.0 expert come into action.

New cutting methods, glare effects and camera sequences that can be labelled, ensure a presentation that is worthy of a movie. You can present your layouts on websites to the public. In short: This is railroad romanticism made at home.

Realising the old dream of a big installation with EEP

The company called Trend follows the fashion in the real model train scene and realises functional models and improves the coding and presentation. EEP 9.0 includes a lot of improvements. Newly developed, partly resulting from customer feedback and all plug-ins that have been released for version 8.0, but there are ergonomics missing which simplifies the start and manual control.

Other than that, version 9.0, free from unexpected crashes, provides a stable world of model trains that wants to be explored due to its huge amount of possibilities. Just like the real model train, EEP

can recreate the everyday life of its counterparts

The point blades stand out as to their appearance. Fifty new 3D models are featured. There are more locomotives and equipment available in the trend-shop – ranging from a blade of grass to a Class 01.

EEP, supported by its tools can create an endless number of installations, can be compared to a musical composition, constructed in a way that creates a pleasing resulte.

After having installed EEP 9.0, the train enthusiast first has to learn his trade. Then, nothing can stop the next entertaining installation.
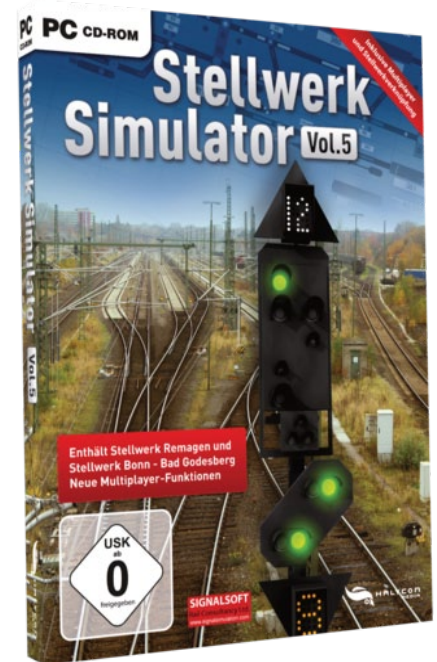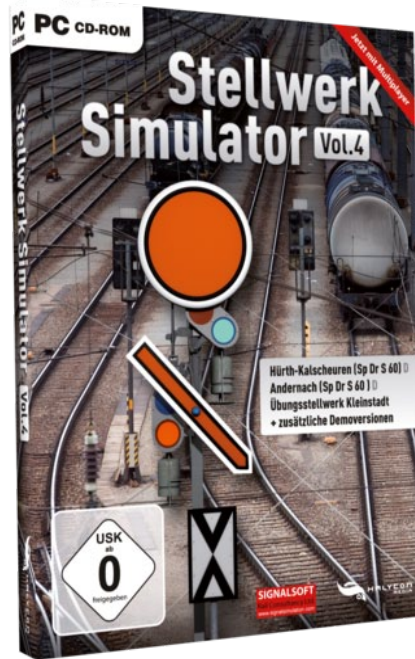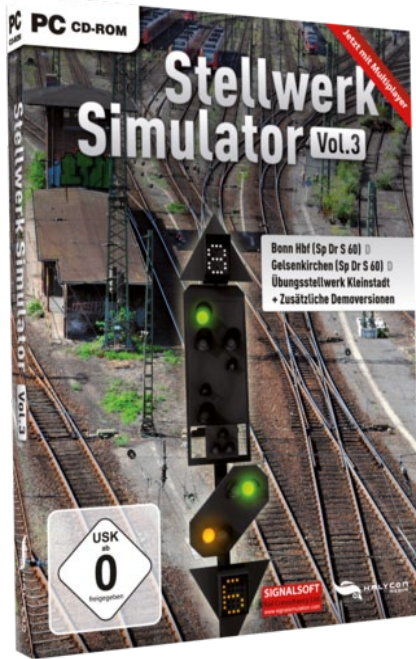
André Rogalla

Infobox

System Requirements:

- Windows Vista/ Windows 7 (32 Bit)
- Dual-Core-Prozessor with 2,5 GHz
- Grafikkarte 1 GB Pixel-shader 3.0
- DirectX 10
- 2 GB RAM
- DVD-Laufwerk
- 5.1-Soundcard
- Internet connection

Price 46.99 € (Box-Version)

Available at: www.eep4u.de

Halycon's signal box simulators

Within three years, five instalments of the signal box simulator have been released with each of them featuring at least 2 signal boxes based on the DB or the NS. The new pro-series only includes one simulated model which can be understood considering the size of the Amsterdam Central Signal Box. Parts 1 -3 are currently available in a collective bundle.

Signal boxes seem to be quite dry, but amateurs and railway enthusiasts alike should keep in mind that they ensure secure train services as well as effortless traffic to the proper time-table, given the points and signals are controlled correctly! For this, complex control and safety systems have been installed that also encompass safe shunting operations.

Debuting the dispatcher

The first part already features three different signal boxes that await their use: Arnhem, Mathilde and Oberhausen. It includes an astonishingly detailed recreation of a historic panel from 1965 (Arnhem) that you can use to set the route and cancel it. 100 points, 95 signals, 145 rails, 8 platforms supported by individual sound effects to the operations ensure a realistic simulation. Time-table data from 1965 result in a detailed simulation on your monitor. In order to aid the beginner, there are 9 tutorial films in addition to the manual.

Whereas the player has been on his own so far, he can now work with various assistants in the virtual control centre choosing the multiplayer- and online-mode in part two. This part includes the Braunschweig signal box, the Kleinstadt ("little town") training signal box in the rail plan push button S 60 configuration as well as the Dutch signal boxes Hengelo and Lodelo in the GRS-NX configuration.

The Sp Dr S 60 signal box at Braunschweig central station contains more than 250 points, 24 intersections, 300 signals, 2,000 routes and more than 350 track vacancy detection sections. Time-route and track occupancy diagrams that you can also be printed are new in this version. Moreover, there
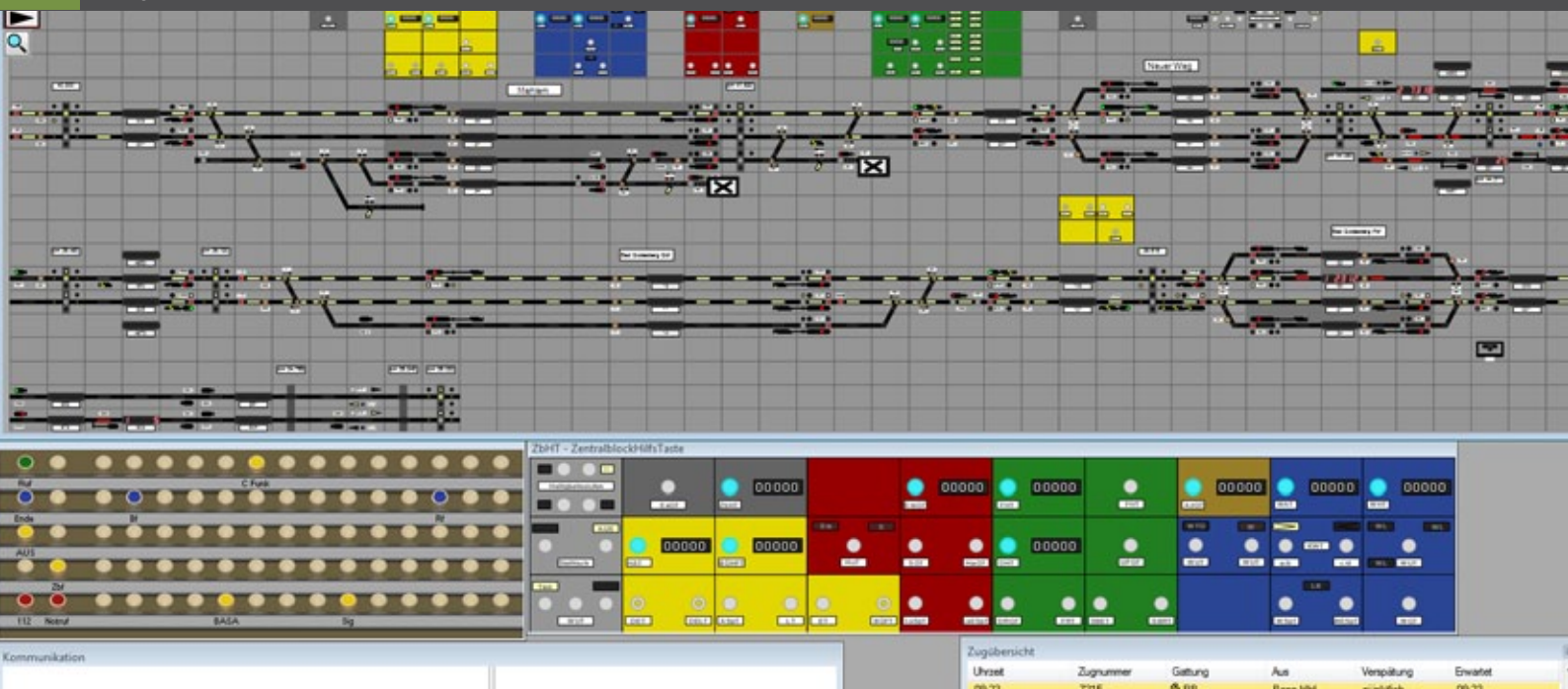
is the signal box at Bonn central station featuring the double ICE-trains shortly after each other, access routes at 160 km/h as well as 7 railroad crossings. Things are a lot more laid back at Gelsenkirchen central station, but creating equilibrium between the tram, regional trains and the typical freight trains in the Ruhr area is not that easy.

Part 4 features a training signal box small town for the start. Every signal box has its own problems and characteristics; no one is like the other. Whereas Hürth-Kahlscheuren requires fast correct decisions due to the small intervals between trains, the task in Andernach is much more focussed on industrial plants and the port.

The special novelty in Part 5 is the amazing function of connecting routes in the multiplayer mode. That is how you can control the railway traffic between the individual signal boxes and thus experience a unique multiplayer game for Remagen and Bonn Bad Godesberg.

In the Netherlands, we have a professional series featuring bigger types including the central signal box at Amsterdam central station which can barely be mastered by a simulating dispatcher. With about 230 km of rail tracks in total, more than 3000 possible routes and 1200 trains per day, you won't be easily bored. Here, the multiplayer mode makes a lot of sense and in case that is still not enough you can change the degree of difficulty.

Track maintenance, disturbances, delays etc. make your virtual work difficult.

André Rogalla

Infobox

▲ Matrox triplehead2go Setup for Flight Simulator X

Simulation - Pushing Technology, Expanding Boundaries By James Woodcock @jameswoodcock

Even at the tender age of five, I oh so wanted to drive the car. Of course, this wasn't possible and certainly not legal - so my parents purchased a device that stuck on to the side window and would give me at least a sense of what driving was all about without the risks.

Imagine if you will my father carefully driving through the beautiful English countryside in a Ford Cortina and a much younger James sat with his plastic steering wheel and squeaky horn, feeling that he had control over this impressive mechanical machine.

Well OK, I didn't have any impact whatsoever to the actual journey - however I enjoyed every minute of it and for the first time I mimicked the operation of something that was currently out of reach. This turned out to be my first experience of 'simulation' and although technology has the wonderful ability of immersing us in all manner of challenging scenarios and fabulous locations, really it isn't much different from my plastic steering wheel and not forgetting squeaky horn.

Simulation is a superb way of gaining access to all

kinds of transportation that might otherwise be impossible or at least incredibly difficult to experience. Simulators aren't just confined to transportation and of course cover a wide range of subjects, however we are train simulator enthusiasts and it is here I will take a look at how technology has given new opportunities to express our passion for this pastime and how it could evolve.

One direction early simulators adopted was Virtual Reality. As a teenager, I remember trying one out at a Science Museum, a very weighty piece of headgear that included an integrated screen and earphones. It was incredibly basic and the 3D worlds were pretty flat and uninspiring, however the head tracking was an immersive touch. The unit would detect simple motion and adjust accordingly, allowing you to explore the environments with a simple turn of the head.

Thankfully, Virtual Reality headgear never really took off and instead the same effect is often realised by using multiple monitors. Ideally with three displays, simulators have the potential to offer a panoramic view of the location. For a train simulator, you can easily imagine the locomotive cab

▲ Microsoft Kinect Controller for Windows

controls in the center monitor with two either side providing the extra perspective. With modern day graphics cards and a few identical monitors, this is becoming a far more realistic possibility for the home consumer.

Graphics cards are also expanding the virtual worlds in which these simulations exist. It began with a few simple lines reconstructing the bare minimum of a locomotive, track and scenery. Titles such as 'Southern Belle' on the C64, Amstrad and other platforms of the era certainly were the first building blocks of how train simulation could be a focus for developers.

Lines advanced to 3D shapes known as polygons. The number of polygons in which locomotives are created have increased from just a few hundred to tens of thousands in a relatively short time. Add to that high quality textures and you begin to see immediately identifiable rail stock.

The transformation even within the last few years has been pretty drastic as realtime lighting and shadows take centre stage in portraying times of day, weather conditions and overall realism. It is amazing how a simple light source, which in turn casts a shadow can yield such dramatic results and add further immersion within the environments.

It's not just the visual indicators that are important, the sounds we identify from a moving loco-

motive including switching tracks, rocking carriages from behind, metal rubbing against metal are all vital. The often even slightly annoying sounds that when absent, only emphasises it's a recreation and not the real thing.

As multi-monitor setups offer a wider field of view, surround sound systems & headsets offer a wider field of sound - giving a greater sense of the position of activities around you. The way in which sound is reflected off certain objects and echoes in varying sizes of buildings, all add to the depth of detail. The presence of a steam whistle for example reverberating in a large roofed station is certainly different to when heard in the open countryside.

Tablets and smartphones have become a major platform for gaming recently and even here, train simulation isn't far away. Although they aren't powerful enough to compete with a computer system, I can certainly envisage these types of devices displaying detailed information regarding the current scenario and how other enthusiasts are progressing by linking to your favourite simulators. These same devices could also offer another method of operating the simulator, with full cab touchscreen controls.

Although there are hardware controllers especially designed for train simulation with levers and but-

▲ XBox-Controller compatible with Train Simulator 2013

tons, I'm sure most of us stick with the keyboard. The trusty mouse also plays it's part and more recently simulators are implementing such devices as the Xbox 360 controller, which in turn includes vibration to indicate certain onscreen activities. Microsoft Kinect offers interaction by detecting body movements while also including voice recognition, is this a possible future?

More recently, the focus is becoming less about the individual player and instead the larger community. Multiplayer gaming has been a feature of computers and consoles for a number of years, yet rail simulators in particular are finding it hard to find their feet in this area. Small steps have already been taken, yet there is still a long way to go to recreate a fully interactive and community inspired effort within scenarios.

Simulators are all about capturing those little fine details that we often take for granted in the real world. Nuances that are probably left unnoticed when standing beside a real steam locomotive, yet as soon as an attempt to recreate this within a computer environment occurs - it becomes abundantly clear if something is missing, rapidly removing you from the realism.

The risk when recreating these environments, activities and machinery that inhabit the simulated world is that you become part of a perfection just not possible. It is actually the imperfections that

add realism and therefore strides are taken to remove the glossy 'new' look and instead highlight the areas that are damaged, worn down or simply dirty.

Imagine a time when routes are no longer separate entities and instead of London to Brighton, imagine London to Edinburgh and every intersecting route in-between. Open worlds where communities live and breathe the atmosphere and have an effect on the players around them. Rather than just driving the locomotives, is it possible to also operate the lines as a signalman or repair broken rail stock? Will random events strike and need to be solved by a group of players rather than a single individual? Is this all possible within the next decade?

So much has been achieved in the quest for realism and with each year respectable steps are taken to advance our immersion in simulation. As technology becomes more powerful and capable, with our passion for train simulation seeing no evidence of diminishing, the future looks incredibly bright.

James Woodcock

PREVIEW EDITION 1-2013

Available in December

▲

ity Bus Simulator Munich

▲

Mega Airport Dusseldorf

▲

Farming-Simulator 2013