smartCARS

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OVERVIEW

smartCARS is an easy to use and modern virtual flight tracking application designed and developed by TFDi Design. Starting out as an ACARS for a single virtual airline, smartCARS has grown into a retail product, extending beyond the functionality of a simple flight tracker. smartCARS lets a pilot view their own flight and hundreds of other active flights on a live map, see their overall statistics, and chat with an ever-expanding community.

This document will describe all of the features that smartCARS has to offer and how you can best benefit from them.
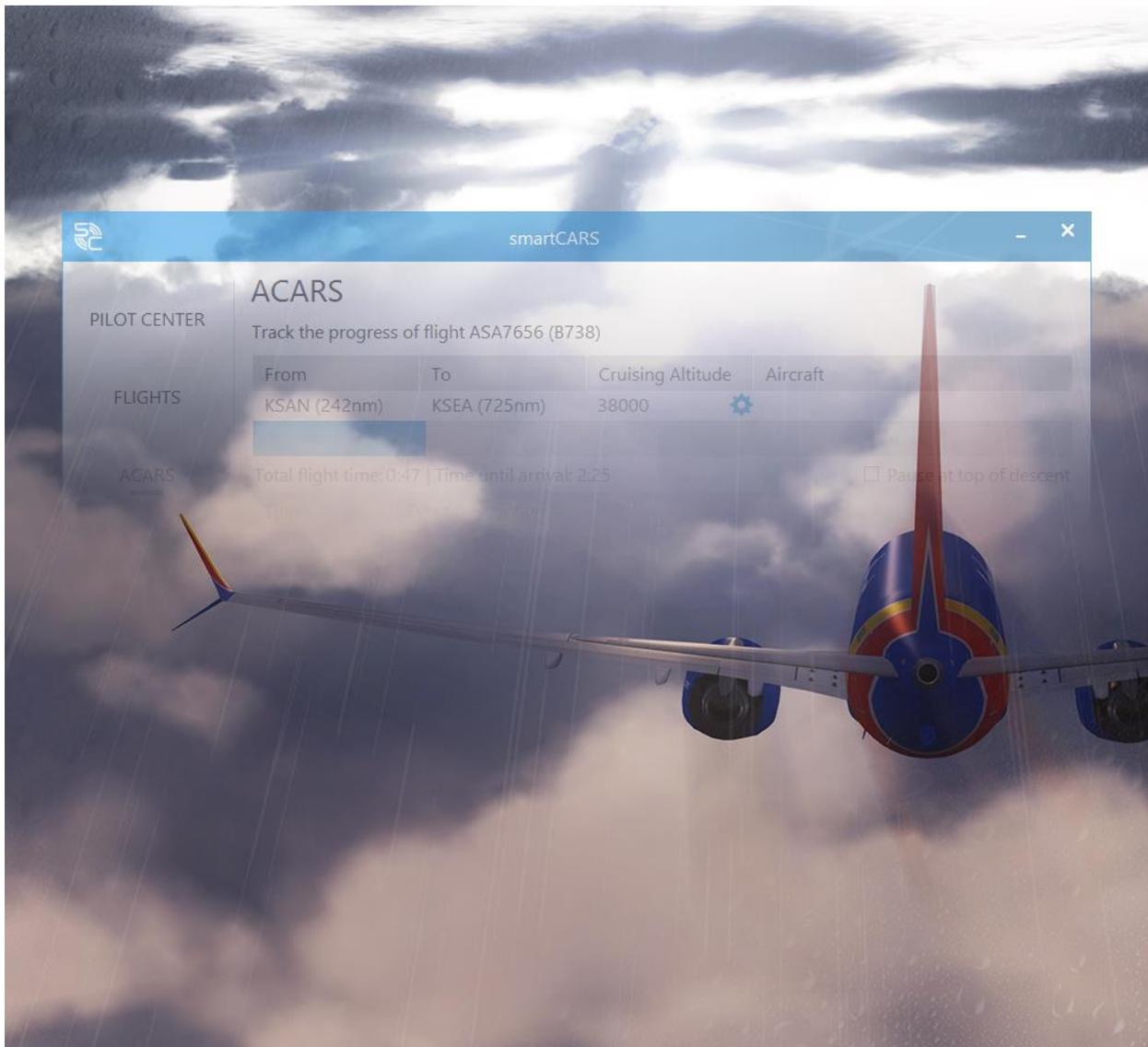
PILOT CENTER

The Pilot Center allows you to view your most important pilot statistics, your previously completed flights and submitted PIREPs, and the latest news/information from your virtual airline.

STATISTICS

Your statistics are representative of any and all flights you have done during your time with your virtual airline. When actively being loaded/refreshed, the statistics themselves will be displayed as double dashes ("--").

VIEWING PAST PIREPS

You can view your past flights by clicking the "View PIREPS" button below the pilot statistics section of the Pilot Center page. You will then be presented with, by default, a list of all past PIREPS you have submitted to your virtual airline. Use the search filters at the top of the page to narrow down the list to a specific flight or flights if you wish.

Select a PIREP from the list and click "View Details" at the bottom right of the page to view all details of that PIREP.

FLIGHTS

The Flights tab is where you will bid on flights, as well as find the flights that you have already bid on. Clicking on a specific flight in the list view will display more information in the table at the bottom of the page.

BIDDING ON A NEW FLIGHT

By clicking the "New" button at the bottom of the page on the Flights tab, you will be taken to a page where you can search for new bids.

You can easily search for a flight to bid on by setting the various filtering options available at the top of the page. Once you have found a flight that you want to bid on, simply select the flight and click the "Bid" button at the bottom right of the page.

Note: Only 1,000 flights can be shown at once. This helps to keep down server load and offer quicker search results.

CHARTERING A FLIGHT

If your virtual airline has it enabled, you can use the charter system instead of bidding on an existing flight. The charter system allows you to essentially create your own flight that is not already in your virtual airline's database. At the bottom of the page on the Flights tab, you will find a "Create" button. This will take you to a page where you can enter all of the information needed to create a flight.

STARTING A FLIGHT

When you have either selected a bid or created a charter flight and selected it on the Flights page, you can click "Fly" to begin preparing to fly it.

Once you have customized all of the options on the flight set up page, you will be ready to fly. Ensure that your flight simulator of choice is running and loaded up at the appropriate airport. You can then click the "Start" button to begin tracking the flight.

| Boeing 737-400 (B734) ▼ | Flying offline ▼ | 159 | Cruise Alt. |

Route

PIREP Comments (Editable Later)

Back   Start

ACARS

The ACARS tab is where you can view the progress of your currently active flight. At the top, you can view your distance from both the departure and arrival airports. You can also view the total flight time, your time until arrival, and a log of all major events that occur during your flight (take off, cruise, landing, etc.).

From	To	Cruising Altitude	Aircraft
KSAN	KSEA (915nm)	38000 ⚙	

Total flight time: 0:00:00 | Time until arrival: N/A   ☐ Pause at top of descent

Time	Event Description
03:23:16 PM	Preflight started, flying offline
03:23:16 PM	Flying Boeing 737-800 Paint4
03:23:17 PM	Engine 1 is on
03:23:17 PM	Engine 2 is on
03:34:59 PM	Pushing back with 45360 lb of fuel
04:22:40 PM	Cruising altitude changed to 38000 ft

Route   PIREP Comments

Cancel   Copy Log   Finish

Clicking the gear icon next to the cruising altitude will allow you to edit it, should you need to for any reason. To save your changes, simply click the check icon that replaced the gear icon.

MAP

The Map tab lets you see both your active flight and all other flights currently happening on smartCARS. Clicking on an aircraft on the map will display the pilot's name, the itinerary, and aircraft type.

CHAT

smartCARS has a simple, yet powerful chat system that lets pilots talk to the community of smartCARS pilots.

GLOBAL: Includes all online smartCARS users

AIRLINE: Limited to only the online smartCARS users in your virtual airline

PRIVATE MESSAGES: Private conversations with individual smartCARS users.

In order to start a private message with a user, click on their name next to one of their messages in either the GLOBAL or AIRLINE chat and select "Private Message" from the popup menu. You can also right-click a user in the active users list, which is accessible by clicking the "person" icon at the top right of the page on the chat tab. The active users list also displays a list of your active private messages and lets you switch between them.
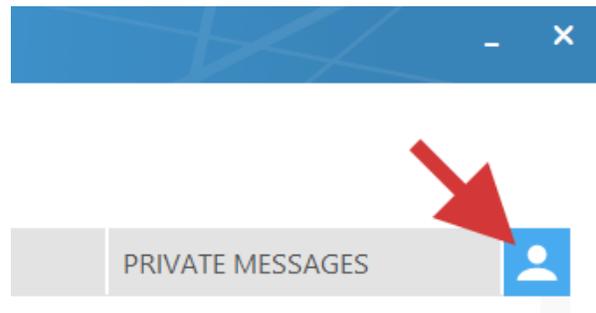
Tip: You can also double click a user's name in the active users list to start a private message with them.

When receiving a new private message, a slide-in notification will be displayed at the top of the smartCARS window.

PREMIUM

As a pilot, smartCARS Premium extends the features of smartCARS beyond any existing flight tracking solution by adding airline-independent PIREP backups, integrated flight recovery, and theme options.

You must sign in to Premium with the same credentials you use to sign in on the TFDi Design website.

OWN IT?

Log in to your account.

Email

••••••••

☑ Log in automatically

CLOUD FLIGHT REPORT AND SIM BACKUPS

smartCARS automatically backs up your flight progress and aircraft position to the cloud every 60 seconds when you are signed in to Premium. If smartCARS crashes, the simulator crashes, or your computer shuts off, you can restore your flight from the Premium tab. Simply launch your simulator and load up a flight at a location of your choice in the same aircraft, then click "Restore" at the bottom right of the Premium tab in smartCARS.

Note: In order to use the flight restoration functionality in X-Plane, this (https://tfdidesign.com/dl.php?type=d&id=22) version of XPUIPC from the TFDi Design website MUST be used.

THEME

Premium lets you choose between two themes in smartCARS – light and dark. These can be chosen on the Premium tab. As well, you can enable/disable the ability for smartCARS to switch between the two based on the time of day, which can help during late night flights when your room is dark.

SETTINGS

The settings available in smartCARS let you customize the application and how it operates. Below, all settings are explained in detail.

GENERAL

Default Tab

Sets what tab is shown when smartCARS is first opened.

Time Zone

Tells smartCARS to use either Local or UTC time.

Time Format

Sets the format that smartCARS displays time in.

Log in automatically

Remembers your credentials on the login screen and logs in automatically.

Play radio at launch

Automatically plays the radio stream after you log in to smartCARS.

Meters or Feet

Set smartCARS to display altitude in meters or feet.

Speed Units

Set smartCARS to display speed in knots or miles per hour.

Weight Units

Set the flight log to display weight in kilograms and pounds.

Return to Flights page after bidding

Tells smartCARS to return to the list of bid flights after bidding on a new flight.

Confirm exit

Prompts the user to confirm closing smartCARS while a flight is running.

CHAT

Flash the taskbar icon when new messages arrive

Tells smartCARS to flash the icon in the taskbar when a new message is received.

Show drop down notification for new private messages

Enables an animated slide-down notification when a new private message is received.

SOUNDS
Soundpack

Allows selection of the soundpack (if more have been downloaded/are available).

Play global message sound

Enable/disable the notification sound for new global chat messages.

Play airline message sound

Enable/disable the notification sound for new airline chat messages.

Play private message sound

Enable/disable the notification sound for new private messages.

Sound volume

Change the volume of all sounds in smartCARS (excluding the radio).

Play flight attendant

Enable/disable the flight attendant announcements during different flight phases.

Announce 10000 feet

Enable/disable the 10000 feet altitude callout.

Announce 18000 feet

Enable/disable the 18000 feet altitude callout.

CREDITS

DEVELOPMENT

Collin Biedenkapp: Programming

Brandon Filer: User Interface

SPECIAL THANKS

Daniel Gibson assisted TFDi Design during the testing phase of smartCARS version 2 by accepting PIREPS, answering support tickets, and helped to manage the testing team. Thank you, Daniel!

TESTING

TFDi Design greatly appreciates the feedback and support that all of our testers have given. The testers listed below went above and beyond in their efforts to help make smartCARS the product it is.

Ashley Jones

Connor Jones

Josh Mendoza

Chris Sutton

Alp Yeni