

AVSIM Commercial Utility Review

Ultimate Traffic II



Product Information

Publishers: [Flight 1](#)

Description: Add-on traffic pack .

Download Size:
1.4 GB

Format:
Download

Simulation Type:
FSX

Reviewed by: [Jason McKee](#) AVSIM Staff Reviewer - August 20, 2009

Introduction

Flight1's Ultimate Traffic series has been a long running and successful venture which combines great looking and low impact AI aircraft, and world wide Flight data in one simple package. Ultimate Traffic was originally designed for FS2002 and FS2004, but was then upgraded to FSX. The biggest problem with this path was that there was no compatibility with DX10, and this has become a small issue as a lot of people using FSX have found better performance with DX10 preview enabled. Even freeware AI traffic was not fully DX10 compliant as it used FS2004 models that were ported into FSX (with some steps required by the user).

This has all changed with the introduction of Flight1's Ultimate Traffic II

program. To use some marketing parlance, it has been completely redesigned from the ground up, specifically for FSX. This means that the models are more frame rate friendly than the FS2004 version; that you can use DX10 preview without the grey or white aircraft issues showing up; and overall you can have more traffic than you could have had in the past. This is not the first release of DX10 compatible traffic for FSX, but from what I have seen so far, it is the most complete single package you can get with full DX10 compatibility across all aircraft included.

Ultimate Traffic II takes advantage of new features in FSX including the ability to use set flight plans that the aircraft will follow, not the round the circle method that has been used in the past. Also included is a set of powerful tools that allow you to change everything from flight plans, number of flights to printable timetables and livery changes.

Enough of the introduction let's get on with the important stuff.

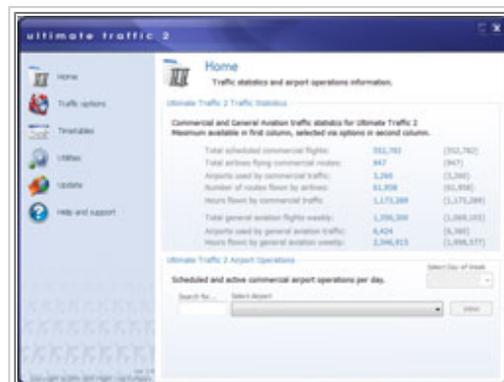
Installation and Documentation

Installation follows the tried and true Flight1 wrapper system. Download and purchase the software then follow the on screen prompts to install and setup the program. Once installed you will have the Ultimate Traffic II program and readme installed on your hard drive. The readme covers everything you need to know about using the tools included in UT2, and also some tips about setting up the system. The read me file should be your first port of call if you have any trouble with the product, as it covers everything you need to know about UT2.

Test System

AMD Phenom 9850 Quad Core
4Gig 1033 Ram
Gigabyte 9600GT 1Gig PCI-e Video Card
Saitek Pro Yoke and 2 Throttle quadrants
Saitek Pro Rudder Pedals
Windows 7 RC 7001

Flying Time:
18 hours



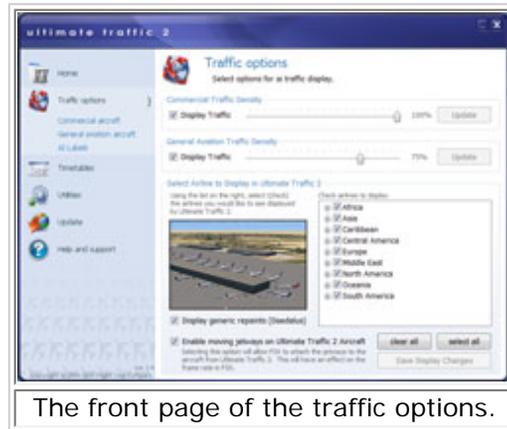
The main home page of Ultimate Traffic II, from here you control all the functions and tools.

Ultimate Traffic II Tools

Included with the package are some very neat tools, including schedules for one or all airlines covered, flight maps, flight routes, aircraft livery configuration and aircraft removal to name but a few. I will start at the opening page of the Ultimate Traffic II program and run through them.

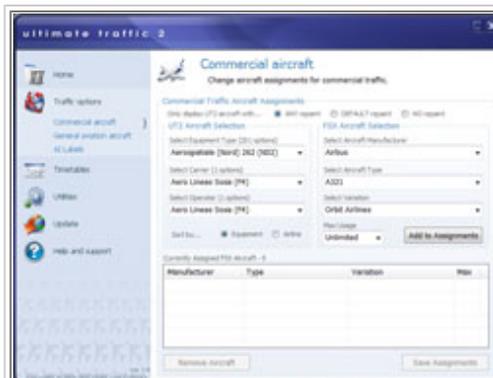
When you run the program you will be greeted by the opening page, which will load the FSX aircraft and other components of the program. Once the processes have been run you will be at the home page. On this page there are statistics for UT2 that includes how many scheduled commercial flights there are, the airlines flying those flights, airports used, total routes flown and total hours of commercial flights. Also included are statistics about the general aviation component of UT2.

On the left side of the home page you have the different pages available to you to customize and review data in UT2. The next page we will go to is the traffic options page.

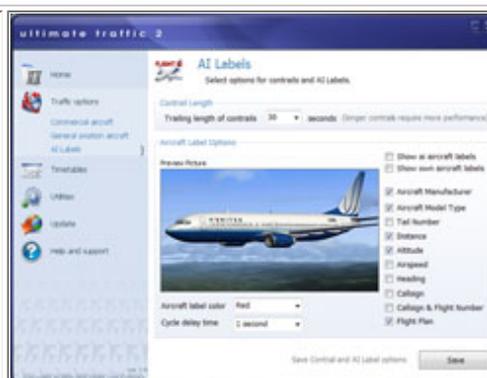


The front page of the traffic options.

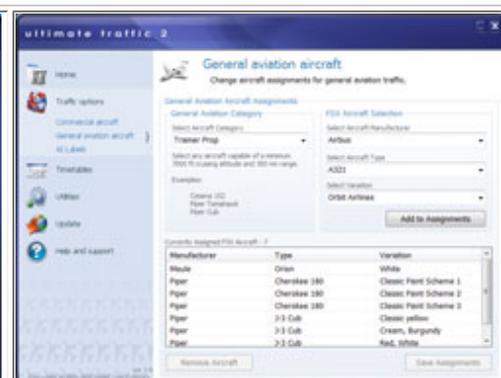
The traffic options page allows you to change the traffic density of both the commercial and general aviation traffic. You can also use the check boxes to display only a certain regions' traffic, i.e. you can remove all traffic for an area or have all the traffic worldwide included, you also have the option of turning off moving jetways on UT2 traffic. This setting is good if you have a marginal system, or don't want the eye candy as it will give you back some frames. You can also select to use the generic repaints, this is used if a schedule has an aircraft assigned to it, but there is no paint scheme for it. Rather than remove the flight from the schedule, UT2 will provide a generic repaint in it's place. This is good if you want realistic traffic levels, places like new Zealand benefit from this as most of the domestic traffic do not have repaints for it yet. If you make any changes, make sure you update the program to reflect the changes by clicking on the update button.



The commercial traffic options.



The AI labels options.



The General Aviation options.

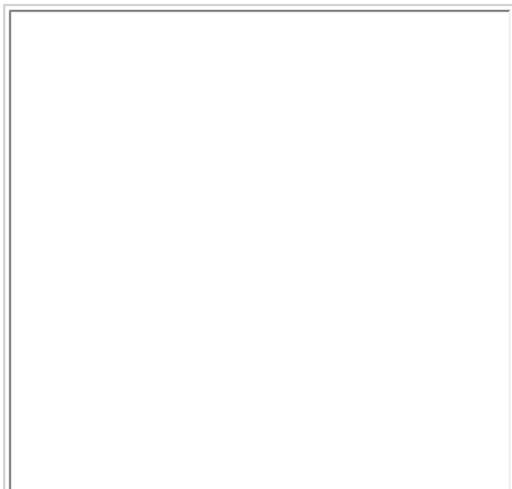
Sub pages under the traffic options allow you to change the aircraft used, it also allows you to change the repaints used and how many times that repaint will show up. Here you can select to use any aircraft you have installed, even user aircraft; the downside to this is you will have a big frame rate impact, but you will have good looking traffic. This is very helpful if you want to add aircraft to fill gaps in the schedules or paint schemes. Once you have used this tool a little while it makes changing aircraft a breeze.

The same options are available for General Aviation aircraft as well. The last sub page is the AI label page; this allows you to have labels displayed for your traffic and what information is displayed in that label. This uses the FSX label system, but gives you more control over what is displayed. You can also select the contrail length from this page, beware though, long contrails are nice, but like anything they do have a performance impact.



The timetables front page, here you access the timetable options available to you.

Next on the pages is the Timetables page. Here you can view timetables, flight maps, status boards, and even view flights by location. The printable timetables allow you to print timetables in several different ways; these include flights by departure or arrival airport, or by operator/airline. You can also choose between two timetable types, full color or black and white.



The printed timetable as displayed onscreen.

Once you have made your selection, click on the create timetable button and in a short while your timetable will be displayed in PDF format. The status board will only work when flight sim is running; this displays the flight information the same way a flight board is displayed at the airport.

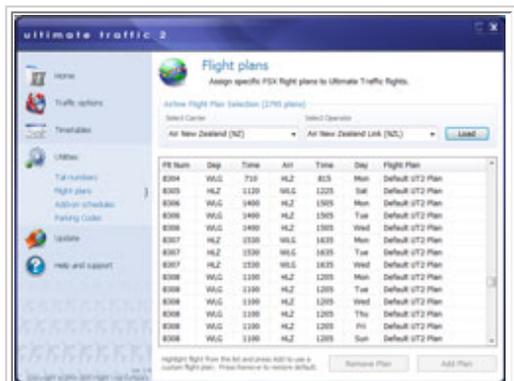
The virtual flight map, showing all scheduled flights for an area.

The information is displayed when you select an aircraft by holding your mouse over it.

Flight view is a view that displays the flights at any given time at any given place; it creates a virtual traffic system that show you the current flights actually flying the routes set by UT2. It allows you to see how many flights are being displayed in the area and also allows you to hold your mouse over any flight and it will display the flight information about that flight.

The utilities page is next; here you can select to change the tail numbers on aircraft, and what rules apply to tail

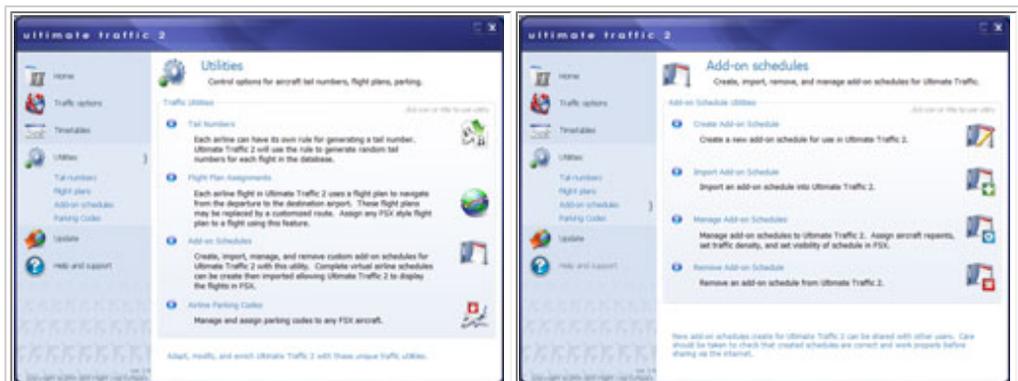
numbers for each airline. What this allows you to do is allow for random tail numbers that follow a set of rules, so for example if the airline is Australian based, you can set it so that the first two letters in the registration will always be VH, and that the last three number will always be letters. This is quite a handy little tool if you have set your own schedules, or would like different registration numbers on each aircraft.



Here you have specific flight plans from FSX that you can assign to your AI aircraft.

Under the flight plan page you can add specific flight plans for each airline and aircraft. One thing that FSX does that FS before it didn't do is allow aircraft to follow a set flight plan, with waypoints and jet ways included.

What this means is that aircraft will follow actual traffic flows and jetways instead of being left to their own devices which usually meant a direct or round the world .route. To use this you first need to set up a flight plan in a format recognized by FSX, then you can import this to whatever airline you want to use it with.

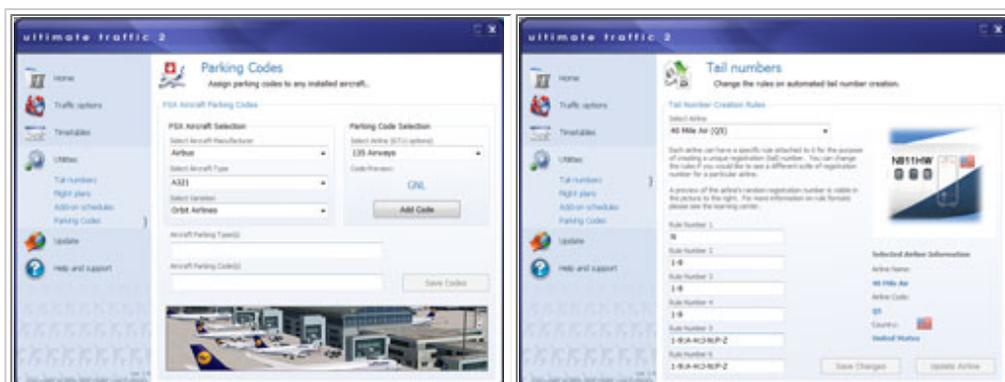


The main utilities page.

The add-on schedule page allows you to manage any add on schedules you may have.

The next page is the add-on schedule page. This utility allows you to create your own schedule from scratch. It also give you help along the way and tells you if a schedule is ok but not been imported or is not ok and needs some information

updated/added. You can also import a schedule that you may have downloaded or someone else has made for you. You can also manage add-on schedules and assign different aircraft to the schedule. Lastly is the remove add-on page, this allows you to remove an add-on schedule from UT2.

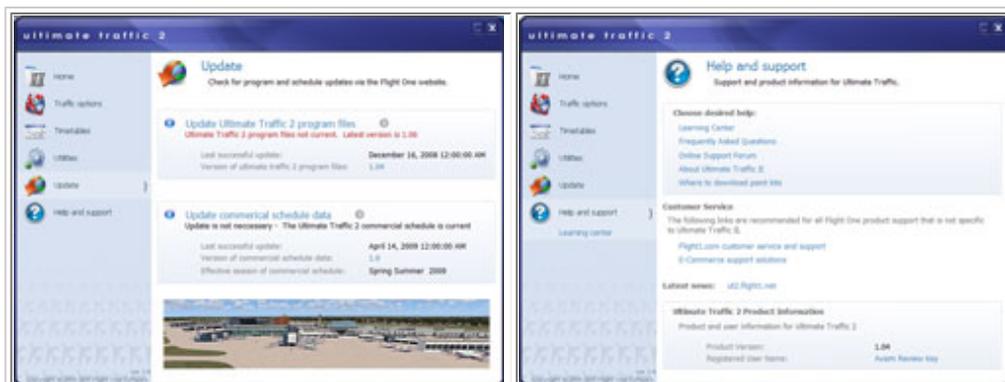


The parking code page allows you to set what parking code will be used, this allows the aircraft to only park in certain areas at airports.

The tail code page is where you set the random tail code rules that will be followed when generating tail numbers for the airline selected.

The last tool in the utilities group is the parking code page. Here you can change what parking codes are assigned to the aircraft and airline, this allows the aircraft to park at the correct locations in the airports. This will only work if the airports have had parking information set on their AFCAD file. Usually you can download a correct AFCAD file for the airport you want. UT2 has decided not to include AFCAD files with this program, and I personally think that this is a good idea, as what used to happen was when you installed a package like this, you would lose any custom AFCAD files you had, especially for add-on scenery airports you may have had and the end result was aircraft not parking or moving around the ground correctly.

The last two pages are the update page and the help and support page. From the update page you will be able to see the current updates installed on your version of UT2 and what schedule you are running. Clicking on the two options brings up the website update page where you can download any updates needed to bring your system up to date.



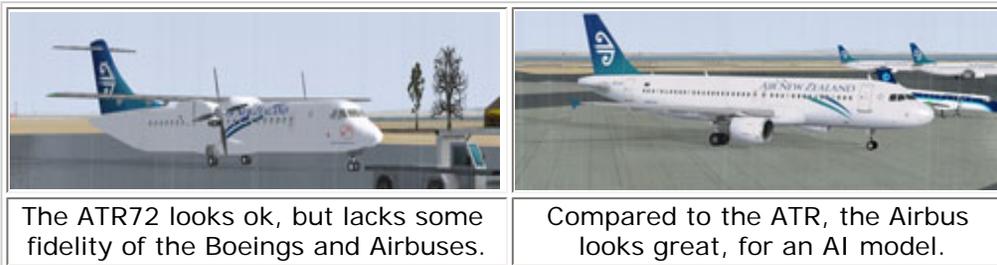
The update page, which will tell you if there is a current version available.

The main help and support page, i recommend this be your first port of call if you have any problems.

The help and support page allows you to go to different support and help areas, including FAQ's learning center and the online support forum. I would recommend that this is your first port of call if you have any issues. Also, the forums are very helpful and are a wealth of information, but you will need to register your product to get product support.

UT2 in FSX

On starting FSX for the first time, you will be asked if you wish to allow UT2 to run. Select yes then it will always allow this to run and you will not be asked about this again. On start up you will get the Ultimate Traffic 2 initialized voiceover as you go in to the main menu of FSX, this is normal and gives you verbal confirmation the UT2 has loaded correctly. If for whatever reason you have had FSX crash or shut down uncommanded, and you restart FSX without rebooting, you will get a stop sign when you restart FSX and UT2 will not work.



Once you have started your flight, the traffic is injected into the airport or area where you have started. This does take a few seconds for the traffic to show up, as UT2 uses a different way of injecting traffic into FSX than the default. Once your traffic has shown up, you may notice a major slowdown of frame rates depending on what you selected in the UT2 setup menu. This occurs specifically if you are at large airports with a lot of jetways moving to the aircraft, they do not move all at once but the combination of traffic and moving jetways can grind your system down. I found that if I sat at the gate for about five minutes or so the frame rates generally came back to a little lower than without traffic.

If you have selected 100% traffic and your system can handle it, you are in for a treat. Major airports become bustling areas with traffic going every which way, and GA fields have a nice flow of traffic around them too. Of course this is all dependant on the airport, a dirt strip in Africa more than likely will not have a Cessna there as in real life it may only visit once a month if at all, but then if you go to say LAX, you will see almost every aircraft you could think of.



Again the A340 looks great, where as the beech not so flash

The beech looks right dimension wise, but I think would look a lot better under a decent paint job, this is the default daedalus scheme that is used if there is no paint for the schedule.

Now as we all know AI traffic, especially the default, causes a huge performance impact in FSX, I can say this is not the case here. You do get a hit, but nowhere as much as the default traffic or even ported FS9 AI. Of course your mileage will vary as every system is different. With this being the case, you can have your traffic set higher than you normally would and still enjoy good frame rates. It is a matter of finding a good balance.

DX10 works very well, with the odd livery not showing up. I Only found 1 livery that didn't display and that was fixed with the patch applied. DX10 does seem to give some performance benefits to some systems, that is if you can live with some of the issues that DX10 itself creates.



Classic 737 series looks good under any livery.

Following the AI with the new AI camera option in FSX is great fun. Watching a variety of different aircraft flying around they all seem to fly correctly, taxi well and generally look good. Now, being AI models they are not designed to be hi-fidelity aircraft, and as such are not as well polished as your flyable aircraft, but they are some of the best AI aircraft I have seen for FSX. Some of the FS9 AI were great, but hit you harder in the FPS. These look great and don't kill your FPS as much.

That said, some of the A/C don't look quite right and have some weird flight characteristics. The main culprits are the Challenger and the CRJ's. To me the landing gear seem to belong on the CRJ and both models look a bit too elongated and skinny. Also, the CRJ seems to like hopping in the air. What I mean is if you have ever seen a car bouncing down the road on air suspension, that is what the CRJ does in the air; the nose stays static and from the nose back it goes up and down as it flies along. It seems to happen when you first watch the aircraft, after a few minutes it stops and flies right. I would hate to be serving coffee on those flights!!

Summary / Closing Remarks

This is a great product, designed from the ground up with FSX specific models and features, most aircraft feature moving flaps and reversers. The models take advantage of DX10 and as such, being designed with the FSX SDK they eclipse FS9 ported AI.



With the range of tools provided and options to change the flight plans of aircraft, it makes a powerful program to manage and adjust your AI. It fills your airports with realistic traffic that follows the latest schedules and assignments.

I highly recommend this product if you are looking for a great AI traffic system that is fully customizable to suit your needs. I hope that the pictures have given you some idea of what the AI quality is like. Aside from a few problems they look great, even more so when flying around. Also, I have shown mostly Air New Zealand planes, as this area (New Zealand) has always been neglected by AI packages. I can now say that this has been remedied while the rest of the world is the same.

What I Like About Ultimate Traffic II

- Easy to use and install
- Full traffic control options
- Completely redesigned AI models for FSX only
- Not a huge frame rate impact
- Not including AFCAD files mean your custom files are safe
- Ability to import your own VA repaints and schedules so your VA can fly too
- Aircraft follow routes that you can change

What I Don't Like About Ultimate Traffic II

- By not including AFCAD files, AI traffic tend to park all over the place at default airports

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