

SkyDecks Panel Design

Boeing Jets, Widescreen Panel Pack

For Microsoft Flight Simulator 2004

Widescreen 2-D Panel Support for the Boeing 737-400, the 747-400 and the 777-300.





SkyDecks Panel Design
FS2004, Boeing Jets, Widescreen Panel Pack
Support for the 737-400, 747-400 and 777-300 Boeing airliners.

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Thank you!

On behalf of SkyDecks Panel Design, we thank you for your patronage in purchasing your SkyDecks product, and welcome you aboard as a valued customer. Much time and thought has gone into the design and application of this panel pack for the virtual pilot. Our goal to create quality product that will fill the need of many within the flight simulation community, is brought about in part from comments we receive. Your comments are valued and very much necessary in helping us to continue in providing the community with quality that is expected from a SkyDecks product. All of us hope you will enjoy our Boeing Jets, Widescreen Panel Pack as much as we enjoyed developing it for you. Thank you!

Sincerely,



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Introduction

The latest versions of Microsoft Flight Simulator have seen technological advances in several areas, many of which have added more realism with regard to cockpit instrument panels and virtual cockpits. As cockpit technology has vastly improved the immersive nature of Flight Simulator, the diversity of products available has kept flight simulation enthusiasts happy and busy while in their virtual "office in the sky". The road to better realism however, has seen its share of shortcuts having been used along the way. An example of this is the lack of updated support for 2-Dimensional panels within Flight Simulator.

FS9 is arguably the best Flight Simulation product to date, but for whatever reason Microsoft chose not to add widescreen monitor support for the use of any of its 2-D panels. Instead, the FS enthusiast ends up with "stretched-out" versions of default panels when viewing them on widescreen monitors. Being only slightly annoying, the stretched 2-D panels may have led more enthusiasts to try out and switch to the updated level of detail that's present within the virtual cockpit environment.

On one hand, the ability to "look" around the flight deck while viewing the outside world has never looked better. On the other hand however, the frequent need to zoom in and out just to read specific gauges has kept intact the need for quality 2-D panels. The ability to open an easy to read 2-D panel that displays the detail of many of an aircraft's gauges at one time is still a favorite way to fly for many that use Flight Simulator. Unfortunately the stretched out panels on a widescreen monitor have many wanting for more realism.

SkyDecks Panel Design has now brought about a widescreen solution for three of the most popular 2-D panels used in FS2004. The Boeing Jets, Widescreen Panel Pack, brings about a new level of detail and realism to the widescreen 2-D panel environment. Included in the package are the Boeing 737-400, the Boeing 747-400 and the Boeing 777-300. With detailed panel bitmaps and the utilization of many standard FS9 gauges, the newer widescreen versions of the Boeing airliners are true replacements for the default

2-D panel configurations found within FS9. The Boeing Jets, Widescreen Panel Pack is the beginning of this work. Say goodbye to those horizontally stretched 2-D panels once and for all!

Not only do they look good, you'll find that our newer widescreen panels can be used and function just the same as their 4:3 originals. At installation, you'll have the option of using one of two aspect ratios for widescreen monitor support: 16:10, 1440 x 900 (1.6:1) or 16:9, 1920 x 1080 (1.78:1). The 16:10 configuration is most popular for widescreen computer monitors, while 16:9 is used with most HDTV monitors.



Before You Proceed

Please carefully read the following:

Re: COMMENTS AND SUPPORT

****PLEASE DO NOT contact Flight1 Software with any support or purchase issues.**

All related inquiries should be directed to the following support options:

Flight1 Software Key File support: keyfiles@sky-decks.com

[Or visit Flight1's key file support page.](#)

For other support inquiries: support@sky-decks.com

For general customer service: ksparkuhl@sky-decks.com

Any and all comments are welcome!

Please visit our website at <http://www.sky-decks.com> for updates and FAQ support. You may also leave questions and comments at [our support forum by visiting the link here](#).

Installation

The installation of this package is performed in two steps. First the installation.exe which installs the panel folders within Flight Simulator needs to be run. The file name is: SDwideFS9_install.exe. This step should have already taken place immediately after you purchased this package using Flight1's software wrapper interface. If you purchased this product using the Flight1 Software Wrapper, then the installation.exe is set to run after your payment is verified. However, if you purchased this software from another vendor, then you'll need to manually run the installation.exe found within the vendor's software folder. Do this by clicking the "SDwideFS9_install.exe" program file within that folder.

Once the first step has been completed, the second step involves making an entry within the **aircraft.cfg** file for each aircraft you wish the panel to be displayed, and then you're all set to fly. Let's have a look within the aircraft.cfg file. You'll find these within each aircraft container folder inside the **Flight Simulator 9\Aircraft** section.

The **aircraft.cfg** has many entries. We'll only be concentrating on the first few sections named **[fltsim.x]**, where "x" represents the numerical value for each of these sections. (For example **[fltsim.0]**, is the first entry in the "fltsim" section.)

These "fltsim" entries represent each of the variants of airline liveries for each aircraft model. There may be just a few or many of them. Note that in each "fltsim" section that there is a listing for "panel=". This is where Flight Simulator "looks" for the panel files within the container folder. If left blank, then it looks in the default "panel" folder within the container. If an entry is made after the equal sign, then it points to a different location for the panel within the aircraft container folder. We're going to add an entry after "panel=".

If you look inside each of the following three standard aircraft container folders; **b737_400**, **b747_400** and **b777_300**, you'll notice that during installation, two new panel folders were placed inside each container. These folders are named "**panel.SDwide734**" and "**panel.1080SDwide734**". These folders represent the two aspect ratios available as follows:

SDwide734:

B737-400, 1440 x 900 pixels, 16:10 aspect ratio.

1080SDwide734:

B737-400, 1920 x 1080 pixels, 16:9 aspect ratio.

SDwide744:

B747-400, 1440 x 900 pixels, 16:10 aspect ratio.

1080SDwide744:

B747-400, 1920 x 1080 pixels, 16:9 aspect ratio.

SDwide773:

B777-300, 1440 x 900 pixels, 16:10 aspect ratio.

1080SDwide773:

B777-300, 1920 x 1080 pixels, 16:9 aspect ratio.

Choose the aspect ratio that you want the panel displayed in and add the name after the equal sign to each “fltsim” livery section as follows:

“panel=SDwide734” or **“panel=1080SDwide734”**

Once you’ve finished editing, close up your folders and start Flight Simulator. The standard 737, 747 and 777 will now be shown in a widescreen aspect ratio!

Also, if you have a look inside these new widescreen panel folders, you’ll find within each one an aliased “panel.cfg” file which points to:

*Flight Simulator 9\Aircraft\SkyDecks\SD-Wide-FS9**panel folder name***

What this means is that you can easily install your new panels to any aircraft container folder of your choice. By having a look inside the Aircraft\SkyDecks folder, you’ll see the “ConfigurationFiles” folder there. These aliased configuration files are placed there for your convenience so they can easily be copied to different aircraft container folders. Copy and paste these to the aircraft folder you wish the new panels to be shown in, and then edit the “fltsim” section “panel=” entry. It’s that easy.

Panel Details, Boeing 737-400



With SkyDecks Panel Design's Widescreen Panel Pack, the standard Boeing panels in Flight Simulator have never looked better, and the 737's makeover is probably most dramatic. Sure, there's still much artistic license taken here and there, but for the most part the new panel is vastly improved from the original design.

Added are the avionics button and master caution/warning on the Mode Control Panel, an annunciation panel above the standby altimeter, a spoiler arming switch just above the auto brake knob, a panel lighting switch next to the OMI lights, and nine buttons above the sim-icons to the lower-left. I wonder what the nine buttons do.

(Here's a hint... turn on tooltips for more info.)

Panel Details, Boeing 747-400



In FS2004, the Boeing 747 panel was one of two panels to be programmed in extensible markup language, or .xml for short. Because this was a new format at the time, the 747 panel did have some bugs in it which we've ironed out.

Firstly, there were two levels of detail provided originally with the panel; 800x600 and 1024x768. Unfortunately, as computer monitors progressed beyond 1024, the panel's 800x600 files were utilized in higher resolution monitors rather than the "1024", higher resolution images. This left the 747 to appear less than detailed on some monitors.

To solve this, the cabinet file was extracted and all 1024 images were isolated and kept, while discarding the lower quality images. Each gauge file was also edited to reflect this change, and in doing so, some improvements were made to the gauge coding within the panel.

The most obvious is the new moving map within the Nav Display of the MFD. If you click anywhere within the center of the MFD you will

call up the EFIS control panel for the display. The details for the EFIS will immediately follow this section.

Also fixed is the exhaust pressure gauge within the EICAS. It was basically non-functioning from the onset. You'll find the MFD switch that made the displays turn dark will now move the primary EICAS page to the MFD screen while the EICAS displays the secondary screen, thus showing both EICAS pages at one time.

Also added is a lighting panel on the left side of the visor which has knobs for panel lighting and varying the illumination of the CRT displays. Moving these independently of one another, you can obtain differing levels of brightness for each display. There's also a button on the EFIS which resets these to the default level of brightness.

Moving up to the Mode Control Panel, you'll notice a new "course" section included, which is not accurate for the 747, but it makes it much nicer to change course heading than with hovering your mouse over the corner of the MFD to change it as before. If you never experienced this, that's how it was built from the MSFS developers.

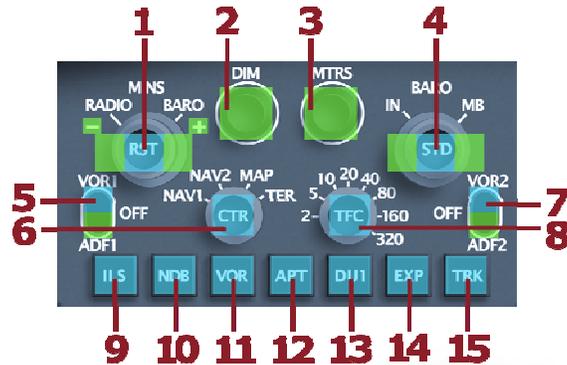
You'll now also notice the clock and overhead are fixed to the main panel now, as well as those nine buttons above the sim-icons on the lower-left of the display.

And for those of you who were fond of the 3 year-old "baby" picture within the EICAS: I'm sad to say that this Easter Egg is one I was happy to remove. This kid is probably all of ten years old by now and I'm sure he wouldn't want the embarrassment to continue on.

The EFIS control panel details follow below:

EFIS Control Panel

The Electronic Flight Instrument System is the heart of your Navigation Display Unit within the Multi-Function display. Here you will make selections for range modes, nav aids, VOR or ADF selections, barometric scale and decision height settings. Please review each of the following to help familiarize with the EFIS and its features.



EFIS Control Panel, highlighted to show mouse-click areas.

1 – Minimums Knob. The green outer portion of this knob will adjust the Decision Height. Pressing the blue portion (not shown, but actually over the word, “MINS” above the knob) clears/activates the DH alert within the PFD, above the EADI on the right. Clicking the “plus” and “minus” symbols at each side of the knob will adjust the Radio Height of the aircraft.

2 – Display Dimmer Reset Button. Clicking this area will reset the brightness of all Display Units to the default brightness of the panel.

3 – Meters Button. Pressing this button displays the “Meters” altitude boxes next to the standard altitude displays.

4 – Barometric Scale Knob. The green portion will adjust the barometric scale. Pressing the blue portion (again, not shown, but actually over the word, “BARO” above the knob) will select the scale in either Inches of Mercury (In.HG), or Hectopascals (HPA) to be displayed within the lower right corner of the EADI.

5 – VOR1/ADF1 Switch. This switch will display the VOR1/ADF1 arrows within the Navigation Display of the MFD.

6 – Map Mode Control Knob. This knob will select the map mode within the PFD display. “NAV1” displays the Nav1 frequencies with the map off. “MAP” displays Nav1 radio frequencies with moving map on. “TER” displays Nav1 radio frequencies with moving map and water definitions on. (NAV2 is INOP)

7 – VOR2/ADF2 Switch. This switch will display the VOR2/ADF2 arrows within the Navigation Display of the MFD. (ADF2 is INOP)

8 – Map Range Selector Knob. This knob selects the range for the moving map.

9 – INT Navaid. Displays/clears intersections nav aids within the moving map. Off at startup.

10 – NDB Navaid. Displays/clears the NDB nav aids within the moving map.

11 – VOR Navaid. Displays/clears the VOR nav aids within the moving map.

12 – APT Navaid. Displays/clears the Airport and ILS nav aids within the moving map.

13 – CLR Button. This button will clear all nav aids. Reselect each to restore.

14 – EXP Button. Displays the ND compass view within the navigation display.

15 – TRK Button. Displays/clears the track line within the navigation display.

Panel Details, Boeing 777-300



The Boeing 777 arguably has the most elegant cockpit in the skies today. This certainly won't last forever though when the 787 finally takes flight. But being second best in something isn't all that bad either, now is it?

Immediately popping out at you is the addition of the third display unit for the EICAS. Make certain to switch the selector on the bottom to "eicas" as it defaults to the nav display at startup. This configuration also allows for both pages of the EICAS to be run at the same time.

Also added is a new avionics button and panel lighting switch on the visor panel, reconfigured lighting switches and sim-icons, all located around those ever-popular nine buttons again.

What are they? They're part of your crew announcement system. Your pilot and flight attendant will keep you immersed along the way to your virtual destination. You may use the tooltips to see which announcement to play during your flight. They're sure to get you some looks while running flight simulator on your notebook computer!

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