

The things we do for the love of it

By Greg Whiley (CaptAus)

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Recently Tony Smith of MSFS Gateway contacted me to say that he had included a link to Aussie Star Flight Simulation (ASFS) on his website. For the past ten years Tony Smith has amassed and categorised hundreds of links to resource sites for Microsoft Flight Simulator, FS9, FSX, FSX-SE and Lockheed Martin's Prepar3D for the flight simulation community. Some of the categories include Aircraft; Apps for Tablets; Flight Planning; Home Cockpit building; Hardware; Panels and Gauges, Scenery; and many more. The link to ASFS can be found in the General & Regional Sites page.

I replied to Tony's email saying I was only too happy to have ASFS included. I took the opportunity to ask him what his motivation was in developing and maintaining a website such as this over an extended period of time. He replied saying that his aim is to help other flight sim fans to find add-ons, particularly those provided by freeware developers, who so generously share their work for free, and to give back to the flight sim community. This is a quality I admire. I know from my own experience of maintaining the ASFS website and Google Plus Community, and writing tutorials and developing support materials, that one can put in a considerable amount of time and effort with little or no acknowledgement or feedback.

Tony does worry that the lists are getting too long and finds it hard to ditch some of the sites that have been on the site for ten years, some of which are no longer being updated. Nonetheless, he says, many have good stuff on them, and that's true. While the technology in this area is changing rapidly, the essential principles of aviation, navigation and communication still apply. With the recent entry of FSX Steam Edition by Dovetail games into the sphere, Tony recognises that this has opened up FSX to a new audience who might otherwise miss out on some of the gems from the past.

For my part I share Tony's passion for the advancement of the flight sim community. I recall my own early experiences and learning journey when I became a simmer back with FS98, and the amount of freely given support and advice I received from willing members of the flight sim community. It's the things we do for the love of it. It can be a thankless task. But occasionally I might get the odd email to acknowledge work done. It's affirming when they come.

If you are not presently aware of Tony's [MSFS Gateway](http://www.msfsgateway.com) site, I highly recommend it. If you also believe it is a valuable resource, tell a friend and acknowledge Tony's work and provide some feedback at tony.smith@msfsgateway.com