

2020 Event Survey Results

Context

- On Oct. 22, I posted an online survey regarding vUAL's events, with the responses to guide future event planning. The survey had nine questions and most respondents completed the survey in less than two minutes.
- To make vUAL pilots aware of the survey, there was a forum post, a vUAL home page news item and the survey was mentioned in CEO Gary Price's November message to pilots.
- Originally, the survey was to conclude on Nov. 14 but the deadline was extended one week (to Nov. 22) after Gary's message to pilots..
- When this report was written, vUAL had 449 registered pilots.
- There were 34 survey respondents. In 2019, 41 pilots completed a similar survey.

Question 1: In 2020, I flew in three or more Virtual United Airlines (vUAL) events. (For clarity, that's anything that appeared on the vUAL Events Calendar.) Answered: 31 Skipped: 3

- Of the 31 respondents, six responded Yes (19.35%) and 25 responded No (80.65%)

Question 2: If No, why didn't you fly in vUAL events? (Check all that apply.) Answered: 28 Skipped: 6

Responses, in descending order, were:

- I like to fly where the mood hits me when I flight sim; I don't plan ahead.
Selected by 13 respondents (46.43%)
- The events were on inconvenient days.
Selected by nine respondents (32.14%)
- The events were at inconvenient times.
Selected by nine respondents (32.14%)
- I do not fly on VATSIM.
Selected by eight respondents (28.57%)
- My computer is not powerful enough.
No one chose this response (0.00%)

Question 3: I use vUAL TeamSpeak. All respondents replied to this question.

- Most of the Time (more than 3 in 4 flights)
Three respondents chose this option (8.82%)
- Some of the time (up to 2 in 4 flights)
No respondents chose this option (0.00%)
- Occasionally (up to 1 in 4 flights)
Six respondents chose this option (17.65%)
- Never
25 respondents chose this option 73.53%)

Question 4: If you never use vUAL TeamSpeak, why not? Answered: 23 Skipped: 11

- Don't actually have it set up yet.
- I log on, but the same 2-4 people are on and for the most part, there is no interaction. The staff especially, should be making an effort to converse with vUAL pilots. We almost need a pep club leader.
- not social
- I am a discord guy :) And already flying on Vatsim ONLY
- xpilot
- I dont know how to use it
- No desire for
- Never considered that as part of online experience
- Just haven't had the chance.
- I don't really know.
- I don't use teamspeak. I feel the virtual airline should move over to discord.
- I have no need to talk socially while flying.
- I don't know the password
- It's old and outdated. Discord is much more user friendly and convenient.
- I think it's a outdated platform and there's not a lot of discourse on the platform
- No familiar with it.
- Because it is outdated and Discord is a better communication platform
- I haven't had time to try it yet.
- Not interested
- Never really had a reason to.
- Doesn't seem like many people are on, an when they are, its senior guys and I feel like I dont have much to add.
- I never set up the software
- because i only use Discord

Question 5: I use the vUAL forums for event information, details about changed/updated airports, and/or to keep up-to-date with what's going on in my hub. Answered: 33 Skipped: 1

- 23 respondents chose Yes (69.70%)
- 10 respondents chose No (30.30%)

Question 6: If you don't use the forums, why not? Answered: 13 Skipped: 21

- Use the forums, but my posts are 80% of the recent content. It's obvious pilots don't bother with creating posts, though about half may view them.
- I cannot log in, and still have not gotten any word when form anyone. I am new. Yet I fly each day. UAL903 Gregory Spivey
- No time
- N/A
- I don't really know.
- Low traffic. Little responses to posts. Maybe switch to discord and drop web based forums and teamspeak.
- I don't know the password
- N/A
- It's a little hard to navigate and somewhat outdated
- Not familiar with them
- It's also an outdated place for information to be shared. It too can also be replaced with a Discord server
- Usually nothing relevant to me
- I occasionally check the forums, but they are very quiet.

Question 7: I might fly more vUAL events if this was changed: Answered: 18 Skipped: 16

- No changes needed. I find they are very current and interesting.
- I am on the West Coast (Pacific Time), in past events during the week have usually been planned when I am just getting home from work and or eating dinner with my family. Weekend events are better, I probably need to do a better job seeing what is happening and making time to fly them. (We need a better reminder system)
- A group flight leader, like a MC who will take part in the event, set up routing and make scenery recommendations, as well as be available on TS and/or Discord during the event.
- My lack of participation in VUAL events has nothing to do with VUAL, or the events themselves. I don't have a huge amount of control over my free-time to fly currently.
- I travel a lot , very hard to catch the event times for me. But long events (more than 8 hours windowed) are more fitting my schedule
- We can select the time and date about we are going to fly. Theres no out of date
- I really am not an event pilot. I used to fly a lot of VA, VATSIM events years ago. I just do not have the time or patience now day's.
- Work schedule
- Native integration with ProSim ACARS system to make it easier to setup and track flying.
- I know weekend nights are a good time to have events, but it's difficult for me to make these.
- Yes.
- I don't feel comfortable flying online with VATSIM. Never have. I'm coming back to flight simulator from a 14 year hiatus.
- More convenient times for Asia.
- Shorter more engaging
- I would if I had more time to fly.
- I took the time to set up all the necessary programs for VATSIM and the flights were a reasonable (short) length.
- If I could line them up with my routes. I like to fly real routes in real time with the actual equipment United flies. So if an event is on a Friday night from KIAH to KMEM and the real UAL doesn't operate a that flight, Im not excited about flying it.
- More people flew them.

Question 8: Some demographic data to help us better understand the survey results. In which timezone do you live, as of Oct. 31, 2020: _____ UTC (e.g., -04:00 UTC) If you're unsure, please see <https://www.timeanddate.com/> Answered: 30 Skipped: 4

Response accuracy varied greatly; there was a mix of Daylight Savings and Standard Time, and some were just wrong. Here are the responses we received.

- UTC +10:00 (Hawaii!)
- PST (California, USA)
- UTC -05:00 Central Time Zone, USA
- Central Time Zone
- I usually travel between uTC-4 and utc+3
- +09.00 UTC
- -05:00 UTC NYC
- -07:00 UTC (PDT) -08:00 UTC (PST)
- -5
- East Coast
- -05:00
- -05:00 UT
- EST
- Eastern
- PST
- +8 UTC
- 8utc
- -07:00UTC
- Mountain Standard Time GMT-7
- -08:00 UTC
- 0900
- -05:00
- -0800
- MST
- -6
- MST
- US - Pacific
- -03:00 UTC
- -03:00 UTC

Question 9: Which sim do you use the most when flying for vUAL? Answered: 34 Skipped: 0

- Prepared v4 or v5
16 (47.06%)
- X-Plane 11.x
8 (23.53%)
- FSX
7 (20.59%)
- Microsoft Flight Simulator 2020
5 (14.71%)
- FS2004
1 (2.94%)
- FS9
0 (0.00%)
- X-Plane 10.x or earlier
0 (0.00%)
- Prepared v3 or earlier
0 (0.00%)
- Other
0 (0.00%)

Note: My bad; FS9 and FS2004 are the same.

Response

First up, I really like flying events. For me, it is much more interesting to hear other vUAL pilots getting their clearances and chatting with ATC, and interacting with them on TeamSpeak where possible (sometimes, there's just too much ATC/pilot chatter during a popular event) as opposed to flying alone offline, with robotic AI ATC/pilots' voices in my headset.

As of this writing – Nov. 23, 2020 – vUAL had 196 events on its 2020 calendar. This is all in, including the multi-leg rallies that took place during the COVID-19 wave in the spring, Cross the Pond, etc. That's an average of 16 events a month. When surveyed, more than 80% of our pilots responded that they had not flown three or more of the 196 events on offer.

As a result, there will be fewer events in 2021. Regardless of whether they appear on the vUAL event calendar or not, pilots will be able to fly VATUSA Friday Night Operations (FNO) events and count towards our FNO participation awards.

The 2020 Frequent Online Event Flier award will be retired at year's end and be replaced by a redefined Frequent Online Event Flier award.

With regard to Question 7, "I might fly more vUAL events if this was changed", one response caught my eye: "A group flight leader, like a MC who will take part in the event, set up routing and make scenery recommendations, as well as be available on TS and/or Discord during the event." We're going to try this; watch for a call for volunteers sometime in December for 2021 events.

Almost half of the respondents say they do not plan ahead; they fly where the mood takes them and I understand that sentiment. I know we have a few pilots who frequently log on to TeamSpeak and plan a group flight with other members online.

About one third of respondents said events were not on convenient days or at convenient times. I understand when pilots take issue with events starting at 2359Z (9:00 p.m. where I am, 8:00 p.m. in New York, 6:00 p.m. in Houston, 4:00 p.m. in Los Angeles, 2:00 p.m. in Honolulu and 9:00 a.m., the next day, in Tokyo). However, we are constrained by when the ARTCCs offer ATC. When I plan our quarterly VATSIM partner airline events, most ARTCCs will not schedule coverage unless we have at least 10 pilots participating and that has never happened. We make due with what the ARTCCs have already planned.

With regard to TeamSpeak, we receive anecdotal comments from time to time and there have been forum discussions about TS vs Discord. I wanted to gather some data that vUAL can use in its decision-making going forward. Our subscription was renewed in the fall so I believe TeamSpeak will be our communications channel of choice for awhile. That's my assumption, not vUAL management policy.

I want to thank the seven per cent of our pilots who took two minutes or so to respond to the survey. If the other 93% don't like how your responses shape our future events, maybe they will invest a few minutes in responding to a future survey.

Prepared by:

Kevin Finch, VP-Events
November 23, 2020

Appendix I

Interim 2020 Events Summary

Event	Month	Day of the Week	Start Time	Signed Up
Minneapolis FNO	January	Friday	2330Z	1
San Juan FNO	January	Friday	2330Z	2
Honoring the Dream FNO	January	Friday	2330Z	4
Operation Deep Freeze	January	Saturday	2330Z	0
KTPA - Sunday Funday	January	Sunday	2200Z	0
Japan Group Tour 1/5	January	Thursday	0200Z	4
Northeast FNO	January	Friday	2330Z	0
KSEA/KDEN - Mountain Mayhem	January	Saturday	2300Z	1
Tulips to Toronto	January	Saturday	1300Z	0
Japan Group Tour 2/5	January	Thursday	0200Z	2
Frozen Lakeshore FNO - KORD	January	Friday	2330Z	4
Vancouver to Winnipeg Snow Shuttle	February	Saturday	2200Z	1
Cross the Pond Lite	February	Saturday	1200Z	1
Rome Online	February	Wednesday	2000Z	0
Japan Group Tour 3/5	February	Thursday	0200Z	1
KSFO/KLAX Friday Night Flights (FNO)	February	Friday	2330Z	2
KSEA/PHNL Divert to Paradise	February	Sunday	1900Z	1
KORD - Chicagoland Challenge	February	Tuesday	2330Z	1
Gatwick Midweek Madness	February	Wednesday	1800Z	0
Albany - Newark	February	Wednesday	2330Z	0
Japan Group Tour 4/5	February	Thursday	0200Z	1
Feel The Love FNO	February	Friday	2330Z	0
Daytona 500	February	Saturday	2300Z	1
Light Up the Caribbean III	February	Saturday	2330Z	0

Party at Palm Beach	February	Sunday	2330Z	0
Japan Group Tour 5/5	February	Thursday	0200Z	1
Raleigh Rally 2020 FNO	February	Friday	2330Z	1
KCLE - Operation Frost	February	Saturday	2330Z	0
Montréal-Vancouver Cross Country	February	Saturday	2100Z	1
Oklahoma City After Dark	February	Thursday	2100Z	0
KMSP Frozen 5K FNO	February	Friday	2100Z	1
Miss the Swiss?	February	Friday	1900Z	0
Leap into Orlando (KMCO)	February	Saturday	2300Z	1
Over the Mountains FNO	March	Friday	2330Z	3
KMCI - Friday 13 FNO	March	Friday	2330Z	1
Have Some Madeira, My Dear!	March	Saturday	1800Z	6
Hawaii VFR	March	Sunday	1800Z	1
Mr. Rogers FNO - KPIT	March	Friday	2330Z	1
Southern Spring Showdown	March	Saturday	2330Z	0
EdMoncton, eh?	March	Saturday	1800Z	1
Empire Sunday - ZLA	March	Sunday	2200Z	2
Short Pond Hop - East	March	Tuesday	0000Z	2
Short Pond Hop - West	March	Wednesday	1100Z	2
Fresno FNO	March	Friday	2300Z	2
Cherry Blossom Fly-in - KDCA	March	Saturday	2330Z	2
East Asian Connection	March	Saturday	0000Z	0
Open Skies South Africa	March	Saturday	1200Z	1
Cross the Jungle - MPTO/SKBO	March	Sunday	2300Z	0
Santiago Real Ops	March	Sunday	1400Z	0
vUAL Rally - Leg 1	March	Tuesday	1200Z	10
vUAL Rally - Leg 2	March	Tuesday	1430Z	7
vUAL Rally - Leg 3	March	Tuesday	1700Z	6

vUAL Rally - Leg 4	March	Tuesday	2030Z	5
vUAL Rally - Leg 5	April	Wednesday	0100Z	5
vUAL Rally - Leg 6	April	Wednesday	0330Z	6
Rise of the SIDS FNO	April	Friday	2330Z	2
Cross The Pond Westbound	April	Saturday	1100Z	6
Springtime in Philly FNO	April	Friday	2300Z	6
Catch and Release Crossfire	April	Saturday	2200Z	2
Quadruple Chaos	April	Saturday	1730Z	0
Look East - Tokyo to Kuala Lumpur	April	Saturday	0500Z	0
Blow Your Refund in Vegas	April	Sunday	0100Z	2
NorCal Tuesday	April	Tuesday	0130Z	0
Columbia River Gorge VFR	April	Wednesday	2200Z	0
Honk! FNO - KBOS/CYYZ/KBDL	April	Friday	2300Z	4
The Long Hop: OMDB-EGKK	April	Saturday	0900Z	2
Share a Coke™ - KATL	April	Saturday	2330Z	0
Escape to Paradise	April	Sunday	1800Z	3
Alligator Alley KMIA FNO	April	Friday	2330Z	6
Anchorage/Honolulu Crossfire	April	Saturday	2100Z	1
Good Morning Portland	April	Saturday	1700Z	3
ANZAC Parade	April	Sunday	0330Z	1
Melt the Chocolate	April	Sunday	1630Z	3
ZHU/ZTL	May	Saturday	2300Z	3
Stacked in Seattle	May	Sunday	2130Z	3
Paris Online	May	Wednesday	1900Z	3
I-70 Crossfire III	May	Saturday	2300Z	2
Southern Region FNO	May	Friday	2330Z	1
Light Up Liberty	May	Saturday	2300Z	2
Good Morning Seattle	May	Saturday	1600Z	0

Saturday Night Caribbean Heat	May	Saturday	2200Z	0
Portland/Vancouver Crossfire	May	Sunday	2300Z	1
Mega Rally - Leg 1	May	Tuesday	1100Z	2
Mega Rally - Leg 2	May	Tuesday	1230Z	2
Mega Rally - Leg 3	May	Tuesday	1300Z	2
Mega Rally - Leg 4	May	Wednesday	1400Z	2
Mega Rally - Leg 5	May	Wednesday	1430Z	2
Mega Rally - Leg 6	May	Wednesday	1500Z	2
Mega Rally - Leg 7	May	Thursday	1400Z	2
Mega Rally - Leg 8	May	Friday	0300Z	2
Northern Crossings III FNO	May	Friday	2330Z	1
Keflavik Overload	May	Sunday	1500Z	0
Deep in the Heart of VATUSA FNO	May	Friday	2330Z	3
Dallas Overload	May	Saturday	2330Z	1
Gulf Crossfire OMDB-HAAB	May	Saturday	1630Z	0
Good Morning Portland	May	Saturday	1600Z	0
Mad Dog Farewell	May	Sunday	2330Z	1
Los Angeles - Vancouver Crossfire	May	Sunday	2130Z	0
HCF Overload FNO	June	Friday	1800Z	0
Frankfurt Overload	June	Saturday	1500Z	1
Throwback Orlando	June	Sunday	2330Z	0
ZDV ZSE ZLC FNO	June	Friday	2330Z	1
Good Morning Seattle	June	Saturday	1600Z	0
VATUSA -Transcon 2020	June	Saturday	2000Z	1
San Jose, Cosa Rica to Toncontin, Honduras	June	Saturday	2200Z	0
Orlando - St. Maarten	June	Sunday	1500Z	3
The Great Phoenix Fly-out FNO	June	Friday	2330Z	3
Get Out of Newark	June	Saturday	2300Z	1

Good Morning Portland	June	Saturday	1730Z	1
Cajun Craziness	June	Sunday	1800Z	2
4th of July Preparty FNO	July	Friday	2330Z	4
Southern Sweet Tea Party Crossfire	July	Sunday	2330Z	4
Fort Worth Freedom Fly In FNO	July	Friday	2230Z	2
VATCAN: East Coast Vacation	July	Saturday	2200Z	3
KDEN - Shooting Star	July	Sunday	2330Z	3
The City in the Forest/KATL FNO	July	Friday	2330Z	3
In the Sky to PBI	July	Saturday	2200Z	1
N90 (NYC) FNO	July	Friday	2330Z	4
ZNY Real Ops	July	Saturday	2330Z	3
ZHU - Caution Wake Turbulence	July	Sunday	2330Z	0
Florida Citrus Haul FNO	July	Friday	2330Z	5
Seattle in the Summer	August	Saturday	2300Z	1
21st Annual Boston Tea Party	April	Saturday	2000Z	1
Summertime in the Queen City	May	Friday	2330Z	0
Sweltering Summer Crossfire	June	Saturday	2330Z	1
Colorado Birthday Bash	July	Sunday	2330Z	2
New Generation FNO	August	Friday	2330Z	2
Kennedy-Amsterdam Crossfire	August	Saturday	1300Z	4
Indy500 Fly-in	August	Saturday	2300Z	2
Heathrow Madness	August	Wednesday	1700Z	1
Columbia Overload	August	Thursday	2300Z	0
Northern Isolation FNO	August	Friday	2330Z	2
Florida Man Fly In	August	Saturday	2230Z	2
Hong Kong to (the other...) Tokyo	August	Saturday	1100Z	0
Milan to Dublin	August	Saturday	1330Z	0
Surf 'N Turf - KJFK/MYNN	August	Sunday	1700Z	2

I-95 Overload FNO	September	Friday	2330Z	1
Fly to Africa	September	Saturday	0830Z	1
Portland Getaway	September	Sunday	1900Z	1
Boston-Montreal Crossfire	September	Tuesday	2300Z	2
Key City Fly-in	September	Tuesday	2300Z	0
ZMA Roulette	September	Saturday	2300Z	1
Four Corners Fly-In	September	Sunday	2300Z	1
100 Years of Flyness - KSTL	September	Friday	2300Z	2
Frankfurt-Madrid FNO	September	Friday	0000Z	0
Definitely Not A ZTL Event	September	Saturday	2330Z	4
Withstand the Tide - MYNN/KATL	September	Sunday	2130Z	1
VATUSA Open Mic Night	September	Friday	2000Z	0
Retro NY Fly-in	September	Saturday	2300Z	2
Gettin' Shanghaied! RJAA-ZSPD	September	Sunday	0200Z	5
ZAB/ZFW/ZME Trifire FNO	October	Friday	2300Z	3
Liberty City Fly-In	October	Saturday	2300Z	3
Staff It Up: KMYR	October	Sunday	2100Z	3
ZDC: Tim's Big Event	October	Saturday	2330Z	5
Spooky Season in Seattle	October	Sunday	2000Z	4
LAX - Mexico City Link	October	Wednesday	2330Z	2
Denver FNO	October	Friday	2330Z	1
Bradley Bash 2020	October	Saturday	2300Z	1
Mexico City - LAX Link	October	Thursday	2330Z	0
Great PMPKN FNO	October	Friday	2330Z	2
Autumn in the North	October	Saturday	2300Z	1
YVR-PDX Crossfire	October	Sunday	1900Z	1
The Bob Ross Fly Thru - ZHU	October	Thursday	2330Z	0
A Not So Scary FNO, Part II: Electric Boogaloo	October	Friday	2300Z	0

Cornfield Crossfire	November	Friday	2330Z	1
Athens of the South (KBNA)	November	Saturday	2330Z	1
ZLA/ZOA FNO	November	Friday	2330Z	1
Cross the Pond Eastbound	November	Saturday	1100Z	5
Texas Extravaganza!	November	Saturday	2300Z	1
Flight of the Americas (KMIA-SEQM)	November	Sunday	2300Z	3
Winter in Anchorage!	November	Wednesday	2330Z	1
Fort Worth Parade of Light	November	Thursday	2330Z	1
Never Dull at Dulles FNO	November	Friday	2300Z	2
KDEN Birthday Bash!	November	Saturday	2330Z	4
Stuff the Albu-turkey	November	Sunday	2300Z	2
Open Mic FNO	November	Friday	2330Z	2
Autumn in Austin	November	Saturday	2330Z	2
Sunday Funday	November	Sunday	2130Z	2
Sunday Brunch in Seattle	November	Sunday	1800Z	1
Albany - Newark Hop	December	Wednesday	2330Z	0
ZSE Winter Wonderland FNO	December	Friday	2330Z	1
KATL: Min. Time on Runway	December	Saturday	2330Z	0
Los Angeles - Vancouver Crossfire	December	Sunday	2100Z	0
Winter Kickoff FNO (KBOS, KEWR, KPHL, KBDL)	December	Friday	2330Z	0
vUAL VATSIM Quarterly	December	Friday	2330Z	2
ZHU Presents "Cooldown Crossfire"	December	Saturday	2330Z	0
Caribbean Crossings (KFLL-TJBQ)	December	Sunday	2000Z	0
Ending the Year in Paradise	December	Friday	2300Z	1
ZDC Presents: Capital Christmas	December	Saturday	2300Z	0
ZMP Last Minute Shopping	December	Sunday	2330Z	0
Open Mic FNO	December	Friday	0000Z	0
Home for the Holidays - Chicago	December	Sunday	2330Z	0

Notes:

- The 2020 Events Summary will be finalized in early 2021.
- “Start Time” reflects what is shown in the Events Calendar. Event entries must be scheduled in half-hour increments so 2330Z is the latest time an event can be posted and show up on the day of the event. For example, if an event starts at 0200Z on June 13 (10:00 p.m., EDT) , it would be entered into the calendar at 2330Z, June 13 and a note in the event description would say that ATC is expected around 0200Z. If the event was posted for 0200Z, June 14 – the accurate time – it would show up on our events calendar for June 14, the wrong day.
- “Sign-ups” reflects how many vUAL pilots show as signed up for the event at the time this report was drafted. If a pilot signed up for an event in April but was not with vUAL in late November, they would not show up as signed up. Sometimes, pilots sign up for an event but cannot fly it. Sometimes, pilots don’t sign up for an event but do fly it (never avoid an event because you haven’t signed up!).
- December events have not occurred; relatively few sign-ups in advance.