

FLY A PASSENGER JET

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R Vyhava Srinivasan and Deepak Agarwal



A mall in Bangalore seems an unlikely setting for India's first real Flight Simulator open to the public

Flying can be addictive, which explains why pilots do what they do. As lesser mortals, we're almost always confined to the rows of seats in the cabin behind them, with a thick metal door separating the two. To peer into the cockpit of a Boeing or an Airbus with the pilot genially showing off the controls is an indulgence that's largely unavailable to most to wide-eyed laymen.

For those who envy the life of a pilot, joining your local flying club and taking controls of a Cessna is prohibitively exorbitant. What then, does a man who has caught the flying bug do? Simple: You head to Forum Mall in Bangalore and take a lift straight up to [Flight4Fantasy](#) – a one-of-its-kind flight-simulation facility in India that has a 1:1 Boeing simulator primed up and ready to let you indulge in your fantasy of taking to the sky. We did precisely that and came back rather impressed with an itch to go back and do it all over again.

The brainchild of two chartered accountants and school mates, Vyhava Srinivasan and Deepak Agarwal, [Flight4Fantasy](#) is the first real Flight Simulator facility open to the public in India. It all began with Srinivasan, who is an out-and-out flight simming enthusiast with an experience of over a decade,

wanting to share his enthusiasm for his passion with others. He partnered with like-minded Deepak to set up this facility that shares floor space with a PVR multiplex. But even with minimal marketing, the facility has managed to garner over 1,000 customers within two months of its inception, which is quite impressive in itself. That the same experience could cost you four times as much at a similar facility abroad is one of the contributing factors.

The enterprising duo imported components for the Boeing simulator in parts and assembled it themselves to ensure that prices could be kept low. For about Rs 1,800, you can fly for an hour on the Boeing simulator with Srinivasan occupying the co-pilot's seat. By doing everything that a real co-pilot would do, he takes particular care to keep the simulator experience real.

For instance, you actually retract landing gear as you take off and you even switch the seatbelt and no-smoking signs on during take off and landing. Once airborne, you even see building names and traffic whizzing by in major cities of the world. To enhance the experience, the sim can be configured to simulate engine failures and low fuel conditions that you will be instructed on how to deal with.

The entire process is extremely challenging, especially for first timers, but instructors ensure that the whole experience is packaged extremely well, right from the little flight briefing closet. The facility is in the process of inducting a Cessna simulator into its line up too within the next few months. If you're a gamer, you can choose the fighter jet simulators replete with 3D visuals. The facility also sells a myriad range of simulator software, Hogan scale models and other flight simulator equipment.

To take the experience to another level, Srinivasan and Agarwal can also set up a similar facility right at your home. Then at least you could call your pilot-friends over to experience the *real* deal. This time it will be them who will be left wide-eyed.

Jay is the editor of [indiancarsbikes.in](#), a blog dedicated to motorcycle and cars.

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