

# Dennis Oliver

Williamsburg, Iowa



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## Airframe

Cessna 421 Golden Eagle

## Pilot Name

Dennis Oliver

## Avidyne Solution

EX500

## Location

Williamsburg, IA

Dennis Oliver flies so much, and has flown for so long, that when asked what his profession is, he says, Pilot. In reality, though he's ATP-rated, Oliver doesn't fly professionally and uses his aircraft in support of his real career, agriculture. Oliver sells and trades horses and cattle around the U.S., and on his farm in Williamsburg, Iowa, he's even carved a 4000 foot runway into a cornfield. On any given morning, it's from that cornfield strip that Oliver will launch in his Bellanca Decathlon to frolic in the sky and check on his livestock spread across his various large parcels of land. He also flies his Beech Baron from his farm strip, and he hangars his Cessna 421 with Avidyne's EX500 multifunction display at the municipal airport in nearby Cedar Rapids.

**Flying with Avidyne's EX500 enriches Oliver's aviating experience. It's now safer, easier, and he has more information than ever available at his fingertips.**

“One of the things that has enhanced my flying quite a bit is the Avidyne EX500. I became aware of Avidyne in the early 2000s when I was looking at upgrading some equipment and read about their EX500 multifunction display, which became available, I believe, in 2003. It did a lot of the things I was interested in so I ordered the first unit that was certified and had it installed in May of '03. And on the very first trip, we took off from Des Moines, Iowa and went directly to Alaska. I don't consider myself computer literate and it was

just a great piece of equipment. I went the entire trip without breaking the cellophane on the EX500 handbook, it was that user friendly.”

“The EX500 has the advantage of satellite downlink weather and with it you can really pick your way around thunderstorm activity. Plus, with just one turn of the knob, it turned my old Bendix monochromatic RDR 160 radar into a brand new four-color radar display. So if you're around storm activity, I can be looking with the forward-looking, four-color radar and then with the turn of the knob, I can have satellite download weather information and you can just alternate pictures on the screen. On some of the stormiest days, you can have a very smooth ride just by picking your way through very carefully.”

**Oliver's looking at Avidyne for an upgrade to his Strike Finder.**

“Avidyne's new unit, the TWX670, detects electrical strikes, which are some of the most severe hazards in flying. I have an old Strikefinder which works just fine but I'm looking forward to Avidyne's new upgrade because it seems to have a lot of improvements in it, and when you're flying in thunderstorm season, you want all the odds in your favor.”

Comfort and piece of mind. The EX500 helps Oliver with planning and decision making, before and during the flight.



## Dennis Oliver

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Between the on-board radar and the satellite downloaded weather information, I get the broad picture and am able to launch in weather I probably would not have gone in before because I wouldn't have the knowledge or the comfort level that I have with the EX500. On our flight to Alaska, though we're used to seeing the needles centered on our approaches into some of the mountain airports, it was a comforting feeling seeing the little airplane symbol going right down the middle of the valley to the airport. That was totally new to me after flying needles all my life and it was just unbelievable to see where your airplane was in relation to the terrain. And the graphics are very realistic."

**Airports "Nearest to Destination," a feature on the EX500 that Oliver finds very useful during instrument operations.**

"Another advantage of the EX500... most GPSs have Nearest Airport, which is a logical feature, but the Avidyne EX500 has the additional feature of the nearest airports to your destination. So in the winter, if I'm going from Iowa to Florida, and about halfway down I'm aware that the weather is starting to come down, fog is moving in, I can pull up a dozen of the nearest airports closest to my destination and just see what the weather is doing and have a pretty good picture of the weather a couple hours out... It's a nice feature that adds to your general comfort level and safety."

**Oliver decided on Avidyne when it was time to upgrade his instrument panel and found the research, purchase and installation processes a breeze.**

"I was reading about the MFDs available on the market. Some of the unique features of the Avidyne EX500 really appealed to me. I studied more about it... and a couple things that appealed to me were that it could interface with more radars than most of the other units and being able to use my existing radar and have it upgraded to a four-color radar with the EX500. This was a

tremendous advantage, along with some of its other features, like its excellent terrain contouring and nearest airports to your destination. When I decided to finally pull the trigger and buy a unit, I contacted Avidyne and talked to Jessica in sales. She was very informative and very helpful and sent me some additional information. I then decided to go ahead with the Avidyne. Jessica followed through with all the details and coordinated with the radio installation shop and it was a very painless process."

**Expectations met and succeeded!**

"The Avidyne EX500 does everything and much more than I ever anticipated. It's been a godsend to have such a nice piece of equipment in the airplane. It's also been trouble free. When I did have a couple questions, I called Jessica on the phone and she answered my questions. The follow-up and customer service from Avidyne have been excellent, but I really haven't had any problems with the equipment; it just keeps on working."

**The EX500 cuts workload in single-pilot IFR.**

"I usually fly single pilot. The use of the EX500 has certainly helped reduce the workload and increase my confidence level... You know where you are and what's going on with just a glance at the Avidyne."

"In over 20,000 hours of accident and incident-free flying... the EX500 has enhanced my comfort level. We still make the same trips in the same weather, but the Avidyne EX500, with all its features and satellite download weather, it just makes it more comfortable to fly... it simply spoils you."

"On an approach, the EX500 acts almost like a copilot. Just glancing over to the EX500 tells me exactly where I am on the approach and it makes it a lot easier and helps keep you out of trouble."



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