

Tom Greer

Southern Star Avionics, Mobile, AL

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Dealer
Southern Star Avionics

Dealer Name
Tom Greer

Location
Mobile, AL

Southern Star Avionics is located on the Gulf Coast in Mobile, Alabama. They specialize in engineering, STC certification, manufacturing and the installation of post-production products for general and business aircraft. They provide full, turn-key services in their repair, manufacturing and installation facility.

Why Avidyne?

Tom Greer brought Avidyne and their Envision integrated flight deck system to Star Aviation for an STC program for Cessna 300 and 400 series and Cirrus SR-20 and SR-22 series aircraft.

“We’ve looked at Avidyne products over the years and from the beginning they were one of the first companies to have a really good multifunction display that we could put in airplanes pretty easily. And they’ve taken that original design and carried it forward progressively and have made it better and better.”

From multifunction displays to integrated flight deck retrofits.

“Avidyne is always looking forward. They recently opened up their primary flight

display to the retrofit market, which is our market. [Their primary flight display] is a mature product, something that we could install and certify. And as my relationship with Avidyne got closer during this STC program, I realized that they really do have a lot of things going on and that makes me feel even better about Avidyne as a company. There’s a lot going on with them in their skunk works too – new products, new innovations.”

Avidyne has a proven track record, and that was important to Greer and Southern Star.

“I have confidence in Avidyne products. There’s a lot to sell in this industry right now. You look around at the Aircraft Electronics Association convention and everyone has a glass display. You’ve got all the big players, Honeywell, Bendix King, Garmin, Aspen, Sandel, most of these companies have good products but they don’t have proven products. Avidyne goes back to the very beginnings of the Cirrus program and the AGATE program. They’ve had multifunction displays and primary flight displays since the 1990s, which is a pretty good track record.”



Tom Greer *Continued*

For us at Southern Star, when we choose to spend quite a bit of money on the STC program, we couldn't take the chance of putting something in that was tried and tested."

Reputation and partnership – critical to a dealer

"What a dealer sells is what he represents. The end user comes back to the dealer when something's wrong, he doesn't call the manufacturer generally, he wants the dealer to fix it. The dealer has got to be confident in what he's selling and know that the support from the manufacturer is there – I don't see being able to do business any other way – you really can't. Over the years we've gotten involved with some cutting-edge products that have really dealt us some pretty bad headaches. And it doesn't take a long time to learn that you carefully pick the people you're going to partner with, whether from a dealership standpoint, to sell their products, or to partner on a major project like the Envision STC program. We've chosen Avidyne for this program because of their solid reputation, support, and because of their quality products.

As technology evolves, Southern Star wants to know that a manufacturer will aggressively support both hardware and software.

"Software support is increasingly critical. When WAAS interface issues occurred with the Garmin 430 in Cirrus airplanes, Avidyne really stepped up to the plate. They brought a software package in and it looks like on the first release they have basically no problems. That says an awful lot, doesn't it?"

Avidyne has a history of good dealer support.

"Over the years they've learned how to support and listen to us, the dealers. The first mark for someone who fixes problems is to listen to the people you're selling your product to, and Avidyne listened. People at the company would go out and ask, How can we do things better and they brought [their findings] back to the company. Jerry Henry has been a huge asset for us, and he's always available for technical questions. You can call their 800 number and get someone to pick up the telephone at any time of the day. Avidyne has progressed remarkably in their dealer and customer support. And they've got a good support staff."



55 Old Bedford Road
Lincoln, MA 01773

Ph 781.402.7400 800 AVIDYNE
Fax 781.402.7597

www.avidyne.com