

# Questions and Answers

## **1 – When did you create Vertex Multimedia ?**

The company was established in 1996.

## **2 – Who created ULTIMATE GOLF at Vertex ? How many people worked on the project?**

All members of Vertex have been contributing to the game: a team of 12 very creative developers. Ubi Soft contributed to the game as co-producer and adviser. They have a lot of technical know how which we share with our developers.

## **3 – How long has the game been developed ?**

The original concept was designed in 1996 aiming to have the most playable and accessible golf game. After various experiments, the actual program was started from autumn 1997. The game will be released in the third quarter of 1999.

## **4 – Was it your first experience in golf game ? Why did you choose such a genre ?**

We have people who has been golf game players, people who developed a game and enthusiastic golfers. We choose this genre simply because we have never been convinced with any Golf Games in the market which have been very slow and have hardly felt any excitement. Never has the player been able to feel any interactivity with the speed and the control...

Thanks to the fast pace brought by 3D acceleration, we hope to change the standard of Golf Games !

## **5 – So, what is unique about this game compared to the others that are out or are coming out ?**

ULTIMATE GOLF is one of the very first golf games to be created in complete real time 3D. This allows us to obtain realism and freedom of movement never before seen in a golf game.... The feeling of realism will be further enhanced as a result of our unique "Real Feel" control system which can reproduce a real time golf swing like no other game. So we will therefore be able to appeal to players who want a simulation experience but with an arcade pace (faster moving to keep the player interested in the game). Golf games available on the market are slow in speed and graphically not accessible to consumers. Our aim is to make one of the most playable, realistic and accessible golf game ever produced.

The game has been targeted to normal game players as well as traditional golf computer game players with combination of creative areas to enhance playability and simulation elements such as ball and club physics. We are aiming to have the most playable and accessible golf game.

## **6 – Is it a golf simulation or an arcade game?**

ULTIMATE GOLF has all the best features of a simulation : hyper-realistic ball, club and wind physics with the possibility to customise ones set of clubs and reproduce all types of swing. In addition to that, it is a fun game that gives the player some challenge and strategic choices, with a fast pace and beautiful colors.

## **7 – Why 3D ? What benefit does this bring to the player ?**

Well, in all other golf games we have 2D golfers set in a photo realistic environment and have a situation where each screen has to be redrawn after every shot of the ball and this causes a kind of unrealistic delay which unacceptably slows down the game. If you want to see this in action just look at Links Golf...

So for this first time the player will be able to control a 3D character (made up of over 500 polygons) which is completely integrated into the 3D background and whose movements can be controlled in real time !

We have created a credible environment as a result of the implementation of many animations and dynamic cameras (using the I-CAM TV system ). All information will be available on screen. So the player will not need to flip from screen to screen to get the information he needs (wind, distance, undulations). The end result of our method is a fluid 3D environment and a fast paced game without the irritating lapses between each swing experienced in the 2D games.

## **8 – Could you summarise the strengths of Ultimate Golf ?**

- Real time 3D environment
- Fast paced game. No redrawn time of holes from shot to shot.
- Possible swing in First Person View.
- Innovative “Real Feel” control system (with real-time control of your club on screen).
- Incredible TV style “I-CAM” camera movement
- Superb graphics of non-digitised original golf courses, especially designed for computer games.
- Soft-Jointed 3D characters.
- Various special effects in proper 3D. eg. Fully 3D rain, shadow, reflections, fog, etc.
- Walk mode in 1<sup>st</sup> person view. (In addition to common fly by.)

## **9 – Tell us more about this “Real Feel” control system.**

The “Real Feel” is an innovative method which acts as a more user friendly alternative to the classic “double click” (however for those who prefer the old way we will keep that as an option too). This lets the player control in real time the 2 major parameters of the golf swing: the angle of the shoulders and the angle of the wrists. Thus our system will neither use the “power meter” nor require quick mouse movements. Thanks to the real time factor, you will be able to decide the strength and direction of your shot just by observing the posture of your character on the screen.! If you use an analogue joystick the swing feeling is just amazing !!!

## **10 – What will the first person view bring to the game ?**

For the first time, the player will have the same feeling as a real golfer on the course.

This 1<sup>st</sup> person view lets the player prepare and execute his swing from a natural 1<sup>st</sup> person perspective and then see the flight of the ball from his own eyes.

If you ever searched for realism in your golf games, that is an option you will never want to play without !

This view will actually be proposed by default in the game but you can change it later to any external view if you want.

## **11 – What are the main differences between ULTIMATE GOLF and its competitors ?**

In a very simple term “Interactivity” backed up with technical advantage per the above 9. The character is actually physically present, standing on the course and the game player controls over the character’s swing/putting.

Our competitors claim that their games are in 3D. However, they are not really 3D. The Courses are 2D, the character is 2D or if it is 3D, always does 1 or 2 pre-designed swing.

The game player will not be able to adjust the stance to the terrain. This is the kind of things you’ll be able to do in ULTIMATE GOLF .

## **12 – What about the game’s courses ? Are they real ? If not, why ?**

We chose not to use existing courses so that we could create original and challenging golf courses. You will see holes you have never seen before for example double fairways or a green on an island.. This adds to the fun factor we were looking for in the computer golf game.

We used our freedom to create the most suited golf courses for computer games rather than to simulate real golf courses, which may not have fitted so well on screen.

### **13 - How did you create the game's environments ?**

We wanted to have three courses in totally different environment and decided to have:

Course 1 : Traditional Course in England designed relatively easy

Course 2 : Desert Course in Arizona (medium difficulty)

Course 3 : Island Course in Hawaii (Hard).

### **14 – What about the game's characters and animations? How did you create them ?**

All eight characters are in proper 3D with soft jointed animation system. They stand on golf courses built in proper 3D without floating. The game player can adjust the stance of the character to the terrain and the character will automatically adjust its' standing style depending on the slope.

It was very difficult to create this soft jointed system. To get the swing to work smoothly involved a delicate and intricate understanding of exactly how each of the human muscles and joints work together to produce realistic movement. To model the soft jointed character, integrate animation system in the model, texture the body and input all these data to our 3D engine took us more than 6 months. This allows simulating joints and muscle movements. The result is an impressive piece of animation wizardry.

### **15 – What about the balls physics?**

Ball physics are very realistic. Magnus force lift, spin, realistically modelled air drag.

### **16 – How many game's modes?**

There are seven modes in total including Stroke Play, Match Play and Tournament.

### **17 – What about the cameras?**

An artificial intelligence system (I-CAM) judges the best, most dynamic, most informative camera angles and displays the action using these angles and the AI can change these angles in Real Time to deliver a new experience in interactive game cameras.

### **18 - Will the game be multiplayer ? Will it be playable on a Game Service ?**

The player can enjoy : TCP/IP over Internet (direct connection)

IPX or TCP/IP on LAN

Microsoft Direct Play Lobby Clients

Ubi Soft Game Server

### **19 – What is the main target of the game? Why?**

We are targeting for normal computer game players as well as computer golf game players and golfers.

The golf games available in the market are lack in interactivity and speed which most of the computer game players require. The realistic ball and club physics combined with carefully designed original golf courses should satisfy computer golf game players as well as golfers and simple Game addicts...