

GolfTraxx.com



November 12, 2019 Q & A Session with Founder, Frank DeBenedetti on the NEW HTML5 App from Golftraxx.com

Q: Frank Thanks for agreeing to meet with us. So we haven't heard much from golfraxx for awhile. You came out the gate strong back in 2006 and quickly reached 10,000 mapped courses, over 150,000 users, and courses in 60 countries. You were even featured in [Private Clubs](#) magazine. What's been happening lately and why the sudden surge now?

A: As our loyal golfraxx users know, golfraxx has been providing accurate distances to Front, Center, and Back of the green for as long as anyone. 14 years after launch, we now have nearly 22,000 courses in our database in 80 countries and over half of those courses have GPS coordinates. We launched our initial versions of golfraxx on TREO 650 's, Pocket PC's, and Garmin Ique's back in 2006. The Intel-sponsored Consigntech IDE that we used to create those early versions was great, but is no longer relevant. Our Google Earth mapping method introduced in 2007 allowed us to capture the coordinates without introducing manual data collection errors, and without GPS device errors.

That first version of our our product was light years ahead of our competition, and dare I say, those versions provided the product road maps for our competitors for the past decade.

Our business challenge back then was we didn't have a hardware product that we could sell anymore after Garmin cut off our supply of Garmin Ique's. Garmin did that AFTER requesting our source code under the false pretense of wanting to “help” us support GARMIN users. Of course, no one was buying TREO's after iPhones and Androids hit the market. In addition, the GPS accuracy was substantially lower on iPhones and Androids than what we had been able to achieve with our bluetooth GPS receivers and with the Garmin units, since neither bluetooth receivers nor the Garmin units were classified by FCC as radio devices.

To make matters worse, we discovered some of the Google Earth Maps had errors as large as 10-15 yards in some areas and that the Google Earth mapping itself needed to be adjusted. When I met with Google in 2008, they told me that what golfraxx was doing would help them improve their mapping. The placemarks we added in course maps gave Google a way to “true up” their Google Earth maps to known positions. As imagery improved, these “shifts” stopped. From where I sit now, I know that the course mapping work we created back in 2007 and to the present helped Google make Google Earth far more accurate. Thousands of courses were accurate in 2007, but thousands and thousands more needed more accurate Google Earth imagery. After the Google Earth maps were trued up, the variances between actual yardage and calculated yardage using the formula I created reduced to zero. Google has made billions of dollars from improving Google Earth because it makes their applications and logic that rely on GPS more accurate and more reliable. You'd think we would be on their Christmas card list...

Whenever Google decided on their own accord to make those adjustments to maps, we would see the placemarks of groups of courses in the same geographic area shift several yards when viewed in

Google Earth or Google Maps. Of course, we wouldn't get any notice that it was going to happen...it would just happen. There are still courses in our database to this day that reflect those “shifts” in the underlying imagery.

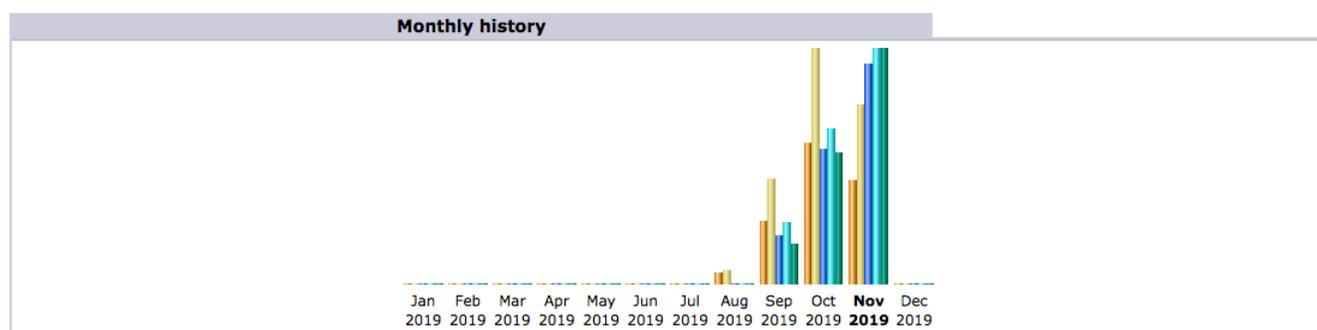
So I knew in 2008 that it was going to take several years and considerable investment to get the underlying Google Earth mapping corrected and also to get FCC radio devices to a point where they would be accurate enough for golf. There were areas where no further adjustments were needed, and there were areas where imagery quality was poor and adjustment had not even started. The announcement of the Xiaomi Mi8 earlier this year with dual-band GPS and decimeter precision got us pretty excited again, as it meant the possibility of true accuracy was finally a reality.

We have been going strong for several months now since that Xiaomi announcement, truing up the course mappings we did in Google Earth all the way back to 2007 and updating the scorecards for the courses, as well as adding extras for thousands of courses in the database. All of this, AFTER the Google Earth correction of their own maps. We knew twelve years ago that it was just a matter of time for it to happen. You may recall that even then there were certain areas like Las Vegas that had very high precision and clarity Google Earth maps. The course I played in Danville was another one where high precision had been already achieved back in 2007. By integrating Google Maps API 3.3 we have been able to show the world what we could not for many years, specifically that the mapping we did was high quality that simply needed enabling technologies to catch up with our approach.

Since integrating Google Maps API 3.3 back in July, so we can actually show the quality imagery and course mapping that we have in the database for thousands and thousands of courses worldwide, things started to improve in terms of site visit stickiness. In addition, by launching player scoring and stats capturing capabilities in our new HTML5 app, that alone, by design resulted in players viewing more pages. We also started our **scorecard update project** in which close to 5,000 updated course scorecards and links to golf course websites have been added to the database. Finally, adding CloudFlare enabled us to cache that imagery so it would be provided instantly to our site visitors, so of course they can consume more content as well in shorter periods of time since pages of amazing imagery are delivered instantly. Our site stickiness has just reached and ALL-TIME high over **over 62 pages/per visit**.

Summary					
Reported period	Month Nov 2019				
First visit	01 Nov 2019 - 00:00				
Last visit	24 Nov 2019 - 08:26				
	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Viewed traffic *	524	902 (1.72 visits/visitor)	56,143 (62.24 Pages/Visit)	59,906 (66.41 Hits/Visit)	11.65 GB (13539.73 KB/Visit)
Not viewed traffic *			12,567	16,653	599.95 MB

* Not viewed traffic includes traffic generated by robots, worms, or replies with special HTTP status codes.



Not bad when you consider that 140,000+ iPhone users downloaded our iPhone App back in 2008.

Q: So what can you tell us about this new app? What's different and why did you create it?

A: From the start, we have been a scorecard, GPS distances, and stats application, but not a course map application. We wanted a version that could be used by everyone, where maintenance costs would be substantially reduced by maintaining a SINGLE code base, versus for Android and IOS application revisions for every OS upgrade or release. We also wanted to integrate map imagery, and were excited about the new version of Google Map 3.3 API's, post the map corrections so that the higher precision maps would also demonstrate the quality of the course mappings we have created using Google Maps themselves. In addition, Golftraxx has always been a take-everywhere app that works even where there is no wi-fi or 3G/4G and we wanted to preserve that feature in our next gen version.

One of the other things we learned and focused on, even from our earliest versions was that “too many clicks spoil the soup!” For on-course stats to be tracked and for scores to be kept, and ALSO for ready-golf to continue to be played, the scoring and stats capture MUST be accomplished with the fewest clicks possible. We figured that out way back in 2007 on our Garmin version, and from what we can tell, not one of our competitors has come close, even to this day. To make it happen, we select your club for you based on the distances you hit your clubs, and we determine your lies, and your clubs, and your chips and putts, and whether you hit fairways or greens in regulation based on location, such that 80-90% of your shots required just ONE click per shot to capture scoring AND accurately record your playing stats.

Of course the Google Earth imagery embedded in our html 5 app and in our website speaks for itself and is the big new feature. It accurately depicts where you are on the course, and where landmarks and hole features are relative to you in stunning imagery.

HTML5 also now provides support for “Where Am I?” which enables us to provide dynamic lists of hundreds of nearby courses that can be selected to play a round of golf in a few seconds, and provide turn-by-turn directions through Google Maps to arrive at the course.

These were some of the have-to-have qualities we wanted to offer in our html5 version of golftraxx.

Q: Wow! And you were able to do all this in html5?

A: Yes, I am quite pleased with the HTML 5 app we have brought to life for golfers worldwide in this newest version of golftraxx against some remarkably stacked odds against us. Of course, it relies heavily on the database that we created 12 years ago and continue to update with additional courses and further tuning. As you have already heard we have been under hacker attacks non-stop for the past several months, deleting data, changing site pages, and wreaking havoc. But through all that, our users stayed quite happy.

Month-over-month we are achieving record numbers of page views on the site, even after excluding the hacker traffic. Last month we received over 200,000 page views on the site, a new all-time high. Just like the earliest versions, the course can be downloaded to your browser ONCE and then the entire round played without ever re-connecting to the internet. Shots are captured in a single click including club selection, lie, distance to target. GIRs, Fairways Hit, Chips, and Putts are all tracked automatically.

Q: And what's next for golftraxx from here?

A: The stats we are collecting for rounds played can be uploaded to golfers profiles through facebook

integration and will serve as the basis for us to provide “post-round analysis and recommendations” for improving your game.” Think of it as taking a playing lesson, where the pro goes with you on the course and makes recommendations that can save you considerable amounts of shots by playing smarter golf during that round and in future rounds. Our stats analysis will help golfers identify weaknesses in their game and give actionable feedback to help improve their games.

While golfraxx does now have 22,000 courses in its database, there are many countries where course penetration rate is less than 10%. It is our plan to reach 90% penetration in every major golf market in the world. To do this, we of course need the assistance of our golfer community. There are 209 countries in the world with golf courses. It is our goal to have courses in every single one of them. Our new website makes it easy to navigate in a single click to any continent or country in the world, to see the list of courses we have in each country or state or zip, and to view the scorecard and course maps for each course in our database using Google Maps API 3.3 mapping technology.

Q: Frank, Thanks for taking the time to speak with us. Best of luck with everything in this blossoming venture!

Frank DeBenedetti
GolfTraxx.com