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# Tiger Woods PGA Tour Online – hands-on

By [Joe\\_Rybicki](#) November 03, 2009

A console-quality golf experience... in your browser?

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COMMENTS

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But the big tweak is the complete overhaul of the golfer-upgrade system. Unlike previous games, which relied on skill points and experience, Tiger Woods Online's upgrade system is entirely cash-based. You earn cash for feats on the course, and each of the 15 courses includes a whole suite of objectives (think Achievements) that keep the cash flowing. You use this cash to level-up your different swings – or unlock new ones, since Punch, Flop and Chip shots aren't available until you've racked up enough cash to unlock them.



Earning enough cash to level up your golfer is key, because the EA hosts daily and weekly tournaments with huge purses, and the rewards get bigger as your golfer's level gets higher. Place well in a tourney and you get big cash to level up your player... to do better in the next tourney, and get more cash.

If you think that sounds like the philosophy behind a massively multiplayer RPG, you're on the right track. EA is looking to build a similar community around Tiger Woods Online, right down to the idea of clans or guilds (called simply "groups" here) where you can track the collective accomplishments of your team of like-minded players. They're also building something of a shared world, where you can monitor the progress of folks playing concurrently on the same course; you get shot trails of players on the same hole, and a running chat window for the genteel exchanges that ought to mark all friendly games of golf. (Both features are, of course, easily disabled for those who prefer to play solo.)

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It remains to be seen whether players will embrace this kind of format. Fans of Tiger on the PC have been feeling neglected since the franchise's last PC release in 2007, and may have already departed to greener links. And we still need some idea of rates for the "multi-tiered subscription" model EA has promised – as of this writing the numbers are still undetermined. If the rates go high enough, it could prompt potential subscribers to wonder why they shouldn't just pick the game up on a console instead.



Even so, seeing a game like this running in a browser is frankly startling. It may not lead to the end of the dedicated game machine as we know it, but it's certainly a step in an interesting direction.

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