

TerraTools

Table Of Contents

- [1 Overview](#)
- [2 Information](#)
- [3 Location](#)
- [4 Projects](#)
- [5 Game Development](#)
- [6 Urban Assault Development](#)
- [7 Post-Development History](#)
- [8 Notable Key Members](#)
 - [8.1 Prof. Ulrich Weinberg - CEO](#)
 - [8.2 Andre Weißflog - Lead Programmer](#)
 - [8.3 Andreas Flemming - Software Development](#)
 - [8.4 Bernd Beyreuther - Graphics and Assets Designer](#)
- [9 Microsoft Interview](#)
- [10 Urban Assault Credits \(TerraTools\)](#)
 - [10.1 Terratools](#)

TerraTools Computer Graphics Solutions (also later known as 'RadonLabs' and 'BigPoint Berlin') is the official German developer of Microsoft Urban Assault and Metropolis Dawn.

(This article is currently under construction!)

1 Overview

TerraTools Computer Graphics Solutions (also later known as 'RadonLabs' and 'BigPoint Berlin') is the official German developer company of Microsoft [Urban Assault](#) and Metropolis Dawn that was initially based on Babelsberg, Potsdam; and later the German capital city of Berlin.

2 Information

TERRATOOLS was founded in 1993 by Professor Ulrich Weinberg. One of the progenitor figures of early computer graphics technology in Germany. The German company had around 30 employees initially who develop software products in the field of interactive 3D environments such as games, simulations, virtual TV applications, massive-multiplayer-environments and cross-media-projects (combinations of internet, TV, CD-ROM and other media).

TERRATOOLS as a game developer was the only European partner of Microsoft Inc., Redmond, USA; who was the development partner and official publisher of the video game Microsoft Urban Assault in 1998.

The company specialised in the following services:

Quote

Development, Creation & Production of

- 3D Computer Games

- Massive-multiplayer-environments
- Cross - media - projects
- Virtual TV Studios

3 Location

The initial headquarter of TerraTools was established at the famous historical site of 'Churchill-Villa' (Villa Urbig) in the city of Babelsberg, Potsdam; a city directly adjacent to the German capital city of Berlin. This Churchill-Villa is the same famous historical building where the illustrious British wartime Prime Minister, Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill had stayed and lived during the Potsdam Conference (German: Potsdamer Konferenz) shortly after the end of World War II.

TerraTools later moved their HQ into the heart of the city of Berlin, and operated under the new company name for their future works: 'RadonLabs'.

4 Projects

Quote

Cross-Media

1998 terranet café: Cross-Media project in cooperation with Krüger Film & ZDF/ 3sat (German TV Station). TERRATOOLS is developing a 3D Interactive Internet environment in VRML for a TV Show as massive multiplyer environments. Start up was on April 19th with the first 19 weekly episodes (Sundays at 4 pm at 3sat). The virtual terranet café is reachable under <http://www.terranetcafe.de>

Consulting

1994-95 conceptional and technical consulting for the first European SILICON STUDIO CENTER (Silicon Graphics Training Centre), Berlin.

Culture

1994 CARMINA BURANA: development of a virtual stage as an environment for a live dance-theatre-event based on stereoscopic polarised projection.

1993 development of PAGANINI a classical Pop-Promo in cooperation with the record company TELDEC, Hamburg. TERRATOOLS produced 3D Views of a synthetic building, in which a live musician performed his show.

Science

1994 ZIB, the Konrad-Zuse-Institut in Berlin: a [movie](#) about the research activities of the Berlin supercomputer centre. Total length 15 minutes including 8 minutes of high-end-3D Animation.

1993 TERRAVISION, a research and development project in cooperation with the Ministry of Research, Brandenburg, aiming at the set up of a database containing worldwide geographical data and the production of 3D Animation Software to open up a new dimension of map development for media companies.

1993 Cooperation with the GMD (German Center for Supercomputing) on the occasion of their 25th anniversary. TERRATOOLS prepared 3D Elevation data, in combination with [satellite](#) and aerial photography for visualization on a supercomputer in real-time.

Display More

5 Game Development

TERRATOOLS INTERACTIVE 3D SCENARIOS

(Game Development)

Urban Assault

[URBAN ASSAULT](#) combines diverse action game play with strategic depth. From a first-person cockpit perspective, players can control 44 types of combat vehicles, from airplanes, helicopters and satellites to jeeps and tanks. Gamers can simultaneously command and deploy their entire army from an overlayed transparent map as they manage resources and upgrade technologies. To win URBAN ASSAULT, players have to think like a general and perform like a frontline soldier. URBAN ASSAULT is set in a foreboding, post-apocalyptic 3D world with astounding high-quality graphics.

Games under Development

The TERRATOOLS team is currently working on several new products including:

- * strategy games
- * action-simulation games
- * science fiction role play games

Future Game Development

With the development of new games TERRATOOLS puts the main emphasis on following points:

- * development of 3D User Interfaces
- * development of massive multiplayer environments
- * server oriented games
- * [artificial intelligence](#) to control the opponents
- * physical simulation, inverse cinematics, 3D Morphing
- * combining games interactivity with virtual TV [Sets](#)

6 Urban Assault Development

The initial prototype project of Anarchy/Your Personal Amok (the development title of Urban Assault) was formally commenced in 1995 under the direction of Professor Ulrich Weinberg, based on the comprehensive set of proprietary engine software, tools, assets, and game design ideas that were developed by the core team students over the timespan of 1993 to 1996. Since then the game saw continued professional development and production phase in their own technology company TerraTools as well as its publisher Microsoft Corporation in 1998.

Because of the technological complexity involved in the design and production of the proprietary engine and calculation-intensive gameplay mechanics of Urban Assault, especially for its time, the game had undergone various development phases, with different assets and features being gradually implemented and scrapped. By 1996, the basic development of the engine and prototype assets were finished, and UA had Warner Interactive as its first publisher company. However, the official publisher was eventually changed to Microsoft Corporation later.

The prototype versions of Urban Assault were showcased at E3 in the year 1996 to 1998. In 1996, the game was initially showcased at Warner Interactive booths. On the contrary, in 1997 and 1998 the game had successfully forged a new contract with Microsoft as the new official publisher company, and therefore was showcased at Microsoft booths. The official final title of Urban Assault, including the copyrights and

trademarks with the same name was also established at this time.

7 Post-Development History

Shortly after the final development phases of Urban Assault and its (unreleased) official expansion pack Metropolis Dawn, the company changed its name to 'RadonLabs'. Since then, RadonLabs had produced multiple different video game projects and titles. One of their most successful and widely recognised titles is the Drakensang series, which contains the same internal references from the developers that could be originally found in Urban Assault game data.

In the year 2010, the company was eventually purchased by the Hamburg-based video game company called BigPoint, and it still operates under the title of 'BigPoint Berlin' to this day.

8 Notable Key Members

8.1 Prof. Ulrich Weinberg - CEO

8.2 Andre Weißflog - Lead Programmer

8.3 Andreas Flemming - Software Development

8.4 Bernd Beyreuther - Graphics and Assets Designer

9 Microsoft Interview

Microsoft Game Studios also arranged the official interview session with several key TerraTools developers from Potsdam/Babelsberg, Germany when they visited the main Microsoft campus in Seattle, Washington during early 1998.

The Microsoft interview with TerraTools developers can be found at here:

[Q-and-A \(Microsoft Interview with TerraTools Developers\)](#)

10 Urban Assault Credits (TerraTools)

10.1 Terratools

Terratools Management

Producer, Owner, and President	Uli Weinberg
Project Manager	Uta Kapp
Development Manager	Thomas Langhanki

Terratools Production

Lead Programmer	Andre "FLOH" Weissflog
Game Design, Graphics, and Modeling	Bernd Beyreuther
Programmer	Andreas Flemming
Sound Design, In-game Music	Sylvius Lack
Level Design and In-house Test Lead	Stephan "OPTI" Karau
Level Design, Testers, and Additional Graphics	Steffen Priebus, Stefan "3" Warias, Henrik Volkening, Nico Nitsch, Dietmar "DIDI" Köbelin, Dirk Mansbart
Technical Support	Stephan Bludau, Gregor Schmidt

Special thanks to Steve "SARGIE" Sargent and Andre Schulze, aka "GÖTZ."

Note: This is the official full credits of the TerraTools department for Urban Assault development. For the credits of the Microsoft department for Urban Assault development, please check the [Microsoft Games](#) Article.