HOLOPHONE H3-D HELPS EA SPORTS KICK OFF NEW FIFA 10 VIDEO GAME IN SURROUND SOUND
~ Soundtrack Incorporates Real-World Audio Captured with Holophone's Surround Mics from Stadiums Across the Globe ~

VANCOUVER, CANADA, NOVEMBER 18, 2009 - When creating the soundtrack for a best-selling video game that is centered around the internationally played sport of soccer, the sounds of the crowd is certainly a key element. In order to create authentic crowd noises, Holophone's H3-D was recently placed front and center at several European football/American soccer games to capture ambient sounds in true 5.1 multi-channel surround for EA SPORTS' latest title, FIFA 10.

On previous versions of FIFA, the sound team would set up several raised microphones throughout the various league stadiums and then would composite the crowd sounds in-studio. Holophone's H3-D surround mic was first used for FIFA 09 to capture true surround sound. Based on the microphone's excellent performance, EA SPORTS once again turned to Holophone for its FIFA 10 title.

With the advancement in broadcast technology towards HD and 5.1 surround in regions such as the U.S. and UK, EA SPORTS was able to partner with the stadiums and local sports broadcasters to obtain direct feeds from each of their broadcast trucks. When working in countries like Southern Europe, South America or Eastern Europe, the broadcasters do not have these elaborate set ups. This is where Holophone's H3-D provided an essential solution to capturing these games in surround sound without having to depend on the local broadcast stations.

"The great part about Holophone is that when you play it back in-studio, all the footage is
already there and there’s not much additional work you need to do. It sounds like you were sitting right there at the game," says Jeff MacPherson, audio director for EA SPORTS football titles. "We used to have to spend time creating this stuff and now we start with that 5.1 crowd bed from Holophone. From there, we can add content to sort of texture it and layer it."

The soundtrack for FIFA 10 was comprised of several elements. Holophone was used to create the main background crowd beds in surround sound. Sounds of excitement, such as cheers and "ohhs" and "ahhs" are incorporated and triggered when goals and tackles are made within the game. The various league chants are captured in stereo; the tracks are isolated and then reviewed by an international panel for content and layered in. Lastly all the commentaries for the games are recorded in-studio as the final element to the sound.

"We are taking a true re-creation and true capture of the environment," continues MacPherson. "We are not building it; what you hear in the game is exactly what your human ears would hear if you were standing in that same spot. We were able to get that real-life texture from Holophone, which was a lot harder for us to try to re-create before we started using the product."

With the help of several location engineers, ambient crowd sounds from stadiums around the world are captured using Holophone’s H3-D as well as several stereo mics. The location engineers tend to use a handful of stereo sources around the venue to obtain the vibe. The real challenge is in choosing the right location for the Holophone within the stadium.

"Reproducing the atmosphere of a football stadium is not an easy quest," continues MacPherson. "You're 90 percent of the way there if you can find the right spot to position the Holophone mic. From that point, most of the work is done for you. Just keep in mind, though, that the Holophone mic will capture everything that you're hearing, so if it's in the wrong spot, it's so accurate that it will capture sounds you don't want. Just remember, location is key."

Holophone’s H3-D is a portable 5.1 multichannel surround sound microphone, based on the company’s patented H2-PRO. The H3-D eliminates the need for multiple-microphone surround setups. Designed to support 5.1 surround-sound recording devices, the H3-D provides 3-D surround audio. It also provides a six-channel discrete microphone manufactured to automatically deliver 5.1 channels with no external mixing or signal manipulation needed. FIFA 10 from EA SPORTS is now available for the PLAYSTATION 3, Xbox 360, Wii, PC, PlayStation 2, PSP (PlayStation Portable), Nintendo DS and mobile hand-held devices.