

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

*the platform*

# “Our friends and family were always complaining about the cost of golf balls”



**INGO DÜLLMANN**  
CEO VICE GOLF

[vicegolf.com](http://vicegolf.com)

[@VICE\\_GOLF](https://twitter.com/VICE_GOLF)

The German golf ball brand that likes to do things a little differently

**T**HE BALL MARKET IS one of the most competitive and complex in the golf industry. At VICE we have one fundamental mission; providing great products, for a great price directly to golfers. The traditional golf ball brands you all know; Titleist, Callaway, TaylorMade, etc, have been around for decades and most of them make great golf balls. What they all have in common, however, are their distribution and business models. By cutting out the middle men (plus not spending millions of dollars on tour player contracts) and selling directly to consumers, we are able to give golfers all over the world premium golf balls at a significantly lower price than our competitors.

My partner in crime, Rainer Stoeckl, and I both studied law and worked

as lawyers before moving into the consultancy business. We were doing some consultancy work for one of the biggest golf ball manufacturers and became fascinated with the market. At that time we both had several family members and friends that played golf and were always complaining about the high cost of golf balls.

We saw that there was a gap in the market to offer golfers high quality, performance golf balls at a considerably lower price than most other manufacturers. We sat down together with one of our friends, who is an engineer and had the necessary expertise, and started to develop a golf ball of our own. We then established the VICE brand and by the end of 2012 we were selling our first batch of golf balls direct to consumers. We experienced fantastic initial success here in Germany and other German speaking countries before expanding out into the rest of Europe, Australia, other global markets and then into America in 2015.

We wanted to make sure our balls were manufactured using the best materials, performed to the highest level and would be as good as or better than our competitor's golf balls. This was perhaps the biggest challenge for us when we founded the company. Thankfully, we were able to achieve all of our goals in terms of performance whilst delivering a low cost alternative for golfers through our direct to consumer approach.

Creating a brand from scratch is, on the one hand, an incredibly exciting prospect, but on the other something

that requires a lot of work and presents its own unique challenges. It isn't enough to simply have a great product at a great price like we do, you have to find a way of making customers identify with the brand and take notice of it. This was pretty tricky considering how attached golfers often become to a particular brand or type of golf ball.

Our brand image is young and we feel as though we have a completely different and vibrant approach to marketing our products.

We have several engineers that work for us in developing our golf ball technology. We have aerospace and aerodynamic engineers that work on improving the aerodynamics of our golf balls. They will carry out a lot of different tests to make sure our dimple patterns are as efficient as possible in order to improve the ball flight, performance in windy conditions and overall distance.

We also work together with third parties to discover new material mixes for the core or inner layers of the ball. One of our main USPs is the material we use in our specially designed cast urethane covers. Used in all of our Pro models, it is an extremely soft material that helps to generate fantastic feel, control and serious amounts of spin.

The design and development of



our golf balls is an on-going process. We are constantly looking for ways to improve the performance and durability of our products.

All of our products are subjected to hours of testing both by ourselves and third parties to ensure that they are of the highest quality. Over the last few years we have seen our balls come out on top of several tests and win the highest accolades. When someone make the decision to purchase one of our golf balls they can be assured that we are 100% happy with its quality.

At VICE we know that by playing with the same golf ball from shot-to-shot, round-to-round you are likely to improve your golf. Our golf balls allow you do this by delivering premium performance at a less than premium price.

## THE FUTURE OF VICE GOLF

WE HAVE QUITE a young image as a brand and in general appeal to younger golfers that are used to shopping online. We have some work to do in convincing the older generation of golfers to purchase balls on the internet, but as time progresses we are confident that we will continue to grow as golfer's buying habits change. Also, once someone has tried our golf balls we know they will not be disappointed with the performance and the cost savings will convince them to switch to our balls permanently. As we continue to grow we will always focus on improving the performance of our golf balls but also intend on growing our successful line of accessories and expanding into new product categories as well. We may even move into the offline world by opening a handful of flagship VICE stores. We know that we have a lot of scope to grow the VICE brand and are incredibly excited about what is to come over the next couple of years.