

THE SCOOP

THE OFFICIAL VERTUAL NEWSLETTER

June 2023

Vol. 11



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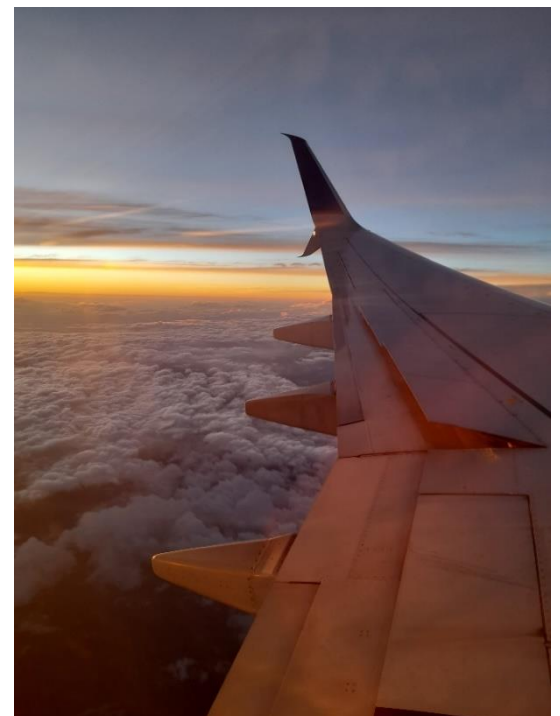
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Message from the CEO

by Debra Leeves, CEO

The start of a new year is always a busy time at Vertual, and this year was no different. We travelled to Dubai for the Arab Health Conference and were able to meet our distributors (TechFlow, CH Consult and Varitron) for the region, as well as meeting many new customers who came to watch a VERT demo and learn about how VERT products could be used in their universities and hospitals. We were able to showcase our growing range of products ranging from the VERT systems, which you know and use, along with Compact VERT and our newer subscription-based products, VERT on Demand, VERT Flex and Physics Flex.

Now that we have rolled out VERT 6 it has been wonderful to get your feedback on the software features you like to use and how VERT 6 is making a difference to the way you teach your students. Please keep sending feedback so we can continue to develop the products you want and need.

The number of universities requesting a Compact VERT is starting to increase, as more customers are looking for a compact and mobile version of the VERT system for teaching. The latest Compact VERT left our offices last week to be shipped to Spain, representing the first VERT system in the country.

This newsletter, as always, is packed with interesting features from around the world, along with some future plans for VERT products, I hope you enjoy this edition.



PTCOG 2023

by Honey Ayeni

PTCOG 2023

I had the opportunity to attend the 61st annual PTCOG conference in Madrid with our Spanish distributors Atfisica. It was lovely to be able to show the delegates how VERT and Proton VERT can be used for both staff education and to transform patient care with quality education. Delegates were able to get hands-on experience using the Probeam Pendant to control the linear accelerator and were able to see how VERT fits in the training and patient care pathway.

Vertual's New Website

by Jan Antons.

In late 2022, we decided to invest in a new, dynamic and exciting website that showcased all our products, such as VERT on Demand and VERT Flex, and was useful to our existing customers.

A team was formed with representatives from development, technical and commercial. After defining our requirements and selecting a provider we worked hard from February to May to design the site and create and populate all the content.

Our team is delighted with the result. If you haven't seen the website yet, please visit www.vertual.co.uk. The Compact VERT animation (<https://vertual.co.uk/compact/>) and 3D glasses zooming into a VERT suite are very popular with visitors and add the wow factor!

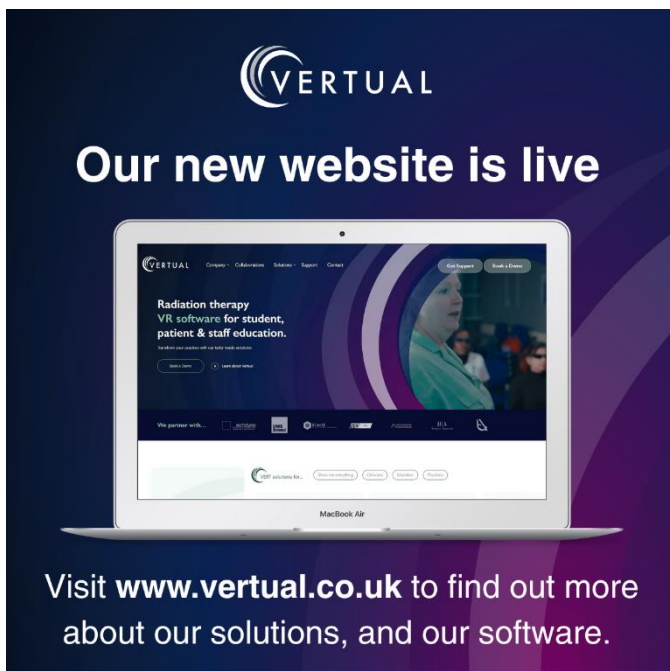
In addition to showing our products, we have also added new features to benefit our existing customers. There is now an option to click "Get support" from the home page, and by accessing this page

<https://vertual.co.uk/request-support/>

From this page you can request technical support or a license to activate your software. There's also an "other" option to request a quote for software support or to update your system, suggest a new feature, or enhancement, and send a general enquiry. We hope this will be helpful if you don't have email access and just want to get in touch with us.

If you prefer to email us, you can use our support address: support@vertual.co.uk

We hope you enjoy the new website. If you want to share any feedback or ideas, get in touch!

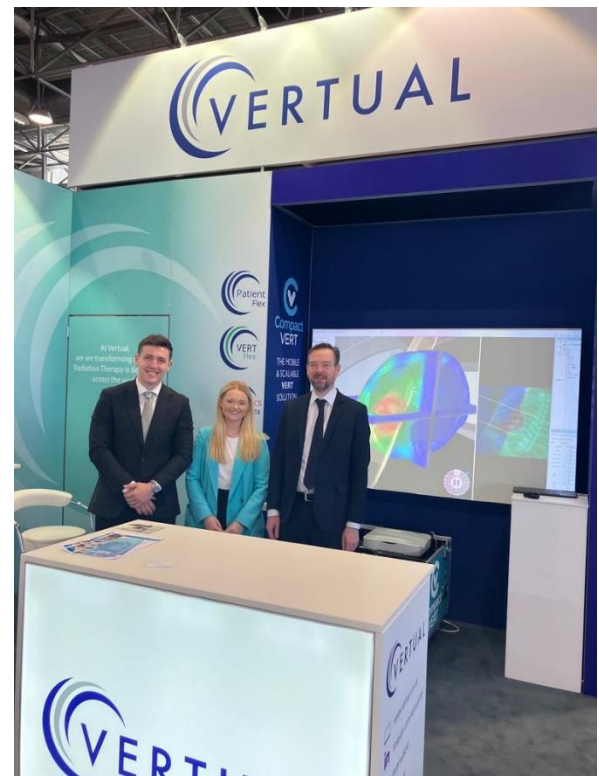


ESTRO 2023

by Tamsyn Vivian

This year's ESTRO was the second biggest turnout the event has ever had. It was an amazing conference with many of our customers and distributors visiting the booth. Our Team: Debra, James, Andy, Daniel, Jan and Tamsyn were on hand delivering demos and making new connections. We showcased our new upcoming products VERT On Demand, Patient Flex and also had our much-loved Compact VERT system on display. It was great to network with other exhibitors at the event as well as meeting Jo and Naman from RadChat!

Special thanks to Cerberex for helping with our booth, you did a fantastic job! We can't wait to see you at ESTRO 2024 in Glasgow! If you didn't manage to see us at the booth you can book a demo here <https://www.vertual.co.uk/contact/>.



Vertual & Delgado

by Robin Wegner

The Delgado Community College Radiation Therapy Program coordinated a meeting in conjunction with the American Association of Medical Dosimetrists (AAMD) 48th Annual Conference in New Orleans on June 6, 2023. Vertual, Inc. sponsored dinner and worked to get approval for 2 CE credits from the ASRT. There were about 20 attendees which included both radiation therapy and medical dosimetry educators. Also, several local dosimetrists joined and were able to see the VERT system for the first time.

Since radiation therapy and medical dosimetry educators have not collaborated before, this was the perfect opportunity to get together. The lecture partnership was titled *Let's Make a Roux: Radiation Oncology Educational Gumbo!* A roux is a base or foundation for any type of gumbo. This analogy was used to demonstrate the varied educational backgrounds among both radiation therapists and medical dosimetrists. Some radiation therapists trained with conventional simulation, custom block cutting, 2D planning, and hand calcs versus CT simulation, multi-leaf collimation, and 3D treatment planning. At the same time, medical dosimetrists may or may not have a background as a radiation therapist. Since automation of procedures has eliminated clinical experiences, a sound foundation should include simulation-based education.

Robin Wegener, Program Director of the radiation therapy program, spoke about the history of the Delgado VERT system and how the Radiation Virtual Education Leadership Group was formed. This group of radiation therapy educators, with a VERT system, first met in New Orleans in 2017. They presented at the ASRT Radiation Therapy Conference (RTC) in San Antonio in 2018 and met again in Seattle in the summer of 2019. Mellonie Brown-Zacarias, Medical Dosimetry Educator and member of the AAMD Formal Education Committee, gave a presentation titled, *Virtual Reality for Medical Dosimetry Education: A Teaching Tool*. She presented images of the VERT system and how it can be used for medical dosimetry education. To sum up, Daniel Owen, Radiotherapy Product Specialist, followed up with a demonstration of errors using VERT.

Both radiation therapy and medical dosimetry educators are looking forward to this continued partnership. A follow-up presentation, *Radiation Oncology Gumbo: A Collaboration of Radiation Therapy and Medical Dosimetry Team Members*, will be presented at the ASRT RTC in San Diego in October.



Founders Corner

by Andy Beavis

In the four months since the last newsletter, I have been involved in quite a few events, lectures, VERT related talks and activity that remind me of why I enjoy being involved in teaching and training the next generation of radiation therapy professionals so much. For me this had been a breath of fresh air given the general state of healthcare finance in the UK and the challenge to providing world class Radiation Therapy.

Recently, I was asked to participate in two meetings and to illustrate the use of VERT to two different audiences, however I kept the theme of those presentations similar. The first of the meetings was at ESTRO (European Society for Therapeutic Radiation and Oncology) course on Clinical Audit, hosted by the National Physics Laboratory (National Standards Lab), London, UK in April. This was very much a course orientated at Physicists at which I collaboratively gave a session (to three groups) about the pitfalls and common errors that auditors might expect to see when reviewing the Primary Calibration Dosimetry of the Linacs and Output measuring equipment. The three groups were organised so that they represented 'inexperienced junior staff' to 'battle hardened old hands' and so it was fun to work with the course faculty to create scenarios in VERT (Physics) to illustrate points we felt important to explore. This exercise confirmed my long-standing belief, and intention for VERT, that being able to show a realistic simulation of the measurement of key dosimetric factors and further

the impact of having a procedural error adds tremendous value to the didactic exercise.

For example, we discussed the measurement of the Quality Index (TPR ratio) for the IAEA TRS398 calibration protocol with a 20cm x 20cm field, rather than a 10cm x 10cm field. All participants were aware that this would introduce an error into the process, but none were able to quantify or assess the magnitude of that error. This virtual practical session using VERT illustrated nicely that for a 6MV beam a value closer to that expected for a 10MV beam was measured. Even for the more experienced group, this enabled further discussion around the benefits of working through simulated sessions to anticipate what might go wrong, but more importantly to provide some 'experience' to be able to recognise it happening and be able to rectify it.

The second meeting was run by Robin Wegener at Delgado Community college and was done during the AAMD (American Association of Medical Dosimetrists) meeting in New Orleans (Louisiana), USA in June. Robin has been a long-standing advocate of VERT and simulation training and a very active member of the VERT community for a number of years. We first met at the ASTRO sponsored Call to Action meeting regarding Radiation Therapy safety in Miami, Florida in June 2010 and so it seemed highly appropriate (at least to me!) to orientate this presentation around using VERT to illustrate actual, historical, patient set-up errors and how the tools and functions in VERT can be used to understand the dosimetric and accuracy implications of these events. Again, I believe that VERT adds so much value to enabling students (and those still finding their way in the clinic) to understand the impact that even seemingly innocuous set-up errors can have. A much-used mantra of mine when presenting VERT reflects that 'we talk about radiotherapy needing to be accurate we tell students they must be accurate... we remind them that we told them we rely on accuracy', but we often forget to define what 'accurate means. VERT is a great tool to clearly illustrate that discussion. The talk at Delgado took a clinical breast case where we had delivered one fraction using the wrong breast board angle. We then explored how the error could be simulated in VERT and compared it to the planned set-up and the discrepancies in delivery were highlighted and discussed. We showed that the intended distribution was lifted off the rib cage more than anticipated, but that no overdose was seen. I have used this example many times and feel it is very helpful for students to gain a thorough understanding of the impact of the error, rather than just being told 'always make sure you use the right breast board setting'.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend personally in the end and so prepared a presentation for Dan, one of our Product Specialists, to give on my behalf. Given the preparation of such detailed notes and materials, we will offer it as an example 'workbook' for inclusion with the VERT 7 release. As ever, we would be delighted to hear from anyone who feels this type of suggested practice is interesting and that more would be useful. If you have specific topics that you feel would be helpful, then we would be delighted to get your suggestions. Likewise, if you have prepared sessions and would be willing to share with the VERT family then please let us know, we can help re-implement using library patients if necessary.

ASTRO/ ASRT is just around the corner in October, I hope to see you there and so you are then please swing by the Virtual booth and say hello.

