number of e-commerce initiatives targeting the golf course market, Albert contends that XSTurf already has an advantage because it offers anonymity, the security of escrow accounts and so many ways to sell products.

"There is the catalog model which lists manufacturer's products at list prices," said Albert. "But if I am a buyer why do I want to buy from the site for the same or higher prices? There is convenience, but not much value."

As far as the request-for-quote model, Albert dismissed that as "great for the buyer, but bad for the seller—since the buyer is not committed the seller has little incentive to respond."

XSTurf aims to penetrate all courses that have an annual budget of at least $100,000 for chemicals, seeds and parts—an estimated 10,000 courses.

Morgan Stanley invested $20 million in the company in December, and the company is in another round of strategic financing right now with Credit Suisse First Boston.

In preparation for the launch of XSTurf.com, the company will be adding turf seed and equipment experts.

"Going forward, Albert is confident. "This is not just a theory," he said. "We have proven that the free market exchange is the most efficient market mechanism leading to the best way to move inventory and reduce the over all costs for the end user."
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Simplex additions
Continued from page 31
hold on to that," said Whitacre. "In
Phoenix integration is beginning
already. And in Kentucky, we are
all around it, so that will be one that
we will be developing consolidation
plans for." On the turfgrass side, Simplex
T&H has picked up hot-selling L-93
creeping bentgrass, Southshore
creeping bentgrass, Jamestown II
chirnings fescue, and Jaguar 3 turf-
type tall fescue. The company now
has all the distribution facilities,
growing contracts, germ plasm and
related genetic research for these
turfgrass varieties.
These new assets are already being
integrated, said Whitacre. "We were very strategic with the
assets that we purchased. They are
complimentary to our existing var-
eties," he said. "We were putting
business plans together around
these varieties 90 days ago."
According to Whitacre, these var-
eties will be available through indi-
pendent seed companies and dis-
tributors as well as through Simplex
Partners. "We will hit the market in
a number of different channels," he
said. "There are some market
niches where we’d need more than
one point of access."