Getting Started

FIRST

Download the game and extract the package to your C:\ drive. This should create a C:\UO directory. Within this directory, you should have a folder for DATA, FILES, INFO, SAVES, and SCRIPTS.

If you do not put this in "C:\UO" then open your "MyServerSettings.cs" file and edit the line to the directory you placed the server files (see below for the line you should look for):

public static string FilesPath()

CLIENT

You can run either *Razor.exe* to play the game or *Razor.bat* if you want your screen resolution to change to a lower one before running it. If this is something foreign to your computer knowledge, then just use *Razor.exe*. If you play this on your local machine (server and client) then leave the server address as 127.0.0.1 for that. Otherwise, you will need the IP address of the remote server and use that instead.

FIREWALLS

The most common issue with running a public server is firewall configurations. That is beyond the scope of this document and you will have to seek help from others if you have issues. The simple explanation, however, is that port 2593 needs to be open on a firewall that points to the internal IP address of the Odyssey server. Players need to know your public IP address (or local IP address if you are on the same home network). For local networks, the firewall of the server needs to allow the access previously mentioned for port 2593. If you have a server shared over the Internet, then your home's router needs to direct traffic from the Internet to your server on port 2593.

CONFIGURATION

Open your "MyServerSettings.cs" script and make any changes to this file that suit your desired server setup. It is recommended that you perhaps play the game for awhile before making changes here. If you are going to run this server in single player mode, then have the server save when you log out (SaveOnCharacterLogout) and some routines run at startup (RunRoutinesAtStartup). These will run by default unless you change it. If you are going to run this server 24x7, then turn these features off by setting them to "false". You may be tempted to set the "Unidentified Item" chance to zero percent. Although you can do that, just be aware that skills like Arms Lore and Item Identification will become quite useless along with merchants and magic items that perform these identifying services. The time between quests is a means to avoid getting rich quick by doing quest after quest in quick order. Along those lines, if you don't want the players to pile up on artifacts it is best to leave the "Sage Artifact Search" time as it is (GetTimeBetweenArtifactQuests).

DO NOT DELETE the SAVES folder. It is a world all setup. If you do not use this world as a base to begin, then all of the dungeon homes, and sky castles, will not be able to be purchased.

START THE SERVER

Run the ODYSSEY.EXE file and let the world load. NOTE: Whenever the server starts up, it will mention that it deletes inaccessible items. This is normal behavior as part of the server cleanup and maintenance. Some routines run as server start, so be patient if you cannot log in immediately. This doesn't apply if you disabled the "RunRoutinesAtStartup" option. Once the server is running, you can play the game by using the executable in:

MUSIC OPTIONS

There are 3 different folders in the C:\UO\Client\music directory. One is the modern Ultima Odyssey music in the "Digital" folder. There is also a folder called "DigitalClassic", which has more retro music from older Ultima games. Lastly, there is a folder called "DigitalAlternate". This contains newer music from other classic fantasy games, chosen for variety and thematic purposes. If you want to switch between these two, you will need to close your client and then rename "Digital" to "DigitalModern" and then rename one of the other folders to "Digital". When you start the client again, you will have different music. To switch back, close your client and then rename "Digital" back to what it was and then rename another folder to "Digital". Then start the client again and you will have the other music.

EVERYTHING STARTED

When you can, log in with the admin account. Do not play the game using the admin account. Create another account to play the game instead. Run the [helpadmin command while in game to learn about some of the commands you have at your disposal.

ADMIN ACCOUNT: Wizard

ADMIN PASSWORD: admin

If you enter the world, you are all set to go. Player accounts will be created automatically by default when they enter a unique username and password of their choice.

If this is your first time running this server, then run the "[buildworld" command while logged into the world as the admin account. If you feel the need to rebuild the world later on, you can run the "[buildworld" command again the same way. You should probably run this command if you ever choose to update to may latest version. The command will leave all of your players' stuff alone so don't worry. It will only remove the server's items and creatures, and then rebuild them fresh. You may find that you never run this command, but it is good to know it is there.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you plan to change anything on this server, other than the server connection information or difficulty settings already noted, there is a really good chance you will break something. Be it the server itself, or a feature down the line, something will probably happen. Do any such things at your own risk, as this server is tightly connected to various elements and has been tweaked for over 7 years to get the balance it has. The client included has been heavily customized so don't use anything else. I provide no support for modifications or results of modifications beyond what was already covered.

There is a folder, "C:\Info", where some information is collected and/or added to for use within the game. The "Articles" folder contains up to 10 entries you can post (read 0.txt first), where these entries can be as long as you need them to be and people can read them on bulletin boards.

The "News.txt" file allows you to add messages of the day.

The "Rules.txt" file has my current server rules in there, so feel free to edit it. These rules appear on the bulletin board in the game world.

There are also log files kept here. These are added to by the system as certain events occur. When a character dies, completes a quest, or kills a creature...they are added in one of these files. These then allow citizens or town criers the ability to speak about the most recent deeds in the land.

One of the design goals was to include as much information in the game as possible, without the need to leave the game client and browse the Internet for information. Players can learn everything within the game and these "Articles" and "Message of the Day" options allow you to keep players informed without the need of a website. If a player doesn't know about a game feature, it is likely due to one of three things:

1. They have never played Ultima Online to have a decent understanding of the mechanics. So this game assumes you have some Ultima Online experience to run around, fight, and train skills.

2. They haven't read the provided information like the book you start with or the help screens.

3. They haven't explored the world enough to learn things from citizens, or found the right books that explain various features.

There is a task manager system that runs tasks throughout the day. Some of these tasks also run at server start (by default, but it can be changed), so when the server comes up, don't be alarmed if you cannot log into it instantly. It is just running a few routines. These things are in place to make a self-sufficient server that should require zero adminstrative intervention. There is a help system in place for physically stuck characters, in case that ever occurs. There is also a mechanism to save the server when a character logs out (by default, but it can be changed). These are mostly for those that

play this in a single player environment. So if your server is not going to run for 24 hours a day, then at least the routines can run at startup.

When players log in for the first time, the can run the [helpme command while in game to learn about some features they can use. An easier way, however, is if they use the character's paper doll window and press either the INFO or HELP buttons for more information and many settings for their character and gameplay experience.

All characters begin with the following items:
100 Gold
Dagger
Torch
Waterskin
Bread
Book (Guide to Adventure) – This book only talks about the client interface, so if you have played Ultima Online before, you will learn nothing new from it.

Road to Odyssey

I started playing UO back in about 1997, and we had one copy of the game that three of us shared. It was a neat experience because I saw MUDs being played by others, but I didn't want to play a game that looked like a DOS shell all day. It was pretty amazing to see logged in players running around the game world. I didn't play official OSI servers very long, as I got annoyed with the player killers and Everquest came out with a no-PVP game. When I heard of the UOX emulator, I was intrigued because I could make a UO game that I could play in single player. I made my first server with WolfPack and made it public for my local friends and I. I remember the boat system didn't work so I had ferrymen at docks that would give you ride to Hythloth or other islands. I think we were more excited about playing UO without paying the monthly fee.

I began this project in mid-2012, and like I eluded to, it wasn't my first. I had a couple of servers in the past, and they were mostly cookie-cutter OSI shards. I go back as far as Lonewolf and Wolfpack emulators, where I was the first to release a fully spawned world for everyone to download and use. I had very little knowledge of Ultima lore other than when I used to play UO in the late 90's. I had one server where I called my land Sosaria but it was the Britannia map. I didn't know there was actually a difference so I felt pretty dumb about that later on in life. When I discovered the Darkshard maps for sale, I saw an actual Sosaria map that was all built. I quickly bought it and gave him an FTP account to my home server so I didn't have to wait for a DVD.

Since this wasn't my first RunUO server, building up Sosaria was pretty quick. I had to set some normal things I like where skill caps were at 1,000 and some other game tweaks. I can't recall what those originally were. Anyway, I could finally turn on the server and my friends and I played in it. They were excited with the new land and dungeons. *TIP: If you want to make a server, and your dreams are large, don't wait until everything you dreamed of comes true. Get a base up and running and build onto it. You will be a more content server admin if you can play while you build. If you are going to wait until it is "perfect", chances are it will never see the light of day.*

As time went on, I learned more about the client and how to add maps, rearrange maps, add items, add sounds, basically change the client entirely. I used CentrED and RadMapCopy to do much of that work. I hate having to make maps from scratch. I think I only made the space ship and Dracula's castle from scratch. Everything else was taken from some other sources and I just maybe redecorated them. *TIP: If you like what some other shard has (map, items, etc), download their client and take the pieces you want. Hell, take my maps and content and make something brand new. We already unofficially borrowed Richard Garriott's art, maps, and animations so there are no angels in the shard emulation arena.*

My goal with the map was to have as much decoration built into the actual map files, and I am glad I did that. By the time I added the actual items you can interact with, it was a huge amount. Some shards just go into the game and add decorations manually. Mistake! It just makes a messy world that loads weird to players and when they control-shift...hell...what a bunch of screen spam. I think maybe some shard owners do this because A: they don't know how to edit the map or B: they don't want to host the client software so they point you to it.

There ended up being 9 different lands to explore (10 if you count the Moon but who are we kidding?). I reused the T2A map as the Savaged Empire. I wiped out Tokuno and made the Isles of Dread (a Dungeons & Dragons module name). This consisted of islands from the original Britannia map. Other than that, I think everything else is brand new from my point of view. Oh, I forgot that when I had the Lodoria world map, it had dungeons that were identical to either Sosaria or the Serpent Island (I forget which) so I decided to take the dungeons from the original maps of UO and use them. I have them in various areas but mostly Lodoria and the Savaged Empire. I am glad I did this because A: it was easy and B: it is nice to travel to familiar locations...not everything has to be brand new. I like going to Destard or Hythloth.

Once you pick a RunUO/ServUO version, you are best to stick with that version forever. Some will claim you can do things to check your files against new files, but I would challenge anyone to take my stuff and convert it to ServUO without ending it all with a shotgun in your mouth. With that, people often wrestle with client versions. I downloaded the version I wanted, and stuck with it. I had this plan even before I modified it like I did. I added so much content to my client version that I had to expand the memory the EXE can use to load so you wouldn't get virtual memory errors. It was the extra animations that did it.

The client and server need to be assessed and you have to realize what you can and cannot do with them. For example, the virtue system in the emulator was an incomplete mess. Only some things worked and not very well. So I stripped that out of the game. The other is the client. Learn where you are limited and accommodate for it. As an example, you cannot add custom containers to the game and expect them to work right. So, you have some choices. You could avoid adding new containers. You could add new containers and watch them stack items funny...forever. You could do what I did and start using the ClassicUO client as I find it handles custom containers better.

Because my friends and I didn't really "play together", I wanted a single-player style environment. I wanted to make a character and be able to go through all of the places by myself. I wanted to play the game on my schedule, and so did my friends. One of

them always became a tamer so he had virtual friends. The one thing I did was change the ratio of hit points, stamina, and mana toward their primary attribute. This was the simplest change to help with a single-player setting. I could leave the stat caps alone but 100 strength gives you 200 hit points. It may seem like a lot, but an ancient wyrm will still tear you down quickly. The other nice thing about this statistical approach is that you can change it at any time. You can't readily do that with stat mods themselves, meaning you can't globally change a stat cap on everyone that has characters created already...or not as easily.

I always liked the 1,000 skill cap instead of the 720 (or whatever it is). Many people will say, "play this shard because it has an unlimited skill cap" or "I hate skill caps because I want one character that does it all". I can appreciate those modes of thinking, but I wanted a system that promotes character archetypes. With 1,000 skill points, you have enough to make a good fighter, wizard, thief, druid, assassin, priest, etc. Playing these archetypes allow you to enjoy the game differently with each one. If you make a wizard-tamer every single time, you will never get to experience the other stuff in the world. Stuff like making your own Frankenstein's monster or sneaking through town and poisoning your assassin marks. It means you won't step out of your comfort zone and try an alchemist murder that is on the run surviving on all of his elixirs.

Continuing on with tamers, I don't think any shard out there has ever stopped the fact that tamers can run through the dungeons and slaughter everything with their wyrms. My game is no different. First, you have to work to get there in taming and the other animal skills. So I feel that if they get that good at taming, then plow through the dungeons. Do you have fun doing it? That is all that matters. So I took a bit of a different approach and moved some of the niceties of taming toward the non-tamers. I created the henchman system so you can hire virtual friends to go with you. They are as good as your character is, but you can give them supplies like bandages and potions...and they will use them when needed. You have to give them a cut of the loot, but at least you can get some help if you want it. It also looks very Baldur's Gate-ish when you have a couple of adventurers following you around.

There are also other things in the world that supplement this. You could get a monster that is bonded to you by doing some quest-like things and saving up some gold. You can build a golem or a robot. You will never have the versatility of a tamer, but at least you can enjoy some of the benefits. Necromancer's "summon undead" spell has been greatly improved where they can summon a very powerful ally that stays in the world much longer than on the original servers. The same goes with magery, as I increased their summon timers and also gave them the ability to have a more powerful summon based on their evaluate intelligence.

I would visit other shard's websites, and I would see what features they were bragging about and determine if I liked it or not. If I liked it, I had to create my own interpretation of it but it was nice to get these ideas from other sources. Some that come to mind are the golems you can build and what you can do with the "magic trap" spell. Those ideas came from other shards. Most recently, I took some ideas from Outlands where I have mountless dungeons and they inspired me to make almost all of my gumps consistent looking. Not like theirs, but consistent. I should have done that sooner because "[" commands can be annoying and I think they can be a turn-off. It is also just lazy user interface design.

Some things about the skill system bothered me. First, my client showed all of those gargoyle skills and spellweaving in the list. They didn't work well or at all so I wanted them gone. I forgot the program I used but I was able to strip them right out of the client. I couldn't get rid of skills in the middle of the list, just the end of the list. Since I hate seeing useless skills in the list, I decided to make them into something again. This was years before some other shard broached this area. Now they handled it differently than I did for the most part. They tried to add some benefits to having the skills. I went the other approach and made the world "need" those skills again. I made a system that would make items unidentifiable at times. I made some potions appear as unknown so you have to sip them like the very old days of UO.

Detect hidden had very little application, so I incorporated a secret treasure system. Many people take this skill now just to find treasure randomly on the dungeon floor. Forensics was greatly expanded to a more morbid skill where you dig up graves in cemeteries and make potions from dead creatures. One good at this could become a grandmaster undertaker. Camping was another one that needed some help. I like the idea I eventually came up with, where you can setup a tent and basically have your own portable tavern. I often take this skill because loot gets heavy and this skill really helps you offload it instead of having to head home.

Because camping turned out well, I focused on the fishing aspect of the game, and with that...boats. I set the boat's holds to fit a certain weight which is based on their size. Otherwise there wasn't really any reason to buy a bigger ship in a game with a low population. When your skill in fishing is high enough, your boat will have a hatch door that goes to a lower deck. This is a public area (described later) where anyone going into their lower deck will go to the same lower deck. It makes the fishing skill a much more versatile skill. I have a character that does this and it is nice to park a boat near a dungeon. I can return to the boat and go below deck to rest and/or log out...or drop off treasure. It turned out to be a neat little element because if your friends went down into your lower deck, and you dock the boat with them inside, they will pop out at some beach when they leave the lower deck...like they were abandoned at sea.

Some spells needed help as well, and mostly due to the slow rule changes made to the game over the years. Magic lock had very little use so I incorporated that one shard's idea of locking creatures in an iron flask. A flask you dump out later and the creature attacks stuff. This spell also locks dungeon doors for a short time, which can be handy. Resurrection was another spell I had to tweak. In a single-player environment, this spell does you no good as you can't resurrect yourself. So I changed it that you can cast it on yourself ahead of time. Nightsight is only as useful as your client's light levels, however. I get that people want to see everything all of the time, but you really lose something in the world's ambience of the use of lighting when you filter it out. Torches light the halls, fire elementals glow, and your magic candle lights your way.

As I stated in other articles, this game was designed around old Dungeons & Dragons methodologies. In UO, traps never hurt us enough to be scary. So why have them? They would only really get you if you had 5 hit points left after a fight and opened a chest without checking it first. So I didn't use the UO traps in this game (other than mushrooms, stone faces, and container traps). Since traps are more dangerous, I had a heart and made the exploding mushrooms strange colors and glow so a player can avoid them better. You can't see the glow with light filters on...can yeah...huh? Most of the

traps, however, are random hidden traps that move around the dungeon so you never know where one is going to be and when. I grabbed my old Dungeon Masters Guide and came up with some fun traps that will piss you off...and that is the point. You are supposed to hate traps and not consider them a mild inconvenience. So now your coins might turn to lead, an item might vanish from your hand, your potion bottles might break everywhere, or you might get teleported all the way across the world.

I didn't like UO treasure. I thought it was pointless. Treasure map chests were fine, but those crates you would find in Despise had a torch and a loaf of bread. Don't you feel like a mighty adventurer to vanquish evil and be prized with a torch? I wanted loot. Not treasure...loot. I want to find chests and crates and throw open the lid to see what is in there. I want to shuffle through the box and take the things I want and leave the rest. I want to feel like I am exploring a dungeon with monsters AND treasure. I don't want a requirement be that you have to kill something to get something. If a thief wants to sneak around and pick locks on chests...fine. That is what a thief does. So people may think I have a lot of treasure in the game but it is mostly loot. You need to want the stuff in the box for it to have any value to you. I myself only take things that help my character archetype. If I am a wizard, I don't take the lock picks. If I am a fighter, I don't take the magic scrolls.

If you can't tell from playing this game I made, I will tell you that I have no love for player killers. Never have. It is why I quit UO so many years ago. But...I have PVP turned on in this game...so...I like the danger of a player being able to hurt another player. Not in the way the player killers state, but more of a group adventure way. I think it provides more danger when you go with your friend into a dungeon (with his white wyrm) and you get into a fight where the wyrm's breath hits you too because you were close to the monster. Or your friend accidentally runs through your fire field. Plus if you want to have a friendly face-off with friends the game lets you do that.

This game is not player killer friendly, however, for a few reasons. First, the world is ginormous and it has over 100 dungeons to explore. I will admit that 70 of them are of sizeable adventure, where the rest are smaller (one level) areas of interest you may run across...but still...that is a ton of places to go and no one would ever find out where you were. Secondly, "public areas". I have a few of these and they are non-PVP areas for players to go. These include the tavern, inn, or bank...along with a handful of other areas. I wanted to be able to run to the bank, drop off some stuff, and stand in there safely while I run in the kitchen to check on dinner. Lastly, "invulnerability potions". I use these mostly for corpse retrieval but just take a swig of this when some guy feels like whacking you just cuz. Then you can walk by him and wave as you head to safety.

The public area idea was mine, as no other shard tried doing this. They complain that the player base is small so their solution is to make the map smaller so people run into each other. Screw that! I like walking around a huge land. It isn't like UO's land of boredom. You will run into a fight with something...maybe a giant or a dragon. You could be going through the forest and a huge magic gate opens and you are face to face with a balron. I have so many dungeons that I forget where they are so if I am doing a land crawl, I could stumble onto a dungeon and go in it...just cuz.

But, I wanted to have a situation where you could run into your multi-player friends so I devised this system where if you go into the bank, it is the same bank everywhere. This

proved to work well with only 3 people online. I would see my friends in the bank quite often...and it didn't matter what city I was in. To digress a bit, this actually all started with the Thieves Guild. I wanted a Thieves Guild in every city because of things like the Thieves Guild role-playing game or Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser. I made one guild and I thought...shit...I don't want to make a bunch more for each city. So I had the doors go to the same place and lead back to where you entered. Then I used this code on banks, taverns, and inns.

After I came to this realization about public areas, there was something I maybe would have done differently. If I had this idea sooner, I may have had just one giant city that was central. So imagine there are 9 different lands but they have a city in each one. All you would see from the land is the city walls and city gates. Once you went in, you were in the same city as everyone else. Basically one giant public area. But...I already had the cities built and I just left them be. This is when I decided to have cities rotate stock round in their stores. This worked out pretty neat because if I wanted to buy something from a mage, but the Britain mage didn't have it, I would run to Moon to see if they were selling it. It is a bit of a simulation on goods, stock, and availability...especially in a low population world.

To go back in time, before this server, I did have a shard where I wiped out every town with CentrED...except Britain. I built forests over where the cities where and it is as if they never existed. I even got rid of the roads. This had the desired effect of everyone having to go to one city because there weren't any others. Just another tip for those that are annoyed with spread out, small player bases.

I found some dude's "graphic update" package, where it basically had new animations to replace the current creature animations. I don't remember where I got that now, but it had a ton of graphics that were basically new to UO. If you are a game player, you will recognize them from games like Diablo or Warcraft. They may not be "in line" with classic UO graphics, but that ship sailed when EA put Third Dawn monsters into the 2D client...so I grabbed them and ran with it. I replaced only a couple of monsters. The succubus, centaur, beetle, kirin, skeletal horse, and swamp dragon...because EA's looked dumb. The others I loaded up into free slots and either made new monsters with them, or I randomized current monsters to have various appearances. Skeletons are an example of this randomization. This is why I had to do the memory hack on the client, because it would no longer load with all of these new animations.

I would rather have the new monster graphics than to take the old fashion route of just using the same monsters over and over while only changing their color. How many different colored water elementals can you fight before you are sick of seeing them? I used pretty much every available slot I could for monster and animal graphics. I literally ran out of numbers to use. You can't go over 1,000 for body values. Don't fool yourself if you think you can. You may think you succeeded...but watch them fight. Are they doing their animations or just standing there fighting stiffly. If they are not doing their animations, you probably put them in a body value over 999. Put them in a lower body value and you will see them move around again. That was another tip...but it really depends on your client version.

You can't drive yourself nuts about game balance either. Don't get me wrong, it is an important element, but some things are out of your control. As an example, games often

put on their boxes that this will give you X hours of gameplay. They played it from start to finish so they have an average. So if it is 72 hours of gameplay, and someone plays it for 12 hours a day...every day...then they are done with it in 6 days. If you play it for an hour a day...you have over two months of gaming fun. It is not much different for UO shards. I created this game to be approached by my gaming time. So if someone jumps into my game and plays for 12 hours a day...every day...they are going to amass more wealth sooner. If they reach what they determine as their peak...and they are bored with this game...there is nothing you can really do. Tell them "thanks for playing?" I try to tell them to try another character type, but then they look at you with a puzzled look of "why in the hell would anyone not want to play a tamer-mage?" If you have players like this, please try not to roll your eyes too hard...you might strain them.

I think the quest system in UO was pretty good, there is just a trade off with complexity. They are involved, but because of that...there are fewer of them and they are all the same every time. No matter what you do, quests have the same elements that make them quests. Kill stuff and/or get stuff. I chose the simple quest route with not much complexity. The upside is that they are very random and they could send you all over the many worlds to do them. This randomization I built into the game was important to me. I wanted to be surprised when I played the game. You can't do that if you know where everything is.

Now I do have some involved quests as well, but again, only a few. These mostly revolve around Ultima lore and although they are static in presentation, they are random in execution. You will probably have to get stuff but it will be in a random part of the world. The biggest one I think is the Bard's Tale recreation quest. I remember in the 80's, I played a lot of the Bard's Tale. When I saw someone playing Ultima, I thought that it was pretty cool because they had Skara Brae too and you can finally explore outside of the town. Again, with my youthful ignorance, it wasn't the same Skara Brae. That still stuck in my mind, however, so I made the quest in my game. At first, it was supposed to be a trap of sorts that one of my friends fell into. They accidentally got stuck in Skara Brae and they were pretty pissy about it. Another friend of mine heard about this and ran into it on purpose. I now find myself making characters and going to Skara Brae on purpose because it is a good place to go and get some gold and artifacts.

I like my prisoner system I came up with. This was designed to give you a sort of super boss that you can fight on your time and hopefully on your terms. You may find a crystal ball with a trapped prisoner inside. I put some heroes and villains in them randomly so you could fight Tiamat, King Arthur, Elric, or the Grim Reaper. There are 24 currently and you can add to the list in the scripts. They have you getting some items to free them, and you have to free them inside some random dungeons...but at least you get to decided when you want to face the creature. So if you play this in a multi-player environment, this gives a system where you are not camping for these boss fights because players control them. Killing them is reminiscent of champion spawns, as you get some neat items and coins drop all around you in explosive victory.

Character customization was important to me since UO had a cool system of dressing your characters and dye tubs. Many games don't have these graphical options, even newer ones today. So I wanted to have better access to item appearances and dyes. I focused a lot on robes, by adding a bunch of different ones. They only look different on the paperdoll, but the pixel size of UO wouldn't warrant a much different looking robe

anyway. The robes were more focused on because most characters end up wearing one and it covers all of your armor...so I thought I would give them more looks. These cosmetic things don't alter the gameplay mechanics, but if I want my necromancer character to wear a robe with a pentagram or skull on it...I can.

If you have played this game, you probably already know that you can dye your houses and boats. As I wrote in previous places, it has good and bad elements to this design choice. One can build a totally pink house in the middle of the woods. I am sure I could write some code to avoid these "things" but hell...if that is what you want to do to have fun...then go for it. My personal vision was that one would use this enhanced system to make a black castle out of the classis UO castle...or even white. The boats started out pretty crappy. An entirely dyed boat looked strange as everything, down to the tillerman, was that color. I eventually revamped the graphics to make the boat pieces a partial hue. A lot of work, but it turned out well. Now boats look pretty neat no matter the color...even pink.

I added a lot of new house designs that I got from Rel Por when they shut down. I like to pick a house that is pre-built. I am lazy when it comes to house construction. I did build a few pre-built houses myself. My favorite was the pyramid. I always wanted to have a character that lives in a huge pyramid. With this system, you can have any color pyramid you want. *TIP: I never use UO Architect for this. I built houses in CentrED and then loaded up the map in the game. I logged in as a GM and thawed the statics and then did a static export to get a list of all the house pieces. Then in Notepad++ I cleaned up the list into their multi format.*

I left the custom housing in place for players that want to build a house of their own, again, for personal taste and customization. I think most shards suffer from the empty plots all over the place, but I think people would rather have the option to build a home than not. I think I may have come to a compromise to this for those that run this in a multi-player environment. You sometimes find tents that state you need a 9x9 plot to set it on. You can dye it whatever color you want. This lets players build their huge 18x18 – 3 story plot at first (if they plan to save money and build it up later). They can cover the plot with grass for free and place this tent on it so it looks like a campsite instead of an empty plot with crates and chests sitting on it.

I find it interesting the different perspectives on rares and rarity and what that means to players. This server has no vet rewards, but I made them randomly available on some merchants so you can go buy them. Quite frankly, I don't care how long you play this game. These things considered "rare" are neat and I think we should have access to them if we want to get them. Some are the classic strange item you get from killing a paragon (for example). I left those elements alone. If you remember old UO, the ranger armor was highly prized by players even though the armor was basically junk. It was green. That was about the special-ness of it. So limiting the amount of colors you dye things with, just to make other colors some highly sought prize, is something I don't care to make "rare". I am not impressed when a server releases some new color cloth for 2 days and you have to go get it because it will never be seen again. I would rather make equipment and house decorations special since this is a D&D based server. Did you ever play D&D and say, "oooh, I found a plain shiny blue robe and it is the only color of this robe ever!" No...instead we were excited about finding a rod of resurrection or a vorpal sword.

The only aspect of items being available for a short time are holiday decorations. The system is designed that during October and December, vendors will sell Halloween and Christmas decorations respectively. I did this because they are neat but I don't want to see them on vendors all of the time. But on the other hand, if you play this game and you take a break for a few months, you may miss the window of opportunity to buy these things. As far as I can remember, this is the only category of items that are available for a limited time...but at least they pop up one month a year.

Another interesting observation is the war between T2A-style and AOS-style servers. I will often hear/read that other players say that Age of Shadows "item driven" system ruined the game that it is all about "items". You will then hear/read these same people talk about how pissed off they were when they lost their silver weapon or vanquishing weapon. So...what is the difference? Well I think it just comes down to complexity. AOS added more complexity to the system where old timers didn't want to do the math on their gear. They just want to find a silver weapon and not put much thought past that. I can appreciate that, but I like the AOS system. It lets me create many different types of magic items with various properties. It lets me create an ice sword that does major damage against fire creatures...just like D&D. Because characters have a resist system with physical, fire, cold, etc...I put in a pseudo saving throw system. This system mostly works against traps, but it will check your resist level and see if you avoid the trap or minimize the effects. So for example, let's say you walk over a poison cloud trap but your poison resist is 70%. The game does some math and maybe you avoid setting it off altogether or the poison that affects you is way less severe.

You could also argue that I ruined the artifact system in this game with my naming system. So you could find a magic longsword in a chest, which is "normal", but you may also find "Mishak's Longsword of Might" because my treasure system named the item as such. It may not be super cool, but I bet you will never find "Mishak's Longsword of Might" ever again. So with this naming system in place I did create true artifacts. I don't mind the implications, as I think it adds a bit of story flavor to treasure. You will notice in the game that I loved to mix and match colors, materials, and names into items and randomizing them. There are no more wands of healing but instead you may find "Verek's Diamond Wand of Healing".

I left all of the classic UO artifacts in the game because...well...why not. Players remember these items and they are good items to find. I also added a bunch of custom static (as in not randomized) artifacts as well like Conan's Sword for example. Because these are so particular, I did throw in a search quest system where you pay a bunch of gold to a sage to learn the location of the exact artifact you seek. Then you have to go search the land for it. My friend equated it to the Super Mario Brothers level ending. "Sorry Mario, but the Princess is in another castle". He said this because you might get to the place the artifact is supposed to be and find another clue that leads to another dungeon. These quests also have a failure possibility, that has a neat twist. You may find a counterfeit artifact that is basically just a plain item. It could piss off a player but that is the risk/reward element. At least you can decorate your home with the counterfeit item.

Custom artifacts were something I came up from the "Item Level" system someone made for RunUO years ago. It was a system where you have levelable items and you would use them in the game. They would gain experience points that you could then spend on

the item to make them better. I first decided to incorporate this into the game in regards to fame. Fame is a useless statistic for game mechanics, and only provides a different title for your character. I wanted fame to be something sought for a tangible reward so I came up with the Legends system where you spend your fame points (along with other things like gold) to get an item of your choice that is mundane. As you use this item, it gets better where you customize what properties it has. You can even name the item whatever you want. In the end, if your character's name is Tim, you could have a really cool "Longsword of Tim's Might" or "Tim's Grand Sword of Death". It not only provides an outlet for fame points, but also a bit of a storytelling birthplace for an artifact from the players themselves. Almost a "where do these artifacts come from" answer.

Because this worked out well, I had the idea of custom artifacts you can find. In regular UO, you could have a wizard character that finds a plate helm you cannot really use efficiently. Now on a high population server, you could sell it to another player. In this game, a local vendor may buy it from you but they won't pay a ton. So in a low population server it could be quite un-rewarding in this situation where the wizard might just toss out the artifact altogether. So there are a few situations where you find a book where you can pick the exact item type of you want (sword, talisman, robe, etc.) and you will get some pre-set points to spend on it. This lets you not only get the item you want but the properties you want as well. Because this mostly comes from killing "bosses", I had to limit the distribution where if you kill the Dragon King and get a custom artifact...you will never get one from him again for that character. There are other ways to get them and they are not that restrictive. Killing one of those 24 super boss prisoners is an example. I just wanted to put the control in the player's hands so they don't regret their character choice, "nice armor...too bad I am a thief and only wear leather".

Crafting needed some help for a single player environment (or low population). At first, in this game, crafting was just a means to make your own stuff or fix your own things. I didn't want crafting to be necessary in the game. That is why you can pay a local blacksmith to fix your armor. If you don't want to pay them, then make a blacksmith character. Along with that, I wanted to somehow simulate the shop experience. It first started with the Merchant Crate, where you can put crafted items and gathered resources into it and it will empty once in a while as "the story goes" the Merchants Guild will pick it up and pay you for it. It is a simple system where you just lock the box down in your home and put stuff in it.

I recently added to this again, where you can buy a shoppe from the appropriate vendor. This is a shelf you lock down in your home and you will have 12 customers that want you to do things for them based on the profession. Your shoppe has a reputation as you do more tasks for customers. You may fail at tasks where you gain no guild, lose some resources in the shoppe, and lose some reputation. The better the reputation, the better paying jobs you will get. Eventually, your crafter character will have a means to earn as much money as an adventurer playing for a session (session being subjective so let's say 2 hours). This is why your shoppe will get new customers every couple of hours. It is not a complicated system and is more story-driven/flavor-textual, but it lets you have a virtual store in a low population game world.

Resources were changed where I either added more or revamped them. Some ore cannot be found unless you are digging in the appropriate land. There are other metals that are not found in nature, so you need to get the other element to mix them together to get

"brass" for example. In the early days of the server, I stripped out all of the custom wood because it provided nothing but item color to furniture and wooden shields. When I added wooden armor to the game, I decided to add custom wood again but I did it my way. I didn't like UO's custom wood as the names of the wood seemed strange and off putting. Like ore, some wood can only be obtained when in the correct land. You can only get petrified wood in the Underworld for example. Driftwood cannot really be chopped from trees, but is found in watery dungeons or out at sea. Leathers were greatly expanded and renamed to have better names than horned or spined. I wanted to wear a lizard, serpent, or dragon tunic. There is also many more leathers added to offer more colors and properties and many more creatures can be skinned to get these different leathers.

I had a server once with a bunch of custom spells like druid magic and extra necromancer spells. I wanted the spell effects to be in this game...but not as spells. This is where the necrotic and druid alchemy came in. The necrotic alchemy was first and it mimics the story of witches making brews with eyes of toads and stuff like that. It uses the forensics skill since you like cutting up dead things. They would then make potions with these effects I described earlier. Druid alchemy works almost identical, with their own types of potions. The interesting part of these two types of alchemy is the recipes. They are random. If you have a cauldron, and you learn all of the 16 necrotic potions, your recipes for these items will be different than another person's necrotic brewery.

Guilds were ignored past the initial release of the game. I remember people wanting to join the mage guild so they can pay 1 gold less on a black pearl. I guess that was cool when it was hard to get gold, but after a while they were just left in there as an old game mechanic that was forgotten. Nobody did it anymore. It is like having taste ID in the skill list even though it did nothing. I had a choice of either scrapping it or making it better. I think the guild option is very fantasy RPGish enough that I had to save it. So being a member of a guild has huge benefits now where you do get things cheaper, but you also gain skill faster in the associated skills. So magery raises faster if you are in the Wizards Guild, for example. Members can buy things from the guildmasters, where a wizard can buy reagents in bulk much easier being in the guild. Crafters can make really cool magical items if they are in the guild. Because of these changes, I added even more guilds to join (you can only be a member of 1 at a time) and I changed the merchants to show their guild affiliation so you know you will get good prices from them.

I put a lot of effort into evil play styles. I made necromancers better, thieves worthwhile, poisoning profitable, and all the other depravities I could think of in a medieval game world. Forensics was a big one, where you can go dig up bodies in the cemetery and loot the dead's belongings. You can carve up other people and eat their hearts. The death knight character class was added. You can steal from merchants and their coffers. You may get an assassination task to kill the tinker in Britain. You can sail the high seas and kill some fisherman minding their own business. You can even play as a fugitive where you will be killed on sight if you approach a settlement. The murder system is pretty much a non-player driven system. If you kill a local merchant, you will get a murder count. You don't need another player to "report" you as a murderer anymore. This game thinks if you kill an innocent, then you murdered.

With this, I added some new elements to aspects such as poisoning. You can use the poisoning skill in a few different ways like the "Weapon Ability" method of infectious

weapons or the classic bladed item hitting method. If your skill is good enough, you can throw poison bottles onto the floor where those that walk over it may get poisoned. Assassin quests provide a way to "get away with murder", where if you are assigned to kill a local merchant and succeed at it, the guild will pay off local authorities to forget about your crime. That is the only scenario where you can remove a murder count, otherwise you have to use the classic game time method of 72 hours (or whatever it is). When death knights get better with their skills, they are killed on sight in most towns. I added an entire part of the world where some of these evil characters can live, and I would like to say it was inspired by old gothic novels...but it was mostly Castlevania. This place provides a means for evil flavored/rpg characters to build a dark castle in some scary woods.

The finale of the game was a struggle for me. I didn't really know what I wanted to do here. I had some notes about reproducing the Pagan elements of the Ultima VIII. At one point, I had no Underworld. It was the planet of Mars where it was all desert and I even had a large face on the surface (even though science showed it wasn't really a face). The map allowed you to run in one direction and you would wrap around it so you could run in one direction forever. That is as far as I got on Mars before I wiped it out and made the Underworld. The Underworld looks better to the eye than Mars did and it did help me incorporate the Stygian Abyss and the Pagan-like land of no sun and giant mushrooms.

My Titan of Ether quest doesn't have the leading elements Pagan had. You don't have to learn different schools of magic to get to the end. I just randomized the locations of the blackrock items needed. I didn't feel the need to make a brand new magic system for this anyway. We already have 64 magery spells, 64 research spells, 19 necromancer spells, and spells for death knights, priests, bards, and knights. The Codex of Ultimate Wisdom quest isn't nearly like the intent of the Ultima games. In Ultima, you needed to get the book so you could become the Avatar and then you used it later to finish other quests. It didn't have any game-mechanic value itself. So I turned this ethically driven quest of enlightenment to a classic "must get the book because it does cool things to my character" quest instead. I like my result and it fits into my game better. It is also pretty cool to look at someone's paperdoll and see the codex there.

The last area I had to do was my crashed spaceship. I had this idea for years but I didn't know how to do it back then. As time went on, and I learned about client modification, this goal became a reality. This dungeon is a combination of elements from Thundarr, Gamma World, Planet of the Apes, Fallout, Star Trek, and Star Wars. I didn't want to break the game by having things like power armor or laser rifles, so I limited the way this dungeon would affect the overall world. I wrote all of the lore that goes into this dungeon, and it explains pretty much everything that happened since it crashed. So if a player pieces it together, they will learn what happened in rooms, why they happened, and how things came to be the way they are. The dungeon is a very sci-fi diversion from fantasy as doors slide open and you hear computer beeps and electrical sounds as you traverse it. There are aliens, mutants, and robots to fight. I think I am the only one to make such a dungeon in an Ultima game. I could be wrong. I just never heard of anyone doing it. I think it is a fun ending to a huge game like this.

The last couple of features I added to the game were a nice addition I think. For years I didn't like the fact that you could ride mounts in dungeons. I never played a D&D game

where we took a horse into a dungeon because face it, the hallways were narrow and the ceilings low. I also think dungeons have less danger if you can flee quickly on a horse. I would watch the Outlands Developer Debriefs to help motivate me in finishing this game, and they talked about the mountless dungeon mechanic. They used a horse token type system that I did not want, but I like what it did. This took me maybe an hour to implement into the game, and it was that easy to do. *TIP: Stables don't care how many pets you have in the stable, it is the stable masters that care.* So your mount gets put in the stable when you enter a dungeon, automatically. If you leave, your mount gets sucked out of the stable and you are back on it. This was a nice "safety" feature because although I tested it backward and forwards...there still could be glitch. If there is, at least your mount will be in the stables to go get. The system had a side effect that I was also happy with. If you die in a dungeon and go get resurrected in town (for example), as soon as you start running back to the dungeon your mount will reappear under you. This doesn't apply to ethereals of course, as those are items on your corpse and not real creatures. It is a seamless system that makes dungeon delving more "realistic".

The other feature I implemented involves no game-mechanic benefit, but another cosmetic one. I saw another shard had some type of spell hue deed thing you could buy. It would change the color of your spell effects. I thought that was a pretty neat idea and it was something that I kind of thought about years ago. So to go back in time, I was thinking that if I had a necromancer character that did magery, I think it would be cosmetically cool if the spells looked evil-like to fit the RPG style of the character. I didn't want to create new spells just for this. So I now have options to set the spell hues to whatever you want. Now, it is one for all here...meaning once you pick a color ALL of your magery spells will have that color. You can't mix-and-match. But now I can have my character cast a black fire field or black gate spell. It also helps multi-player environments, if you want your group to have different color spell effects for each character so you can visually tell where the spell came from. Like I stated before, cosmetic options are something I like to make easily available. I don't want to have a 12 hour quest of 1 million gold to change a color of something. If you are playing for twelve hours I would rather it be for character enhancements or saving up to have a huge dungeon home in a swamp.

I stated that I developed this game over 7 years, but it wasn't constant development. I would take months off here and there to either step away from it or play it. Since I did it myself, I think it provides some consistency and quality control that you risk with group development. I tried to tie things together the best I could and I would often add elements that just didn't matter if they existed or not. You can cut the heads off of thieves and bandits and give them to town guards for rewards. You can take the random bones and body parts and sell them to necromancer-type merchants. I added the ability to get fruit from fruit trees. These types of things were just granular details that I just thought up one day. It is actually because of these "details" that it took me so long to get things done. At one point I added flavor to assassins you may fight in the world. If you kill an assassin in Destard (for example), they might have a note in their pack. The note will say something about how so-and-so wants the assassin to kill you because you are meddling in some plan, and that they may find you snooping around Destard. That was more of a Skyrim inspiration.

UO server development can be a huge undertaking, but I was focused on making a game "I" wanted and one that I didn't mind playing single player. My friends jumped in because they didn't feel like doing the work and just wanted to play so they would play in whatever I made. I think that people with dreams of making a server that will be populated by many players is statistically going to be met with disappointment. Make a game for yourself and see if others agree with your design choices and want to come and play. If nobody does, hell, you have a game you like for yourself. If nobody comes to your party, but you tried to make a game that appealed to others to draw them in, then you might be more pissy in the end.

This particular game I made did have a few audience members in mind when I decided to release it publicly. So to assume someone likes my design choices here and wanted to play the game, they may play it because they want a single player game too. Someone may be tired of heavily player killing shards. Maybe one is moving to a new home and Internet isn't readily available to play an MMO on, but they want to play UO. Perhaps someone wants a pre-built server for their small group of friends. There are people that are into UO but get overwhelmed with the server setup when they discover emulators like RunUO or ServUO. This game just lets to players, play.

I played a free shard once years ago. I logged into it and ran around for a few minutes. I saw a bunch of empty house plots with boxes, but no one around. I went to Luna and saw a bunch of logged in AFK characters macroing or casting moongates over and over saying "go through the gate to buy my wares". I thought, what is the point of being here? If I want to play UO in a player absent land, I am going to make one better. I also had thoughts of playing on someone's server, spending hours developing a character, only to have them turn off the power switch one day. I don't have that problem with my game. If I leave it alone for 6 months, I can come back to it and my characters and houses are still there. My server was running 24x7 for a few years, but it was only down to me and 2 other friends. One moved to a house just outside of Internet range and they weren't going to use up their Verizon data to play UO. The other wasn't playing enough to have the electric bill I was having so I shut it down. I gave them each a copy of the server so they could play their characters. The one without Internet was very happy about that, because he could play UO again and continue where he left off.

To digress a bit on shard owners that take their ball and go home, I have to say that is a shitty thing to do. I would go so far as to say "what assholes". I mean really? If you are going to shut down your server because the population dropped or you don't have the time/finances to run it anymore…then zip it up and throw it on a Google drive and let the dedicated players download it if they want (saved world and all). They can continue on with their characters at that point. I don't understand this methodology of shutting off a server, deleting everything, and emptying the recycle bin. I guess some would say that there are "issues amongst the developers" or some other crappy story of angst. Others would think that they don't want others to take their hard work and benefit from it. So what? You are not going to run the server anymore so what in the hell do you care? Rel Por? What the hell? You shut down the server after a couple of weeks and empty the recycle bin on the way out the door. An Corp? Same thing. Just gone. I mean you had a crappy looking Britain with carpeted bank roofs and streets, along with a moongate every 2 tiles, but some people liked it. As far as I am concerned, there is no need to wipe the hard drive when you decide to quit UO shard hosting.

Anyway...I am happy with the game and I am now playing it again after a few months of constant finishing/developing. I am not ignorant enough to say there isn't any bugs, as I sometimes find them as I play or others mention them. Some things are not bugs, but intentional. Other things may not be bugs either, but more of a tweak-needing affair. I had many things hard scripted in, but I made many of them easily editable options when I released it publicly. This was so you could tweak things easier for yourself.

I don't consider myself a game design genius either, although I got comments to the contrary. I played many different types of games over the years, and used those experiences here. I visited other shard's websites for ideas. I got custom content from various Internet sources. I downloaded clients from other shards just to strip out the parts they made and I wanted for my game. I didn't ask for permission and I am not asking for forgiveness. We are in a wild west world of taking a marketed game and violating the EULA all of the time, while infringing on different intellectual properties, so there are no angels in UO emulation. Anyway, it helped me reach my vision of what I wanted in an Ultima game. Unless someone corrects me, I think this is the largest UO shard made in terms of real-estate. Does anyone else have as many lands and dungeons that I have? This isn't a rhetorical question. Just curious mostly, as I don't care if someone has more than that. I just haven't run into one and I visited many shard websites.

I used to like RPGs with definite goals, but after UO came out...I was attracted to the "lofty goal" style of sandbox play. I like doing whatever I want or making whatever goals I want. I like the world simulation and the abundance of places I can go and do things. I released this publicly in case others want this for "what it is" or "I like it for the most part but I am going to tweak the hell out of it" or "I am going to rape your client and make my own thing". I don't care if you make a 24x7 server and you become one of the best shards in town...and never mention me at all. Go ahead and log in with your admin account and tell your players how hard you worked on this world. Don't care. I have my copy of this world and that is all I wanted.

Keep in mind that if you change something, you'll probably break something. I have no desire to dig deep into a problem you created yourself. I don't mind looking into legitimate problems because it doesn't just affect you, it probably affects my own little world too. Asking me how to add things to it will get you nowhere with me, but maybe someone else. What you think is a flaw, I may not. If what you think is a flaw, and I state is intentional, I will have no ambition to look into it further because the game is behaving how I made it. At that point, it is a tweak "you" want for "your" server and you will have to deal with any ramifications that may come of it. Good luck to everyone that wants to play this game. If anything, I hope I saved you 7 years of your life so you can just get down to playing the game.

Sources of Inspiration

The theme of the game world is first and foremost based around older Ultima games, MUDs, and 1970's Dungeons & Dragons. It takes Ultima mechanics and lore, combines them with progression levels familiar in MUDs, and wraps the cosmetic/design methodologies of old D&D games. From D&D you will find the familiar elements of magic pools to drink from (where you don't know what will happen) to magic wands with charges. The world is filled with randomized traps, treasure, and encounters. There is also a ton of randomized flavor added to many items to make them feel unique from similar items. So I just opened up my Dungeon Masters Guide and looked over all of the random tables to virtualize the results here.
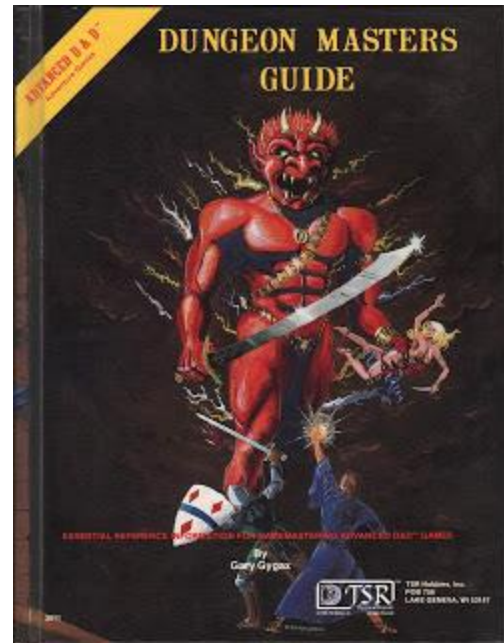
After 7 years of constant development, however, it is difficult to remember where all of the client artwork/maps/gumps/sounds/hues had originated. I had a couple of different servers in the past, but those mostly suffered from items that were too powerful, combined with the unlimited skills that most shards like to provide. I ended up with servers with little to no challenge for the player. The primary reason I started Ultima Odyssey was when I found Darkshard's maps for sale. I began by purchasing his Sosaria map and quickly decided that I would leave behind the world of Britannia forever.

Many elements in Ultima Odyssey are unique to this game. When the server began development, there was some resources implemented from RunUO's custom script section. They were few and far between, however, because most of the resources either provide nothing substantial, they were game-breaking, or they provided elements I wasn't interested in seeing in my game.

More maps were acquired from Darkshard, which made up the Serpent Island and the World of Lodor. The one thing you can see in the official map development, is that you would have nice looking worlds like Ilshenar. Then they would create a map like TerMur which looked rushed and clumsily assembled. The T2A map was also a map that had poor attention to detail. Don't get me wrong, I like the map layout itself. It is just the mountains had no flow and they looked like pointy jagged shards sticking out of the ground. Since I felt that the T2A map could be salvaged, I put that on the TerMur map instead and made it the Savaged Empire. I flattened out many areas so characters could build homes on it and fixed the flaws in the maps that mostly were tile errors from the developers.

There was a large site of Ultima Online client art, and that site is called Grafikportal. Here I grabbed many different types of item artwork and various gumps for equipment. I would say the bulk of my resource raping came from there (well...aside from raping EA's client from the start). There are additional links there for other (smaller) sites with client art files. I grabbed some of those as well. I had some comments about the material

taken for Ultima Odyssey. These were interesting because the comments came from people who were going to take some Ultima Odyssey material and noticed that I taken their material for certain parts. No honor among thieves they say.

I am not very good at making maps, but I think I can decorate them really well. If you want to see details of maps I decorated from scratch, look over Dracula's Castle or the Crashed Spaceship maps. I also decorated the Black Knight's Vault, but I did that early on so my style wasn't fully defined yet. The Black Knight's Vault is an example where the floor and walls were already designed by someone else. I just added the decoration it was lacking. The other two mentioned had a floor design but I had to add everything else. *NOTE: The Black Knight's Vault is wonky on purpose, as it was meant to emulate an old D&D mega-dungeon of randomness.*

So when it came to maps I grabbed whatever I could from wherever I could. I brought in the original EA dungeons and placed them in Lodor, but that was mostly for nostalgia of traversing classic dungeons. Sometimes I would search for shards with custom maps, and if they had a different dungeon, I would decide to use them on my shard to fill a void. Many custom maps, however, are poorly designed or look very plain in comparison to EA's maps.

At one point, there was a very short-lived shard called Rel Por. Their site, however, was still online well past the point it closed its virtual doors. So I downloaded that client and noticed it had many new houses and some new dungeons. The houses were a nice find because although I provide the custom housing system in Ultima Odyssey, I don't personally like it very much. I would much rather choose a pre-built house from a menu.

One of Grafikportal's maps had a huge dirt area surrounded by mountains. I quickly grabbed that to finish my Underworld. For a couple of years I wasn't sure what to do with that map at all. At one point, I was going to build the planet of Mars on it. I had the map covered in nice dune-like sand and you could walk around the world as I had a wrapping system written like the ships have on the seas. I even built a face on Mars that led to a dungeon below. I just didn't like the look of the planet, and I was also thinking about Ultima VIII - Pagan as well. So in the end I settled for a combination of both Ultima Underworld and Pagan to get the mushroom filled landscape below the surface.

Everything was done now except for two last things. I wanted a quest line for the Codex of Ultimate Wisdom and another for the Titan of Ether. I just didn't have any dungeons to finish them off so they sat in limbo for a year or two. I ended up taking some dungeons from Outlands to finish these areas off. This is when I discovered that some of the dungeons from Rel Por were in Outlands already, so I had to do a stylistic change to make it feel different than the areas I already had from Rel Por. A couple of the dungeons I left cosmetically as-is, but many I did a thematic redesign and connected them together differently to get the final results.

So take inspiration and resources from wherever you can, even from Ultima Odyssey. This hobby is a collection of permanently borrowed ideas and methods, stitched together with your vision to hopefully create something unique. Developers make their first steps in taking EA's art, design, worlds, and animations but you can go much further to reach your goal.