

# Maintenance Plan

*Runtime Terrors (Abby Davidow, Grant Schnettgoecke, Anissa Khan, Jacob*

*Swearingen, Chongzhi Gao)*

After deploying our product, we will have to consider the costs and man-power required to maintain it and expand upon it. As discussed in the deployment plan, there are a variety of upfront costs required for the initial deployment of the site. After deployment, there are additional factors to consider for the long-term development and continuation of our product. For example, maintenance considerations include finding a hosting web server, security, domain name, development engineers, advertising, and distribution platform. In this plan, we will dive deeper into the costs of each individual aspect and develop a plan for our website for the upcoming year.

A major maintenance cost is hosting our product on a web server. Currently, we are able to host using the KU server, but eventually we will need to migrate the website to a different server. Since we use a PHP backend, we will need to have a server capable of handling PHP server-side scripting. Additionally, our site stores usernames and passwords in a MySQL database which adds another requirement for the hosting server. One option for a web server is Cloudways. Cloudways supports both MySQL and PHP as well as provides many other features. They offer 24/7/365 support, and because of our limited cash flow at first, their month-to-month payment option will allow us to not be locked into a long-term contract. Cloudways also offers an unlimited amount of applications that can be hosted on any plan. This would allow us to create branches off of this arcade and expand our offerings in the future. The month to month

pricing varies on factors including RAM, processor, storage, and bandwidth as well as the web service we want to use. Some web service options are DigitalOcean, Linode, Vultr, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and Google Cloud. The price could be anywhere from \$10-\$230 a month. Since we would be a small startup, we would most likely choose the cheapest \$10/mo option until we get our feet off the ground. If the arcade becomes successful enough, we could upgrade the storage, bandwidth, and other factors, or switch to a larger web service like AWS.

The security of our product will also need to be improved in order to protect our website from hackers. Since we utilize the MySQL database for storing passwords, we will have to watch out for MySQL injections. Luckily most web servers, including Cloudways mentioned above, offer certain security measures to protect our website. Additional ways to keep our website secure are—requiring users to create strong passwords, using HTTPS, keeping our website up to date, and regularly installing security plugins.

Another important part of maintaining our website is hiring web developers. Since our website is relatively small, we may only need one or two full-time employees. Full-time entry-level web developers typically make around \$50,000, but if we want someone with more experience, their salary will likely need to be higher. Since our website is relatively small, we may only need one or two full-time employees. However, it might be a good idea to start out with a few part-time employees instead to save money but still benefit from some extra help. Since we are a newly formed, small company, we would hire and employ these developers remotely so that we do not need

to incur the costs of renting office space. Even in the future, we would most likely remain a remote employer. Not having a physical office space would save thousands and thousands of dollars that we can put towards salaries, employee benefits, and other resources.

As our company grows, we would like to provide opportunities for high school and college students to work with our engineers and learn coding hands on. We think it is very important to engage students in their learning and provide them with real-world experience even at a young age. An opportunity like this would help teach young students about keeping deadlines and how to work in a remote, professional environment. We could provide them experience in both back-end and front-end programming with languages including PHP, Javascript, CSS, and HTML. They could pitch new game ideas and work with the developers on a plan to deploy these new features on the website.

Advertising would make up another significant business expenses, so we would need to set aside a monthly advertising budget. Different advertising websites charge different rates. For example, Google Ads charges anywhere from \$0.25-\$2 per click depending on the wording of the ad. Using Google Ads is beneficial to us because it would enable us to advertise on a variety of websites. By using Google Ads we would be able to advertise on any website that uses Google Ads. Academic or studying websites are a good option for us to advertise on because our target audience is students who want a study break. For example, a website like Quizlet—who uses Google Ads—would have many users that may want to take a study break. Therefore,

an ad for our website offering free games could attract many new visitors. Some websites provide geotargeting audiences, which might also benefit us. We could also target people that are near college campuses or high schools since that is where our target audience spends most of their time.

Along with advertising, it will be important that we secure a good domain name for our website. Our name needs to be short, easy to spell, and instantly recognizable as offering games to play. After researching, we found that the annual cost for buying and retaining a domain name is around \$10 per year. Depending on our budget, we could change providers and avoid popular keywords to bring down the price and save money. There are many services that offer domain registration such as GoDaddy and BlueHost. Many of these sites also offer hosting, so we could consider finding a domain registration site that could also host our website provided that they can also support PHP and MySQL.

At the initial launch of the website, it will be free for users and all games will be included. If the website becomes popular enough in the future, we can create exclusive or premium games that only paying members can access. We would call it the “Extreme Procrastinators Club.” Depending on the demand and the number of games offered, we could charge around \$3-10 per month. In order to charge monthly fees, we will need to have built up enough personnel and expertise to innovate new and complex games. The games we have right now are basic and fun to pass time with but are not complex or unique enough to charge users to play. Charging users will also require us to set up a merchant account or use a third-party merchant to accept payments. Setting up our own

merchant account at a bank might be more expensive at first, but if we have enough interest and premium members, it would be more cost effective than a third party. However, if we want to test the waters first, we might want to find a free-setup third party merchant that will take a certain percentage of each transaction. For example, PayPal is a common third-party merchant used for online transactions. PayPal does not charge sign-up, termination, or monthly fees. They do, however, receive 2.9% of each transaction plus a fixed fee of 30 cents. A benefit of using PayPal is that it eliminates our responsibility to ensure the security of our users credit card information during processing since they handle the entire transaction through their own secure website.

We may also decide to turn our arcade into an app that people can play on their smartphones. In that case, we will have to account for the expense of distributing our app on the Apple App Store and Play Store. The App Store charges \$99 per year for individual developer accounts. The Play Store, on the other hand, charges a one-time fee of \$25.

The table on the following page shows the anticipated annual costs for required components to maintain our product. The costs for advertising and employees may differ depending on how much funding we are able to obtain. At the start, around 10% of the overall budget will go towards advertising, and 50% of the budget will be put towards the employees' payroll. The remaining 40% of the budget will be used for any unforeseen costs and additional employee benefits.

Item	Cost
Web Server	\$120
Advertising	\$1,000
Employees	\$8,000
Domain Name	\$10
App Store	\$99
Play Store	\$25
<b>Total per Year</b>	<b>\$9,254</b>