

17. Cost optimization

What we should focus on: [🔗](#)

- **Distribute cost accountability** Everyone—from devs to product owners—should understand the rough cost impact of the things they build or select. We can assign ownership for specific areas (infra, third-party tools, messaging, storage, etc.).
- **Check pricing before adding new tools** Always review cost calculators, pricing tiers, and overage policies when considering new providers. A seemingly small tool can balloon at scale. Free tiers rarely stay free.
- **Track actual spend across services** Use cost dashboards (e.g. Azure Cost Management + third-party billing exports) to visualize per-service monthly spend. Tag cloud resources by environment and feature to make tracking easier.
- **Recurring audits every 3–6 months** Schedule regular reviews to check:
 - Are we still using everything?
 - Are there cheaper or more efficient alternatives?
 - Can we optimize resource usage (e.g. scaling down unused VMs, consolidating services)?
- **Use forecasts and budgets** Set budgets per feature, per environment, or per department. Track estimated vs. actual usage to catch drift. Forecast storage, outbound messages, and compute cost based on user growth.
- **Take advantage of discounts and support plans** Make sure we're enrolled in any startup credits or long-term commitment discounts from Azure. Also look at nonprofit or volume discounts for external tools like Twilio, Mailchimp, Duda, etc.

Tracking Costs Per User & Per Club [🔗](#)

Why it matters: [🔗](#)

It's easy to grow the platform while losing money on some users or clubs without realizing it. Tracking per-user and per-club costs lets us keep things fair and sustainable. We'll be able to grow confidently knowing each new customer is adding value—not draining it.

What to track: [🔗](#)

- **Per-user cost drivers:**
 - Authentication events (logins, MFA, tokens)
 - Communication (emails, SMS, push)
 - Storage (files, stats, logs)
 - External API calls (e.g. to federations or IoT systems)
- **Per-club costs:**
 - All user activity under that club
 - Club-specific integrations (if they require separate or custom handling)
 - Support time (if tracked)
 - Infrastructure usage tagged by club or tenant

What to do with it: [🔗](#)

- Build **dashboards** or **monthly reports** that estimate cost per club.
- Compare this to the value or revenue from each club.
- Spot clubs that are below break-even and decide if adjustments are needed (e.g. price changes, feature limits, smarter usage caps).