

# RATE MY CAMPUS

## MAINTENANCE PLAN

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## Introduction

Rate My Campus aims to deliver the most reliable and accurate information about college campuses to faculty, staff, and students. This means having a product that is accessible and up to date. To do so, we will need a dedicated team to drive traffic and maintain the website. We will need a fast and reliable platform to host our data. It also needs to be easily scalable so that Rate My Campus can be the nation's most trusted college campus review website. We'd also need to obtain a domain name that is easily recognizable. Finally, in this development stage, we will need to focus our efforts on marketing strategies to gain traction and awareness of our product. The total cost of operation in the first couple of years will be roughly **\$900/year**.

## Employees

In the development stage of Rate My Campus, the business has no proven market or user traffic that it can rely on. During these first couple of years, the business will be focusing on its business

model: deciding on ownership, architecture, and business planning. We will not be generating any revenue in the next year. Thus, employees will not receive a salary. In the first few years, Rate My Campus may look to expand its core team. Until the business can generate enough revenue, the work is mainly voluntary.

## Platform/Server

### Heroku

We are currently using Heroku which is a cloud Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) system that allows us to easily build, run, and scale our web application. Heroku also offers different add-ons that will enable us to easily and securely manage our database. It has a few pricing options <sup>[1]</sup>, but we are only considering the first two tiers until we generate revenue.

#### 1. Free

- Ideal for experimenting with cloud applications in a limited sandbox
- Runtime: Sleeps after 30 minutes of inactivity
- Database: Limited to 10K rows (\$9/month from 10M rows)

#### 2. Hobby (\$7/month excluding add-ons)

- Ideal for small scale projects and hobby apps
- Runtime: Always on
- Database: Limited to 10K rows (\$9/month from 10M rows)
- Application metrics

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.heroku.com/pricing>

In the development stage of our business, Rate My Campus only functions as a prototype. Therefore, we will continue to use the free option since it provides more than we will need. However, as our site traffic grows in the start-up stage, we may need to move up to the Hobby tier with a larger database capacity. With the Hobby tier, the cost will be roughly **\$312/year**.

## **Galaxy**

In the future, we might consider moving our platform to Galaxy, a dedicated PaaS built specifically for Meteor apps <sup>[2]</sup>. Galaxy uses Docker and AWS cloud infrastructure to provide full devops support for Meteor applications. It includes the following features:

- One-line “meteor deploy” command
- Built-in SEO prerendering
- Full logging and performance metrics
- Zero downtime and automatic load balancing
- Full Meteor-specific support

Most conveniently, Galaxy builds and maintains the web application for you. Other services like AWS or Heroku requires a bit of DIY. Further, Galaxy offers a pay-as-you-pricing of \$.08/hour (standard) or a prepaid yearly plan \$45 per GB / month.

## **Domain Name**

Heroku offers the ability to point our web application to a custom domain name, but we must purchase the name from a domain registrar. Google recently released Google Domains which

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.meteor.com/hosting>

cost only \$12/year for popular domain name endings <sup>[3]</sup>. Unfortunately, [ratemycampus.com](https://ratemycampus.com) was already taken and in our current stage, it is not in our favor to “Pied Piper” the domain name. For now, [campusrater.com](https://campusrater.com) is available for **\$12/year**. Luckily with Google, they provide great features at no cost compared to other domain registrars. For just \$12/year, Google Domains provides private registration, custom email with G Suite, customization subdomains, simple integrations with services like Shopify or Squarespace, and robust domain management tools that includes customizable DNS, domain locking, and more.

## Marketing

Marketing will be highly important in the first few years of Rate My Campus. We will market our product in a few different ways:

### **Social Media**

By far, the cheapest and most effective marketing tool is through social media. While in the development stage, we can advertise on our personal social media platforms like Facebook or Twitter. The use of *hashtags*, *mentions*, and *shout-outs* are important in turning ads into clicks.

### **Google AdWords**

As a review-based web application, Rate My Campus needs as much traffic as we can get. We need a specific clientele: faculty, staff, and most importantly, students. We also need them to submit reviews. With Google AdWords, we can target users using keywords like school, college review, university rankings, etc. Search ads will appear next to Google search results while display ads will appear on websites. We would only pay for AdWords when the ads are working.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://domains.google/#>

In other words, we only pay when someone clicks on the ad. For that reason, setting a budget is our call. The average cost is between \$1 and \$2 per click, while more competitive keywords are \$50 per click<sup>[4]</sup>. Since we are still in development stage, we will allocate around \$75/quarter which totals to **\$300/year**.

### **Rate My Professors**

This may be a wild card but we may consider partnering up with Rate My Professors to gain publicity. Rate My Professors already has a massive following from college students, and so, any type of publicity from them would help us tremendously. The hard part is convincing them that we can be partners not competitors.

### **Miscellaneous**

For other forms of marketing like posting flyers or conducting surveys, we will allocate around \$50/quarter which totals to **\$200/year**.

## **Summary**

The total cost to maintain, market, and grow our product totals to roughly **\$900/year**.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2015/05/21/how-much-does-adwords-cost>