A maintenance plan is necessary to ensure the stability and success of your product. As a startup we will have to look at costs and our budget to have a successful maintenance plan. To maintain our bill payer website, we will have to take into consideration a lot of aspects. In the deployment plan various aspects were discussed about how to boost up our startup business and launch the product with all necessities. In this paper, we will be talking about the different ways to maintain our product as a website, app, or both and what approaches will be needed to ensure stability and successes of the bill payer.

First we would start out with hiring developers to further the product. Hiring developers depends really on how much you want to spend and what kind of developers you need. It all depends on how complex your product is. Since ours is a bill payer website and a potential app in the near future we do not think it is plausible to spend that much because we have good knowledge of our product and how to maintain it. But once it is out in the market we will need help because experienced developers will know how and what to do for the betterment of the product. The following are cost factors we will need to look at: the scope, geography, and platform/category. Scope is based on our budget and how much we want to put in. Since it is a startup we would start out simple. The geography is based on where and who we want to reach. If we hire someone from Australia, he or she would want more than an average pay. But if we hire someone from Europe they would be alright with what we offer because their standard of living and expenses is potentially lower. The platform/category comes into play as a website or android or apple app. How much time that will be spent for the developer we hire and to work on android is far cheaper than apple. Basically it will all depend on various aspects when we hire developers.

A website is referred to as a “car.” If we do not have keep up with and cross check it from time to time it will go broke. For fixing a car the expenses can pile up depending on the severity. Same goes for a website. Depending on the damage it will take time and money to fix. Therefore, it is better to hire developers and have it examined every so often then waiting till it is not stable which will require more costs. Hosting our product will require $1 a month. But we will be taken into a contract. Therefore, it will be better if we go with a well-known host whom we can trust and pay our money confidently to. We would also need to update the site because technology and times change very quickly. For example, the hashtag on twitter is hot right now and people make use of it on Facebook as well. This was not the case before. Same goes for the website, we will have to take advantage of new features we could include and update our content. Our look may also become outdated. So to give it a modern look and freshness we will have to examine our HTML pages every so often. Lastly, we would have to ensure that this website can be pulled on mobile internet. If it is not developed into an app right away, we want people to be able to access all of its content on their phone’s web browser.

Another website maintenance cost we would have to look at is domain renewal. This is a small one in terms of cost, but it contains a lot of importance. If your website and URL are new, you had to purchase the web address (domain) through a provider like GoDaddy, Network Solutions, or other ones the best thing is to prepay for multiple years in advance and/or be sure to have your web address (domain) automatically renewed. It's generally $10 to $20 per year. If you forget to renew your domain, your site will go down. It is easy to forget such a small thing as a domain renewal when running a startup company. These providers help new startups like us to adjust to the system and learn the basics before becoming professional. If we forget our site will go down automatically. So it is better to have it renewed automatically for the beginning years and then find an alternative. The price is not a lot per a year basis. But paying it altogether for multiple years may not fit the budget. This is a topic of open discussion with my team.

Another way to maintain our product is to make sure that we have a back-up of our bill payer. This is an area many companies don't think about until it's too late. It's **always a good idea to have your entire website backed up frequently**, and a further suggestion is to have it backed up in a separate location from where your site is currently hosted. This is very important in case a disastrous situation occurs or if we get hacked then we can access it elsewhere and get it stored up again. There are many companies that offer backup services and the cost for backups will be **similar to the hosting cost ranges above**. This would be another aspect we will have to look at. Things like this do happen and we do not take precautions we will be stuck in a loss and suffer more than expected. There is tough competition out there so we have to take each step slowly and with a lot of discussion. If or when a site does go down, you will need technical expertise to be able to restore the site from a backup. So we need to have a good team to help in situations like this and have good relations with our sponsors.

Maintaining a website is much easier than an app. An app as a lot of other costs associated to it. Advertisements, subscriptions, annual fees and a lot competition. Apps are trending and are built into our daily lives. We cannot function without them. There is an app for every function needed to survive in society. Eventually we will have to turn the tables a become an app to gain more sets or eyes and for more easy access. Maintaining a website requires a lot of costs too but if we want to fulfill our ultimate goal we need to have an app.

If the bill payer does become an app we will have to look at costs to maintain it on the app store. The annual fee is something we would have to adjust for as a startup. Android will always be cheaper than Apple. But there are more benefits to Apple as discussed in the deployment plan. Apple gives better feedback whereas Android is for experienced developers who can go without seeking help and run their app on there by themselves. Apple app store fees are $100 per year whereas Google Play has only a onetime fee of $25. Many app stores get most of their income from paid apps; the stores take their share before passing the money on to the developer. This would be something we would have to cope with as for startup making a profit will be much harder. But once we get going this would not have much effect on us. App store profits depend on percentages. So once we start boosting and making much more the app store will also get the same benefit. There are many app stores that give out a higher percentage to their developers. It will not just be about getting the most from each sale but it's more of getting a lot of sales too. Unfortunately, we don't get our money immediately when we make a sale. Almost every Android app market holds on to your money for a period of time. Google Play is the best when it comes to payouts; it pays you out just a few days after the month is over, and with apparently no minimum. Many other app markets pay about 30 days after the end of the month. So it really depends on what app store we choose. We will have to make sure we get paid in a certain amount of time as well.

Another factor of the app store is the app store subscription. We need to see as well if costs change month to month or year to year. We do not only want to make a profit for ourselves but want the customer to save their money as well. The customer is our best friend. He or she is the one that drives us into producing what we produce. Based on them only will the app or website be a success or failure. The Apple app store has many changes going on with its subscriptions. Any app can be developed or redesigned to use auto-renewing subscriptions, but Apple will only approve what it thinks is correct and wants to abide by. Developers can price subscriptions at any of 200 different fixed price points, dramatically more options than before. Developers can charge different rates in different territories. Apps can offer not just different durations of subscriptions, but also different things like standard, extra, and premium. This is something we would use to be a good way to make profit. Apps can have multiple non-overlapping subscriptions for different features or services. Subscription prices can change, and developers can choose to honor the existing price or inform the customer of an increase.

These factors would truly depend on us. Apps can have a lot of features that can pave a road for us to make a success and make profit. We could be mean and change the subscription the customer is paying for. Putting myself in their place, I would never buy from this company again and use any of their apps. So this would need to be discussed by my whole team on what we should do and go about. Increasing $2 would not make much of a difference. If the customer really likes what have out on the market and it functions correctly with daily checks on it to see if it is running smoothly then we would be fine. But if we increase by $6 customers would not like it because it is way too high and they could find cheaper apps or free ones to suffice for their assets. Also if we are not keeping daily checks we will lose their business and no one would want to get our app. But charging in different rates in different territories would be wise. Europe is much cheaper than Australia. So we could have higher rates in Australia and low rates in Europe. We would not make it an international app right away because we would want to start slow and steady and then increase on the work force and to make the product better. But if we go international it would bring us more success. We could also have international companies advertise for us and bring us more business that way. Our ultimate goal is never ending. Every child goes to college or at any point in life will need to divide a bill with another person or group, so the more places we reach the more success we will get.

The next topic to be discussed is how to make a profit. As a part of the maintenance place this what we want to drive toward. This is what we want and what we anticipate to happen once our product is out on the market. I think the best what for our startup is to start as a freemium. We would need to start free because we want customers to test our product, once we start getting more reviews and people clicking on us and using us we can then upgrade our package to make more profit. We could also do a onetime paid app. We would have to tempt to download our app without trying it free and trusting us. This would be a good option because our target is college students and they would be the ones that would be getting a real deal out of it. We could also do paid with added paid features. We could think of other ideas to implement and charge them for use. It would not have to be right away but once it is kick started it would be good. Lastly we could just have a free app and have advertisements. This would be another good way to make profits because advertisements are really annoying and people have to x them out which means they will have to view it one or another.

Another way of making a profit would be to have upgrades. I talked about this above but I will elaborate on what ways we could make a profit with premiums. We could have a free version in which it will split the bill for you so know how much exactly your roommates and you will have to pay. After that the next level up would storage of receipts. You would have to pay a small fee in order to get receipts and add/edit/remove them from the system. This would be good because if one of your roommates does not pay on time or says he or she did pay you will have proof that that person did not pay. This will help miscommunication and make college an eventful experience. The next upgrade would include financial planning. You can make a planner or calendar with different bills you want split up between your group. It would tell you who is paying when and how much success you are getting from the app. These studies would come in as fusion charts. They would show the customer the success rates of the bill payer. The next upgrade after this would be to have multiple accounts. You could even use this app to split payment amongst other things. Like travel expenses, shopping bills, restaurant bills, movie tickets and much more. You are not solely using this app to make sure your roommates are paying the bills on time. You can use this app for anything that requires a group or another individual. This will help reduce tension of getting your money back and develop a long lasting relationship.

In terms of our ultimate goal, making a profit, another good way is to advertise on the web app. I did touch upon this earlier with the other topics. But I will go more in depth in this setting right now. There are two type of people. Ones who like advertisements and go through them all and ones that absolutely hate advertisements and just wait for the X button to appear or until the ad is over. My theory is no matter what type of person it is you will have to view the app one way or another. Sometimes I have seen people who despise ads actually watch the add or view it if it pertains to a certain part of their interest. Advertisements will make us a good profit, but now the question is what kind of ads and who would sponsor the app and how will it make us look good and people notice our bill payer amongst all these other advertisements.

We will join ad networks that sell off advertising space in apps to advertisers, who buy spots that will reach target demographics. Advertisers typically pay the network for ads each time someone clicks on the ad. The network then passes a portion of the revenue on to the developer whose app displayed the ad. Some apps might have a strong-enough following that advertisers will work directly with the developer to place ads, which often fetches more revenue than network ads. This is exactly what our plan is. Our market could be like apps that are related to bill paying or messenger apps like what’s app or viber. Other bill paying apps would most likely not want to advertise us unless we give them a profit. But apps like what’s app, viber or duo would want to sponsor us because we go hand in hand with them. Bill paying has something to do with phones and communication. All these apps have group conversations so our app is a group app as well. We could also advertise on apps like google maps or something related to find a place to live. Even apps with yellow pages could do the trick for us. The most common way to make profit is when someone clicks on the app. So this would be the only way amongst the advertisements that we make a profit.

Advertisements will only be good and lead to a success if people are clicking on it. We are taking a risk of doing them because we want a way to move through and become well known. I would think we would take the minimum period of time or smallest contract to give companies our advertisements. Then it would be better to see how were are doing. If it is going well then continue on with the contract with the same companies or if we find better industries that pertain to the product go with them. If it is not going well then we should stick with one advertisement and continue on with that. We will also will not get paid as soon as possible so that is something we will have to think about when making these types of decisions. We could have advertisements on the website as well. It will just depend on what form of the product we are presenting out on the market.

The last and important way to tailor our bill payer would be to meet with apartment complex owners or residential companies. College towns such as Lawrence would be a good place to start because our aim is college students. There should be a section on the flyer or pamphlet the dorm or apartment complex owners give out to students to live a healthy life style while in college. We could include a download the app right now on a section of it with our product. We could also reach out to universities and try to get them to be our face. The University of Kansas is a good place to start as they have good on campus housing as well. We would just need to try it out and see if our budget lets us to move forth with it or just stick to advertisements.

Another market we are looking at is roommates of any age. These could be any types of people. The ultimate goal is to split a bill and avoid tensions. Such as a nursing home or old age home, these places people are living together. If these folks go out for dinner or one friend gets groceries for another friend, they could use the bill payer to split the cost. Our app is modeled towards any age group. We prefer to have it maximized and used by college students, town and apartment or residential company complexes. But it is not limited to the use by anyone.

In conclusion, our maintenance plan consisted of a lot of bullet points that we need to assess for the betterment of our start up product. I talked about hiring developers to further the product, continued cost of server and domain sites maintenance, app store annual fees, profit in terms of premiums, advertisements, tailoring to residential companies’/ apartment complexes and mostly all sorts of age groups in any neck of the country. We hope to take everything into consideration when putting our product out on the market for a good a success.

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