Unlock the benefits of player-owned game servers for long-term success in online gaming.

A guide to keeping your community engaged and invested to sustain popularity and revenue.

White Paper by

OVHcloud®

Attract players to your multiplayer game, and boost engagement and creativity, all while controlling server costs.

Welcome to the world of player-owned servers. A world where you can discover a whole new level of community building and player retention by giving the players the power to host and manage their own servers. Let your players take the reins, give them the power to set up their server according to their needs, and allow your game to remain revenue-generating long into the future, even if official support ends because players continue to host the game themselves.

Reduce your financial burden and even profit from it by shifting the server cost to the players.

What are the benefits of a player-owned server?

Provisioning servers for your online multiplayer game can be expensive, but with player-owned servers, it could be free, a shared cost or even a revenue source. If you're a game developer, a player-owned server reduces your costs because you don't have to pay the server fees yourself. The cost can be shared with the players instead.

As a game developer or player who owns a server, you can count on it being up 24/7, so your community of players can join in at any time. No matter what time, day or night, you can count on it being there, and all your progress is saved. With a reliable hosting provider, you can depend on a high level of security and protection against DDoS and other attacks. And as a game developer, you don't have to worry about server maintenance. Instead, you get to focus on game features and new content.

Decentralized gaming means there's never an outage affecting the entire game – there will always be online servers for players to keep gaming.

You can scale up or down as needed, and spikes are automatically handled as players deploy their own servers, which can reduce customer support requirements. Larger communities can grow around the game, and more user-generated content can keep the game fresh and players engaged.

With player-owned servers, latency is diminished because players can choose the server location from data centers around the globe. Furthermore, privacy and safety are increased because gameplay is by invitation and choice.

You can customize and you keep control.

One of the best benefits to a player-owned server is that you can customize it as much as you want. You can completely custom-create your world or environment and maintain full control. You can control what plugins and mods are installed, adjust the level of difficulty to make gameplay easier or harder, and enhance gameplay with many other settings. If you want to build shared elements or features, you can do that too, benefitting all players. For example, if you're running a Minecraft server, you can install mods that everybody on your game roster can enjoy.

You can decide who can join and who to exclude, and you can even kick people off the server if they're not complying with the server rules. This is a serious advantage in terms of quality control, as you can limit the number of players to optimize performance and prevent latency.

> In any game scenario, players must abide by the rules. If you're running your game on a dedicated server, however, you may be able to make the rules.
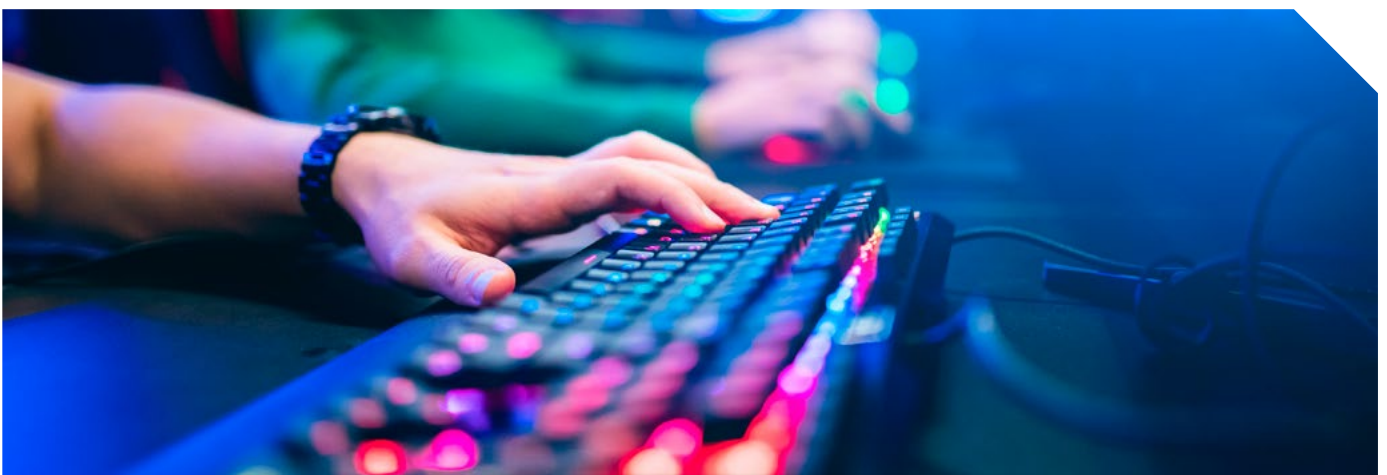
A player-owned server also allows community members to choose the version of the game they prefer and even go back to previous versions. For instance, RuneScape and World of Warcraft, both games lost following after major updates changed what originally made the games popular. They were able to restore popularity by re-releasing older versions of the game. With a player-owned server, players can choose to stick with older versions. Minecraft 1.7.10, for example, is often preferred because this version has a different combat system.

On the back end of that, with Shockbyte as the game hosting platform and OVHcloud® running the servers, players can enjoy their own personalized experiences when gaming, and developers can focus on providing them with fresh content. If you're launching a new game and don't have a player base yet, Shockbyte has hundreds of thousands of customers they can promote the game to, which is a quick way to gain an audience and players.

> Regarding game performance, the best solution is to partner with a reliable game server host like Shockbyte, ensuring high performance and lag-free experiences for all gamers who opt for player-owned servers.

What are the main disadvantages?

Any game developer would dream of having a massive community of player-generated content built around their game. However, with great power comes great responsibility. When servers are owned by particular individuals, you'll have less control over moderation within the game. This can be a challenge, especially if your game is tailored to underage gamers.

Additionally, giving the players the possibility to host servers from their own computer or choosing their own provider could have a negative effect on the performance of the game, skipping any sort of quality control by the game developer and, in the end, affecting the players' experience. These issues may sound challenging, but there are solutions.

When it comes to moderation, there are multiple ways of overcoming the problems. Some examples include being able to ban player accounts from online play, banning servers that don't comply with terms of service, and only promoting servers in-game that you, as the game developer, have approved.

In a gaming environment, security is essential.

Remember, there's a high prevalence of DDoS attacks in gaming, primarily sparked by ruthless competition. Even if you're meticulously selective about who you allow into your game, you'll need to secure the perimeter and be hyper-vigilant about updating. Players who are running their own servers could be at an even higher risk because they may not be aware of the dangers of DDoS attacks or how to stop them.

Online games, including Minecraft, are common targets for DDoS attacks, which is why all OVHcloud Game servers are equipped with DDoS Game protection to ensure players' servers are protected in the event of any attack, so end users don't experience interruptions to gameplay. OVHcloud's anti-DDoS protection offers a high level of security to protect against various types of volume-based protocol and application layer attacks.

Whether a virtual private server (VPS) or a dedicated server, OVHcloud has a game server that will fit your needs. Servers are assembled and configured to deliver powerful performance, so you can rest assured that the most robust resources will be allocated to you. OVHcloud provides clear information on pricing, services and options. All solutions include benefits such as unmetered ingress and egress traffic and anti-DDoS protection.

Together, OVHcloud and Shockbyte can you ensure you have the best game server solution based on your requirements and budget and, of course, offer you all the technical support you need.

OVHcloud®

OVHcloud US is a subsidiary of OVHcloud, a global player and Europe's leading cloud provider operating more than 400,000 servers within 37 data centers across four continents. For over 20 years, the company has relied on an integrated model that provides complete control of its value chain from the design of its servers to the construction and management of its data centers, including the orchestration of its fiber-optic network. This unique approach allows it to independently cover all the uses of its 1.6 million customers in more than 140 countries. OVHcloud now offers latest generation solutions combining performance, price predictability, and total sovereignty over their data to support their growth in complete freedom.

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⚡ SHOCKBYTE

Shockbyte is a game server provider, launched with the intentions of providing the highest quality services at the lowest possible price. Shockbyte's mission is to make it easy and affordable for anyone to operate any kind of internet service at any scale. Shockbyte is a registered business in Australia and has been providing services since March 2013, making it one of the longest-running Minecraft hosts. The Shockbyte team is made up of experienced and dedicated gamers and developers who've been working in the hosting industry for many years. Shockbyte aims to provide an amazing user experience and the best service possible. It's why they use the best hardware available and have a worldwide team to provide 24-hour support to all clients.

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