

Planning

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* Of course, as usual, anything above this line will not be included in the actual post.

The Post

Hello everybody, here is a weekly update thread for GFL. It has been a while since I've made a major update thread. I've been very busy recently and never really had the time to write a big post announcing the things I've been working on. This update should be overall exciting, though, there are also many concerns we have to pay attention to. Let's begin!

TF2's Mailing List Thread

On May 13th, John Schoenick posted a HLDS Mailing List thread [here](#). To sum up, TF2's community support may improve in the future. To be honest, I trust John S more than any other Valve developer, to me, he seems to actually care about the modding community.

Why does this matter to us? Well, we used to have a big community/player base in TF2, however, due to a few changes back years ago, our servers have died. We still have a few TF2 servers that are being managed very well by [member=Snoopy] and his Server Managers. Though, our servers aren't reaching the population they deserve due to Valve's lack of support for the modding community (e.g. community servers, etc).

If the new "features" announced in the thread include giving community servers the amount of Quick Play they deserve and removing Valve official servers from the server browser (as it should be), I believe this opens up a big opportunity for us to expand further into TF2.

Overall, I truly hope Valve can make the right decision and give community servers a fair chance in the Quick Play pool (as of right now, Valve servers retrieve most of the population).

IPS 4

As mentioned countless times in the past, GFL will be moving to IPS 4 in the future. Currently, our Developer team is working on the custom applications I will list in this section. After that is done, we will make some tweaks to the theme and we should honestly be good to go. The developers currently working on this major project must read this section. I will be giving more details about the project and how the finalized application should be done.

GFL-Specific Application(s)

Like I said above, the developers currently working on this project should read this section. This section will basically include everything that needs to be done. I will be addressing these following details to the developers themselves, though, I felt the need to share it to our Teams, etc to give them an idea of what the conversion to IPS 4 will be like.

Main Structure

The main structure of the application(s) should be well-built. Everything that **can** be configurable, should be configurable via Admin CP. Why? Well, it is generally easier and cleaner. With that said, we have Higher-Ups that will want to edit some things and they do not have access to FTP to change things in the source code. Basically, making the application(s) with the mindset of it being released publicly (e.g. configurable, smooth, etc) is the best option. Another thing is having a strong API. For example, it should be easy to add custom PHP scripts (e.g. SourceBans script after a player donates) to the donation system packages.

Donation System Module

The new donation system coming with these applications will be one of the main features in switching to IPS 4. First, let's look at our current donations system located [here](#). IPB Nexus isn't a bad application to use, though, it does have things we do not like. Let's list them:

1. User's not signed in cannot see any packages whatsoever. You must register to buy any of the packages.
2. There is only one set price (\$5.00/m for Supporter, \$50.00 a year for VIP). You either pay \$5.00 a month for Supporter (or \$15.00 every 3 months).
3. Two separate Supporter packages (recurring & non-recurring). We could turn it down to one package but that would require a lot of work. With that said, this makes it more difficult to update the description of the packages (since you're doing it twice instead of once).
4. The custom-actions backend just isn't great in my opinion.
5. You can't integrate the donation system with in-game functions since there aren't any Steam ID GET fields. For example, http://gflclan.com/store/product/2-supporter-recurring/?steamid=STEAM_0:0:123456 will not work.

We plan on working on these issues with our new donation system. Let's list how we're going to fix each issue listed above in IPS 4:

1. Users will have the option to donate without a forum account. If they do donate without a forum account but make one later, once they link the Steam account they donated with, it will automatically give them Supporter or VIP on the forums.
2. Users will be able to input the amount of money they want to donate. We're not sure how it's going to be done yet, but I would imagine a factor * Days. For example, \$5.00 per 30 days for Supporter sounds like a good estimate. $5 / 30 = \$0.16$, therefore, Supporter is \$0.16 (factor) a day. That is how I do it on my TDC [website](#) (still in development). The developers ([member=Denros], [member=mbozwood], etc) will discuss this further. Minimum values will also be implemented.
3. There will be one package for each item (instead of two, etc). If the package is monthly/yearly, etc there will be a factor. I am also thinking about adding the feature to make server-specific packages (most likely a one-time payment). For example, \$5.00 for 2000 PointShop points on Garry's Mod or something like that.
4. Using custom PHP scripts, etc will be very easy to use with packages. We will also have the ability to execute multiple custom PHP scripts in a package (e.g. execute insertIntoSourcebans.php, execute insertIntoRustDatabase.php, etc).
5. There will be a public Steam ID GET variable with this donation system. For example, http://gflclan.com/donate/?steamid=STEAM_0:0:123456 will go to the Donate page and automatically fill in the Steam ID field with "STEAM_0:0:123456". This will make it very easy to donate in-game and we will be adding this feature to all servers that support opening up a web page in-game.

Finally, it's time to list the extra features that will make this donation system even better!

- This will be integrated with the Game Server module for our IPS 4 applications. For example, each server manager will be able to select which packages apply for their server. For example, CS:GO Zombie Escape will have "Supporter" and "VIP" selected, all Garry's Mod servers will have "Supporter", "VIP", and "Extra Pointshop Points" (this is just an example, I don't know if we will be offering extra PointShop points) selected, and the TeamSpeak 3 server will have the possible "TeamSpeak 3 Channel" package selected. The list goes on and on. We are doing this because in games like BF3, the Supporter package doesn't apply (due to BF3's limitation, etc). I'm sure there are players expecting a tag in Battlefield 3 since we've always said that the Supporter package applies to all servers. It's time to be realistic and make sure the players know what to expect after buying Supporter, VIP, etc..
- Each package will include a "View Supported Servers" link that will list all the game servers the package applies for.
- Each transaction made will be transparent. It will remove the personal information but the amount, date, fee, etc will be listed. It will also link back to the account who donated.
- To gain Supporter or VIP access on the forums, you must link your Steam account (while donating or afterwards). If the Steam account you link has an active package with forum support, it will automatically give you forum access. Changing your Steam account on the forums will give you whatever package the Steam account you linked has. For example, if you switch from an account with Supporter to an account with no active

packages, you will be demoted on the forums. Multiple users cannot have the same Steam account, it is unique.

- You will have the option to donate for other people. There will be a sign-in through Steam option and an input field for inserting the Steam ID manually (the donation system will automatically check if the Steam ID is valid and list the Steam profile they are donating for before proceeding). If you sign in through Steam, you will have the option to link the Steam account to the forum account (if not linked already), this will allow users to automatically gain forum privileges after donating since it'll link the Steam account they are donating for. This is **only** available with the "sign-in through Steam" option.
- There will be a "donate for no packages" option. This will be used for people who want to donate to help out. There will be an official leaderboard for people who donate to help out the community.
- There will also be two automated fields for packages like Supporter and VIP. One named "Main server to donate for" and "Additional servers". The first option will be a select box (one selection only) and the next one will be a check list. Basically, this will be used to see which servers are generating donations (stats). This list will be automated with our Game Server module database. Therefore, if we add a new server, it will automatically be added to the list.
- Support for multiple Payment gateways (instead of just PayPal).

Well that's just about it. As of right now, recurring (automatic renewals) purchases will not be supported. I will talk to the developers more about renewals though. I haven't went into this much detail yet with the developers currently working on the IPS 4 donation system. But I will ensure I communicate with them about this. Yes, these are a lot of features. However, this will be the finalized product if all goes to plan. Some features will most likely change after talking to the developers.

Dedicated Machines

Just like Game Servers, we will have the ability to add each machine as well. Each game server will be assigned a specific machine. Machines can be a VPS or a full dedicated machine.

Eventually, if we get enough coding support, we could potentially add machine statistics (e.g. current ram usage, CPU usage, graphs, bandwidth, etc). However, we will need more than two developers for this project.

Just like the Game Server List, we will have a Machine List which will all of our machines/VPSs with their specs and price.

Games & Game Servers Module

The Game Servers module will be the next big part of the IPS 4 conversion. Each game server will basically have its own page that will include Player Reports, Ban Appeals, Suggestions, Report An Admin, Admin Applications, and custom forms. With that said, we plan on adding many other features that will make managing a server in GFL easier to deal with.

Let's start with the forms. When a server is added, there will be a default list of forms added. This will include the following:

- **Player Reports** - Fields include: Steam ID Of Player, Player's Name, Your Steam ID, What happened, and Proof.
- **Admin Applications** - Fields include: Steam ID, Age, Why should we accept you, and Any other information.
- **Admin Reports** - Fields include: Admin's Steam ID, Admin's Name, Your Steam ID, What happened, and Proof.
- **Ban Appeal** - Fields include: Your Steam ID, Admin's Steam ID, Admin's Name, Why were you banned, and Why should we unban you. NOTE: I believe we should automatically pull up the bans from SourceBans with the "Your Steam ID" field while viewing the Ban Appeal.
- ...

These forms should be editable by the Server Manager (e.g. adding in an extra field, etc). Also, Server Managers should be able to add custom forms with custom fields (e.g. Competitive forms, etc).

The next thing to talk about is assigning specific users to games and game servers. We will be following our ranking system layout when it comes to this. For example:

- Administrator (A.K.A. Roy) - Has access to all Games & Game Servers.
- Council - Has access to all Games & Game Servers.
- Division Leaders - Has access to all the servers in the game(s) they lead.
- Server Managers - Has access to the servers they manage.

However, the only groups that should be assigned to Games & Game Servers are Administrator and Council (since these are the root groups). Each individual Division Leader should be assigned to the games they lead. Assigning a user to a specific game will give them access to all the servers running that game (Division Leader). Also, each server can have multiple Server Managers.

Each server will have a separate page named "Staff". In this page, Division Leaders, Server Managers, and Server Admins will be listed. Each server manager can add/remove Server Admins for the servers they manage. You can only add their forum account to this list and the admin must have a Steam account linked to their forum account (we will integrate the list with Steam accounts).

With that said, we will also add the support for custom list. For example, the Server Manager can add a list called "Developers" and add developers who code for the server to the list (again, their forum accounts only).

The next thing to talk about is specific server pages. Here's a list of all the default pages created when a server is added to the database:

- MOTD.php - This can be used to create a nice MOTD for the server. By default, the page will include the IPS 4 wrapper. Though, that can be disabled by the Server Managers.
- Loadingscreen.php - This can be used for Garry's Mod servers.
- ...

Server Managers can also make custom pages. For example, you can make a page called "winners.php". This page will be able to execute PHP/HTML code. With that said, you can also apply permissions to the file as well (e.g. Only Supporters+ can see, etc). One other option we want included is an "Include IPS Wrapper" option. Basically, if the option is on, it will include the IPS template (like <http://gflclan.com/stats.html>, etc). If it is off, it will be like creating a blank file with no includes (e.g. white background if you don't include any changes to the CSS, etc).

Each server will also have their own forum. Players can talk about whatever they want here. Server Managers, etc can pin topics that are important. So on... This forum shouldn't be listed on the main forum index, but instead, act as a "tab" (read below) for the server.

Next, I would like to talk about how everything will look. Basically, think of each server as an user profile (just made for servers). Each feature will be listed in "tabs" (e.g. NavBar). The default tabs will include:

- **Main** - This tab will be the default tab. It will list the current player counts, graphs, map name, server description, latest news, etc.
- **Forms** - All the forms will be listed here. From this page, you can click each form which will redirect to a page with all the applications for that specific form and server. You can also hit a button to create a new form (e.g. a "+" sign on each form indicating to "Fill Out form" or whatever).
- **Staff** - This will list the staff page.
- **Features** - This will list all the unique features for the server. For example, one sub-section will be Donation packages that the server supports (e.g. Supporter and VIP). Server Managers can edit the features and add new subsections as well.
- **Specs** - This will display all the information to determine performance. For example, since each server is assigned a machine, it will display the machine specs here (e.g. Processor, Ram, Host, etc). This will also include the actual server cost (most likely \$0.00 unless if there is a fee on the slot counts) and the machine cost.
- **Population (NOT FINALIZED)** - If we do get the chance to create software that generates unique player graphs per server, this tab will be used for it. This is way down the road though.

Finally, we will also be introducing a new and improved Server List. This list will be a table with the following columns:

- **Server Name** - The Server name from the database (not host name).
- **Player Count** - The current amount of players on the server.
- **Maximum Players** - The maximum player count.
- **Bot Count** - The current amount of bots on the server.

- **Map Name** - The current map.
- **IP** - The current IP of the server (not the A-Record).
- **Port** - The current port of the server.
- **Capacity** - A percentage bar indicating how full the server is (from 0 - 100%) Basically Player Count / Maximum Players put into a percentage bar (with color codes, for example, red = low, yellow = half way full, green = full, etc).
- **Game Icon** - Game icon indicating which game the server runs.
- **Location Icon** - Location icon indicating where the server is located.
- **Join Button** - Join the server button. (steam://connect/ip:port)

More server details will be listed on the dedicated server page (e.g. A-Record, full game name, full location, etc).

Other statistics include:

- Server count.
- Overall player count.
- Overall location player count.
- Overall game player count.
- Etc...

Badges

As mentioned in the past, we plan on implementing a badge system as well. We haven't started working on this yet, but it is definitely on our to-do-list. Basically, there will be two type of badges:

- **Basic** - Only a visual thing. All badges server managers create for their server will be basic. An example of a basic badge is "Zombie Killer" (requires 1000 kills as T in Zombie Escape).
- **Custom** - These badges will act more like a group. Custom badges can only be created by Council+ and we can apply permission sets to the badge (e.g. Developer badge will get access to the Developer section on the forums).

You can select one badge as your main badge (which will show on every post you make, profile, etc).

If we want to make our Badges system similar to Steam's system, we could make each badge worth certain XP and forum users can "level up" on the forums. Maybe after level 10, you have the option to list all of your badges on your profile (instead of just your main badge), etc. To be honest, we haven't really planned this system out yet and it isn't our priority.

We will most likely need more coders to work on this project to get this part done. We will need users experienced in SourcePawn and Lua to help our web developers make an API between the server and website.

Overall, this is a long shot and I'm not sure if we'll ever have the power to create a system like this.

The Theme

[member=Denros] has created a theme for IPS 4. As of right now, we will be using this theme with IPS 4. Though, I still think it needs a few tweaks. This is your chance to give suggestions, etc! The theme can be found [here](#).

Suggestions should be going to [member=Denros] and [member=Mbozwood]!

I will make a separate thread addressing a few suggestions for the style later.

Estimated Date On Conversion

There really is no ETA on when IPS 4 will come to GFL. The initial launch of IPS 4 will be very basic and won't include all the features listed in this update.

If I had to make a guess, I would say right before the Summer of 2016 (month or so from now). With that said, it also takes a while to perform test builds, etc of IPB 3.4.x to IPS 4 conversions.

Overall

To the developers working on this project ([member=Denros] and [member=Mbozwood]), I understand this is a lot to take in. I am not expecting you guys to get all these features implemented, the truth is, we'll need more than just you two to get everything implemented. However, over time, I think we should slowly implement these features. Keep up the great work, both of you! I will be discussing this with both of you.

Overall, as I just said, this is seriously a big list of features. Hell, I didn't even list **everything** I wanted implemented. I am going to say this right now, I cannot guarantee that all of these features will be implemented. Yes, it would be nice, but the truth is, we don't have many developers and the developers we do have are busy with other stuff (e.g. work, school, etc). We will try the best we can to make this IPS 4 conversation worth the wait! If you have any suggestions, please message us.

SourceBans 2

The next thing I would like to talk about is SourceBans 2. Currently, we are running on an outdated version of SourceBans. We have two separate SourceBans installs. One is for servers using SourceMod and the other is for Garry's Mod.

The web interface of the outdated SourceBans feels broken to me. For example, when I try to expand the ban details on the main bans page, 75% of the time it doesn't work and spits out the following errors:

[CODE]

```
sourcebans.html:391 Uncaught TypeError: Cannot read property 'innerHTML' of  
nullfireEvent_DOM @ index.php?ipbv=c657bf5...&g=js:723  
index.php:18259 Uncaught ReferenceError: InitAccordion is not defined  
3sourcebans.js:179 Uncaught TypeError: Cannot read property 'setStyle' of undefined  
[/CODE]
```

I feel it would be worth upgrading to SourceBans 2 for the SourceMod install. We cannot do this for the Garry's Mod bans yet because the SourceBans lua file doesn't support Sourcebans 2. Though, I do plan on adding support in the future.

Screenshots of the SourceBans 2 web interface can be found [here](#). The differences between Sourcebans 1 and SourceBans 2 can be found [here](#).

Overall, I will be performing test in the future to see how easy it is to convert over to SourceBans 2. I will also be talking to the Council about this. In my opinion, it'll be beneficial to move over to SourceBans 2. Also, please read the IPS 4 section to see some of our plans with integrating the ban list, etc into the IPS 4 template.

Expenses Cut

As many of you know, we've lost a server that generated us a lot of donations. With that said, we also had to move PayPal accounts (e.g. had to cancel all of our recurring subscriptions). With the combination of both, I would say we are still in a tight financial situation. Therefore, I felt it was best to cut down on expenses the best we can. We've made some changes that will benefit us. You can find a full list of our expenses [here](#). To sum it up, we basically did the following:

- Moved all of our Linux servers to our Windows machines and cancelled our only NFO Linux machine (-\$179.99/m).
- Got a NFO discount on all of our NFO machines (-\$10.00/m per machine and we have five machines).
- Moved two of our Surf Timer servers off of our NFO EU VDS to our Frankfurt machine and cancelled the VDS (\$-39.00/m).

This has saved us \$269.98/m. Our expenses are still slightly over \$1000.00/m (\$1111.89) but it is much better than before.

We have \$576.09 coming in on June 15th and \$489.78 coming in on July 15th, although, we shouldn't be relying on Ad money.. Ever.

Overall, as long as we are getting donations, we should be fine. Sadly, we haven't been receiving as many donations as we used to. If you do want to donate to help out the community, you can go [here](#).

Linux Machine Removed

As said in the Expenses Cut section, we removed our NFO Linux machine. Ever since CS:S ZE was removed from the machine, the peak CPU usage was around 20% which is a big waste in my opinion. Therefore, we decided to cancel the machine.

The server's moved from the Linux machine included:

- CS:S DeathRun
- CS:S Bunny Hop
- CS:S Surf RPG DM
- TF2 Smashfort
- TF2 TF2Ware
- CS:GO Surf Timer (1-4)

I've successfully moved all servers to Windows (updated all the extensions, etc) and they all do appear to be working fine. However, Windows does have a few disadvantages over Linux (mostly for Server Managers). This includes:

- Console.log files can't be opened or removed while the server is on.
- No console wrapper tool (can't see the current SRCDS console).
- No instant restarts. In Linux, the console wrapper tool could automatically detect if the server crashed and if it did, it would instantly restart it and post an event with the last lines from the console before the server crashed. This was honestly very helpful. With Windows, it takes around 10 minutes or so for the servers to restart if crashed (a script must run every 10 minutes to check if the server crashed).

Overall, this action was needed and the servers should be mostly stable. If you have any questions, feel free to message me.

European VDS Cancelled

Back in December, we decided to order a NFO VDS for our European servers. We did this to load-balance the servers from the Frankfurt machine (the machine was very overloaded at the time). However, in the past couple months, our European servers have lost population and we did move the Frankfurt machine to Windows (better for CS:GO servers). Since we are cutting on expenses, I felt it was best to move the Surf Timer servers back to the Frankfurt machine and cancel the VDS. Our peak CPU usage for the Frankfurt machine will most likely go from ~50% to around 60% after this move. 60% peak CPU usage isn't bad compared to the 95%+ peak CPU usage we witnessed back in December.

Depending on our income in the Summer and the peak CPU usage, we may have to order another VDS if our machine becomes overloaded (it may not, I'm not sure).

OVH Game Server Machine With EasyWI

I made a [thread](#) about this already, but I would like to include more things about our current setup.

As a few of you know, we have set up a free control panel called [Easy-WI](#) on our OVH GameServer box. First, let me go over our OVH GS box. Here's a list of its hardware:

- **Processor** - Intel I7 4790K Overclocked to 4.4 GHz
- **Ram** - 32 GB
- **Hard Drive** - SSD 250 GB
- **Network** - 250 megabits (with 350+ gbps in protection from DDoS attacks, etc)

So obviously, that is a crazy machine! This machine should run game servers extremely well. Initially, the only problem we had was finding a good control panel to use for our game servers. However, we have found Easy-WI, which isn't bad, but isn't great either.

Things I like about Easy-WI:

- Free and open-source.
- Secure (runs each server as a specific user, etc).
- Uses link installs which saves space (important in our case).
- A nice-looking web interface.
- Automatic game updating & server restarting.

Things I dislike about Easy-WI:

- The control panel is buggy. For example, there is a 50/50 chance you'll get this error while restarting the server and nothing is done: "PHP Notice: Connection closed by server".
- It doesn't keep you logged in. There doesn't seem to be an option to edit the amount of time it keeps you logged in for.
- Can't assign more than one user to a server.
- Not a lot of helpful support on the forums.

Other than those issues, it works great. Since it is hosted on our web machine, the control panel is very fast. If those issues could be fixed, the control panel would be great.

I've been learning a lot while setting up future servers with this control panel. The next thing I am trying to do is figuring out how to execute a file after a certain game is automatically updated (e.g. Rust). I have to manually update Oxide every time Rust is updated. Making it automated would be nice (I already made a bash file for it).

Oh, just a side note, our OVH GS machine can handle 63 bots + me at 64 tick with no lag (bot_flipout at 0, etc). I was playing Deathmatch on the test server with the 128p_test map running. We can handle 63 bots + me at 128 tick with bot_flipout 1, but sadly, once I turned bot_flipout to 0, the server lagged (128 tick + 63 bots + me + deathmatch is pretty intense).

The next thing I would like to mention is the fact that there may not be a Linux limitation in CS:GO. Although, that isn't confirmed. I made a CS:GO test server running 64 bots on my 128p_test.bsp map. The server was 128 tick (to ensure I send the most networking data

possible). I set sv_stressbots to 1 and bot_flipout to 1 (this will make it so bots only jump around). I had bot_flipout set to 1 so no action is going on (if action was going on, the server would be lagging and network data wouldn't be used as much). It turns out the server was using 120% CPU (over 100%). It is still unconfirmed, but I will look into it further. Maybe Debian 8.4 doesn't run into the Linux limitation while Gentoo does (NFO's Managed Linux operating system)?

Overall, so far, Easy-WI is the best control panel I could find. If any others come out that are better than Easy-WI and meet our needs, I will look into moving to that, but for now, we will be using Easy-WI for our OVH GS box game servers.

New Servers (No Announcements)

Now, this is not the time to make server announcements, but I will say that there are servers that will be released in the future. These servers will be ran on our OVH GS machine.

Now, I understand a lot of people are against expanding right now, however, I do have something to say about it. You can read the "Expanding" subsection under the "Game & Game Servers" section. The new servers being released in the future have been being worked on for months now. The Server Managers and Division Leaders working on these projects have dedicated a lot of time and effort into getting these specific servers finished. With that said, our OVH GS box has been sitting for months literally doing nothing. It's finally time to put it to great use!

Donations, Etc

The next topic to talk about has already been hinted at in the other sections. It's pretty simple, we need more donations. After everything that has happened, we have lost a lot of Supporters.

When GFL moves to IPS 4, gaining donations should be much easier. Why? Well, as of right now, it is a pain to donate. Some people just want to quickly donate to receive perks in-game, but instead, they have to register an account on the forums (if they can figure out that is why they aren't seeing any packages).

With that said, we also need to ensure all of our game servers have enough Supporter and VIP perks. That is something I will discuss with our Server Managers+.

Overall, we do need more donations in the future. I will talk to our staff about this.

Who [member=setup.sh] Is (A.K.A. Amp)

As a few of you have noticed, [member=setup.sh] was promoted to Technical Assistant. However, some of you do not know who he is. I personally call him Amp (that was his original name when I first met him). Amp used to host our once popular TF2 Mario Kart server on one of his dedicated machines for free. Sadly, we had to move off of his dedicated machine after being hit and taken offline by DDoS attacks constantly.

Ever since [member=SoJa] was demoted, I've been handed the responsibility of our web machine. Our web machine runs VMWare which is a VPS software. We have a separate VPS for just about everything. For example, we have a separate VPS for the MySQL server, Apache/CPanel, GitLab, FastDL, and TeamSpeak. After last week's maintenance (5-2-16), the machine booted up, but the Apache VPS wasn't running correctly (our website was offline). Now, keep in mind, I do not have a lot of experience in Linux and I am very new to it. Honestly, I had no clue what the issue was. After sitting there for around an hour and a half, I decided to finally talk to Amp (first time in long time). He was kind enough to TeamView me and help me get the VPS working again. The issue was indeed IPTables and he helped me strengthen our firewall. After talking to him for a few days while he was helping me with countless things, I decided to finally make him a user on our VPSs. Everything is backed up constantly and logs have been enabled (so I can see what he is doing). All he has done his entire time in GFL was help. Do I trust him? Yes. Amp only has access to the web machine, nothing else (e.g. PayPal, the OVH account, etc).

Amp is very experienced in Linux and currently, there's nobody in GFL as experienced as him with Linux. Having somebody like Amp can only strengthen GFL (as long as they don't have access to PayPal or whatever, which they don't and never will). With that said, I am also learning Linux and after I am experienced enough, we will have two users (Amp and I) managing GFL's backend which is very good in my opinion.

Overall, this can only benefit us. Like I said before, we have backups running in-case something does happen and we do have logs as well.

Games & Game Servers

Expanding

The first thing I want to talk about is expanding. I've been hearing a lot of "GFL shouldn't be expanding" statements recently and honestly I see why people are saying it. However, as of right now, we aren't receiving many donations and I feel the servers we are going to release will give us a lot of donations. With that said, the specific servers have been in progress for months now.

With that said, we also have an OVH GS box that is currently not being used. Future servers will be ran on this machine. This is another reason we will be launching "soon-ish to be announced" servers. However, other than these servers, we won't be expanding any further until all the servers are populated.

We do need to focus on our current game servers and to be honest, I haven't really looked into it much. Though, I do have a few servers to mention.

Counter-Strike: Global Offensive

All Servers

I would first like to talk about all the CS:GO servers. Basically, I am going to look into the reservedslots.smx issue. In an update a while ago, apparently CS:GO broke the reserved slots plugin (what a surprise, Valve). Reserved slots is a big Supporter/VIP perk and I would hate to see it broken forever in CS:GO.

Surf Timer

Well, it's time to talk about Surf Timer. Honestly, most of our Surf Timer servers have lost a lot of population. However, I don't think it's our fault. After experimenting with the CS:GO server browser the other day, I discovered there were hundreds of Surf Timer servers. When we started Surf Timer, there weren't nearly as many servers. With that said, most of the popular Surf Timer servers advertise "Knife/Weapon Skins" in their host name which clearly gives them an advantage since those plugins are against the rules (and we follow the rules). With the combination of both of those things, I am not surprised our Surf Timer servers are losing population. Let's look at the GameTracker graphs:

[url=http://www.gametracker.com/server_info/gost.gflclan.com:27015/][img]http://cache.www.gametracker.com/server_info/gost.gflclan.com:27015/b_560_95_1.png[/img][url]

[url=http://www.gametracker.com/server_info/74.91.115.90:27015/][img]http://cache.www.gametracker.com/server_info/74.91.115.90:27015/b_560_95_1.png[/img][url]

[url=http://www.gametracker.com/server_info/74.91.119.201:27015/][img]http://cache.www.gametracker.com/server_info/74.91.119.201:27015/b_560_95_1.png[/img][url]

[url=http://www.gametracker.com/server_info/95.172.92.128:27015/][img]http://cache.www.gametracker.com/server_info/95.172.92.128:27015/b_560_95_1.png[/img][url]

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We clearly aren't doing good as we once were. For example, here are some NFO graphs:

Surf Timer Casual (US)

[IMG]<http://g.gflclan.com/6e764d23b26148ae.png>[/IMG]

Surf Timer Beginner (US)

[IMG]<http://g.gflclan.com/77fa42d6b4f66c12.png>[/IMG]

Surf Timer Casual (EU)

[IMG]<http://g.gflclan.com/36c70b90d4f21705.png>[/IMG]

Surf Timer Beginner (EU)

[IMG]<http://g.gflclan.com/a4b88e1311afebcf.png>[/IMG]

As far as I am aware, the management has done great on the server. But sadly, due to the issues I listed above, our Surf Timer servers are slowly losing population. Our best hope for now is to keep our Bunny Hop servers populated (they are doing a great job) and other servers populated. There is a possibility that if Valve fixes the CS:GO server browser, we'll regain population (the server browser seriously is broken).

Garry's Mod

Purge

The next server I want to talk about is Purge. As of right now, the population is dying. Look at the NFO graph:

[IMG]<http://g.gflclan.com/13deb3ecef03b53.png>[/IMG]

Clearly, the server has been losing players recently. I wish I knew the details, but sadly, I do not. Something has definitely occurred 12 - 13 days ago.

The Server Manager(s) of this server need to look into this issue. I do realize Purge is a dying game mode, but I have heard there are some things players disagree with in the server.

My Future With GFL V2

I know I've talked about my future with GFL multiple times already, however, I feel like adding some extra information. As I said in the past, I will be staying with GFL and helping it get back on track. Ever since [member=SoJa] was demoted, a lot more responsibility was handed to me. With that said, there are many new things I am learning (e.g. Linux, handling bills, handling the financial side of GFL, securing GFL, etc). On top of that, GFL has a lot of things to look forward to. For example, IPS 4 and SourceBans 2.

As of right now, I have a lot of motivation to work on GFL and to make it better than ever. There is a lot of potential in this community, there always has been. We truly do have an unique setup. There are a lot of people that disagree with how the community is ran, but that is because it is unique. Of course, there are important areas we can improve in (I've mentioned them in the past), but no gaming community is perfect.

I will continue to try my best at making GFL a greater place to stay.

TeamSpeak 3 Channel Structure, Permissions, Etc

The next thing I want to talk about is about TeamSpeak 3. Recently, we have been undergoing a few changes. Now, the Council are still discussing future changes with TeamSpeak 3, but I will give you a small changelog of what has happened and what we are for sure doing:

Removed Private Channels For Higher-Ups

There are no longer personal (private) channels in any Higher-Up sections (e.g. Server Managers, etc). All the Higher-Ups can create temporary Supporter channels which should be

enough in my opinion. If a Higher-Up buys VIP, they can get a permanent private channel under VIP channels.

Removing Client Permissions

We are in the process of removing all individual client permissions. Client permissions should have never been a thing with our TeamSpeak 3 server and if there is a way to disable clients from giving client permissions, I would recommend doing so. All permissions for the client should be based off of their TeamSpeak 3 group(s). This step will definitely secure our TeamSpeak 3 server and should prevent clients from having access they shouldn't have.

On a side note, the TeamSpeak 3 server should automatically start every time the VPS is restarted.

TL;DR

Well, I believe it's best just to read sections you're interested in if you do not want to read the entire thing. However, I'll give the TL;DR version a try again.

Basically, John Schoenick (TF2 Developer) posted a thread on the HLDS Mailing List showing signs of hope for the modding community (e.g. community servers) in TF2.

If all goes well, once we switch to IPS 4, many new awesome features should be introduced. These features will make managing a server in GFL easier, donating for GFL much easier and better, and will generally make GFL cleaner.

I am looking into SourceBans 2 for our SourceMod-only database. This will improve our banning system, etc. If SourceBans 2 is a success, I will look into adding support for our Garry's Mod SourceBans.

We have cut down on expenses by \$269.98/m. We have cancelled our only Linux machine and cancelled our European VDS (we have successfully moved all of the servers off of those devices).

Our OVH GS box is ready and we have found a control panel called Easy-WI. The control panel isn't perfect but it does its job.

We have new servers to be introduced in the future. These servers will be hosted on our OVH GS machine.

We generally do need more donations in the future. Especially after everything that has happened recently (e.g. PayPal move, etc). I will work with the Server Managers to ensure we have up-to-date Supporter/VIP perks.

[member=Setup.sh] (A.K.A. Amp) will be helping me run our web machine (along with the VPSs) and OVH GS box. I do trust Amp.

As I said in the past, I will be staying in GFL and I will ensure we get back on track. I haven't had this much motivation in GFL for a very long time (in fact, I think I've never had this much motivation). I am constantly learning new things that will help me in the future.

The TeamSpeak 3 server is undergoing a couple changes. Firstly, we removed Higher-Up private channels. Secondly, we are in the process of completely removing individual client permissions.

Overall

I wanted to talk about a lot of other things but honestly, this was a bigger update than expected. I truly hope it was worth the read. I've been wanting to do an update post for a while now but I always found myself working on something else (busy). Like I said before, GFL has many things to look forward to. As long as our developers are working hard, I doubt we'll have a problem with IPS 4. There are still, as usual, other topics to talk about. However, I haven't gathered enough information to actually start writing about it in this update.

P.S. I spent all day writing this. There most likely will be grammar mistakes, but I did do my best to read through it. Also, fun fact, this is the longest update post for GFL.

~16.7 pages long

[Google Document](#)

Thank you for reading.