PIRATES
of the Burning Sea
POWER&PRESTIGE
TM

The Official PotBS Newsletter

Legacy *(/ˈlegəsē/), noun; the long-lasting impact of particular events, actions, etc. that took place in the past.*

LEGACY: Vision's Christmas Present to all Veterans of PotBS!

The **Legacy Server** is going live, and will be opening for Users to enjoy at **10:00 AM Pacific** on **Friday, December 23**!

The Legacy Server is an earlier version of PotBS, specifically v2.10, with a different set of historic ship stats, accuracy, gun counts, and MUCH more. It is also a ***brand-new*** Server, and everyone on it is ***starting out fresh*** -- equal to one another in all ways apart from their existing skills and experience as Captains on the Burning Sea.

Please note that unlike the **Live** Servers *(which remain **Free to Play**)*, the **Legacy** Server requires a **Subscription** to access. Good news -- while their Subscriptions are active, Subscribers ***also*** gain other benefits on the **Live** Servers, similar to the original Captains' Club!

The Legacy Server was envisioned as a way of providing the ***classic game experience*** of PotBS to Veteran Players who had greatly enjoyed the gameplay mechanics of that era, and would often request changes that hearkened back to it.

In **addition** to access to Legacy, an Active Subscription provides the following benefits *(across **all** Servers)* while active:

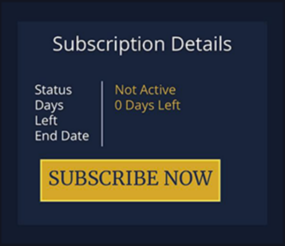
-- All 10 Econ Slots Open
-- All 5 Ship Slots Open
-- All 6 Character Slots Open
-- Free Ship Insurance
-- Epic Missions Unlocked
-- Dry Dock Storage Unlocked
-- A 20% Discount on BSP Purchases in Treasure Aisle

There are **two** steps to accessing the Legacy Server -- ***first***, Download and Install the Legacy Server Client, ***then*** **Subscribe**! Once your Subscription is active, after the doors to Legacy open on Friday, December 23, you will be able to log in to the Legacy Server and create your first Captain.

See below on how to use the Subscription System, Download Legacy and join in on the fun!

How to use the Subscription System

The Subscription System is accessed on the Game Web Site, https://burningsea.com. To access the site, you will need either an existing Account or to create a new, free Account. Once you log in, and are taken to your Account Dashboard, in the top right quadrant you will see your Subscription Details, such as if your Subscription is Active or not, and how many days remain in your current Subscription. To get started, simply click the "**Subscribe Now**" Button, shown below:



Subscription Details

Status	Not Active
Days Left	0 Days Left
End Date	

Clicking this will take you to the Game Store, where you can choose the length of your Subscription. Players can select a month-by-month Subscription, or can elect to purchase larger subscriptions and take advantage of Discounts. Currently, the price for Subscriptions are as follows:

1 Month (30 Days): $7 USD per Month
6 Months (180 Days): $6 USD per Month *(14% Discount)*
12 Months (364 Days): $5 USD per Month *(29% Discount)*

After Subscribing, the next step is to **Download and Install the Legacy Client**!

How to Download and Install the Legacy Client

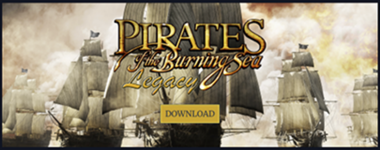
While we plan to eventually integrate all of the Game Servers into a **single** Launcher and Installer, at this point in time the Legacy Server requires a **separate Installation**. When you install Legacy, it will create its own Desktop Icons, separate and distinct from those of the Live Servers.

To download and install Legacy, simply follow these steps:

STEP 1: Go to the Game Web Site at https://burningsea.com and log into your Account.

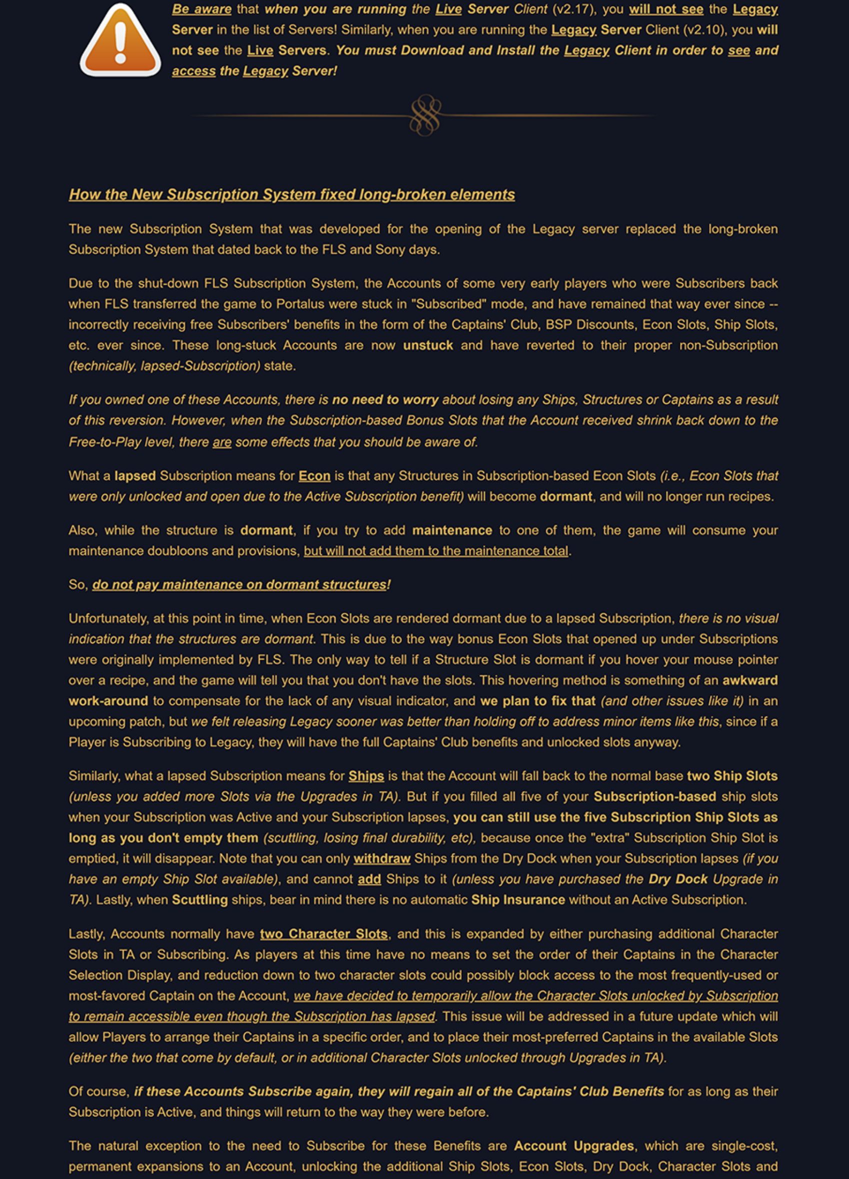
STEP 2: Click the DOWNLOAD Button at the top right once you are logged in.

STEP 3: Click on the Legacy Server Download button to download the Legacy Installer!



STEP 4: Run the Installer and let the ***Legacy Launcher*** download and install the Legacy Client.

STEP 5: Run the Legacy Launcher in the future from the new icon on your Desktop!



Be aware that ***when you are running the Live Server*** *Client* (v2.17), you **will not see** the **Legacy Server** in the list of Servers! Similarly, when you are running the **Legacy Server** Client (v2.10), you **will not see** the **Live Servers**. ***You must Download and Install the Legacy Client in order to see and access the Legacy Server!***

* * *

How the New Subscription System fixed long-broken elements

The new Subscription System that was developed for the opening of the Legacy server replaced the long-broken Subscription System that dated back to the FLS and Sony days.

Due to the shut-down FLS Subscription System, the Accounts of some very early players who were Subscribers back when FLS transferred the game to Portalus were stuck in "Subscribed" mode, and have remained that way ever since -- incorrectly receiving free Subscribers' benefits in the form of the Captains' Club, BSP Discounts, Econ Slots, Ship Slots, etc. ever since. These long-stuck Accounts are now **unstuck** and have reverted to their proper non-Subscription *(technically, lapsed-Subscription)* state.

If you owned one of these Accounts, there is ***no need to worry*** *about losing any Ships, Structures or Captains as a result of this reversion. However, when the Subscription-based Bonus Slots that the Account received shrink back down to the Free-to-Play level, there are some effects that you should be aware of.*

What a **lapsed** Subscription means for **Econ** is that any Structures in Subscription-based Econ Slots *(i.e., Econ Slots that were only unlocked and open due to the Active Subscription benefit)* will become **dormant**, and will no longer run recipes.

Also, while the structure is **dormant**, if you try to add **maintenance** to one of them, the game will consume your maintenance doubloons and provisions, but will not add them to the maintenance total.

So, ***do not pay maintenance on dormant structures!***

Unfortunately, at this point in time, when Econ Slots are rendered dormant due to a lapsed Subscription, *there is no visual indication that the structures are dormant*. This is due to the way bonus Econ Slots that opened up under Subscriptions were originally implemented by FLS. The only way to tell if a Structure Slot is dormant if you hover your mouse pointer over a recipe, and the game will tell you that you don't have the slots. This hovering method is something of an **awkward work-around** to compensate for the lack of any visual indicator, and **we plan to fix that** *(and other issues like it)* in an upcoming patch, but *we felt releasing Legacy sooner was better than holding off to address minor items like this*, since if a Player is Subscribing to Legacy, they will have the full Captains' Club benefits and unlocked slots anyway.

Similarly, what a lapsed Subscription means for **Ships** is that the Account will fall back to the normal base **two Ship Slots** *(unless you added more Slots via the Upgrades in TA)*. But if you filled all five of your **Subscription-based** ship slots when your Subscription was Active and your Subscription lapses, **you can still use the five Subscription Ship Slots as long as you don't empty them** *(scuttling, losing final durability, etc)*, because once the "extra" Subscription Ship Slot is emptied, it will disappear. Note that you can only **withdraw** Ships from the Dry Dock when your Subscription lapses *(if you have an empty Ship Slot available)*, and cannot **add** Ships to it *(unless you have purchased the* ***Dry Dock*** *Upgrade in TA)*. Lastly, when **Scuttling** ships, bear in mind there is no automatic **Ship Insurance** without an Active Subscription.

Lastly, Accounts normally have **two Character Slots**, and this is expanded by either purchasing additional Character Slots in TA or Subscribing. As players at this time have no means to set the order of their Captains in the Character Selection Display, and reduction down to two character slots could possibly block access to the most frequently-used or most-favored Captain on the Account, *we have decided to temporarily allow the Character Slots unlocked by Subscription to remain accessible even though the Subscription has lapsed*. This issue will be addressed in a future update which will allow Players to arrange their Captains in a specific order, and to place their most-preferred Captains in the available Slots *(either the two that come by default, or in additional Character Slots unlocked through Upgrades in TA)*.

Of course, ***if these Accounts Subscribe again, they will regain all of the Captains' Club Benefits*** for as long as their Subscription is Active, and things will return to the way they were before.

The natural exception to the need to Subscribe for these Benefits are **Account Upgrades**, which are single-cost, permanent expansions to an Account, unlocking the additional Ship Slots, Econ Slots, Dry Dock, Character Slots and more. Such expansions (for example, unlocking all Econ Slots) means the number of Slots on an Account will not change by its Subscription lapsing.

Again, we plan on further updating and improving the FLS-era systems that are adversely impacting *(or in some cases, failing to correctly impact)* Subscription-related benefits in upcoming patches.

Understanding Active Nation Change Restrictions

PotBS traditionally had an Active Nation Change restriction, and while this was lifted on the Live Servers (Roberts & Antigua), ***this restriction is still in place on Legacy***. This restriction adds a special poignance to the decision placed before New Players... what Nation would they like to play?

Unfortunately, the game does **NOT** do a good job of explaining that this is a **very important decision**, and not one that can be rapidly (or easily) backed out of. Because once you select a Nation to Play on a given Account, ***you are restricted to playing that Nation for the duration of the current Map cycle***.

Also, once you choose a Nation to be Active, you cannot see or play any other Nation's Captains on your Account for that map cycle, only those of the currently-active Nation.

This lack of clear instruction has historically led to any number of new Players struggling to grasp why they could not create Captains of a different Nation, even after they had deleted all of the existing Captains on their Account.

A while ago, on the Live Servers, this classic restriction was actually **lifted** and this constantly-appearing question went away. But we expect to see a return of it when Legacy is live! Hence, we hope this short ***word to the wise*** is of value!

On Legacy, ***the original FLS model will be followed*** -- the only way to change your Account's Nation in the middle of an active Map cycle will be to purchase a **Nation Change** Token in Treasure Aisle.

Due to the lack of clear explanation in the character creation process that dates back to the FLS days, Nation Change Tokens were often **another** source of confusion for new Players, as many mistakenly assumed these Tokens could be used to change the Nationality of a given Captain. ***This was never the case***. A Spanish Captain will always be Spanish. The token will not change that. Worse, Players who operated under this misunderstanding, purchased a Nation Change Token and used it to change their Account to point at a different Nation would all of a sudden not see ANY of their Captains from the previous Nation when they logged in -- because you can only see the Captains on your Account that are of your **currently-selected** Nation. So someone who had been making British Captains and thought they could turn one Spanish was in for a rude surprise. The inevitable result of this was -- you guessed it -- more confusion, more Customer Support, etc.

If you are a new Player reading this, you now know **what** a Nation Change Token is for, and won't make that mistake!

With that said, the question that naturally follows as a new Player is *"How do I know what Nation would be best for me to select?"*

The **answer** to that very pertinent question is to either join the same Nation as your circle of friends will be playing, or take a few minutes to join the game's official Discord Server and ask around! Talk to people in different Societies, see which Nations are the most active *(or are doing things you enjoy)* and you can make an much more informed decision.

The Name Reservation System

The **Name Reservation System** is still open. If you have not used it yet, the purpose of this system is to allow Players to ***reserve*** the name of a Captain that they have on their Account for use on the Legacy Server ***before it officially opens.*** The intent of this System is to prevent a mad dash of Players grabbing popular Captains' names on Legacy *(quite possibly names that veteran Players have used for years and are well-known by).*

"**Reservation**" of a Captain's name means that *only the reserving Account can create a new Captain with that name*.

Reserving a name goes beyond the Legacy Server -- a Reserved Name is reserved for your account across ***ALL*** servers that it does not yet exist upon. In other words, if the name exists on **Antigua** but does ***not*** exist on **Roberts** (or Legacy), it will be reserved on both Roberts and Legacy, along with any other Servers that may open in the future. On the other hand, if it exists on both Antigua and Roberts, but is owned by ***different*** Accounts on each Server, then the Account that Reserves the name first will be the one to get the reservation for all the Servers it does not yet exist upon.

(Note that if you have an existing Captain on a given Server, and either do not choose to Reserve their name and/or someone else Reserves that name, your existing Captain on its current Server will not be affected in any way)

To give enough time for the word to spread and for everyone to Reserve their Captains' Names despite the holiday season, the Name Reservation System was opened for several weeks before the Legacy Server is scheduled to open.

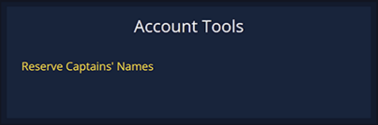
Below we will briefly cover how to use the **Name Reservation System**. Please refer back to this Newsletter or reach out for assistance on Discord if anything in the process is unclear.

STEP ONE: Visit the Game Web Site at https://burningsea.com and log in to your existing Account.

STEP TWO: Click on the "**BSN STORE**" Button on the top Navigation Bar and confirm the Account Username.

STEP THREE: Purchase the number of **Reservation Tokens** you need for the Captains on this Account.

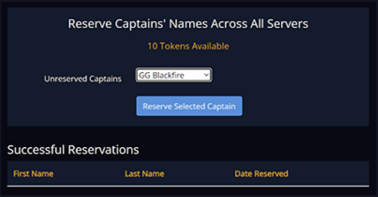
STEP FOUR: Return to https://burningsea.com and click on ***"Reserve Captains' Names"*** under "**Account Tools**".



Account Tools

Reserve Captains' Names

STEP FIVE: Choose the Captain you want to Reserve from your Account List and click the Reserve button.



Reserve Captains' Names Across All Servers

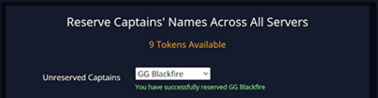
10 Tokens Available

Unreserved Captains: GG Blackfire

Successful Reservations

First Name	Last Name	Date Reserved

STEP SIX: You will see each Reserved Captain move down to the Successful Reservation list, like this:

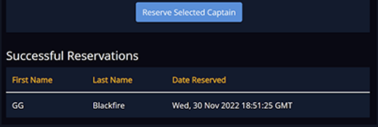


Reserve Captains' Names Across All Servers

9 Tokens Available

Unreserved Captains: GG Blackfire

You have successfully reserved GG Blackfire



Successful Reservations

First Name	Last Name	Date Reserved
GG	Blackfire	Wed, 30 Nov 2022 18:51:25 GMT

To reserve additional Captains' names, just select them one at a time and click "**Reserve Selected Captain**".

Please be aware that the launch of Legacy (in December) will be accompanied by a full-length Newsletter as well as announcements on Discord, Facebook, Instagram and elsewhere. Keep an eye out for it!

To reserve one or more of your Captains' names for use on the Legacy Server and ensure no one else can use them there, please be sure to take advantage of this system before Legacy goes live!

Another Server for PotBS!

With the release of Legacy and as part of Vision's tech refresh for 2023, an ***additional Server*** is joining the PotBS Cluster to support ongoing development. A **Dell EMC PowerEdge R740xd**, it features two Gold-class 2.7 GHz 18-Core CPUs, 768 GB of RAM, Dual Redundant Hot-Swap Power Supplies, dual 10G XFP Fiber Network Ports, dual 40G InfiniBand Network Ports and a total of 28 (24+4) dual-port 12G SAS SSD in its internal RAID Arrays.

The Discord Server: Join the Community!

We regularly talk about PotBS and make announcements on the game's official **Discord** Server. You can also read the **Patch Notes** on the Discord Server, in the **#patch-notes** channel! It's a great place to meet and interact with other lively Captains of the Burning Sea on every topic from Trade to Societies, Missions to PvP! If you have not yet joined our Discord Server, we encourage you to do that now, at: https://discordapp.com/invite/burning-sea

Next Task after Legacy: Restoring Antigua

Antigua, one of the two Live Servers, suffered damage during an upgrade and was taken offline for repairs. The repairs would involve rebuilding some missing data from a second database and converting that data into the binary data blob format used for this purpose by the Engine. This not only represents a lot of work, but it came at an very inopportune time, as at this time, we were elbow-deep in preparations for the launch of Legacy. While at first we had hoped we would be able to restore Antigua quickly, as the scope of the effort involved became clear, we realized bringing Antigua back online would need to wait until Legacy had been launched and we had some breathing room. So it lays next in line on Vision's official list of Things-To-Do!

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A Broader Sea: The Next Steps towards Steam

Vision has been thinking and talking about bringing the Burning Sea to Steam since Day One of taking over the game. To Vision, expanding distribution with a strong launch on Steam represented one of the best routes to restoring a solid portion of the game's population, which in turn would set the stage for further growth of the Dev Team, resurrection of the Art / Content pipelines and the creation of more content. But it was clear there were many, many bridges *(Logistical, Financial, Engineering and Social)* to cross before the game could get there. Portalus itself had tried for many years to get the game on Steam without success. Vision, reviewing their experiences, knew that the work involved in prepping the game for Steam would be significant, and could not be accomplished until after the launch of Legacy.

Looking Back: A Perspective

When the Announcement went out in 2018 that Portalus was going to cease operations, Vision was the company that stepped forward to carry the torch of the Burning Sea forward. Vision and Portalus had already been working together since the separation of the game from Sony -- Vision had been hosting the title at its Datacenter. So there was less effort than usually would be required, and the game never went offline during the transition.

Since 2018, Vision has worked to improve the game and make it ever-more playable, ever-more fun. A partial list of what has been accomplished since then follows:

- *Increased the number of **GM** and **Support** staff*
- *Launched an all-new Official Discord Server and added a comprehensive automatic translation system to it, supporting **six** languages: English, German, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Russian*
- *Repaired several long-broken systems, such as the User-Generated **Flag and Sail** system, which for years had not been showing existing Player-owned Flags and Sails*
- *Created a fully localized, all-new **Game Web Site** with a **User Dashboard**, **Account Controls** (including self-operated Password and E-Mail Reset systems) and much more*
- ***Overhauled the BSN Store**, making it easier to use and stylistically matched to the Web Site*
- *Closed several Exploits*
- *Restored the automatic nature of several systems that had formerly required the manual intervention of Customer Support, such as **Name Changes** and **Level 50 Advances***
- *Made the game more globally accessible, removing many of the geographic restrictions which had plagued players in many parts of the world*
- *Added over **100 Payment Systems**, including Gift Cards, Mobile & E-Wallets for Players around the world*
- *Created an online record of all past **BSN purchases** (now including Name Reservation Tokens and Subscriptions) that can be viewed by each Player on their Account Dashboard via the Game Website*
- *Closed the old **Forums***
- *Created a new **Wiki** for the game*
- *Removed the **Concorde** from being able to be produced*
- *Removed **Unrest Bundles** and put an end to bundle-bombing*
- *Removed the **Nation Change Delay** on the Live Servers, allowing Players to swap between Active Nations at will*
- *Changed the default **Fallback** ship to a more powerful variant*
- *Created an **Automatic Chat Translation System** in the Game, so that all in-game chat from other Players is automatically translated into the language the Player has their own Game set to*

- *Replaced the aging Server hardware the game had been running on at Sony and moved the game onto modern, high speed servers in a major technology refresh*
- *Upgraded the Game Client to use the very latest / final version of Microsoft DirectX 9*
- *Updated all the Server and Client libraries from Visual Studio 2005 to Visual Studio 2019*
- *Replaced the old BitRaider launcher with a modern one, and created a new Installer as well*
- *Built a **Name Reservation System** so existing Players could keep their same Captains Names on Legacy*
- *Built a new **Subscription System** in preparation for the launch of Legacy*
- *Took over promoting the game on Facebook and Instagram*
- *Removed the two Free Economy Slots that came with Free-to-Play Accounts, reducing abuse*

The User-generated **Flag-and-Sail** system still requires more work to be brought fully back to life -- the initial work Vision did only allowed existing content to once again display properly. Vision plans on resurrecting the submission system for new content *(as well as the commission system for Flags and Sails put up for sale by their creators)* after the content pipeline has been built back in place and there are available staff to help review newly submitted content.

* * *

Looking Forward: What Comes after Steam?

If we look back to our previous Dev Blogs, we see much of the below has been accomplished, but we also can see the plan for what is to come on the Live Servers after Legacy. A lot of our long-term plans aim to address issues that stem from restrictions. We want to make the Burning Sea more accessible to modern audiences.

For example, Leveling just to be able to sail certain ships in the game is not popular -- nor does it make sense in a historical perspective. A Captain who knows how to sail one square rigger logically would be able to sail others. Consequently, we are looking to remove ship level restrictions from the game.

Also, Captains not being able to move from one Nation to another is counterintuitive to many players. Also, historically, some Captains have had both long-term and short-term alliances with different Nations. A reputation, crime and loyalty system would make more sense. Plus, very few Players want to build up another Captain from the beginning just to experience other parts of the game, so we are also looking to remove this type of restriction.

Of course, historically the possibility of capturing enemy ships (and their cargo) kindled fire in the hearts of not only Pirates but also Captains and Sailors of the various Nations vying for control of the region. These men who risked their lives and limbs in battle did so largely for the potential of prize money. Most players feel the same way, and wish to be able to capture ships regardless of their Career. In accordance with that, we are also looking to implement this ability -- for anyone to be able to capture prize ships.

The far larger portion of new Players who come to the game have historically expressed a preference for being able to play without being concerned about PvP. They have preferred the Town Life, Exploration, Industry and Mission-based-Adventure side of things. We are looking into ways to make that kind of experience more possible.

We know the game is a bit too complex in many facets compared to more recent offerings in the game space. To make the Burning Sea more accessible and friendly for new players, we want to simplify some things, provide much better tutorials, and address often-overlooked issues that frustrate many players, such as finding specific locations in the game.

Avatar Combat has been often viewed as needing improvement and needs to be overhauled. The current combat system puts Players who are at great distances from the Servers (and/or who have high ping / latency) at a disadvantage against Players who have a lower ping. Creating a system which will help to minimize (or even eliminate) that difference but still retain the excitement inherent in the concept of live Avatar Combat is a major goal.

We also want to make Ships more customizable, to the point where Captains can actually select what types of cannon their ships are using and be able to change them when they choose or when they salvage better ones -- without having to build a whole new ship.

In the vein of enjoying the ability to customize your ship, we have considered adding the ability to walk around your ship while docked in a Port, as well as being able to invite other Captains on board your ship. Similarly, adding the ability to customize and decorate your Captain's Quarters on your ship -- or even to obtain a home in a Port -- have always been thought of as compelling additions to the game. But to get there, we face a number of hurdles, including the need to first resurrect the Art and Content pipelines and rebuild the Art Staff for the game.

We also recognize that some things have not been working well on a grand scale, perhaps throughout the game's history, and that they stem from early design decisions at FLS. For example, the Pirate Nation has historically struggled to be successful in Conquest game play, despite its population overwhelmingly outnumbering the other Nations in the game.

We do not feel this is attributable entirely to game mechanics, as the greater part seems to stem from the concept of a Pirate Nation that does not really fit into the mindset of the average Pirate player. Pirates are generally in it for themselves. Alliances between these highly mercurial souls are often quite short-lived. Consequently, we thought the idea of a Pirate "Nation" (in the concept of a cohesive whole) was inherently flawed.

To address this, we are thinking to potentially break the Pirate nation up; to take it out of the traditional Nation-vs-Nation conquest system and have Pirates be more like ***actual*** Pirates -- society or individual-based, competing amongst themselves for riches and glory. We want to dive deeper into the role of the Pirate, allowing them to do more things that Pirates would do, such as hire themselves out as mercenaries to National factions, engage in smuggling operations and of course -- good old traditional ship-based piracy.

Not that we want to leave the National factions out of such an overhaul. We want to make each more unique. We want the French to be more French, the Spanish more Spanish and the British more British. They may gain unique ships for each nation, have major differences in National markets and possibly unique National currencies (specie) for each.

We want them to have a greater feel as an organized Nation, complete with major changes to how Governorships work, have highly organized National navies and enjoy a much more robust trade with the off-map (Continental) markets.

We also want to add ***more*** playable Nations, such as the Dutch, Portuguese and Danish, that would function in the manner of the new Pirate faction -- independent of the traditional Nation-vs-Nation conquest structure, more individual-player or society-based, yet still capable of hiring themselves out or forming periodic Alliances to their advantage.

Over time, we expect the game will change substantially, and in doing so will serve to continually reinforce the status of Legacy as the origin point, the classic game that carries the torch of the game's origins onward into the future.

These future plans are ambitious, large scale and will take time to implement. It is hoped that as PotBS grows and more development team members are added, we can accelerate these plans. Until that time comes, we will proceed at a steady pace, working within our existing staffing limitations to reach our overall goals for the game.

We hope these short examples of the types of changes we intend to implement will give some players a sense of the general direction we are heading.

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