

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [Licensing a program](#)

john ronaldsad - July 30, 2021, 7:55 pm

Hi there, earlier i accidentally posted this in the wrong section, anyways, I'm trying to get into selling software I've made, but I'm not too sure how to add License keys, I don't want to hardcode keys into the program (for obvious reasons) I want to setup an online activation type of service where when you press "register" it validates the key from a database. Any help would be appreciated! thanks

hazbot77 - July 30, 2021, 9:20 pm

Have you tried an online licensing system like <https://auth.gg> ?

john ronaldsad - July 30, 2021, 9:43 pm

(Jul 30, 2021 09:20 PM)hazbot77 Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Have you tried an online licensing system like <https://auth.gg> ?

I actually looked into and it seems a little iffy, I was looking into enigma protector with their online service but I don't want to pay that freakin much

hazbot77 - July 30, 2021, 10:08 pm

(Jul 30, 2021 09:43 PM)john ronaldsad Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I actually looked into and it seems a little iffy, I was looking into enigma protector with their online service but I don't want to pay that freakin much
Yeah. Auth.gg is on the cheaper side but is a good option if you have a low budget. I have found most other licensing services to be way to expensive.

WingsOfAltair - August 1, 2021, 5:52 am

Code your own, mate. It is not that hard.

If you are not that proficient at programming, hire someone to do it for you.

Pros:

You can control your monthly payment by the server that you choose to rent for hosting
You control every aspect of your system

Cons:

Can be expensive to engineer

Need to hire pen-testers and QA engineers to test your system

Shadow_Cloud - August 1, 2021, 10:27 pm

My advice would be to use an existing service like <https://auth.gg> and make sure you hide that implementation behind an interface / dependency injection in your code. This will get you up and running and then you can start building your own against that same interface. Should be very trivial to swap out a new version of your app to your own service then.

These things seem easy to build on the surface, but if you investigate all the tools and techniques available you realize its a little harder than you imagined because the devil is in the detail.

That's my take on your situation.

Florin Salam - August 3, 2021, 10:20 am

It's the data you want to protect or the implementation/code base ? If the latter, it's just a matter of

time and bit of dedication until someone can actually get your code.

In any case, I would suggest you to use a decoupled/distributed model for your application where all your data and potential algorithms are exposed through some web API. These web api of course will require user basis authentication and authorization.

SLAPYA - August 3, 2021, 5:47 pm

This can be made fairly simply - just have a data store somewhere where you can store your license keys. Then, your program should validate the license key against the data store and only startup if its valid.

Even better you should create user accounts for which license keys can be registered to so the next time they run the program, they would just login and it will validate that their account has been registered.

Hit me up for details on how this can be done if it's not clear.

final - August 4, 2021, 7:19 am

Easiest way is to license your program is to use a service like said above, they usually have ready-to-go templates for most popular programming languages (C#, C++, Python).

Your best option is to make your own server/auth system, it's not hard and there plenty of videos regarding making whitelists/licensing for programs on youtube using SQL databases. There's also lots of examples on github.

Krysis - August 5, 2021, 12:07 am

I use [LicenseSpot](#).

They offer a framework sdk, which makes you able to easily integrate your .NET Framework or .NET Core software with their service.

They are also one of the cheapest ones around, and offer a decent documentation for you to read as well.

Good luck! ?

Shadow_Cloud - August 5, 2021, 5:51 am

(Aug 3, 2021 05:47 PM)SLAPYA Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) This can be made fairly simply - just have a data store somewhere where you can store your license keys. Then, your program should validate the license key against the data store and only startup if its valid.

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Its not this simple.. This is exactly how someone just records a "correct" response and swaps out your endpoint with a bogus one that always returns that response. You definitely need more than this in a decent implementation.

As a start:

Validation should not be valid when replayed

Validation should be node specific
Validation should not be deterministic in nature
Validation should not be valid indefinitely
Validation should have a lockout policy

john ronaldsad - August 5, 2021, 10:26 pm

I am really appreciating all the different way and options I have to do this, I'm gonna probably start off with a service then over time try and develop my own. I really do appreciate the help! Thank You!

KeyAuth - October 16, 2022, 9:53 pm

(Aug 1, 2021 10:27 PM)Shadow_Cloud Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) My advice would be to use an existing service like auth.gg and make sure you hide that implementation behind an interface / dependency injection in your code. This will get you up and running and then you can start building your own against that same interface. Should be very trivial to swap out a new version of your app to your own service then.

These things seem easy to build on the surface, but if you investigate all the tools and techniques available you realize its a little harder than you imagined because the devil is in the detail.

That's my take on your situation.

Definitely don't use authgg. The owner has been exposed for many terrible acts and even admitted to code stealing on this forum. Evidence -> outbuilt.ooo

If you're super cheap, you can use the free plan for biitez.dev and you'll get 1000 licenses

If you want something with more features and far more often updates, keyauth.cc suits that role. We're a little more expensive than authgg, though have several features they don't, no stolen code, and no unethical history. So I'd say it's worth the trade off.

eviking - October 18, 2022, 9:47 pm

(Aug 5, 2021 12:07 AM)Krysis Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I use [LicenseSpot](#).

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Good luck! ?

Does licensespot work with visual basic? I signed up for auth.gg and didnt see where I could only seen c# and couple other languages.

GruntStyl - October 20, 2022, 8:07 am

I developed the NoBot software about 7 years ago. And made my own licensing system with MySQL and creating our own Private API to communicate between the Client and Server for authentication. It's worked so well we haven't changed the setup since. And since MySQL is free there is no overhead/commission payment you have to make to a third party.

If you go this route, a word of advise if using MySQL would be to do it the right way. Do NOT make a direct connection to MySQL through your application. Have a secure connection or create your own API for communication between the two (Client & Server).

That would be my Recommendation.

john ronaldsad - November 3, 2022, 8:23 pm

(Oct 20, 2022 08:07 AM)GruntStyl Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I developed the NoBot software about 7 years ago. And made my own licensing system with MySQL and creating our own Private API to communicate between the Client and Server for authentication. It's worked so well we haven't changed the setup since. And since MySQL is free there is no overhead/commission payment you have to make to a third party.

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would you consider sharing the license system? if not, completely understandable

GruntStyl - November 4, 2022, 7:13 am

(Nov 3, 2022 08:23 PM)john ronaldsad Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) would you consider sharing the license system? if not, completely understandable

It's closed source to myself and a couple others that Run NoBot in specific. Since it is proprietary It wouldn't really help anyone else's needs regardless, as it functions specifically for our application.

However it is quite simple. Look up how to setup a MySQL database. Have a client and server. Setup a TCP listener for connection on server. And have your application connect to it. Encrypt your traffic. And have your server internally manage (Locally) your MySQL information and send back and forth the data to your licensing system. It may sound like a lot to manage through but it really isn't. You can find source code online to piece everything together in a couple hours. Or if you're really new to that type of stuff maybe a day or two.

Side note: you'll also need to know how to port forward but I'd assume anyone setting up a listening system would already know how to do that, just figured I'd throw the extra info out there anyways.

If I see more threads asking about how to setup a licensing system, maybe I'll make a quick Github project for a simple setup down the road. Until then I have confidence you'll figure it out! ?

EagleEye - November 12, 2022, 2:35 am

(Nov 4, 2022 07:13 AM)GruntStyl Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) It's closed source to myself and a couple others that Run NoBot in specific. Since it is proprietary It wouldn't really help anyone else's needs regardless, as it functions specifically for our application.

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Guillyian - March 19, 2023, 9:43 am

(Nov 12, 2022 03:35 AM)CyberEagle Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) it has been a while i didn't comment, but people still asks for licensing system, maybe i could open source mine one day

Please???? It would be of much appreciation

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Still considering open sourcing? I could use a licensing program

Klonopin - April 15, 2023, 4:36 pm

I recommend Keyauth if you know what you are doing

StaticCG - August 19, 2023, 11:35 am

I released an open source .NET licensing system on my GitHub and can be found in my sig.

Its not secure in its current state however you could convert it to a CRUD API using php like how in the Login.cs does and it has a basic implementation to use a php API.

Good luck!

john ronaldsad - July 3, 2025, 2:22 am

(Nov 12, 2022 03:35 AM)EagleEye Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) it has been a while i didn't comment, but people still asks for licensing system, maybe i could open source mine one day
would you be ever so kind and please release the source code?

R00tziLLa - July 4, 2025, 2:51 am

(Jul 30, 2021 07:55 PM)john ronaldsad Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Hi there, earlier i accidentally posted this in the wrong section, anyways, I'm trying to get into selling software I've made, but I'm not too sure how to add License keys, I don't want to hardcode keys into the program (for obvious reasons) I want to setup an online activation type of service where when you press "register" it validates the key from a database. Any help would be appreciated! thanks

Take a look here it might be interesting

<https://www.zluri.com/blog/software-license-management-tools>

john ronaldsad - July 7, 2025, 12:14 pm

(Jul 4, 2025 02:51 AM)R00tziLLa Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Take a look here it might be interesting <https://www.zluri.com/blog/software-license-management-tools>
I'd prefer to self host my own licensing system.

R00tziLLa - July 7, 2025, 12:54 pm

(Jul 7, 2025 12:14 PM)john ronaldsad Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I'd prefer to self host my own licensing system.
Thats cool wise choice!!!

???????????? - July 7, 2025, 1:26 pm

(Jul 7, 2025 12:14 PM)john ronaldsad Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I'd prefer to self host my own licensing system.
To add proper license key validation, you can create a small online activation system where your software sends the entered key to a server (via HTTPS), which checks it against a database. If valid, the server responds with confirmation and optional license details (like expiry or device limit). Your app then stores a signed or encrypted token locally for offline validation. This avoids hardcoding keys and gives you full control over key management, device limits, and license expiration. It will be not as easy as it looks.