

Forum: [Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [Server Move](#)

Omniscient - February 12, 2026, 11:37 am

The situation is this. HF needs to upgrade our entire backed. Upgraded PHP, MySQL, Nginx, Apache, NodeJS, and the OS. It's vital because without the upgrade of the server we can't really do modern development and improvements to HF. Our backend is out of date, so much so it's now becoming a liability. I can't do the integrations and usage of new libraries without this.

I have a new server with excellent specs already provisioned. I now am faced with the task of building up the new server. The last time I did this seems like a decade ago or more. I do have anxiety about the process but I have no choice, this must get done. I'm choosing this week to really push through because my wife is on an 8 day vacation and this is my chance to work without family interruption.

This is my workflow plan.

1. Install OS.
2. Install Control Panel and services.
3. Customize server for security and special needs of HF.
4. Move HF to new server (but not change DNS records).
5. Use my Hosts file to point my computer to new server as HF.
6. Begin working to update the site.
7. Once HF is functional on new server, change DNS for everyone.
8. Continue fixing and upgrading anything broken (which is going to be a lot).

Very likely we're going to lose Convo. I just expect this. It's not the highest priority given the overall forums is more important. I won't give up on Convo but it's also just one feature and I'm fairly sure we can live without it for a week or more. Fixing on-site errors (PHP, MYSQL) will take priority.

I plan on changing how our web socket works which is notify and convo. Fairly sure I'll be able to fix notifications quicker than Convo. It's a simple system. Or I'll just rebuild it from scratch. They are actually integrated and going forward I may attempt to completely separate them. Both run under NodeJS as app.js but would be better imho as notify.js and convo.js instead. Currently the socket is on a different port. Nginx does have a proxy forwarding for WS but as I stated, our version of Nginx is outdated and doesn't support that. This causes some strange issues like Cloudflare blocking the port because of not passing Captcha, which doesn't ever display on web socket. Integration of the WS to port 443 (HTTPS) will fix that ongoing issue.

I will be using AI through much of this. It's a very useful tool for coming up with configuration files like my.cnf (MySQL Configuration) and firewall (UFW/IPTables) rules. And then I have to consider if I'll install an Agent Assistant to go through all of HF's codebase to update to PHP8. That's going to be very experimental for me.

The good news, I've done this a few times, the bad news, not with NodeJS which is where I anticipate most of my struggling will come from. Some members have offered to help but I am not relying on that. Forum member help is always unreliable and in the end, it's best that I have full control and understanding of how HF works. If I can build it and fix it, then it's always going to be

part of HF.

I'm both confident I can do this and apprehensive about the unknown. But this must be done and we're long past due. I'll keep you all posted as I progress. It will be point 5 where I'll feel most energized. That's when the real work begins.

Thank you.

Hackers - February 12, 2026, 11:40 am

Point 5 sounds great and is probably one of the best little tricks to get things done on a dev server.

Plan sounds solid. Maybe without relying on us you could share any problems you face and then if people happen to be helpful, that's a win. Happy to look at anything you share in the future.

Best of luck

Will HF lose threads/posts/activity/changes or will you have a way to sync databases?

CL1B - February 12, 2026, 11:42 am

Goodluck, I'm sure it will be all right.

?ßorder?ineExtr(A) - February 12, 2026, 11:46 am

in Stanley's voice NOT THE CONVOOOOOO

JK. Not a big loss. Good thing we can go a week without giving each other the opportunity to start a flamewar.

My advice would've still been to run a parallel testing site for all the back-end features, then port the front-end and initialize staging. Run a controlled functionality test and then migrate the entire environment to live. This way there is no service disruption, we get all the perks of PHP 8 without much hassle.

Keep up the Good Work [Omniscient](#)

Omniscient - February 12, 2026, 11:58 am

(Feb 12, 2026 12:46 PM)?ßorder?ineExtr(A) Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) *in Stanley's voice* NOT THE CONVOOOOOO

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Keep up the Good Work [Omniscient](#)

Yes, I've done this before remember.

Basically once the new server HF is running well enough. I turn old site off using MyBB Close

Forum with a message like "we're finally moving" and at that point I grab latest DB dump, move it and then the DNS changes. For some it will be quick within 2-3 hours, for others DNS may take 24 hours or more. We won't lose any data. Basically the DB should experience no changes.

I do know what I'm doing overall. I did this multiples times years before AI help. Fairly sure with AI help, this will be even easier.

Omniscient - February 12, 2026, 2:01 pm

Server setup and hardening complete.

Lots of customizing for my own setup. Shells, logins, firewall....

Now onto the next phase which is services (Nginx, Apache, MariaDB).

Omniscient - February 12, 2026, 2:36 pm

Sticking this thread because I'll be using it for updates.

It's going very well so far. Sometimes I forget how capable of a sys admin I can be. It's been a minute since I've done a full server setup but it's all going so very well. Mainly because AI is guiding me through each step where in the past I had to just wing it.

When you're setting up a server there is a ton of small stuff to consider. Everything from the firewall to customizing your shell. Since HF is mainly PHP, I have to make sure it's not missing any custom configs that I might have setup years ago and forgot it's custom.

Me personally I like TCSH and I've had a nice custom config for nearly 20 years.

Cross your fingers because possibly in a few days we could potentially be on the new server. This should be huge for HF.

Jamika - February 12, 2026, 2:50 pm

Good luck, and I am more than happy that AI will make the process easy this time.

[Hackers](#) I know you pray the convo never comes back lol.

R5N3T - February 12, 2026, 3:38 pm

I hope your work goes smoothly

Omniscient - February 12, 2026, 3:44 pm

(Feb 12, 2026 04:38 PM)R5N3T Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I hope your work goes smoothly
I'm feeling more and more confident about it. Going really well.

Mooooookie - February 12, 2026, 3:48 pm

I've been anticipating this new server update for a while, nice to see that you're at the stage of getting it setup, and configured. Excited to see what new features will be brought to the forum over the this next year and beyond. Can't really give any input or advice on the technical aspect of things.. that's not my forte, but I'm sure you will knock the job out the park. Good luck with everything.

R5N3T - February 12, 2026, 3:58 pm

(Feb 12, 2026 04:44 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I'm feeling more and more confident about it.
Going really well.

That's great if you're confident, but always remember to be careful

casperr - February 12, 2026, 4:03 pm

Nice work. This forum has always been a great place for discussions, sharing ideas, and building a strong community over the years. Because of that, it absolutely deserves a solid, modern foundation. Upgrading the backend, improving security, and making the system ready for modern development is an important step forward. Really appreciate the effort you're putting into this.

R5N3T - February 12, 2026, 4:07 pm

[Omniscient](#) Will HF be inaccessible during the migration? If so, how long will the process take?

Omniscient - February 12, 2026, 4:21 pm

(Feb 12, 2026 05:07 PM)R5N3T Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) [Omniscient](#) Will HF be inaccessible during the migration? If so, how long will the process take?

It's really DNS that's the problem for users. We will almost certainly have 1-2 hours of downtime just for the server move. What I'll do is time how fast I can download HF's DB into a dump, move it, and insert into the new server. Because technically that's the minimum amount of downtime we'll experience. From past experience that should be just a couple hours. I can also try to time it on a slow day like Sunday.

I'm almost done for the day. I have a couple things to do and will resume in the morning but for a first day, very pleased with progress. The server coming along nicely.

I should be able to move files tomorrow. That's when the real work begins which is debugging HF's backend for the PHP upgrade. 1500 PHP files have to be reviewed and updated to work with PHP 8.3 vs the 7.2 we run now. This is the first hard part, then the socket is the second, and lastly the most difficult will be Convo. But after that, we're going to be awesome.

R5N3T - February 12, 2026, 4:23 pm

(Feb 12, 2026 05:21 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) It's really DNS that's the problem for users. We will almost certainly have 1-2 hours of downtime just for the server move. What I'll do is time how fast I can download HF's DB into a dump, move it, and insert into the new server. Because technically that's the minimum amount of downtime we'll experience. From past experience that should be just a couple hours. I can also try to time it on a slow day like Sunday.

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Alright, great Omni. I trust you to do your best. Thank you for ur service ??

Omniscient - February 13, 2026, 9:44 am

Day two. I'm going to get some morning work done (usual stuff) and then back into the grind. I should have even better work flow today. I expect to be moving the files and database.

5chn4pp - February 13, 2026, 10:42 am

Considering you have already made it this far with running the site, I wouldn't doubt your abilities, good luck to you and Hackforums itself.

SwimmingPool - February 13, 2026, 10:44 am

good luck

Null State - February 13, 2026, 11:13 am

I seem to remember the same apprehensiveness the last time this was done also, and it all turned out fine albeit now there's a lot more to features wise that wasn't there back then. Good luck Omni!

Hackers - February 14, 2026, 5:00 am

(Feb 12, 2026 03:50 PM)Jamika Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Good luck, and I am more than happy that AI will make the process easy this time.

[Hackers](#) I know you pray the convo never comes back lol.

Only if it is a net positive. My suggestion is based on Omni's previous comments that convo is killing the forum. If that's not true and it is saving the forum, I would vote to keep convo.

I like convo. I am willing to lose something I like if it is beneficial to HF as a whole, over the next 5-10 years.

7 - February 14, 2026, 5:22 am

if convo is lost we will rebuild better I promise!

CL1B - February 14, 2026, 6:12 am

Convo not getting lost because of server migration. Stop scaring the kids.

I don't know why people including Omni keep thinking that this is likely.. A socket server chat has to be one of the simplest things in the backend, even if it was implemented in a weird way. It's very unlikely.

Tip for Omni: Dockerize it and run Cloudflared on path /convo.php

or Nginx but for such a simple service I wouldn't even bother.

As far as Notify and Convo running in 1 js file, that's fine too.. In context of HF's usage and average concurrent connections; Perfectly fine, it's simply about broadcasting nothing else.. Many huge platforms with millions of daily connections do a similar thing and hide it behind a gateway for UX (Simplified of course).

For example gateway.hackforums.net

We're not using PubSub, Redis or other shared state managing either so I think we're good here.

No?

Omniscient - February 14, 2026, 9:40 am

(Feb 14, 2026 07:12 AM)MarlboroMan Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Convo not getting lost because of server migration. Stop scaring the kids.

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While I wouldn't say that Convo code is complex. It's definitely not a simple socket. Remember, it's partially PHP, integrated into the forums, and has actually a lot of nifty features written into it.

I don't want to add complexity like Docker (hate containers). And Cloudflared isn't needed either, I have real issue using 3rd party services I can't replace. If I build HF around CF services and they boot me, then what? No, HF needs to be as self-contained as possible. We are always at-risk. Today CF has a very neutral stance but as a publicly traded company what happens if the Board recommends a policy change and I'm booted, then what? I'm always prepared with a backup plan to keep HF online. From Registrar to Hosting, I have HF under my control only. This is why we don't have integrations like Discord or any service I can't replace within a few hours. And while CF is an excellent service, at the level I use it, there are alternatives.

btw since GPT has helped me on Convo frequently, I asked it about the complexity.

AI Quote:

I've only seen pieces of your Convo NodeJS setup in this chat (the old Node 12.21 context, that it does chat + notifications over websockets, and the "heapdump is in deps but not referenced" situation). I have not seen the full codebase end-to-end here, so I can't score it like a full code review.

That said, based on what Convo is (real-time chat + notification socket service) and the Node 12 era patterns, I'd describe its complexity like this:

Complexity level: Moderate code complexity, High operational complexity

Why "moderate" code complexity

Real-time websocket apps tend to be event-driven, which keeps individual functions small, but spreads logic across many handlers (``on("connection")``, ``on("message")``, presence, joins/leaves, typing, etc.).

Most "complexity" usually comes from:

- state management (who's online, rooms, permissions, rate limits)
- message routing (broadcast vs room vs user)
- auth coupling (session/cookies/token verification with PHP/MyBB)
- edge cases (reconnects, duplicates, partial sends, backpressure)

If those pieces are handled in a straightforward way, the code feels "medium".

Why "high" operational complexity

Running it reliably is harder than the code looks:

- long-lived connections (memory leaks matter)
- load balancers / sticky sessions (if you scale horizontally)

reconnection storms
logging/monitoring (why heapdump was probably added)
dependency fragility on an old runtime (Node 12 + older libs)

In plain terms

If it's a single Node process with socket handlers + some DB calls: medium complexity
If it includes rooms, permissions, anti-spam, Bytes features, notifications integration, and shared auth with MyBB: upper-medium complexity
If it's multi-process/clustered, has Redis/pubsub, queueing, or cross-server broadcasting: high complexity

A quick "tell" for where yours likely sits

The fact that heapdump exists as a dependency but isn't referenced strongly suggests:

a prior dev was chasing memory growth or leak suspicion, or
* they used it temporarily during load testing.

That leans toward: the system had real operational pressure, even if the code isn't "fancy".

CL1B - February 14, 2026, 11:47 am

[Omniscient](#) Yeah OK, valid point with the CF dependency risk.

Omniscient - February 14, 2026, 11:53 am

(Feb 14, 2026 12:47 PM)MarlboroMan Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) [Omniscient](#) Yeah OK, valid point with the CF dependency risk.

Also note..."Convo not getting lost because of server migration. Stop scaring the kids."

Yeah but when I "save Convo", I'm a hero. :)

CL1B - February 14, 2026, 12:02 pm

Well said ;) haha, good luck man.

Target™ - February 14, 2026, 12:09 pm

Awesome this sounds like a great plan!

Envy - February 14, 2026, 12:54 pm

(Feb 12, 2026 12:40 PM)nodes Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Will HF lose threads/posts/activity/changes or will you have a way to sync databases?

If you read the thread he already answered your question with "Move HF to new server", "Use hosts file", "Change DNS". Surely not his first rodeo.

Forum would go into maintenance/offline mode for the duration of the transfer and/or replication can be used, both of which are standard MySQL features.

If he decides to leave it online, tinkering in production while simultaneously staging on another server it'd be his own mistake (not that he cares about a few lost posts here and there).

Pretty normal migration, nothing unusual but still anxious work.

Omniscient - February 14, 2026, 4:25 pm

Actually AI helped me figure out something even cooler for Dev.

Instead of changing my Windows Hosts file, which changes things on the whole desktop, I can start Brave (Chromium) with a flag.

```
"C:\Program Files\BraveSoftware\Brave-Browser\Application\brave.exe"  
--user-data-dir="C:\BraveHFTTest" --host-resolver-rules="MAP hackforums.net 8.8.8.8, MAP  
www.hackforums.net 8.8.8.8"
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I then get a Brave warning about the cert but apparently if you type "thisisunsafe" you override the security rule. Very F'n nifty.

So now I'll basically have both real HF open and Dev HF at the same time.

Thought that was cool enough to share.

Today I didn't get as much done. Mostly worked on tuning MySQL and PHP. AI gave me some trouble with the help because I'm experienced enough to see that what it wanted to do was a bad idea. I asked for tuning configs and it went way overboard on what I needed. Annoyingly it didn't even ask for my existing configs to compare. I use a Control Panel and it didn't seem to take that into account on the tuning either. Basically assumed default Debian package installs, which this really isn't. It's close, but not exactly.

I didn't get the best sleep last night. It's Saturday and Valentine's Day. Wife is away, I think I'm going to call it a few hours early and get some mental rest. I'll resume the big work tomorrow but unfortunately I will also be babysitting the granddaughter.

Thank you.

Cooligan - February 14, 2026, 4:34 pm

Very happy to be reading this, I remember years ago you brought this up but for some reason weren't able to implement the change at the time.

I still remember the 2015 HF server switch. You basically put the site in "free mode" where nothing saved, no posts, reps, bans, nothing. It was all reverted back to wherever it was right before the switch. I also compiled an imgur album from that night for reasons like this lol:

— When HF turned into HFchan ~ the 2015 HF server switch album:
<https://imgur.com/a/bgCq9> <— click me for many memes

Will this server switch be similar to the 2015 one? Or totally different since the process now I'm sure is much more in depth & involved. Either way, I'm very excited about this. These are the types of threads you make where the community reads it and thinks "yeah, this is why HF is the best forum". A ton of work on your end, all done without complaint, all for us, since 2007. This is why you're a fantastic owner [Omniscient](#) — never forget that. <3

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Thank you.
This is good news.

Have you tried using Google Gemini at all? A friend of mine used it the other day for a coding project and said it worked flawlessly for what he needed, even better than GPT in some scenarios such as overall project scope and a few independent variables, apparently. Just wondering as it might make your life a little easier.

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I don't want to use Gemini (Google).

When it comes time to start updating the PHP and NodeJS I may use Anthropic's Claude.

The Pact - February 17, 2026, 4:23 am

Google Gemini has often been the worst AI that I have tried for various things and in my experience Gemini and new Google can't even find something if you spell it with one letter wrong.

For example, if you spell someone's name wrong, which I have done with only one letter wrong than in my experience New Google and Gemini couldn't find anything, and yet Copilot could find those two people where I got their names slightly wrong. Copilot knew what I wanted.

However, people have been saying Gemini has become good at coding. I used to say Gemini was better at math than other Chat bots, but then it failed me on that another time.

Anyway, this is great news that we're getting a new server. ?Thanks for all this hard work.

Cooligan - February 17, 2026, 8:48 pm

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Anyway, this is great news that we're getting a new server. ?Thanks for all this hard work.

When was the last time you used Gemini? I would say it's absolutely gotten better since your last review of it. The three (mainly two) LLMs I switch back and forth between the most are ChatGPT and Gemini. I often use Brave Leo too though as it's built into the browser and works flawlessly on any webpage. Leo also freely includes: Claude / Sonnet / Llama / Qwen / Mistral / Deepseek / and GPT OSS 20B & 120B).

Gemini spits out very detailed code with no problem using "Deep Think", it has "Banana Mode" which is for AI image generation and also works perfectly for what it is, a simple and minimalistic AI image generation tool. That, and the misspellings you mentioned. I've never encountered any issues like this using Gemini. In fact, if I ever have a very specific question about something IRL related and not necessarily tech related, Gemini has actually given me better responses than ChatGPT at times. It seems as if Gemini is trained more to meet current events in our society/world, and ChatGPT is still the "smartest" LLM on the market.

All in all, I would highly recommend you try out Gemini again now that it's been updated a ton of times since your last use I'm sure. Oh, and one small thing, Gemini load times are much faster than ChatGPT I've noticed, both for loading the actual site and loading the prompts. Very small thing, but worth noting for speed-users.

Omniscient - February 18, 2026, 10:15 am

Everyone I know that codes (just realized that's people here on HF), swears by Claude Code.

CL1B - February 18, 2026, 10:17 am

(Feb 18, 2026 11:15 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Everyone I know that codes (just realized that's people here on HF), swears by Claude Code.

Has yet to live up to the hype here. Could be I use it the wrong way, but I'm back on GPT website for 9/10 questions/tasks.

Kaleb - February 18, 2026, 11:44 am

I'm impressed by Gemini personally. Use it often. Pretty sure it tops the benchmarks too but IDK. I've used it to build full Node.js apps flawlessly because I was too lazy and its genuinely not worth my time when it can just get spat out anyways.

Good luck with the move, I bet this code base has deviated quite far from where-ever it was like 2012 myBB lol.

Omniscient - February 18, 2026, 1:30 pm

(Feb 18, 2026 11:17 AM)MarlboroMan Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Has yet to live up to the hype here. Could be I use it the wrong way, but I'm back on GPT website for 9/10 questions/tasks.

Me too. Finding 5.2 GPT to be very good. Almost no mistakes.

webdev77 - February 18, 2026, 2:15 pm

(Feb 18, 2026 11:17 AM)MarlboroMan Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Has yet to live up to the hype here. Could be I use it the wrong way, but I'm back on GPT website for 9/10 questions/tasks.

Do you not have a proper IDE? The whole point of Claude Code and similar tools is so that you don't need to copy+paste from a website and you get your entire project in a decently organized structure that is parseable by whatever model you're running.

Should be noted that Claude Code doesn't use only one model either and can switch between models automatically, so you do need to be somewhat aware of how to integrate it in a workflow so you aren't inadvertently using Haiku for logic instead of Opus or Sonnet.

CL1B - February 18, 2026, 4:08 pm

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<https://hackforums.net/showthread.php?tid=6319584>

xadamxk - February 18, 2026, 8:06 pm

(Feb 18, 2026 11:17 AM)MarlboroMan Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Has yet to live up to the hype here. Could be I use it the wrong way, but I'm back on GPT website for 9/10 questions/tasks.

You have some controversial takes brother.

Confound - February 19, 2026, 10:09 am

I appreciate your keeping the community up to date. I really value the transparency here - I also like that you're not just keeping people in the loop, but updating via this thread almost daily. Cool to see - keep up the good work Omni

Envy - February 19, 2026, 8:57 pm

(Feb 18, 2026 02:30 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Me too. Finding 5.2 GPT to be very good. Almost no mistakes.

I use GPT 5.2 for a lot of work problem solving, so much so I'd consider it an "essential" tool in my arsenal.

Stanley - February 21, 2026, 9:50 am

I'm Stanley HF's helper bot. The OP (original poster) of this thread wants everyone to see this page and has elected to bump it to the top of the showthread listing. Since HF doesn't want a ton of LQP (Low Quality Posts) this is the best method of bumping your content. There is a small ?yte fee for each bump. Any OP can bump any of their threads on HF from the linked icon on the top of their first post.

If you haven't already read the first post of this thread we encourage you to do so.

Thanks,
Stanley

xadamxk - February 21, 2026, 10:27 am

It's been over a week now. How is this progressing?

Omniscient - February 21, 2026, 11:26 am

(Feb 21, 2026 11:27 AM)xadamxk Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) It's been over a week now. How is this progressing? It's going well. Server itself is running well. Comfortable with the security. I'm in the optimizing and customizing phase of confs. Also adding and going through my existing server customizations.

But once again I've had personal emergencies to deal with. They just don't ever seem to end. Very hard to have multiple days strung together of actual work. I'll be happy for next week.

Dotexe - February 21, 2026, 12:47 pm

(Feb 21, 2026 12:26 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) It's going well. Server itself is running well. Comfortable with the security. I'm in the optimizing and customizing phase of confs. Also adding and going through my existing server customizations.

But once again I've had personal emergencies to deal with. They just don't ever seem to end. Very hard to have multiple days strung together of actual work. I'll be happy for next week.

Thanks for the hard work Omni! Take your time when it comes to personal things, don't feel obligated to make all that as soon as possible

Phantom_NiNja - February 21, 2026, 1:07 pm

(Feb 21, 2026 12:26 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) It's going well. Server itself is running well. Comfortable with the security. I'm in the optimizing and customizing phase of confs. Also adding and going through my existing server customizations.

But once again I've had personal emergencies to deal with. They just don't ever seem to end. Very hard to have multiple days strung together of actual work. I'll be happy for next week.

Sounds good... take your time. I have had my share of personal emergencies... life happens.

Komodo - February 21, 2026, 3:44 pm

(Feb 18, 2026 09:06 PM)xadamxk Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) You have some controversial takes brother. Holy hell, he lives.

Hexicidal - February 21, 2026, 8:43 pm

Why not just rollout to a new build completely?

Node isn't crazy. You've been rolling PHP for years. PHP is great still and with your knowledge I

recommend you genuinely stay with it and just optimize your SQL and DB.

Another consideration is build off a different forum platform with JS as the focus. A React upgrade would take you less than a year if you took it seriously. I know the fear of knowing JS is a mindkiller, but the fundamentals are the systematically the same. Then React flexes the power of state management on crack. The API can be rebuilt and utilized to service the DB correctly.

You can even split this further and just run a split test server and half migrate. Run your worries and then see if it works. I'm not going to help you build your site, but if you want a path deeper I can help pick your brain. Whatever you want.

Cooligan - February 21, 2026, 10:32 pm

(Feb 21, 2026 09:43 PM)Hexicidal Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Why not just rollout to a new build completely?

Node isn't crazy. You've been rolling PHP for years. PHP is great still and with your knowledge I recommend you genuinely stay with it and just optimize your SQL and DB.

Another consideration is build off a different forum platform with JS as the focus. A React upgrade would take you less than a year if you took it seriously. I know the fear of knowing JS is a mindkiller, but the fundamentals are the systematically the same. Then React flexes the power of state management on crack. The API can be rebuilt and utilized to service the DB correctly.

You can even split this further and just run a split test server and half migrate. Run your worries and then see if it works. I'm not going to help you build your site, but if you want a path deeper I can help pick your brain. Whatever you want.

I heavily agree with the React upgrade part. React has been known as the "app-like" language in terms of overall site loading speed due to its memory capability (sophisticated state management). Frontend wise, this would be a huge upgrade. HF already loads fairly fast for a forum, especially when compared to other popular MyBB forums. Apart from the initial first slow-load after upgrading due to React having to download new code, once it's installed, the forums interactivity and overall load times will function at app-like speeds.

As for the backend, optimizing SQL would also be great here. Instead of running Full Table Scans, we would have proper indexing. Also, regarding [Omniscient](#) and how he doesn't like to add extra load to the site, Query Efficiency would fix this. Instead of loading every single bit of a users information when only trying to find specific information, the optimized SQL would turn it into a more surgical process rather than a poke-and-prod style approach.

The only real downfall I predict could potentially be reduced SEO rankings. PHP is great for this, allowing Google to read site text instantly. If React isn't setup perfectly, every page will first be loaded blank, then use JavaScript once the pages content is actually delivered to load it. Because of this, Google might end up seeing empty forums instead of immediate cached content, thus killing some of HF's Google SEO in the process. This would not be good obviously and the only thing I'd be "worried" about, especially since Omni has put in very consistent work into growing HF's SEO rankings over the years.

Basically, yes you could stick to what you know and keep things how they are for the most part, the "house" that is HF has always worked well for us end-users. Instead of moving into a new house with similar ammentities though, with [Hydra](#) 's suggestion, HF's "new house" would essentially act like and be upgraded to a smart-home with optimized SQL and the implementation of React for site speeds. Loading times are everything to users nowadays since most sites tend to optimize this the most, especially social media sites that I suppose HF could fall into the category of.

I understand how this overhaul would turn a relatively short process into a fairly long one, especially due to the learning curve. I mean, as you stated in the OP, the current state of the backend is a liability. Trying to put a React frontend on an outdated and potentially partially broken backend is like trying to put a Ferrari chassis on an old rust-bucket engine, so again I understand any hesitancy. In the long run though, it would act as future-proofing for HF in terms of optimized load balance and efficiency.

CL1B - February 22, 2026, 2:11 am

[Cooligan Hexicidal](#) Hell no, this is and will always be the largest bb board. The theme, the plugins everything ties into HF's branding.

That's something so valuable, you wouldn't know if you didn't own shops.

Yes React is wonderful and today's standard yeah yeah yeah, but when you already have a well written site why would you port it? The performance can't be much greater, really not. In fact, I could argue it would take a shit ton of time to get a react port of HF board to be on par with current performance. Also, from scratch is a terrible idea; We have trouble getting you guys to write threads, be active etc and you want a whole new board from the ground up?

Omni clearly stated he's using the little time he has on migrating servers, the fuck you suggesting a whole new board for?

Look, if you guys want a more modern round and flat feel to the UX suggest a new theme.

Also please do not mention the DB as if the man hasn't been optimizing that for years, you have to know HF has done more migrations in the past, more optimizations and so on. Everything is buttery smooth except for the backup connection pool.

The server move is for headroom, so we can implement more features and have a more headroom whilst doing so. There's 1 thing that could seriously benefit from a rewrite or new version and that would be the v2 api, I believe there's already some momentum for this with user like [xadamxk](#) offering their expertise for it.

xadamxk - February 22, 2026, 7:19 am

(Feb 21, 2026 09:43 PM)Hexicidal Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Why not just rollout to a new build completely?

Node isn't crazy. You've been rolling PHP for years. PHP is great still and with your knowledge I recommend you genuinely stay with it and just optimize your SQL and DB.

Another consideration is build off a different forum platform with JS as the focus. A React upgrade would take you less than a year if you took it seriously. I know the fear of knowing JS is a mindkiller, but the fundamentals are the systematically the same. Then React flexes the power of state management on crack. The API can be rebuilt and utilized to service the DB correctly.

You can even split this further and just run a split test server and half migrate. Run your worries and then see if it works. I'm not going to help you build your site, but if you want a path deeper I can help pick your brain. Whatever you want.

While I love React, and do think it is the path forward for web dev, I don't think moving to it adds much value to the site given the amount of work it would take.

He could focus on other plugins and features that bring activity or users with a fraction of the investment.

Hackers - February 22, 2026, 10:23 am

(Feb 22, 2026 08:19 AM)xadamxk Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) While I love React, and do think it is the path forward for web dev, I don't think moving to it adds much value to the site given the amount of work it would take.

He could focus on other plugins and features that bring activity or users with a fraction of the investment.

yeah full conversion would take a while if you want to keep all of the customizations.

Tough position to be in

Nachfolger - February 22, 2026, 12:39 pm

This thread has gone off the rails. Why don't you guys quit yapping about completely unrelated BS and let the guy finish the migration in peace.

Transporter007 - February 22, 2026, 2:25 pm

(Feb 12, 2026 12:37 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) The situation is this. HF needs to upgrade our entire backed. Upgraded PHP, MySQL, Nginx, Apache, NodeJS, and the OS. It's vital because without the upgrade of the server we can't really do modern development and improvements to HF. Our backend is out of date, so much so it's now becoming a liability. I can't do the integrations and usage of new libraries without this.

I have a new server with excellent specs already provisioned. I now am faced with the task of building up the new server. The last time I did this seems like a decade ago or more. I do have anxiety about the process but I have no choice, this must get done. I'm choosing this week to really push through because my wife is on an 8 day vacation and this is my chance to work without family interruption.

This is my workflow plan.

1. Install OS.
2. Install Control Panel and services.
3. Customize server for security and special needs of HF.
4. Move HF to new server (but not change DNS records).
5. Use my Hosts file to point my computer to new server as HF.
6. Begin working to update the site.
7. Once HF is functional on new server, change DNS for everyone.
8. Continue fixing and upgrading anything broken (which is going to be a lot).

Very likely we're going to lose Convo. I just expect this. It's not the highest priority given the overall forums is more important. I won't give up on Convo but it's also just one feature and I'm fairly sure we can live without it for a week or more. Fixing on-site errors (PHP, MYSQL) will take priority.

I plan on changing how our web socket works which is notify and convo. Fairly sure I'll be able to fix notifications quicker than Convo. It's a simple system. Or I'll just rebuild it from scratch. They are actually integrated and going forward I may attempt to completely separate them. Both run under NodeJS as app.js but would be better imho as notify.js and convo.js instead. Currently the socket is on a different port. Nginx does have a proxy forwarding for WS but as I stated, our version of Nginx is outdated and doesn't support that. This causes some strange issues like Cloudflare blocking the port because of not passing Captcha, which doesn't ever display on web socket. Integration of the WS to port 443 (HTTPS) will fix that ongoing issue.

I will be using AI through much of this. It's a very useful tool for coming up with configuration files like my.cnf (MySQL Configuration) and firewall (UFW/IPTables) rules. And then I have to consider if I'll install an Agent Assistant to go through all of HF's codebase to update to PHP8. That's going to

be very experimental for me.

The good news, I've done this a few times, the bad news, not with NodeJS which is where I anticipate most of my struggling will come from. Some members have offered to help but I am not relying on that. Forum member help is always unreliable and in the end, it's best that I have full control and understanding of how HF works. If I can build it and fix it, then it's always going to be part of HF.

I'm both confident I can do this and apprehensive about the unknown. But this must be done and we're long past due. I'll keep you all posted as I progress. It will be point 5 where I'll feel most energized. That's when the real work begins.

Thank you.

I still think HF Database Size would be ?

Omniscient - February 22, 2026, 4:10 pm

(Feb 22, 2026 03:25 PM)Transporter007 Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I still think HF Database Size would be ? It's about 38GB currently.

Jamika - February 23, 2026, 12:47 am

(Feb 22, 2026 01:39 PM)Nachfolger Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) This thread has gone off the rails. Why don't you guys quit yapping about completely unrelated BS and let the guy finish the migration in peace. That's exactly the point of the topic—otherwise, he wouldn't have posted it in the first place.

Transporter007 - February 23, 2026, 1:30 am

(Feb 22, 2026 05:10 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) It's about 38GB currently. Its alot man ?

Nachfolger - February 23, 2026, 5:28 pm

(Feb 23, 2026 01:47 AM)Jamika Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) That's exactly the point of the topic—otherwise, he wouldn't have posted it in the first place.

Yeah for sure. He definitely posted this thread so you people can suggest he do a complete migration to a React.js frontend. You got me there. ?

Popular - February 23, 2026, 5:56 pm

Good shit Omni, very much needed. Smooth move?

Pr0m3th3us - February 23, 2026, 7:20 pm

I haven't been on much lately but I assume everything went smooth. Please don't have Stanley take over full time man, that just spells disaster.

Hexicidal - February 23, 2026, 8:22 pm

(Feb 22, 2026 03:11 AM)MarlboroMan Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) [Cooligan](#) [Hexicidal](#) Hell no, this is and will always be the largest bb board. The theme, the plugins everything ties into HF's branding.

That's something so valuable, you wouldn't know if you didn't own shops.

Yes React is wonderful and today's standard yeah yeah yeah, but when you already have a well written site why would you port it? The performance can't be much greater, really not. In fact, I could argue it would take a shit ton of time to get a react port of HF board to be on par with current performance. Also, from scratch is a terrible idea; We have trouble getting you guys to write threads, be active etc and you want a whole new board from the ground up?

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Look, if you guys want a more modern round and flat feel to the UX suggest a new theme.

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The server move is for headroom, so we can implement more features and have a more headroom whilst doing so. There's 1 thing that could seriously benefit from a rewrite or new version and that would be the v2 api, I believe there's already some momentum for this with user like [xadamxk](#) offering their expertise for it.

I don't know, it doesn't seem hard in all honesty. I'm not suggesting a new board, but if you want flexibility just create what you want. A server migration won't fix activity either, and neither will faster SQL returns. Caching won't make the board more active. PHP is fast and always has been, but if the worst is a server migration there are bigger fish to fry.

A new server also doesn't make for new and more features...

(Feb 23, 2026 06:28 PM)Nachfolger Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Yeah for sure. He definitely posted this thread so you people can suggest he do a complete migration to a React.js frontend. You got me there. ?

>suggests server migration

>upsetti someone suggested the most used frontend framework in a decade

>hurr

Omniscient - February 24, 2026, 8:02 am

I'm still working on it. Server is mostly setup, now for the HF PHP files updating. Each step is time consuming. This is actually the hard part.

Jamika - February 25, 2026, 1:03 pm

I wish you the best of luck... you're now in the "patience" phase....iam sure If you take your time, we'll come back to find a very solid and fast forum .

SwimmingPool - February 27, 2026, 12:07 pm

(Feb 23, 2026 06:28 PM)Nachfolger Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Yeah for sure. He definitely posted this thread so you people can suggest he do a complete migration to a React.js frontend. You got me there. ?

Thats exactly why he did it.

Jamika - February 28, 2026, 12:32 am

(Feb 27, 2026 01:07 PM)SwimmingPool Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Thats exactly why he did it.

Alright, it seems that Nash is a little bit right... but maybe the people want a general change for everything at the same time, if possible.

Honestly, I don't understand these matters, so I'll just stick to being a supporter in the football stadium.

Tyr - February 28, 2026, 11:30 pm

Appreciate you outlining this for us to also follow along with you.

Chrome - March 1, 2026, 12:21 am

Question, are we all going to be logged out and need to log back in?

Cooligan - March 1, 2026, 5:15 am

(Mar 1, 2026 01:21 AM)Chrome Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Question, are we all going to be logged out and need to log back in?

Most likely yes.

He has to restart the entire DB along with any active nodes and sessions. Curious how it will work with Convo sockets this time around, but the last server switch (2015), we were all logged out and forced to log back in.

Cooligan - March 1, 2026, 5:15 am

(Mar 1, 2026 01:21 AM)Chrome Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Question, are we all going to be logged out and need to log back in?

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Cooligan - March 1, 2026, 5:15 am

(Mar 1, 2026 01:21 AM)Chrome Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Question, are we all going to be logged out and need to log back in?

Most likely yes.

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Hackers - March 1, 2026, 6:13 am

(Mar 1, 2026 01:21 AM)Chrome Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Question, are we all going to be logged out and need to log back in?

Most likely, yes. We will most likely lose our sessions / cookies, but this is preventable... Just not worth the effort possibly.

So, basically... I would say most likely yes!

Omniscient - March 1, 2026, 8:08 am

(Mar 1, 2026 01:21 AM)Chrome Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Question, are we all going to be logged out and need to log back in?

Potentially because sessions are stored in DB in a memory based table. So it will get wiped. But then again not necessarily because if your session isn't that old it might still work with MyBB interface.

Are you worried you can't login to your HF account?

Chrome - March 1, 2026, 12:02 pm

(Mar 1, 2026 09:08 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Potentially because sessions are stored in DB in a

memory based table. So it will get wiped. But then again not necessarily because if your session isn't that old it might still work with MyBB interface.

Are you worried you can't login to your HF account?

I used encrypted passwords and a password manager on an old laptop of mine that I don't use. I mainly only use HF on my mobile now.

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Most likely yes.

He has to restart the entire DB along with any active nodes and sessions. Curious how it will work with Convo sockets this time around, but the last server switch (2015), we were all logged out and forced to log back in.

Hey bro, I'm not sure if your post went through, maybe try post it one more time haha.

It glitched and is posted 5 times.

Omniscient - March 1, 2026, 12:04 pm

(Mar 1, 2026 01:02 PM)Chrome Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I used encrypted passwords and a password manager on an old laptop of mine that I don't use. I mainly only use HF on my mobile now.

Have you ever used this?

<https://hackforums.net/usercp.php?action=qrlogin>

From the laptop you go there and then scan the code from the screen.

I actually plan on adopting that feature so SSO via Email. Should make account login and recovery easier.

Chrome - March 1, 2026, 12:13 pm

(Mar 1, 2026 01:04 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Have you ever used this?

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From the laptop you go there and then scan the code from the screen.

I actually plan on adopting that feature so SSO via Email. Should make account login and recovery easier.

I go to that screen and it asked for my password and 2fa haha. Not a lot of use without those.

Omniscient - March 1, 2026, 12:15 pm

(Mar 1, 2026 01:13 PM)Chrome Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I go to that screen and it asked for my password and 2fa haha. Not a lot of use without those.

Like I said, from your laptop which I assume has your PW.

Chrome - March 1, 2026, 12:21 pm

(Mar 1, 2026 01:15 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Like I said, from your laptop which I assume has your PW.

I'll start digging through my old shit and try find it.

Tyr - March 1, 2026, 3:24 pm

(Mar 1, 2026 01:04 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Have you ever used this?

<https://hackforums.net/usercp.php?action=qrlogin>

From the laptop you go there and then scan the code from the screen.

I actually plan on adopting that feature so SSO via Email. Should make account login and recovery easier.

Yo, didn't know we even had this. Gnarly.

(Feb 23, 2026 02:30 AM)Transporter007 Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Its alot man ?

Tbh, 38 GB is actually an OK range for a forum regarding DB size. Especially one w HF's history. Not to say it is small or anything but it's too big to be ignored, yet small enough to be optimized back.

I am not back there looking at records or rows or anything but just my 2 cents

CL1B - March 5, 2026, 3:29 am

Status update?

Omniscient - March 5, 2026, 1:22 pm

(Mar 5, 2026 04:29 AM)MarlboroMan Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Status update?

Taking the week off because I'm doing a fast and my brain is mush.

Dragosthethird - April 19, 2026, 4:34 pm

(Mar 5, 2026 02:22 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Taking the week off because I'm doing a fast and my brain is mush.

Haven't heard much news in a while. Just curious how this is going. Was interesting reading the progress.

He B TeMy - April 20, 2026, 3:42 pm

Pretty sure all is set and done, 2months+ upgrading is for no one.

HF's birthday is close so the backend is prepared now to rickroll us with Omni's setup when he launched HF (maybe) on the background.

XD

Omniscient - April 25, 2026, 9:01 am

Appears I've lost access to the server and my account with the host is closed.

Thus all work is deleted. I sent an email, no response so far. I'm going to assume that the deal I had with the host they've ceased to continue.

I'll have to start over. I'll look for a new server when I'm ready to resume the build.

Is what it is.

C00Lssh - April 25, 2026, 9:12 am

(Apr 25, 2026 09:01 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Appears I've lost access to the server and my account with the host is closed.

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Is what it is.

That sucks. whom was the hosting with?

Omniscient - April 25, 2026, 9:42 am

(Apr 25, 2026 09:12 AM)C00Lssh Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) That sucks. whom was the hosting with?
Not fair for me to say. I'm not upset about it. I'm just sad.

Looking now at my alternatives. Already found 2 solid choices.

In some ways maybe it's better I just pay a datacenter. Free means they aren't treating me like a paying customer. Also, once I provision the server, I'm losing money each month we're still on the old server so it's actually incentive to get us moved.

Things always happen for a reason.

Mercury - April 25, 2026, 10:00 am

I have no doubt that you'll conquer this. Hope it goes as smoothly as possible.

Envy - April 25, 2026, 12:57 pm

(Apr 25, 2026 09:01 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Appears I've lost access to the server and my account with the host is closed.

Thus all work is deleted. I sent an email, no response so far. I'm going to assume that the deal I had with the host they've ceased to continue.

I'll have to start over. I'll look for a new server when I'm ready to resume the build.

Is what it is.

How did that even happen?

Jamika - April 26, 2026, 10:53 am

(Apr 25, 2026 09:42 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Not fair for me to say. I'm not upset about it. I'm just sad.

Looking now at my alternatives. Already found 2 solid choices.

In some ways maybe it's better I just pay a datacenter. Free means they aren't treating me like a paying customer. Also, once I provision the server, I'm losing money each month we're still on the old server so it's actually incentive to get us moved.

Things always happen for a reason.

If I were in your place, I would feel despair and give up... but I know you won't.

Omniscient - April 26, 2026, 10:58 am

(Apr 26, 2026 10:53 AM)Jamika Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) If I were in your place, I would feel despair and give up... but I know you won't.

I'm too stubborn for that. Dedication is one of my strengths. I can commit to something for a very long time.

Omniscient - *April 30, 2026, 1:29 pm*

It's been 5 days no word.

I'll work on replacing the server. Found what I think is a good datacenter with reasonable pricing. I'll rent when I have a weekend to build up the server again for security.

Ugh.

Hopsin - *May 1, 2026, 2:58 am*

I am glad HF is evolving.