

# MU Server Design

by Rocetti

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- You can make profit using this design and there is a section here to direct you on how to make good profit without trashing out the server. But the general rule is: don't be greedy. To run a good server needs some investment and i'm sure that with this guidelines you can afford it and get some to your pocket.

## Intro

Who am I? I'm just an really old fan of this game and while adventuring into game design and creation I really felt that MU could be awesome if it was used better than it is normally. I played through a lot of private servers and a little on the official one. I'm experienced in older versions but familiar with the new ones. Actually I dislikes the game pos Rage and Summon, since they added nothing really different and did not balance the PvP at all. That's why this design will use the examples from older versions (around DL and the refine crazy thing), but that do not mean you can't apply the ideas presented here in newer versions. (and why not any other game? Concepts presented here could be adapted to anything since it consists on trade the grind for hard battles and make items something more interesting to players hunt it)

Basically this design is focused on cut of the mindless grinding and make the gameplay more adventurous, giving items a really important rule to progress through. Cause, seriously, I used to put my chars on a spot and put a dictionary on the right mouse button and go sleep or make anything else. I don't think this is the exactly the concept of playing something.

DISCLAIMER: I'm not going over maths here, just rough concepts.

## The Design

### • Progression

The actual progression on MU is based on resets and accumulation of points. This type of progression makes you feel like robot: kill some monsters, get to a spot, put your favorite dictionary or auto clicker, reset, repeat until you are strong enough to find some good equipments. Get a good set, beef up your char and make it look beautiful, reach 32k points on all attributes and get killed by BKs showing you no matter how strong you get, you can't beat them.

If I could I would code MU all over to change this (would love to add some AI to the monsters), but it's not possible to me and probably to anyone except Webzen. So what we can do to change that? We can make a balance to monsters power, health and experience to make players spend their time where we want for the amount of time we want. The basic idea is: Make monsters stronger and make them give more experience per kill. Through resets the leveling get harder but the player is stronger and can go to the next place to level. But make another layer of difficult to progress putting the player to find a complete set of item to get to the next area. So let's illustrate this: First resets should be on the Dungeon. You go down the floors exploring and try to get into the last part of it so you can face the Kundun's minion: Gorgon. Gorgon is meant to be a type of boss and yes, MU have a story behind it. And for this design he is the one dropping the sets for the next leveling place. Gorgon would be soloed only around reset 5 but can be dealt in group with at least 1 reset. The other monsters drops the sets but with lower chance and with lesser quality. It should be like the normal monsters drop plain item and Gorgon drop +1/+2 items. The dungeon turns out to be not a good place to reset around the 5th 6th. The time to reset should be like 1:30~3 hours, depending on class/build, if you are in the right place for your power and each fight with a monster should be around 6~15 minutes depending on your build (potions get more important to sustain the damage and parties make this faster), but you can consider one fight being with 1 monster or a group of 10 monsters and you can make an average approximation of how much monsters you need to kill to drop good items, then dissolve the number of monsters killed to reset (remember always to make player lose Health and Mana this is important). So after third reset it would be a really "easier"(less painful) to kill the Dungeon monsters and the player is getting deeper into the levels of this place, nearing the Boss, so the exp is not that great at this point making the focus of the player on grouping and go for the drops.

"2 hours a reset? That would make me full in a week!" Nope! This design make the power of monsters something that really matters, the spots are not crowded and you must watch your chars health and mana to not be killed. So you must be actually playing the game actively even at higher resets. (DWs with their spells should try to collect a

mob behind them and then use the magic to kill them all, but this strategy forces them to level at lower levels places so they can handle the damage of lots of monsters. Or just stick to single target/small area spells like lightning, flame tower, power wave, etc. )

Considering nowadays time people spend playing a young person that have only to study would get 2 or 3 resets per play while the casual players would feel they are progressing without the struggle of spending their precious time just parked at a spot holding the right mouse button and watching the same animations waiting for a miraculous bless drop.

#### • Standards to be Followed

- Monsters have higher HP, deal more damage and give lots of exp. Fighting one monster should take around 6 to 15 minutes and some potions. This time per battle could be calculated considering more than one monsters and creating a proportion around the chance to drop good items.
- Level from 1 to 400 and get a reset should take around 2 hours, being faster for some a slower for others. (The difference would be better noticed after the 7th reset, where players get a more diverse set of skills and equipments. The BKs would be killing stronger monsters than a SM and ME, but those other two would be killing numerous monsters or faster than BK. But a perfect party of BK, SM and ME can level at pretty strong places with the buffs, heal, tankiness and high damage output they can deliver)
- Around 10 minutes a fight for around 2 hours:  $120/10 = 12$  tough fights. Much better than 12 hours afk auto casting. If you plan to make an accumulative reset server I would advise to double this amount to make it not so easy. Manipulate the time spent per battle and the exp needed to level up so you can make your server harder or easier.
- Use items to separate the players in tiers of power so they only can handle a new map after they have better items. This make the players search for item parts and the economy of the game is not restrict to EXC/rare items. To this purpose avoid to sell complete sets on stores. Actually I would just put the weakest set +0 noOpt without helmet and gloves to sell on NPCs (just one set of each class). Weapons the same. But put weapons+skill and better armor to drop from monsters.
- Not sure if its possible but make Bosses have a little better chance to drop jewels than normal monsters. But make it with this in mind: Chaos < Bless < Soul < JoL. So lower levels only have better chance on Chaos drop; mid boss (Hydra) is better for Chaos and Bless; and the top tier boss (Phoenix) have better chances on all.
- Lower the Zenny drop so money is a real currency. I always play on servers that you use zenny just for Move and for Reset. Do not make things this way cause is not that nice. Make resets progress in price but make them cheap. The players

should think twice if they are going to use Move or walk their way through the map. So make it matter, make monsters drop small portions of zenny. With the altered combat the player will need potions and they will become the money sink (make better potions drop from mid-high level monsters and you will create a potion commerce between players). The need to buy equipment will turn the economy of the game more alive since people will want better items to go on stronger places. To know how much zenny monsters should drop just calculate how much monsters people will kill to reset and then sum up the average value of equipment, reset and potions, then round it down and divide per monsters killed. My advice is that you try to make something like spiders drop 1z, Elite Yeti around 500z, Icarus monsters around 1,5k z. This would make the money be more valuable since its harder to get a big amount of it.

- Do not aim the end game to be made of full characters fighting each others. If the players don't have builds to plan the PvP turns into a BKvBK and PvE turns into a lonesome task. Player builds let them plan to make their character focused on what they like (elves can be healers or damage dealers for example) and with the importance of items in MU this become a second layer to make something that resembles a balanced server.(BKs will still rule when compared to others but only at top resets)

### • An Example

So thinking on a non accumulative server that gives something around 300 points per reset. I'll not take in account here MG and DL and will just make an overall list of things, but they fit here too. Take this layout of the progress of players as an example:

#### **Lorencia/Noria**

1st reset (soloing)

Drop: leather,vine and pad sets + the weakest weapons + some money

#### **Dungeon**

1st to 6th reset

Drop: leather,vine and pad +1 sets + the weakest +1 weapons + some money

Boss: Gorgon. Drop: the same items +2+opt

#### **Devias 1,2,3,4/Atlans**

3th to 16th reset

Drop: bronze(1), scale(2), brass(3,4,A),bone(1), sphinx(2), legendary(3,4,A),silk(1), wind(2), spirit(3,4,A) + equivalent weapons + some money +

some weak potions (2,3,4,A) + box of luck, heart of love and the star drop here and they drop better versions of the sets this area provide (max +3). These maps drops the Dungeon sets +1~5 and at Atlans the chance to drop +1~2 new sets is better than devias.

Boss: Hydra (Atlans) Drops: Plate, Legendary and Spirit +3 +opt (weapons always follow up the sets dropped)

### **Lost Tower 1,2,3,4,5,6,7**

12th to 35th reset

Drop: all older sets +3~5 with a chance to come with Opt + dragon / black dragon / Guardian / Eclipse or Legendary (5~7), the first plain sets of second class drops at LT7 + medals that can drop +4~7 opt of this sets (except the second class ones).

Boss: Balrog. Drop: Second class first sets +1~3+opt

### **Tarkan**

30th to 50th resets

Drop: all older sets +3~5 + medals + 2nd class all sets +1

Boss: Zaikan and Death Beam Knight. Drop: 2nd class +3+opt

### **Icarus**

40th to 60th (to infinity)

Drops: Everything +0~6 + opt (no feather drop.. Let it just to the boss)

Boss: Phoenix. (Please make this one really hard) Drop: +3~7 2nd classes sets +opt and Feather

### **Arena**

50th to infinity

Drop: Everything.

### **Golden**

10ths reset = +1 kundun box (Lorencia/Noria)

20ths reset = +2 kundun box (Devias)

30ths reset = +3 and +4 kundun boxes (Dragon Invasion and Atlans)

40ths reset = +5 kundun boxes (Tarkan)

If you notice I use all the maps and all the areas so people would be spread and use everything. This is a better use of the game instead of just people cluttering on Lorencia>Devias3>LT7>Arena/Icarus

## **Don't be Greedy**

Every server needs money to pay for the Host, site, staff and, why not, profit. But the actual economy around games and MMOs have changed, so do not stay stuck to past models. Welcome to the microtransaction era.

In this design players will need lots of things that are hard to drop and you can make a profit out of that, but you can't make your game free to play if the free players do not stand a chance to VIP players. So to bring an balance to that and just be fair. Do not sell items that are not droppable or acquired on normal game and do not sell ready to use end game items.

In my perspective the store should have: a starter pack for each class (with a newbie set +7+opt like a Leather or Brass set equivalent, weapon, potions and some zenny), zenny conversion (like \$1 be something around 500z), custom skin wings (just different models but same power as a lvl1/lvl2+0), kundun+1~5 boxes, feather, dinolant, fenrir and VIP monthly account. The VIP have a room on the server with a slightly better exp, but same drops. There is other advantage that the room will not have that much of players so it'll be easier to hunt for golden and other disputed maps. Make some sale of special packs of kundun boxes and jewels, but the jewels just use it on special dates/events (do not abuse it cause jewels are important to be rare and expensive).

I think this is it, the main concept is to make people love the server fairness that they think on contribute to maintain the game up instead of putting walls of difficulty to make people start to cry and finally pay. (Warframe is a good example of real F2P fairness and community building)

## **Build a Community**

To a game or any product to be really successful the rule of thumb is: make it cultural. Create mechanics to connect people around that thing and make them discuss that theme. So have a Discord Channel and Forum for your server at least. Create events with GMs like Find the GM, racing at Lorencia/from a map to another and a big dueling tournament (reward them with kunduns and sometimes some jewels, but never equipments). Organize a player content place on your forum for fan art and fun stories to share. Have guides and tutorials on the forums. Make videos of the server gameplay on youtube. Create comics/book with custom Lore. Make the atmosphere newbie friendly so other players are newbie friendly (Put some newbie article link on the site main page with some guidelines of their posture). This design makes the game more inclined to players help each other and interact. Avoid to have the /post command if possible and make the personal shop work properly, cause this forces people to go on main cities and look for each other instead of just spamming on world chat.