

The Future of Development: Accessible App Building





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Executive Summary

Digital transformation is vital for a company's survival. With hundreds of businesses falling victim to lack of digital adaptation over the years - think Kodak, Blockbuster, Yahoo, and Blackberry - moving with the times is vital to keep a competitive advantage.

But with around 70% of <u>technology projects failing</u>, taking the digital adaptation leap can be pretty daunting. Intelligently built software tools and applications can offer huge cost savings and provide customers with easy touchpoints to <u>engage with your brand</u> – but app building can still be a tricky business.

For every small step towards digital transformation a business makes, the market shifts, and customers are always raising the bar. As the growing digital economy continues to create <u>vast commercial opportunities</u>, people's online expectations <u>become even more</u> <u>demanding</u>.

Spoiler alert: software development doesn't actually have to be difficult, expensive or risky. A new category of app building is available to fast-track your development process and help you bring apps to market more efficiently.

Everyone should be empowered to unlock their true potential in being a Builder, irrespective of what they know, what they have, and what they're afraid of. We believe in pushing the boundaries of conventional thinking, to look at every problem differently and from the ground up."

> Sachin Dev Duggal Builder.ai's Chief Wizard

This ebook, looks at past, present and – most importantly – the future of app development, to examine how AI, machine learning and coding developments are set to transform the industry.



Introduction

The last few years have seen huge uptakes in digital growth. <u>McKinsey data</u> shows that companies accelerated their digital transformation by as much as ten years in some regions. And yet, early predictions suggest this groundbreaking shift in technology is just the beginning.

Analysis from the World Economic Forum tells us that digital business models could generate <u>~70% of all new</u> <u>economic value</u> over the next decade. Given that nearly half of the world's population has yet to secure a stable internet connection, the <u>untapped growth potential is</u> <u>massive</u>.

But businesses still face uncertainty when adopting software tools and tackling digital projects. <u>60-70%</u> of technology projects end in partial or total failure, according to separate analyses from the <u>Standish Group</u> and <u>BCG</u>, but things are changing.

The following chapters will introduce a bold new direction for app building and demonstrate how businesses can generate more software success by embracing a new category of development. We've also pulled together a range of industry viewpoints and stats to better understand current trends in app development, including:



A timeline of computer coding - how did we get to where we are today



Best practices for prospective app development



The future of app building in a constantly evolving industry



The History of Computer Coding



1830s

Charles Babbage proposes a general-purpose computer, the Analytical Engine. Before we look at the future of app building, we need to understand how we got to where we are. Coding firmly took off in the second half of the 20th century, but the history of programming goes back much further than that.

The Birth of Algorithms and Programming

The Ancient History of Algorithms

Programmers use algorithms to tell computers what to do and how to do it, but algorithms have been around much longer than computers.

One of the first algorithms came from Ancient Greece and helped early mathematicians calculate prime numbers. Algorithms have since become more sophisticated and complex to help programmers build all the powerful digital apps and web services we know today.

The First Programmer

Augusta Ada Lovelace is known to be the first computer programmer (the first true representative of women in STEM, go Ada!). She worked tirelessly with Charles Babbage (a fellow mathematician) on one of the first <u>mechanical computers ever created</u>. While translating a paper on the device into English, Ada made accompanying notes describing how the device could calculate Bernoulli numbers, a special type of <u>number</u> <u>sequence</u>.

Ada's contributions brought the translation to nearly triple its original length in French and helped <u>give birth</u> <u>to programming</u> as a distinct field. Her work marked the first point in history where a computing device was programmed to execute an algorithm, rather than a single calculation, becoming the world's first computer program.

1840s

Ada Lovelace becomes the first computer programmer.

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THE FUTURE OF DEVELOPMENT: ACCESSIBLE APP BUILDING



Alan Turing imagines the computer as we know it today.

1950s - 1960s Computers become faster as hardware improves.



1970s Apple launches the Apple Computer 1.

20th-Century Advancements

1930s

Computers and software became more advanced as governments and private businesses invested in research and development.

1930s - 1940s

Fully-digital computers were invented in the mid-tolate 30s. In World War Two, military forces began using computers to break enemy codes and intercept battle strategies.

Alan Turing, the man behind much of the code-breaking effort, would become the father of modern computer science. His 1936 paper imagined the computer as we know it today, and his publication 'Can machines think?' laid the <u>foundations for artificial intelligence</u> (AI).

His achievements throughout World War Two and beyond is such a defining moment in history. What he managed to do for the world of computing and tech, and the hardships that he faced while doing it, is a fantastic story. He opened up new possibilities for what computers can actually do which have only become more and more relevant today."

Rohan Patel

Builder.ai's SVP of Engineering

1950s - 1960s

Further advances in electronic hardware helped computers become faster and more efficient.

Computer coding became popular in universities and cutting-edge business firms.

Some of the first major programming languages (FORTRAN and LISP) were invented.

1970s, 80s and 90s

Apple <u>pioneered the modern enterprise computer</u> through its point-and-click interface.

Microsoft released Windows and Microsoft Office. The suite of apps gave business users revolutionary productivity.

Sir Timothy John Berners-Lee invented the internet and reshaped the world. Despite many people seeing it as a fad that wouldn't last, the number of internet users ballooned to 412 million in just ten years - <u>but grew to</u> <u>billions in the following decades</u>.

21st-Century Challenges

The 2007 release of the iPhone, which brought mobile devices mainstream. Google followed a year later with Android, which would become the global leader.

Users now had access to hyper-connected smart devices capable of running complex apps in the palm of their hands.

According to a survey by Pew Research Center, the proportion of U.S. adults who say they're online 'almost constantly' has risen from <u>21% in 2015 to 31% in 2021</u>.

1980s

Sir Tim Berners-Lee invents the World Wide Web. The internet and smartphones coming together and creating this new app economy, has really transformed the way we interact with other people and conduct business. Every company is now looking to digitalise. Looking back, each innovation that we've had along the way has produced some pretty amazing results."

Priyanka Kochhar Builder.ai's Global VP of Product

Agile Software Development

Despite their popularity, the knowledge of how to build apps hasn't become as widespread as the knowledge of how to use them.

There is a growing skill gap wherein thousands of businesses are fighting to keep a competitive edge through cutting edge, user friendly technology - but simply can't hire, or retain, the right people fast enough. App building is almost as difficult today as it was 50 years ago. While tools like GitHub or Visual Studio can make the development process easier at some stages, programmers are still needed to create the fundamental concepts of developing an app idea. Learning to code can be complex and time-consuming and just isn't a viable option for most of us, which is why entrepreneurs often turn to outsourcing or SaaS (Software as a Service) solutions.

The uptake in businesses and entrepreneurs building more creative applications to connect to consumers and better manage their organisations, can be linked to recent <u>economic forecasts</u> suggesting the digital economy is generating immense growth opportunities.

So what will the future of app development look like in the next few years and how can businesses and entrepreneurs prepare for it?

2008

Android launches its first mobile device, The T-Mobile G1.

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2007 Apple

launches the first

iPhone.

Advancements in Code and the Digital Economy



the Digital Economy

The Digital Economy

The Future Growth Potential of

The digital economy has grown **2.5x faster than global GDP** over the past 15 years, with current estimates placing it between **4.5-15.5% of global GDP**.



New Economic Value

Research by the World Economic Forum suggests that as much as **70% of all new economic value** will be based on digitally-enabled business models <u>until 2030 at least</u>.



Customers of the Future

Incidentally, **71% of 15-24-yearolds worldwide** use the internet. As connectivity increases, this cohort are the customers of <u>the future</u>.

<u>Digital tools</u> will become more important to manage supply chains and deliver the seamless digital <u>experiences</u> that consumers have <u>come to expect</u>.



The Existing Development Options for Businesses

Before businesses can access the growing digital economy, they need apps and online platforms for customers to interact with. Senior leaders are at a crossroads in how they choose to create apps and innovate.

Previously, businesses have had to choose between commissioning software agencies to create apps from scratch, or searching for the perfect off-the-shelf SaaS solution. But neither of these solutions balances the needs of today's businesses.

Saas: On-Demand & Affordable but Constrained

SaaS offers a range of benefits. Solutions are affordable, readily available and highly scalable. They can also help with back-end processes (like finance automation or supply chain management).

It seems like the perfect solution, and for many businesses, traditional SaaS solutions are a great fit. But, as businesses mature and customer needs change, it is easy to outgrow SaaS platforms. They are provided on a licence basis, meaning that the business does not own the platform. Scalability is therefore tricky, and businesses can't achieve the deep level of customisation they need to remain competitive.

Agency: Custom-Made but Risky & Expensive

Some businesses may choose to outsource their software development to fill in the knowledge gap they are lacking. In theory, this solution enables them to build a digital solution that works with their business needs without hiring expensive in-house developers.

But working with an agency comes with several risk factors. Not only are these relationships often tricky to manage through to deployment with the typical project taking up to 46 weeks, but there comes the risk of vendor lock-in wherein the code belongs to the agency, not the business. With the initial hefty price tag of creating a new digital platform from the ground up, further costs associated with making changes and ongoing maintenance can rack up.

New Category: On-Demand, Custom-Made Software

There is now a new approach on the market that sits inbetween SaaS solutions and agency-created customised software. Its aim is to give businesses the flexibility of custom software at the speed and cost of an off-theshelf product, with on-demand support and ongoing care. So, how does it work?

Businesses can create an initial app framework from a huge library of features using low/no-code tools, supplemented by AI, and then utilise a network of developers to add any customisation. Early industry comparisons suggest that the combination of low/nocode digital assets and on-demand customisation is up to 6.5 times faster and 70% cheaper than traditional dev shops.

In the next few sections, we'll look at how on-demand, custom-made software could impact the business community and deliver on transformation needs.

The Impact for Everyday Entrepreneurs

Low-code, no-code, and automated customisation tools offer immense benefits for budding entrepreneurs. Most obvious are the time and cost savings. Small business owners are keenly interested in developing new skills since they know it can help them take their business to the <u>next level</u>. Yet, learning to code is a big commitment, and business owners have to focus on so many things in the early stages.

With these new advancements in development technology, business owners are empowered to take the next step in digitalising their business with custom software – without knowing how to code. They can focus on innovating their product and processes, and creating the best experience possible for their customers.

We could soon see the digital economy explode as a new generation of entrepreneurs overcome the barriers to starting their businesses. Their fresh perspectives could allow them to tap into niche or underserved markets and generate a wave of never-before-seen digital features.

The Impact for Ambitious SMEs

The benefits of low/no-code with added customisation are equally applicable to small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

In general, SMEs have lagged in adopting digital tools compared to larger firms, and the gap has widened over the <u>last decade</u>. This 'digital deficit' is particularly evident in sectors like <u>construction and finance</u>. Customisationenhanced low/no-code development tools can help SMEs modernise through a simplified and low-risk digital transformation. As a by-product, SMEs can give endconsumers a range of online services to choose from and stay competitive in our increasingly digital world.

Each business is unique, so having the perfect fit with your commercial needs and your software is important if you want to remove friction across your organisation. As with entrepreneurs, low-code solutions with on-demand developer support can help SMEs save money and time during their digital transformations.

Regardless of whether SMEs develop a customer-facing platform or back-end app, the cost savings can be reinvested in key growth areas, like employee well-being and product/service quality. The same tools can also help SMEs iterate mobile touchpoints based on customer feedback and ensure they always exceed customer expectations.



The Impact for Large Enterprises

Larger firms will also benefit from low-code software tools and on-demand developer support, but in different ways.

At this enterprise level, competition is at its highest. <u>90%</u> of large firms think that their business model is at risk of becoming obsolete in 2023 and are turning to digital solutions to maintain viability. In response, investments in digital transformation reached record levels, <u>up 65%</u> from 2020.

If the scale of digital transformation isn't enough, senior business leaders also have to oversee faster innovation cycles than before. McKinsey data shows that what was considered best-in-class transformational speeds in 2018 are now slower than average. <u>Companies with the</u> strongest digital portfolio are maintaining the lead.

The rate and scale of digital innovation, coupled with the global shortage of developers, puts intense pressure on senior leaders to keep pace with their industry peers. In particular, top-performing companies are more effective at hiring, meaning firms with <u>IT talent gaps will</u> increasingly need external support.

Enterprise companies will benefit from the on-demand aspects of low-code development platforms. By tapping into readily available developer support, larger firms can meet their technical needs while speeding up the development process through automation.

Larger firms can run into a unique challenge that newer and smaller companies often don't: <u>legacy data</u>. At best, legacy data offers untapped insights into company performance. But it can also create compliance issues if it isn't properly warehoused.

By outsourcing the development of growth-enabling digital projects, senior business leaders can empower internal teams to <u>warehouse their dark data properly</u>. Businesses can avoid breaching consumer privacy regulations and use data science to deploy highlyoptimised <u>commercial strategies</u>. Software development is a big investment for any business. If it's an entrepreneur, they are probably putting their lives on hold to build a new app. For small businesses, it's a huge investment of their profits - their future, their family's future, and their employees' future. Gaining visibility and confidence in their digital transformation with low/no-code tools will change the game as we know it."

Varghese Cherian Builder.ai's SVP of Revenue



The Importance of Building an App that Stands Out

Building an app is just the beginning of launching a successful digital touchpoint. Let's address the importance of building an app that stands out in a crowded marketplace and look at what businesses should be prioritising.

What do consumers look for in their ideal app?

There are two main ingredients to every successful app: a clear purpose and a positive user experience. Consumers turn to apps for <u>entertainment and productivity solutions</u>.

Users have goals they want to achieve, so apps that fail to meet their needs are <u>uninstalled</u>. Research from Google and Ipsos Mori suggests that this 'review' process is always ongoing, and shows that users will abandon apps later on if they feel they need more device memory or if an app <u>wasn't as useful as they first thought</u>.

App-Related Reasons for Abandonment:



Consumers also want a positive <u>experience</u> while using digital platforms, with <u>personalised recommendations</u> <u>and automated services</u>. Businesses need to pay time and attention to how users navigate their platform and build apps that are not only useful but also user friendly. Surveys consistently show that consumers strongly prefer simple user experiences. <u>61% of app users</u> say their favourite platforms are easy to navigate and provide seamless in-app experiences. For example, sticking to commonly used design principles can help your app feel familiar to users and ease the initial learning curve.

The best apps, experiences, and providers always put their customers' needs first. Some apps might create an amazing experience, but they don't really solve a problem - so they have no retention power. Other apps maintain that high retention despite a lowerlevel user experience solely because they cater to a big need. The best apps are the ones in the middle: servicing customers' needs via the best experience possible."

Stephanie Lowenthal Builder.ai's Global Head of Communication

Businesses that successfully balance utility and convenience can attract and retain users. The same businesses can also scale their digital services more effectively since they continually demonstrate their place in users' daily lives.

How Long do Businesses Have to Attract and Retain Users?

Between <u>25-30% of users</u> uninstall apps after downloading them. Travel and entertainment apps, in particular, have the highest churn rates, at <u>around 32%</u> <u>each</u>. Losing users is more acute at earlier stages. For example, 28% of all uninstalls occur within a day.

Uninstall Rates by Category: 32.5% Entertainment 32.2% Travel 31.2% Productivity 29.8% Communication 29.3% Shopping 29.3% Photography 27.8% Health & Fitness 26.4% Social 26.2% Gaming 24.1% Finance

By day seven, this rate rises to 70%, and 100% within 30 days. The onboarding experience within an app is often the key to success. Streamlining standardised processes like creating an account, placing an order and logging in ensures users have as little reason as possible to abandon the app.



Behind-the-Scenes of App Building

Even if a business has created a pioneering app, there are various factors that can still influence its success in the market. These factors generally fall into two main categories: pre and post-install.

Pre-Install

The first pre-install factor is app store optimisation (ASO), or, the process of optimising your app listing to rank higher in an app store's search results. There are roughly nine million mobile apps for users to choose from, so customers face lots of <u>competition for their attention</u>.

Businesses can use Google Play Store and Apple App Store best practices to ensure their app is <u>more</u> <u>discoverable</u> by those who need or want it. Using key words and effective graphic design entices users into downloading and ensures apps appear in relevant searches.

Another important factor early on is price. The vast majority (94%) of apps downloaded from Apple's App Store as of November 2022 were free, the same being the case for Google Play with 96% of apps being unpaid. Consumers are uncomfortable about paying for apps ahead of time. Chances of app success are increased if businesses release a free version of an app and introduce in-app purchases later to encourage subscriptions and to unlock more features.



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Post-Install

The main post-install factor is consumer feedback. Users have a habit of discussing apps, so it makes sense for app creators to capitalise on their insights. Business leaders can use the review sections on the Apple App and Google Play Stores to see how users feel about their app and its performance. Once this is done, they need to implement it. <u>Consumers</u> like to see that businesses are developing new features and <u>improving their apps' performance</u>. Iterating apps can grow your user base and help improve your app store listing at the same time, creating a very beneficial feedback loop.

All of the game-changing platforms and applications that have been out there in the last decade iterate every single time. That's why I always tell entrepreneurs 'start with the problem, not the solution'. Build a phase one, get it in front of your users and see how they start interacting with it. Take their feedback, look at the data and try to figure out what iterations you want in phase two, three, and four."

Ridhima Gupta Builder.ai's Global Head of Product Marketing

Budgets are always an ongoing consideration through every app build project. Low/no-code app templates and on-demand developer support can condense the development workload and expedite launch timelines. By deploying reusable digital assets that quickly enable new features, businesses can publish app updates in step with user feedback, providing a highly responsive digital service that stands out in the market.

The Future of App Development in a New Age

Overall, organisations have rushed to take advantage of software tools and now, with the digital economy set to expand further, companies are sinking record investment sums to launch market-leading services and secure their future. However, traditional approaches to software development remain a bottleneck to many software ambitions.

On-demand, custom-made software stands to revolutionise the future of app development and transform the global business landscape.

Empowered Developers

App development is being democratised with more of the population having access to easy-to-use development tools. The potential for businesses here is clear: digital transformation is feasible for everyone. Small businesses can build apps easily and create simple digital touchpoints for their customers. They are now able to meet consumers' modern expectations of online services and stay relevant.

In contrast, large businesses can streamline bigger digital transformation projects and remain competitive at the cutting edge of enterprise innovation. In particular, freeing up their IT staff from routine tasks to tackle more complex workloads more effectively.

Inclusive Tech Environments

As the digital economy becomes more accessible, we'll see tech environments reflect our everyday lives. At present, the tech industry's diversity and inclusivity is lagging:

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Gender Inclusivity

In 2021, women held **just 25%** of programming jobs, according to the <u>Pew Research Center</u>.



Underrepresented Groups

Similarly, people of colour made up less than 10% of the workforce in top tech companies in 2020.



The problem with this lack of diversity is that it impacts the innovation process. People from similar backgrounds tackle problems in a similar way, so businesses can't generate as many new ideas. The result is that businesses fail to identify the most effective or creative market solution and lose 25-36% in overall profitability, according to <u>McKinsey research</u>.

Advancements in coding could help to solve this problem by allowing fresh minds to reimagine what's possible in online spaces. With fewer technical barriers to releasing apps to the market, we could soon see new and exciting digital services become possible and tap into today's underserved markets.

Attentive Digital Services

Advancements in coding are about more than just empowering people to become developers. They will also enhance the quality of digital services.

> Around <u>one third of large IT projects</u> experience management problems.

One sixth incur cost overruns of **200%** and schedule overruns of **70%**.

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Traditional software development problems can be avoided by using pre-coded templates of app features to standardise project timelines and workload. If these digital assets don't fully deliver on the software vision, ondemand support can also be accessed from professional developers to support a custom digital strategy.

Everyone benefits in this scenario, since businesses can study customers' needs closely and smartphone users gain more effective apps for their everyday lives.

Faster Innovation Cycles

Tomorrow's coding tools will enable businesses to experiment with new app ideas and test bold initiatives to capture and retain users. The most effective businesses will even be able to shape customers' expectations by being first to market with innovative app features. As soon as senior business leaders have an idea, they can easily build a prototype using low/no-code digital assets and release it to a community of testors, or even as a way to secure early investor buy-in. This will streamline the early trial-and error phase, accelerating projects towards the development and deployment phases.

Comprehensive Digital Environments

In addition to freeing up time for businesses to pay attention to customers' needs, advancements in code will also allow them to focus on everything else that goes into building an app. For example, cybersecurity.

Data breaches and cyberattacks have become more common in recent years. <u>The average number of</u> <u>cyberattacks</u> and <u>data losses in 2021</u> increased by 15% from 2020's already high levels. Some of the most heavily-targeted industries (like financial services) saw a 50% rise in weekly attacks.

At the same time, the threat to businesses has never been higher. Beyond the reputational damage of losing customer data, the average cost of a data breach has risen to \$4.35m, according to <u>IBM research</u>. Overall, this means that companies now face a more serious cybersecurity landscape, where attacks are more frequent and harmful.

Mobile platforms and applications are a prime target for hackers since the devices they connect to hold personal data about users, like credit card numbers.

Modern coding advancements, in particular, will allow businesses to validate their app's security. Instead of getting caught up in unwieldy development workloads, businesses can utilise pre-programmed app templates that follow modern cybersecurity best practices.

App creators can also partner with external cybersecurity experts who can conduct rigorous tests to see how well equipped the app is against more sophisticated attacks. Additionally, businesses will be able to add log-in integrations to their apps with larger third parties, like Google or Facebook, and outsource the problem altogether.



Conclusion: No Coding Knowledge? No Problem.

While we've seen advances in software for endconsumers, the same can't be said for those who are trying to write it, since coding has failed to become more accessible with time.

Small business owners are faced with learning to code or cope with steep outsourcing costs just to build simple consumer touchpoints. Meanwhile, large businesses must grapple with a global developer shortage while competing in a race to be the most digitally-enabled company.

While these barriers hold back innovation and waste resources, businesses need to continue to take the risk to have a place in the future of the digital economy. For businesses faced with spiralling costs, long development times and unpredictable returns on investment, the dangers are all too real.

App building shouldn't have to be this way. Especially since the future digital economy is set to create vast commercial opportunities over the next few years. Businesses need a way to simplify their digital transformations and build apps more efficiently. Senior leaders should be able to focus on meeting users' needs instead of worrying about budget overspend and missed deadlines.

The latest advancements in coding are now allowing businesses to deliver cutting-edge digital services, by blending the scalability and affordability of SaaS solutions with the limitless potential of hard-coded software.



Now, businesses of all shapes and sizes can create digital touchpoints easily. Prospective entrepreneurs can launch their business idea and avoid high development costs. Meanwhile, enterprise firms can build apps more confidently and keep up with industry competition.

In a world where everyone is capable of developing their own application regardless of skill, the digital economy could be entirely reimagined. Next generation developers will bring unique perspectives on what apps are capable of, which markets need disrupting and how to capture and retain users. We're hoping to see plenty of new players enter the market to drive the quality of digital services upward.

We're excited for this future of app building, as new innovations in the digital economy continue to reshape our world. We're keeping our eyes on the horizon as new and unique software designs and app features create brand new user experiences that redefine our interaction with mobile devices.

In short, now that software is as easy as ordering pizza, the only limit on what to create is your imagination.

Builder.ai®

About Builder.ai



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What We Do

At Builder.ai, we've pioneered a new software category between low-code and custom software development.

Our Al Project Manager, Natasha, helps you 'order' software from the world's first app software creation conveyor belt. Around 500 features make up 80% of all software (things like login, secure payments or Live Chat). So, we coded these features, and Natasha helps you pick and choose the ones your idea needs. Then our network of specialists apply your customisation to make the app uniquely yours.

You maintain total control over your software throughout the project and when the application is shipped to you on completion, the code remains yours to keep. This lets you host your app anywhere you wish without ever having to worry about vendor lock in.

What We Offer

Builder Studio is our flagship app-building service that lets you turn any idea into custom-made software, without writing any code, or speaking to a developer/ agency. Starting with an app template, you can add or remove features and receive guaranteed cost and timeline projections ahead of the building process.

We also offer a range of support services, including Builder Care which continuously monitors your software – upgrading and fixing it – before you even know there's a problem. Similarly, Builder Cloud offers best-in-class cloud support from all the major providers and ensures your digital service is infinitely scalable at a moment's notice.

How To Get Started

See how quickly you can build your app idea and find out about our guaranteed prices by <u>booking a demo today</u>.

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Discover

AvocadoSalad