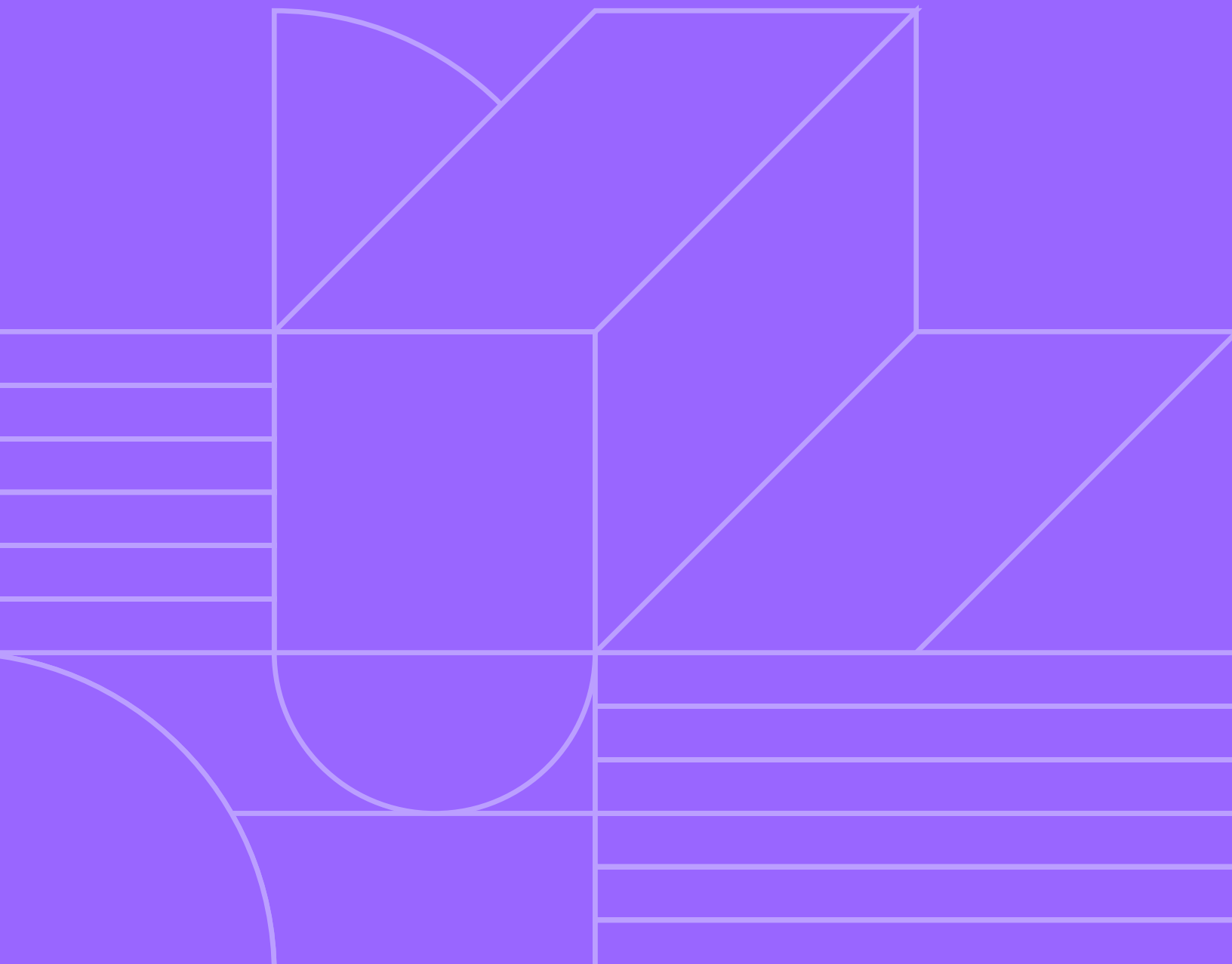**stripe**

No-code guide for founders & owners

Three common misconceptions about no-code tools for startup founders

No-code tools enable entrepreneurs to build products and workflows using conceptual models and apps instead of code. This doesn't mean coding isn't used at all—it's just hidden behind a simple-to-use interface.

This simplicity has often been met with criticism. Many founders felt that no-code platforms don't truly enable them to build differentiating products that their users will love. And in turn, investors have pushed teams to build tech that can't easily be replicated by competitors, resulting in an overall hesitance to use no-code tools if you're a startup looking to raise venture funding.

However, rapid developments in the no-code space—and more recently, the introduction of AI tools that help you code, like GitHub's Copilot—are encouraging founders to reconsider how these tools might be used to support their ambitions.

To better understand how startups are using no-code tools, we interviewed three startups founders. They share practical ways they use these tools and help us debunk common misconceptions about no-code systems.

Key takeaways

1. No-code has grown exponentially in usefulness. Now, regardless of your company stage and technical capabilities, you can treat no-code as valuable infrastructure that reduces your time to value for new product builds.

2. The applications for no-code tools are continuing to increase. Empower your teams to use no-code and increase your experimentation velocity, gathering valuable user insights which help to refine your product roadmap and growth.

3. No-code tools can be used as a way to build traction and prove out a market to potential investors, without committing a lot of resources early on. Increasingly, there are fewer domains in which you can build a tech moat, particularly in software. No-code tools provide a way for you to free up time in order to focus on what really makes your product or service unique.

Misconception #1:

"No-code means compromising on customization and performance"

Reality: As no-code platforms mature, they're enabling users to build customized experiences through multiple integrations with other tools and datasets to build unique workflows.

No-code has traditionally been viewed as a tool for early-stage entrepreneurs and bootstrappers. Software doesn't always benefit from simple cost structures: you often have to frontload the cost to get anything out the door by hiring developers and committing to a build. But with no-code tools, you can quickly get started and more easily ship products and features.

However, for people who can code or companies with engineering resources, no-code has often been dismissed as too basic. Complexity enables customization, and the conclusion around no-code has sometimes been that it's too simplified and therefore not always relevant for the unique application the team is building for. For example, If you wanted to use WordPress for your website in 2010, you were limited by existing templates and designs.

This may have been true in past years: founders were trading flexibility for simplicity and speed by working within the boundaries of the no-code tool. "Build versus buy" was a common framework used when assessing whether to code something or use no-code tools.

Today, as applications have matured, no-code tools have shifted from being a fixed product driving a specific unchangeable function to being far more customizable. Businesses are able to connect different tools and data together to compose unique workflows. For example, when someone fills out your Airtable form embedded on your Framer website, it can trigger an action in your app, built on Bubble, which then fires out a string of emails via Gmail to onboard the new user. These systems can work together, as if you coded it.

On top of this, more platforms are recognizing the need for tailored solutions and have introduced low-code capabilities to enable teams to customize their experience even further, turning no-code from being an off-the-shelf fixed solution into infrastructure that can be built on top of.

Instead of being a rigid solution, no-code today is more like a set of highly composable building blocks that you can customize with low code and endless integrations. It's no longer a decision between build versus buy; instead, it's build *and* buy *and* compose.

Misconception #2 :

"No-code devalues the role of developers"

Reality: By incorporating no-code tools, you're outsourcing a component of your product's function and enabling non-developers to run experiments. This enables your developers to reallocate their time to the hardest-to-solve product challenges.

If you're building solo, no-code tools enable you to simply get started and create something. If you're a startup that has engineering resources, this doesn't mean you don't need developers. In reality, it simply means your developers are now able to focus on the most valuable areas of your product.

No-code is all about empowering people. It empowers technical founders and developers to only focus on writing code for the tasks that matter. As a founder, you may feel like you should build everything from the ground up. In reality, it's often about understanding what components of your product are within your core competency, and that act as a differentiator in the market, and what's outside of it. Why spend time and resources building a subscription management tool? Outsource this to a no-code solution and reallocate those resources back to building a great core product that delights your users.

> "
> Every line of code that you write that isn't contributing to your core product differentiation is a liability and maintenance burden for the rest of your company's existence!"
>
> **Ethan Sherbondy**
> Cofounder, Betafi

For non-developers in your team, no-code is a facilitation tool to run experiments easily at low cost, without having to request engineering resources. Experimentation is all about creating effective positioning before you commit to allocating meaningful resources.

> "
> No-code tooling has made it much easier for us to run experiments. I can easily set up new products myself without asking our engineers to do it. There are so many pieces I can control that don't get bottlenecked by going through our development process."
>
> **Heather Phillips**
> Customer Success Lead, Tiller

The opportunities to run experiments with no-code are endless:

- You can use Figma to mock up a new interface for your app and gather user feedback before you build it.

- Looking to explore new ways of working with your team? Build internal tools and dashboards with Retool to test your assumptions with a small group before you roll it out across the company.

- Stripe's Payment Links enable you to experiment selling your product through new channels like SMS, web, social media, and email—no code required.

Greater experimentation is enabled because developers are no longer needed to initiate tests. Instead, they're available once you've gathered enough data and you're confident you want to build something truly bespoke and tailored to your needs.

Misconception #3 :

"You can't raise venture capital if your product is built using no-code tools"

Reality: At the early stages, no-code tools provide a way for you to more easily identify the problem you're looking to solve and gather early insights and traction, which allows you to tell a more effective fundraising story. At the later stages, using no-code tools is a form of ruthless prioritization.

No-code tools enable entrepreneurs to build products more easily and take them to market faster. Previously, it might have taken six months to build an MVP and take it to market, but with no-code tools, it might take less than six weeks.

In a market where venture investors are asking for more data and insights on your chosen challenge before they consider investing, no-code tools offer you a way to test a market and build traction— such as sign-ups, active users, and revenue—without frontloading the large costs of building your product from scratch.

As you scale, and when you more intimately understand the nuanced needs of your users, you can slowly start to build the core components of your product in-house that enable you to tackle the market challenge in the most customized way possible.

Increasingly, there are fewer domains where it's possible to establish a tech moat. Investors are aware that the way your product functions is only one component of a multivariate equation that represents differentiation. Oftentimes, every early piece of code you write becomes a liability sooner or later. Your distribution strategy, brand, and customer experience are ultimately the ways you differentiate yourself from competitors in the long run.

Outsourcing components of your tech stack to no-code tools frees up precious time and resources which can be better spent on what truly makes your company, product, or service unique.

> "
> As founders we need to go custom for the things that really make us stand out, and ruthlessly prune and go for best-in-class external offerings for the rest, especially in this hypercompetitive and more capital-constrained macro environment."
>
> **Ethan Sherbondy**
> Cofounder, Betafi

How Stripe can help

Stripe's suite of no-code tools gives you what you need to get to market faster—without diverting development resources. You can:

- Use Stripe Payment Links to create a full payment page in just a few clicks and share the link with your customers—no code required. You can sell across any channel, including web, email, SMS, social media, and others, and share the link in any format that works for your business (such as a hyperlink, buy button, or QR code).

- Create an embeddable pricing table in the Stripe Dashboard to configure, customize, and update product and pricing information, without needing to write any code.

- Give customers the ability to manage their billing information, subscriptions, and invoices with Stripe's no-code customer portal.

- With Stripe's hosted invoice page, businesses can build, customize, and send an invoice to their customers in just a few clicks—without any code..

You can read more at stripe.com/no-code. If you'd like to speak with an expert on our team, please reach out.