NO-CODE: OVERCOMING THE TECHNICAL BARRIER

The endless potential of No Code in Emerging & Frontier Markets

Bangladesh Angels

empasco

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The endless potential of No Code in Emerging & Frontier Markets

Through our work in various Emerging & Frontier Markets, including Russia, Bangladesh and others we have noticed the following two things

1. Some of the most successful technology companies are often not the most technologically innovative;

2. Some of the smartest people in the local ecosystems are wary of creating businesses in the field of technology due to their lack of technical skills.

Here, we will try to show that technical skills are not a necessity on your path to creating successful technology businesses. To understand why we'll need to explore the difference between Business Model Innovation and Technical Innovation.

The fact of the matter is

- Many tools are available today to build and launch a minimal viable version of your startup without writing any code and

- Pure technical innovation today is rare and often not applicable to the Emerging Market context.

UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVE POTENTIAL IN A BUSINESS CONTEXT

So what is No Code and what does it allow you to do?

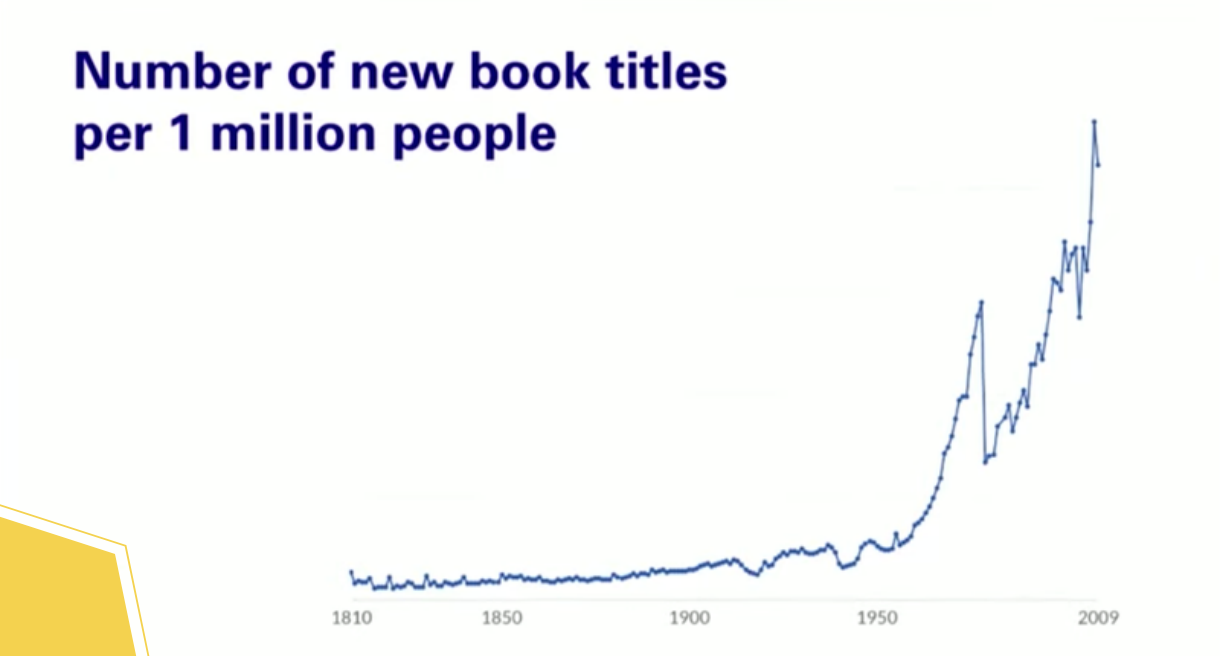
Essentially, No Code platforms are tools which allow you to bring your idea or business to life without having to learn how to code or finding a technical co-founder. A world where technological barriers don't stop your vision becoming reality.

Democratization

Written word → **Audio + Video** → **Software**

Let's look at a few examples.

The invention of the printing press in 1440 democratised the mass production and distribution of written word. With time, through typewriters and later word processing software, publishing your ideas to the world became only a few clicks away. Today, publishing has become so democratised that the market for books that are not sold in a bookstore is larger than the market for books that are.



*THE NO-CODE REVOLUTION, WEBFLOW

Similarly, consider the film industry. Only a couple of decades ago, creating a movie was extraordinarily difficult. It required huge amounts of capital, technical expertise and expensive equipment.

Today, the movie industry is accessible to each and every one. The equipment, your mobile phone, is in your hand and the biggest ever video distribution channels (Youtube, TikTok, Instagram) are a click away.

What about No Code?

The same democratisation that we saw in the publishing of text, audio and video content has now set its sights on web and software development. By removing the barriers to entry, No Code allows creatives to build and test their business ideas.

Business Model Innovation
vs
Technical Innovation

So how does No Code apply to technology businesses and why is business model innovation important to consider. As Fred Wilson points out, business model innovation may be a more powerful opportunity to build new businesses. Amazon, Aibnb, Uber and Netflix are all examples of business model innovation with some technical innovation around the edges.

The No Code tools available today are not there to help you invent new technological breakthroughs. They are rather there to help you apply business models to new contexts.

The most simple form of this is for a brick-and-mortar store to set up its online presence by creating a simple e-commerce website. This is something you were able to achieve with No Code tools such as Wix and Squarespace for over a decade now.

However, the latest advances in No Code have taken things a few steps further.

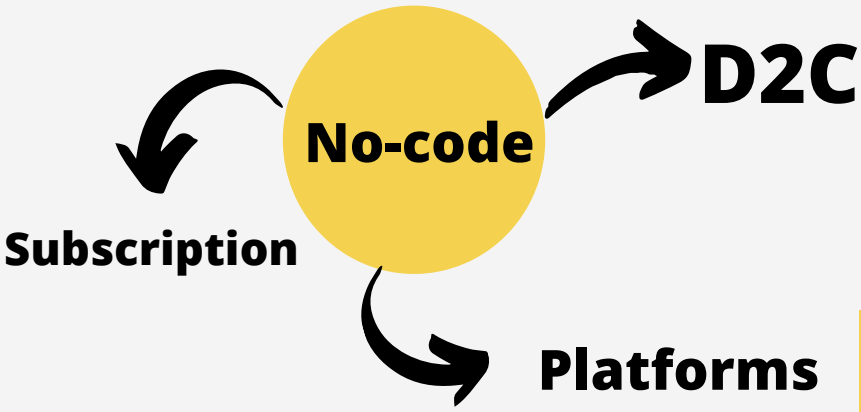
"The No Code movement rests upon the fundamental belief that technology should enable and facilitate creation, not be a barrier to entry." (The No Code Revolution, Webflow)

If No Code does to business what the printing press and online publishing did to writing, then we're in for a ride.

Applications of Business Model Innovation

Today, you can use tools like Webflow and Memberstack to create a simple Airbnb clone or use Bubble to create an Instagram clone with no technical expertise required.

Let's look at various examples of business model innovation:



Subscription models - are a great way to turn what could be a one-off purchase into recurring revenue, while offering the customer a better experience and a higher value product. Subscription models are popular in SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) businesses and among content creators.

To quickly launch and test your subscriptions SaaS product you can look at Bubble (No Code web-app development tool) - one notable example is Marlow, built with Bubble, offering virtual coaching products.

Platforms - businesses that aggregate and facilitate the supply and demand. Some notable examples include Airbnb, Uber, Alibaba and other marketplaces. Looking at the unbundling of one of the original digital platforms, Craigslist, it's safe to assume that a lot of value will also be created in the various niches of these giants.

***Unbundling Craigslist Garners Big Funding - $8.87 Billion Raised to Date by Startups**

To launch a marketplace startup you might want to consider Sharetribe. This is by far the easiest and fastest way for building marketplaces today. A notable example here is Studiotime.io, that Yoroomie initially built on top of Sharetribe.

You can also consider using Webflow and Memberstack, or try Bubble, as shown in this tutorial by Ben Tossell of Makerpad.

Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) - means selling directly to your end consumer, as opposed to the traditional approach of relying on a supply chain of retailers to sell your goods. This approach has been extremely successful in many industries including men's health (Hims and Roman), eyewear (WarbyParker) and grooming (Dollar Shave Club).

With Webflow you can build a beautiful D2C product line and quickly test and iterate on your offering.

There are, of course, countless other examples of business model innovation, including freemium, advertising, add-on services, hybrids and many others. However, the aforementioned models are perhaps most applicable to the No Code landscape in its current form.

Final Thoughts

Few things need to be clarified. No Code doesn't mean you will never need technical people on your team. As it currently stands, all No Code tools have some significant limitations that will stop your business from scaling over a few thousand users. But what these tools will allow you to do is test your ideas, find your early adopters and get the traction necessary to raise funding before you make the switch to code and scale.

Another thing to remember here, before you start on your journey, is whether you're trying to build a startup or a more traditional business. This is a topic of its own, but in short, this depends on how scalable is your business and how aggressively you are trying to win the market.

What excites us the most is that launching an online business, and by proxy learning about business, has never been so within reach. Whether you're just trying new tools, or building your next unicorn, we wish you all the success on your journey.

No Code Tools

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Web Development

webflow — www.webflow.com

Carrd — https://carrd.co/

shopify — https://www.shopify.com/

App Development

thunkable — https://thunkable.com/home2/

bubble — https://bubble.io/

Voiceflow — https://www.voiceflow.com/

glide. — https://www.glideapps.com/

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AR/VR Development

scapic — https://www.scapic.com/

customuse — https://www.customuse.com

Automation

zapier — https://zapier.com/

integromat — https://www.integromat.com/en

PARABOLA — https://parabola.io/

Analytics

Segment — https://segment.com/

mixpanel — https://mixpanel.com/

Amplitude — https://amplitude.com/

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Spreadsheet and Databases

Airtable — https://airtable.com/

dashdash — https://dashdash.com/

Document Editors

coda — https://coda.io/welcome

Notion — https://www.notion.so/

CRM

HubSpot — https://www.hubspot.com/

https://www.copper.com/

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Forms

Typeform — https://www.typeform.com/

JotForm — https://www.jotform.com/

Email

mailchimp — https://mailchimp.com/

ConvertKit — https://convertkit.com/

substack — https://substack.com/

Customer Support

INTERCOM — https://www.intercom.com/

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Payments

stripe — https://stripe.com/

PayPal — https://www.paypal.com/bd/home

User Research

OPTIMAL WORKSHOP — https://www.optimalworkshop.com/

Prototyping

InVision — https://www.invisionapp.com/

Figma — https://www.figma.com/

Sketch — https://www.sketch.com/

Xd — https://www.adobe.com/products/xd.html

Framer — https://www.framer.com/

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