

★ Member-only story

# 🚀 Meet Nico, who sold an AI tool built in 48 hours for \$65k, and then another one built in 1 week for \$200k

15 min read · 3 days ago



Yuma Ueno

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Hello! I'm Yuma Ueno([https://twitter.com/stat\\_biz](https://twitter.com/stat_biz)).

I'm struggling to build many products (Ex: [AI-Powered Japanese FlashCards](#)).

I've researched the amazing indie hackers / entrepreneurs and summarized what they've done.

I would like to introduce the great entrepreneur “Nico Jeannen”!



(Source: [https://x.com/nico\\_jeannen](https://x.com/nico_jeannen))

With no prior programming knowledge, he crammed the basics in two months. In this AI era, he leverages AI to build a massive number of products, with a track record of selling one for \$65k and another for \$200k. His success story is incredibly inspiring! Let's dive in.

### **Dropping out of college and quitting a part-time job in 3 days to become an entrepreneur**

Born in France with a self-proclaimed nerdy streak, a pre-defined life path just wasn't for Nico. He hated school and his grades were terrible.

He somehow managed to graduate high school and get into college, only to drop out, declaring, "College is a waste of time!" He started a part-time job but quit in three days, thinking, "Working for someone else is so boring!"

He was a complete social misfit. But this type of person often succeeds after going independent.

He went independent without knowing left from right, joining entrepreneur communities and taking courses from successful founders. As he built connections and helped with their businesses, he was entrusted with work like ad operations and began to earn a living as a freelancer.

## **Feeling anxious about his ad work, he entered the world of product development**

Although he was doing well and earning money, he was constantly anxious about the future. The advertising industry is easily affected by the economy, and he never knew when the work might dry up.

Feeling uneasy about continuing contract work in such an industry, he decided, “I have to make my own product and earn money!”

He started studying programming. This was May 2022, just before ChatGPT appeared.

He was a complete programming beginner. The language he chose was Python. It's one of the top 1 or 2 most-used languages in the world, applicable to various use cases, and has abundant AI-related libraries, making it perfect for riding the AI trend.

He immediately bought a \$20 Python course on Udemy and began teaching himself.

Anyway, his days were spent learning Python on Udemy. He says he holed up in a hotel and studied Python from morning till night.

Thanks to this short-term, intensive study, he managed to grasp the entirety of Python in about two months. He mastered Python basics, scraping, web development, and AI model development.

Python is a beginner-friendly language and relatively easy to master, so it's highly recommended as a first programming language.

## **Building a product while learning to code and getting his first revenue**

He steadily mastered programming, but the amazing part is that he started building a web app *while* he was still learning.

During these two months of learning, he developed “Augmented Reader,” a web app to improve the reading experience for people with dyslexia.

With programming, it's not just about theoretical study; it's crucial to just start building something. Learning passively gets boring and you won't stick with it. In that respect, his proactive approach to building a product is incredible.

By building a product alongside his studies, he steadily acquired programming knowledge.

By August 2022, he began developing a more serious product: an AI writing assistant that leveraged his marketing experience. He already had connections with clients who might be interested in this tool from his digital marketing work. He immediately had past clients use the product and improved it based on their feedback.

In September 2022, he integrated the Stripe payment system. For marketing, he posted on Reddit and acquired his first users.

It's astounding that he built a product and was actually earning revenue just four months after starting to learn programming. This was the result of focusing on building and selling a product from the start, rather than aiming for perfection.

It's too late to build a product *after* you've mastered programming. You should almost start building *before* you even learn.

Anyway, the AI writing assistant tool seemed promising, but similar apps quickly proliferated, and competition intensified. He made some money, but the intense competition forced him to shut it down.

But he didn't give up there. This is where his relentless product development spree begins.

## **The days of building a ton of products**

In October, he launched "Galeby," an AI customer service app, and "Kursus," a tool to find resources for learning new skills. Both failed and were shut down.

In November, he launched "MyAIPainting," a service that creates AI portraits and ships them as prints, and "PhotoRestore," which colorizes old black-and-white photos with AI.

He had great foresight, spotting the generative AI trend even before ChatGPT's debut and building services like these. And this was just a few months after he started coding.

Nico was confident in these ideas, but ultimately, these projects also failed.

"MyAIPainting" got over 80 upvotes on ProductHunt and generated buzz, but it just

didn't sell.

Since his original job was ad operations, he tried advertising the product, but got no user response. He learned firsthand how difficult it is to build your own product and market it with ads.

This is absolutely true. I also worked in digital marketing analysis during my corporate days, so I was confident I could do well with my own ad operations, but I failed completely. Trying to use ads to boost an unpolished product that nobody knows about just doesn't work. When you're an employee or freelancer, you're often managing brands and products that are already somewhat polished and have public recognition, so it's easier to show results. It's a different world from running ads for a product made by some guy nobody's ever heard of.

Of course, some people have a deep understanding of users and a genius-level sense from the start, allowing them to build services that just click. But for ordinary people who don't, relying on ads from the launch is a recipe for failure. I think it's better to first gather users without spending money, through diligent sales or organic social media, and use feedback from early users to improve the product quality (watch metrics like CVR and LTV!). Only after it meets a certain standard should you move on to ads.

Anyway, he continued to launch many products, but none were successful. But then, a turning point arrived.

### **A new challenge: Launching an AI product in 48 hours**

He began working on his next project, "Open For Ads," a platform connecting media owners and advertisers. This product itself didn't work out, but the experience led to his hit product.

While developing “Open For Ads,” he needed a service logo. He used to hire designers, but his money was running out. Due to budget constraints, he decided to use a generative AI.

The result was... not bad.

Satisfied with the logo, Nico went to bed. Then, a thought struck him: “Maybe the act of making a logo with generative AI could be an app itself...”

At the time, he still believed in the potential of “Open For Ads” and didn’t want to spend much time on a new idea. So, he imposed a 48-hour constraint on himself. To push himself further, he opened Twitter and posted: “I will launch an AI logo generator app within 48 hours.”

In the end, this “48-hour constraint” and “publicly posting it” would be the keys to his success.

From here, we’ll see how he managed to build an MVP in 48 hours, grow the product, and sell it for \$65k. For someone who had just started programming, creating a perfect UI in 48 hours was impossible, but he pulled it off with an unexpected trick. And furthermore, we’ll see the process of how, after selling the product for \$65k, his savings nearly ran out, leading him to build another AI product and sell it for \$200k. His story of failure and challenge is incredibly insightful and stimulating. You’ll want to see this.



## Launching with the bare minimum features to get revenue

Nico had boldly declared, “I’ll launch an MVP in 48 hours!” There was no time to build useless features. First, he completed the core function: generating a logo using an existing AI model’s API.

Next, he tried to build the user interface for inputting prompts and generating logos. However, with his skills at the time, building an interface in this short period was impossible. This was late 2022, when ChatGPT had just come out. It was an era when AI-driven development with tools like Cursor or Claude Code was difficult.

Nico realized launching on time would be tough. Still, he had made a declaration on Twitter, so he had to produce *something* within the deadline. So, what did he do?

He decided to “sell the AI logo tool using Typeform, an online form builder, *without building an interface*.” The mechanism was as follows:

1. A user enters a prompt into the online form.
2. Nico *manually* generates the logo based on that prompt.
3. He emails the finished logo to the user.

As an MVP, this is more than sufficient. You don’t need to build a perfect product from the start. The only “truly necessary feature” here was the “ability to generate a logo with AI.” As long as that was built, the interface could be handled manually by a human.

He launched the service promising to deliver the logo within 24 hours. The “Typeform” tool he used also had a payment function, so he launched it as a paid service.

For the crucial landing page, he packed in all the skills from his digital marketing contract days. The catchphrase wasn’t “high-quality, cheap logos,” but “Get designer-quality logos for less than the price of a coffee.”

And so, he launched “MakeLogoAI” (which was apparently shut down after he sold it).

He successfully launched the MVP within 48 hours of his Twitter declaration.

At the time, he had fewer than 500 Twitter followers. But his “challenge to build and launch an MVP in 48 hours” resonated with many users and went viral. As it turns out, a seemingly reckless challenge can generate a lot of empathy. He brilliantly created this momentum and earned \$75 in just a few hours after launch. It may not seem like a lot, but the fact that *even one person* will pay for a service is extremely important.

## From rapid product growth to a \$65k sale

Earning revenue immediately after launch proved there was demand for the product. But remember, at this stage, he was still generating logos by hand. When he got a notification of a purchase, he manually generated the logo and sent it in an email. This was fine with a few customers, but as they increased, this operation became unrealistic.

Furthermore, other AI logo generators were starting to appear. “I have to secure users before the competition heats up.” Thinking this, he decided to build a proper interface within the *next* 48 hours and launch it properly on ProductHunt.

He managed to build the interface in 48 hours, finish the product, and post it to ProductHunt. Thanks to the product’s novelty and the community’s empathy for Nico’s challenge, it received many upvotes. He hit #1 for the day on ProductHunt.

He wouldn’t have achieved this result if a competitor had beaten him to it. His “open development & high-speed development” under a 48-hour constraint paid off.

By the way, everyone who does well on ProductHunt works desperately, without sleep, for the 24 hours after launch. When this 17-year-old Turkish kid hit the top of ProductHunt, he was glued to his PC for 24 hours calling for support on X.

**How a 17-Year-Old High School Student Built AI Products and Sold for \$70,000**

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[medium.com](http://medium.com)



A good product is a prerequisite, but it also takes desperate effort. Nico also fought hard to snatch that #1 Daily spot.

The impact of getting #1 Daily on ProductHunt was huge. Many users visited “MakeLogoAI,” bringing in over \$1,000 in revenue in a single day. It was picked up by multiple media outlets, and revenue continued to grow.

As the user base expanded, he received daily feedback from many users, and he spent his days improving features. It seemed like it would continue to grow and succeed.

However, he gradually started receiving refund requests from customers dissatisfied with the features. The initial growth spurt began to level off, and he ran out of ideas to promote the product.

Six months had passed since he first started building the product. He had run non-stop, day and night, with almost no breaks. And finally, his health failed. His body was breaking down. This incident made him decide that spending more time on “MakeLogoAI” was not a good idea. He decided to sell.

He says the sale itself was very smooth. He sold it on Acquire.com, a platform for buying and selling products. After negotiations, the price settled at \$65,000.

### **Savings run out, and the next challenge begins**

Nico had secured a lump sum of money. It was the first time in his life he'd had this much money in his bank account. “I don't have to work for a while!” He enjoyed his first vacation in a long time.

He built a few products after that, but without a pressing need, his heart wasn't in it. The few products he made went nowhere.

His bank balance dwindled rapidly, and the \$65k he had earned from the sale was about to run out. “I have to hit it big with another product.”

And so, his second challenge began. About six months had passed since he sold MakeLogoAI.

Having decided to get serious about building a product, he first started brainstorming. When he went to write something in Google Docs, he noticed the voice-to-text button. He tried the feature, but it was terrible and didn't work at all.

But then he realized. Surely, he wasn't the only one who found typing annoying and preferred to speak. This could be a huge opportunity, he thought. The timing was also perfect. Just a few months earlier, a new AI model for audio transcription had been released. “Alright, let's go with this idea.”

Once he decided, he started development immediately. He set a 1-week deadline to complete the MVP for this product. This technique of “setting a deadline and rapidly developing an MVP with only the necessary features” was one he had practiced in his previous success.

After a fierce week of development, he launched the new product. This was “[Talknotes](#),” which would become a huge hit.

## **Directory services and ProductHunt supporting early growth**

So, this product became a hit and eventually led to a \$200k sale, but how did he grow it? His policy was to “only invest in ads from earned revenue.” In other words, he wouldn’t run ads from day one with zero revenue.

The very first measure he took was to register his product on various directory services that list startup projects. There are directory services out there that list new products emerging every day, and early adopters check them daily. Nico researched which directory services his potential competitors were registered on and just signed up for as many as he could. It only took him two hours.

Thanks to this grunt work, he earned \$700 in revenue from directories. This is something anyone can do and absolutely should. By the way, when he registered on the directories, he sold the product as a one-time purchase, not a subscription.

As I’ve mentioned many times in this newsletter, there are quite a few examples of successful products that started by offering a lifetime deal (one-time purchase plan) in the early stages. Like Demon or Gil. Early adopters tend to prefer lifetime deals.



## Damon Chen, a developer who earns about \$130k per month from multiple products

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Having earned revenue via directories and confirmed there was at least some demand, he made his move on his specialty, ProductHunt. At the same time, he switched to a subscription plan.

Nico, who had built up more influence than before, duly won #1 Daily again. The product's MRR grew to \$1,500. With this, he had secured a steady stream of funds for reinvestment. From here, he began the challenge of investing in his area of expertise — advertising — to scale the product further.

### 🏡 Holing up in a room to focus and rapidly grow the product

He looked for a place where he could hole up for several months to focus on product growth. When he mastered programming in two months, he holed up in a hotel room, cutting off all other temptations to concentrate on his studies. This time, it was time to focus on scaling the product. His savings were almost gone. Although the product was already over \$1,500 MRR, he couldn't live on that income. He needed to grow it further, past \$10,000 a month.

He found an apartment where he could concentrate on work and holed up there all day, focusing on the product's growth. He was long-distance from his girlfriend, and some days he didn't take a single step outside.

Thanks to his serious effort to fix his environment, his ad performance began to improve. He had found the target audience that the product really resonated with. And so, "Talknotes" scaled, reaching \$10,000 in monthly revenue.

### 🔥 Burnout and the \$200k sale

However, an unexpected tragedy struck him. In April 2024, a bug occurred while he was sleeping, making the product unusable. Complaint emails from customers poured in incessantly.

He desperately tried to fix the bug, but as soon as he fixed one thing, another bug would appear. It ended up taking him two full days to completely fix the bugs, during which he barely slept.

In that time, many users had canceled their subscriptions, and revenue had dropped significantly. He tried to keep his spirits up and rebuild the product, but this series of events completely sapped his motivation, and he couldn't get himself to work.

He could have taken a break until his motivation returned, but the AI field changes so rapidly that he knew if he rested for even a month, the product would become obsolete.

And so, he decided to sell for a second time. He used the same platform as the first time, Acquire.com. Since the AI space is so volatile, there was a risk the valuation would drop if he waited to sell. He negotiated with buyers for good terms to sell as quickly as possible, and finally succeeded in selling for \$200,000. With this, he managed to gain even more wealth.

That is his story. His strategy of “build and sell, build and sell” may seem unstable, but it might be a strategy perfectly suited to this fast-changing AI era. The AI space is full of fads, so the approach of growing a product quickly and selling it off fast is one to keep in the back of your mind.

## **Summary**

Looking back at Nico's story, you can see that both products that successfully generated real revenue started from his own problems. It's not the “this seems like it could work” idea-based products, but the products he built as someone personally experiencing the problem that succeeded. That's why we indie developers should always be looking at our own problems to build products.

There's a lot more to learn from his story: 

- **Creating an environment for deep work:** When he was learning to program and when he was seriously scaling his product, he changed his environment to cut off temptations. If you're serious about tackling something, temporarily cutting

off past relationships and temptations to change your environment is a valid move. When I was in the company and decided to get serious about my side hustle, I deleted all my private social media. Mindlessly scrolling social media is a real waste of time.

- **The 48-hour launch constraint:** His first success began with the 48-hour launch constraint. This constraint prevented him from building useless features, allowed him to build a minimal MVP at high speed, and by announcing it on Twitter, he was able to capture the interest of many users. Setting a deadline and committing to it is vital.
- **Selling as an exit:** I think having “selling” as an exit strategy in indie development is a good idea. In this day and age, trends come and go quickly, so rapidly growing a product and selling it off is one option. I think because Nico has a bouncy personality and gets bored easily, the exit strategy of selling was a perfect fit for him. (In my case, I get attached to the products and media I’ve raised, so I can’t let go of any of them lol).

By the way, Nico continues to build many products even now, and his indie development journey is far from over. The day he surprises the world with another big acquisition deal may be near.

So this time I have introduced Nico Jeannen.

If you like, comment, and share, it will encourage me to continue!

See you next time!

## References

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Bgerby

What are your thoughts?



Andrii he

1 day ago



Another story about a person who does not know how to program at all. In 5 minutes 😂 😂 😂

He created a product that costs several hundred thousand dollars.

This is all, of course, fun, but it's all advertising for such companies as Cursor.

In fact, without knowledge of programming, you will not succeed.



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[Reply](#)



Alexandru Rada

1 day ago



thaanks for sharing. I'm also building actordo.com but have some experience in SaaS.



-- [Reply](#)



Farhad Nawab

1 hour ago

...

This highlights the defining speed of the AI era: no prior coding knowledge combined with ruthless focus and AI leverage lets you jump from zero to \$200k+ exits in a single week. 💰



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