Vibe Coding Unpacked: Discovering AI-Driven App Making

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AI-powered development tools are clearly reshaping the way software is built, sometimes with little more than a good prompt and some domain know-how.

Having worked in B2B SaaS development consulting, and after attending a recent online session with Jacob Klug and Andrew Yeung, I surveyed three leading platforms—Lovable.dev, Bolt.new, and Cursor.ai. Each of these tools lets users build production-ready web apps, but their approaches differ sharply.

Lovable.dev uses a chat-based interface: you describe, the platform assembles, integrating React, Supabase, Stripe, and more. UI tweaks or backend changes happen by edit prompt—a limited but straightforward workflow. Deployment and hosting are built in; the platform outputs a link, not files.

By contrast, Bolt.new leans into a browser-based custom IDE: it scaffolds projects in mainstream frameworks like Next.js, Vue, and Svelte, and then opens the hood for developers to edit code, hook up services, and deploy. It's more flexible than Lovable but requires technical awareness to get beyond the prototype stage.

Cursor.ai is the most developer-oriented: think an AI pair-programmer in a classic code environment. The user stays in control, assembling code manually, with AI making suggestions, completing functions, or finding bugs.

From a feature perspective: Lovable lets users keep hands off but is limited by what its AI can interpret and assemble; Bolt gives the user substantial editing power but then expects them to know how to fill in the blanks. Cursor demands programming knowledge but offers the most nuanced and stack-agnostic approach. Pricing also varies—Lovable charges by usage/message credits, Bolt uses a token system with a free tier tapering into paid plans, Cursor runs on a flat monthly rate for Pro AI features.

All cover core requirements—UI, backend, authentication, third-party APis—but the degree of hands-on control and fit for technical/non-technical users differs sharply. Lovable is efficient for fast, no-code MVPs; Bolt strikes a

middle ground for tech-enabled teams; Cursor best suits developers who want deep stack control with AI help.

In summary, "vibe coding" is about disrupting the barrier between idea and shipped product. Which tool fits best depends on how close you want to get to the code, and whether you see AI as co-pilot or builder. For now, the choice is more about how you want to work on your idea!