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How BuiltWith generates \$14 million a year while having zero employees



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You've probably stumbled upon a website before and asked:

"Man, this is cool, how did they build this?".

Gary Brewer had this same question and created [BuiltWith](#). It's a web app that tells you the exact technologies a site uses. For instance, I can tell that [Medium](#) uses [Optimizely](#) for A/B testing, [Algolia](#) for search, and [ConvertKit](#) to power newsletters. Pretty cool, right?

But the numbers behind this business are even better ☐

- No employees
- \$14 million annual recurring revenue
- 2 Million monthly page views and all organic (57% direct, 36% search, and no paid keywords)



Per SimilarWeb

The Story Behind BuiltWith

In 2006, Gary Brewer attended a startup conference in Sydney. The conference taught him two things:

- Anyone can do a startup
- He didn't like dealing with corporate politics and pitching his product

For the next few months, he would build multiple tools and products while working his full-time job. While all of these products failed, he enjoyed the experiences from each one.

While searching for his next idea, Brewer naturally looked at other websites for inspiration. While looking through the source code of a website (neat trick programmers often do), Brewer found a piece of code unique to Java and could deduce that the website was built using that technology.

And then it clicked.

"Wouldn't it be cool to know the exact technology every website uses?".

No idea like this had existed, and the domain BuiltWith was somehow not taken already. Gary began building scrapers and his database of technologies. Mapping certain pieces of code to the technology. For instance, certain pieces of code can be used to identify if AdSense is used vs Adzerk or some other advertising method.

And Brewer did this for nearly everything. He loved the technical challenges and it was an area that interested him and was fun for him. Shortly after, BuiltWith had its first official launch and immediately saw traffic.

Gary notified a publication, ReadWriteWeb, about an "exclusive piece" for his launch while also earning the number-one slot on the most popular social sharing site at the time, Digg.

But the most important thing was his meeting with Raymond King, the founder of AboutUs. AboutUs was an internet domain directory containing information about millions of businesses. Gary showed Ray BuiltWith, and Ray immediately loved it. He added a BuiltWith.com link to every record in their index to provide BuiltWith information regarding each business.

This added tens of millions of links, and for those who aren't SEO experts, backlinks (pages that link to your site) are the key to ranking high. And BuiltWith just exploded with traffic

Why BuiltWith generates so much money

BuiltWith's value comes down to one simple concept.

Competitive Advantage. Aka, you'll earn more money from this.

The free version of the site is pretty simple. You learn what tech your competitors are using.

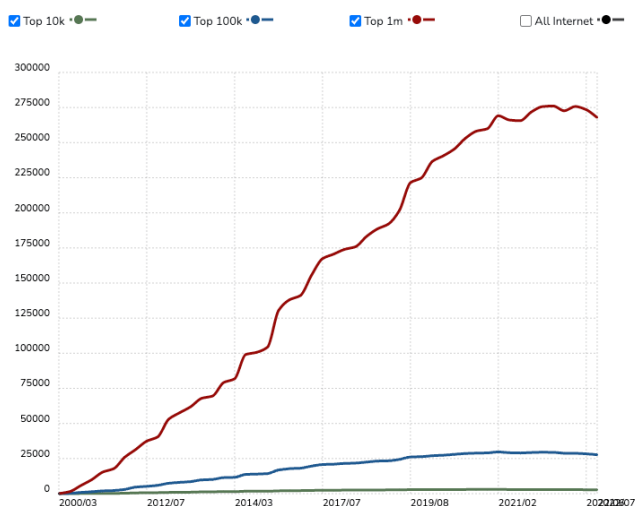
But the paid version is why companies find BuiltWith so valuable. BuiltWith has turned into a colossal database of everything on the internet. More specifically, a database of potential customers and leads.

You can find every website using a specific keyword, and technology, and even break them down by location, spending, and social following. It's the perfect place to build your potential customers.

Have a better, simpler, and more modern version of WordPress? Find every site using WordPress and convert them into your customers!

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WordPress Usage Statistics



[Download Lead List](#)

Get a list of **60,371,738** websites using WordPress which includes location information, hosting data, contact details, **35,871,158** currently live websites and an additional 2,440,340 domains that redirect to sites in this list. 24,500,580 sites that used this technology previously and **3,740,363** websites in the **United States** currently using WordPress.

Site Totals

Total Live	35,871,158
2,440,340 additional website redirects ¹ .	
USA Live Sites	3,740,363
Live and Historical	60,371,738
Top 1m	28.99%
	289,946
Top 100k	29.74%
	29,744
Top 10k	29.14%
	2,914

Countries

BuiltWith will help your business make money, generate leads, and fast-track building features. It's why over 50% of its traffic is direct (users go directly to builtwith.com from their browser URL).

How BuiltWith operates with ZERO employees

In the early 2010s, BuiltWith actually had a co-founder, Andrew Rogers.

He's the one who convinced Gary Brewer to quit his job and go full-time.

Andrew was just off leading his old startup of 50+ people until he discovered BuiltWith. He fell in love with the product and convinced Gary to make him a co-founder with mostly equity for his salary.

Naturally, Andrew drew inspiration from how he scaled his larger company and decided to implement more mature systems.

He wanted to add a ticketing system, CRM to track leads, and setup various metrics.

But he realized one thing, BuiltWith didn't need this.

Customers came organically, and they didn't have many questions or hesitations. They either bought the product or didn't.

And for the few customers with a question, Gary would simply make a 20-second video tutorial with the solution. Future customers with the same question would just reference this video.

In other words, BuiltWith had been fully automated at this point. They didn't need engineers to push out features, add resources, etc.

It was fully functional with just one person.

Soon, Andrew began to understand why Gary felt this way. Sure, Gary didn't want to pay money for an engineer.

But it boiled down to that startup conference in 2006. Gary loved startups and hated corporate culture. Andrew eventually left the company while remaining as an advisor. And BuiltWith is now completely run by Gary (with some content folks for the blog)

No sales team, no customer support, no engineers.

It's a completely automated and fully functional business generating tens of millions of dollars a year.

That's it for this issue! If you like this post, consider [following me on Twitter](#) for the stories and insights that don't make it to the newsletter

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- ☐☐☐ [Decent read](#)
- ☐ [You need to do something different](#)

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