

THE COMPLETE LIST

The Business Stack **2026**

42 tools, 7 teams, one goal. Even a one-person company holds seven posts at once. Here is what I would put behind each of them, with the first pick for every team and the free option where there is one.

01

Prospecting

02

Research

03

Build

04

Design

05

Content

06

Operations

07

Money

This guide is the clickable version. The full article, with the detail of every team and the order to plug them in, is free to read on lihn.fr/en/blog.

Seven teams, seven questions

Each team answers a question you will end up asking anyway. Until the question comes up, the tool is useless. That single rule is what keeps you from paying for twelve subscriptions before you have earned a euro.

TEAM	THE QUESTION IT ANSWERS	FIRST PICK
01 • Prospecting	Who am I selling to? Find the right companies and write to them	Lihn
02 • Research	Does anyone want this? Validate before you build	ChatGPT
03 • Build	How do I make it? Site, app, first version	Codex
04 • Design	What does it look like? Identity, visuals, credibility	Figma
05 • Content	How do people find me? Video, posts, presence	CapCut
06 • Operations	How does it run without me? Organisation and automation	Notion
07 • Money	Where does the money go? Get paid, count, sign	Stripe

The order to plug them in

Assembling the seven teams at once is the surest way to have none of them running.

- ☐ **Research**, two days. Nothing gets built until the problem is written in the customer's words.
- ☐ **Build**, one day. One page, one promise, one button.
- ☐ **Design**, half a day. Timer running.
- ☐ **Prospecting**, then every week. This is the team that never stops.
- ☐ **Money**, from the first customer: get paid properly, separate the accounts.
- ☐ **Content**, once you know what makes people say yes. Before that, you publish hypotheses.
- ☐ **Operations**, last, on what already annoys you. Not on the hypothetical.

The labels “free”, “freemium” and “paid” only say whether there is a version you can use without paying. Pricing changes often: check the tool's own site before committing. No link in this guide is an affiliate link.

01 - Prospecting

No budget: Apollo

Find customers, instead of waiting for them to find you.

1	Lihn Finds, contacts and follows up your leads. You approve what goes out.	PAID	lihn.fr
2	Apollo A database of verified B2B contacts, with a free plan.	FREEMIUM	apollo.io
3	Lemlist Sequenced sending with follow-ups, driven by hand.	PAID	lemlist.com
4	Clay Enrich a list: headcount, tech stack, funding, open roles.	FREEMIUM	clay.com
5	Instantly Scale up, once a sequence actually works.	PAID	instantly.ai
6	HubSpot The free CRM, so you don't lose the thread of a conversation.	FREEMIUM	hubspot.com

02 - Research

No budget: NotebookLM

Know before you build, in your customers' own words.

1	ChatGPT Frame an idea, compare angles, prepare interviews.	FREEMIUM	chatgpt.com
2	Perplexity Web search with the sources shown under the answer.	FREEMIUM	perplexity.ai
3	NotebookLM Twenty documents dropped in, your questions asked of them.	FREE	notebooklm.google.com
4	Google Trends Demand that is rising, demand that is dying.	FREE	trends.google.com
5	Reddit What people say when nobody is trying to sell them anything.	FREE	reddit.com
6	Typeform A clean survey, for when you need numbers.	FREEMIUM	typeform.com

The trap in team 01: the bought list. Three thousand addresses with no reason to be contacted damage your domain's reputation for months.

The trap in team 02: asking an AI whether your idea is good. It will say yes. Ask it instead who already sells this, and at what price.

03 - Build

No budget: Framer

An address a stranger can open and understand in ten seconds.

1	Codex Write, refactor and test code with AI.	PAID	chatgpt.com/codex
2	Cursor The editor where the AI sees the whole project, not one file.	FREEMIUM	cursor.com
3	Replit Build and deploy from the browser, with nothing to install.	FREEMIUM	replit.com
4	Framer The shop window for a service, live the same day.	FREEMIUM	framer.com
5	Webflow The full site, for when it has to live for years.	FREEMIUM	webflow.com
6	Supabase Database, accounts and file storage in one piece.	FREEMIUM	supabase.com

04 - Design

No budget: Canva

Credible, not award-winning. Two colours, one typeface, three visuals.

1	Figma Design interfaces, and share a link instead of a screenshot.	FREEMIUM	figma.com
2	Canva Everyday visuals, in minutes.	FREEMIUM	canva.com
3	Midjourney Brand imagery, for when you want a world.	PAID	midjourney.com
4	Higgsfield Cinematic visuals and video, for a homepage or an ad.	FREEMIUM	higgsfield.ai
5	Krea Generate and retouch live, the render keeping up as you adjust.	FREEMIUM	krea.ai
6	Ideogram The only one that writes legible text inside an image.	FREEMIUM	ideogram.ai

The trap in team 03: adding a second page, then a blog, then an animated logo. Every hour spent here is an hour stolen from team 01.

The trap in team 04: spending three days on it. An identity can be fixed in one evening; an absence of customers cannot.

05 • Content

No budget: CapCut

Get known without posting at random.

1	CapCut Fast vertical editing, with automatic captions.	FREEMIUM	capcut.com
2	Descript Edit a video by editing its transcript.	FREEMIUM	descript.com
3	OpusClip Cut a long format into publishable clips.	FREEMIUM	opus.pro
4	Gamma Decks and sales documents, generated then reworked.	FREEMIUM	gamma.app
5	Metricool See what worked, and schedule what's next in one place.	FREEMIUM	metricool.com
6	Buffer Publish across platforms without going back five times.	FREEMIUM	buffer.com

06 • Operations

No budget: Notion

Keep the shop running, and win back the hours lost to re-typing.

1	Notion Notes, projects, customer list, procedures. The shared house.	FREEMIUM	notion.com
2	Make Build automations visually.	FREEMIUM	make.com
3	Zapier The widest catalogue of connectors.	FREEMIUM	zapier.com
4	Airtable The database that looks like a spreadsheet.	FREEMIUM	airtable.com
5	Slack Useful from the second person onwards, and not before.	FREEMIUM	slack.com
6	Google Workspace A pro address on your domain. Without it, no outreach.	PAID	workspace.google.com

The trap in team 05: opening six accounts on the same day. One network held for three months beats six networks abandoned in three weeks.

The trap in team 06: automating before selling. A scenario shuffling rows between two empty tools gives the feeling of progress, without the progress.

07 · Money

No budget: Stripe

Get paid, count, sign, and know what is left.

1	Stripe Take payments online. No subscription: a fee per payment instead.	PER PAYMENT	stripe.com
2	Qonto The business account, cards and receipts in one place.	PAID	qonto.com
3	Pennylane Accounting that talks to your accountant rather than replacing them.	PAID	pennylane.com
4	Indy Built for freelancers: categorise, file, understand what you sign.	FREEMIUM	indy.fr
5	DocuSign Electronic signature, when a quote by email is no longer enough.	PAID	docusign.com
6	Legalstart Set up and run the company without three evenings of forms.	PAID	legalstart.fr

The minimum stack, at zero euros

Seven tools, one per team, all usable for free. Enough to reach your first customer. It is that first customer who pays for the subscriptions after that.

Prospecting — Apollo, free plan

Content — CapCut and Buffer

Research — ChatGPT, Trends, Reddit

Operations — Notion, and nothing else

Build — Framer or Webflow

Money — Stripe, paid only when you are

Design — Canva

The trap in team 07: mixing personal money and business money from the first euro. It costs nothing at the time, and a great deal in January. For your own situation, an accountant is still the right address.

Three mistakes that cost more than the subscriptions

Buying the stack before having a customer

Forty-two tools adds up to six hundred euros a month fast. A tool gets added when a task becomes painful, never when it becomes imaginable.

Paying for two tools that do the same thing

Make and Zapier, Figma and Canva, Lemlist and Instantly: each pair earns its keep at scale, and gets paid for twice before that.

Changing tools instead of changing the offer

When nothing takes off, the urge is to reinstall. The problem is almost always one team higher up: the targeting, or the promise.

The first subscription I would actually pay for is none of the free tools above. It is team 01: the only spend that pays for itself with one customer, and the only one willpower cannot replace.

Six teams prepare the ground. One brings in customers.

You can own the finest stack on the market: as long as nobody knows you exist, it produces nothing. Lihn finds the companies that match your offer, drafts the messages, sends the planned follow-ups and hands you back the wheel the moment a real reply arrives.

lihn.fr

You decide. Lihn does the rest.