



Acquisition Channels used by companies in the for developers niche

Sorting: Acquisition channels found: 73 (ordered by how frequently they're being mentioned)

1. Product Hunt

Description: ProductHunt.com is the biggest website in the world for launching your product.

Total mentions: 14

- UserGuiding: a no-code tool to help you build interactive product tours for software products

"We officially launched UserGuiding on Product Hunt on January 17th, 2018. It was an unforgettable night, with hundreds of visitors coming to our site from all over the world. People were asking about upcoming features, giving feedback, and helpfully criticizing our product. Over the next week, we had more than 300 new sign-ups and a couple of paid customers. We were officially running a global business, and it was truly exciting!"

- SnapShooter: a tool to backup your servers (DigitalOcean, AWS, Linode, etc.)

"At the start of March, I made some big improvements to SnapShooter, mostly with the UI, and then I self-posted on Product Hunt on March 2nd. It may have been luck, or it may have had something to do with SnapChat's IPO, but I ended up on the home page and received 88 upvotes and my next three customers."

- RunCloud.io: a PHP Cloud Server Management Panel

"Tried ProductHunt, no success"

- AppToolkit.io: a set of useful tools for mobile app creators (for monitoring app reviews, building a website for your app, etc.)

"Once we were comfortable with the three public services, we launched on Product Hunt. I figured because AppToolkit wasn't entirely "new" technology, we wouldn't have the best launch ever, but it was a good start. We ended up in the top ten, but not the top five. One of the other products launched that day was self-tying shoe laces, so my main goal for the day was just to beat them, which we did. ...
Product Hunt and BetaList are the two big ones in the early adopter field."

- jQuery Cards: a directory of over 1000 jQuery plugins

"I owe a lot of the success of the launch to Product Hunt. It was featured in January 2016, and was at the number one spot on the day of launch."

- Doorbell: a tool to collect customer feedback for your website or app

"In 2014, near the end of September, Doorbell was randomly submitted to ProductHunt. That alone is quite the rollercoaster of an experience, but since then things have really started growing!"

- onboardX: a tool that helps web apps onboard new users via in-app guides

"The most cost effective launching strategy for products like this, I think, are sites like Hacker News and Product Hunt. So I submitted to both websites and waited... and nothing happened :) The Product Hunt post got 8 upvotes and the HN post only got 3, so I didn't make the homepage."

- Keygen: an API for developers to implement software license keys into their products

"Even though I had a mailing list of over 300 people, had hundreds of trial sign-ups, even though I got on the front page of HN twice, and was #3 product of the day on Product Hunt, still, nobody stuck around, much less offered me feedback. Lots of radio silence.

But the main problem was that the people I was painstakingly going after weren't my target market they were users from Product Hunt, Hacker News, and Reddittire-kickers, as a lot of us like to call them. They want to try out the hot new thing, maybe poke around a bit, then rinse (i.e., churn) and repeat with the new hotness."

- PhotoEditor SDK: a photo editor SDK that allows developers to add photo editing to their app

"However, we also wanted to do something with just a little more pomp, and thus we committed ourselves to launch the SDK on Product Hunt. We created a whole campaign for the day and reached out to friends, family, and clients. We orchestrated an initial discussion about our product and spent an entire day cramped in a meeting room answering questions and trying to engage as many people as possible. In the end, it was a rather successful launch for us: we got over 500 upvotes and ranked somewhere between #3 and #5 that day. It was a great experience and helped build team spirit, but our sales and traffic didnt exactly skyrocket once the dust had settled."

- Gravity: a boilerplate (to help you build apps faster) for Node.js

"I launched on Product Hunt recently and, despite getting a positive number of upvotes and great support from my customers, I didn't make the front page (however, I did get one sale, yay!)."

- Doka.js: a web-based image editor

"So to gain some attention I created a nice promotion video and successfully launched Doka on Product Hunt, earning the "#2 product of the week" badge.

To generate attention, launch your product on Product Hunt, and time it well. Prepare your launch carefully, look at other products, and figure out what they've done and how their product stands out from the rest. For Doka, I created a thumbnail with a video loop of the Doka logo being cropped."

- No CS Degree: a blog featuring interviews with self-taught software developers with no Computer Science degree

"I launched the website at the end of July, 2019. I put it on Product Hunt and it got featured but didn't get the #1 spot which I was hoping for. I had scored Product of the Day with my previous launch so I was a bit disappointed, but in hindsight it went well and got 277 upvotes."

- Waydev: an analytics tool for people who manage software developers. It works by analyzing the Git repository and making certain recommendations based on that.

"In order to validate our idea, we focus on Product Hunt. We've done five launches in about two years, with which we managed to build and better our product and reach our first paying customers.

Here's an overview of the PH launches:

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1st launch - November 2017

![[img1]](https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5966ea9b9217ca534caf13d5/5ddc53154a09a51dbecd7f35_9wSgdsC4oce2zvTfslXI1OJsQGj1SwZhhPLrxSqANKfQhhHiulJ3jor2-JHdjfzHOaK05GTtQVNREiiq8noNY8e9b391QNg83Epltw2p-HjtdmKUmdB3gEx_CdOSprsKTC7ez94.png)

This was our first launch on Product Hunt. It was our first MVP, an app that took the stats directly from the GitHub API. We managed to have some users on the app but we didn't have a database to store the users :) I know... it was a big mess. I remember in the first half an hour after the launch our landing page was down and our engineer didn't respond to the phone... in the end, it was a good test that helped me with the decision of changing the

technical team.

2nd launch - August 2018

This was the first launch done with my co-founder, Valentin Buzea and a decisive launch for our path. We managed to become the 5th product of the day and receive over 80 negative comments from the engineers because the product was meant to help non-technical managers to better understand the engineers. We didn't realize we were targeting the wrong audience. However, a few months later, without any paying customer, we did realize pivoted from non-technical managers to technical leaders (CTO's, VP's, CIO's and engineering managers).

3rd launch - January 2019

This was the decisive launch for our company; I remember we managed to finish a big feature on Wednesday and we launched on Friday in order to test if the Product Hunt community would still hate us.

We tagged all the people who had left us negative comments to see what would happen. Fortunately, we managed to have 0 negative comments and also to have a lot of new users who started to use our platform. The old users began to give us valuable feedback, as well, and told us they would upgrade.

It took us about on month since this launch until we scored our first paying customer.

4th launch - May 2019

Now our company started to grow, and we prepared for our big launch on Product Hunt, a launch with a product with more features and valuable customers. We managed to convince the #1 community member of 2018, Hiten Shah, to hunt us but we failed. We weren't featured because we didn't have six months since the last launch. It was a black day for us, but we decided to wait another three months.

5th launch - August 2019

ok.png)

After 23 months since the first launch on Product Hunt and 29 months since the incorporation, the stars have aligned perfectly to bring us # 1 position of the Product Hunt homepage. It was a celebration of the past 29 months of hard work and sacrifices. This was just the start of Waydev."

- Talent Service: a developer-focused platform for employer assessment and remote recruitment that uses a reversed recruitment approach, making recruiters prove their company's culture and working environment are suitable for the IT talent they are recruiting.

"We launched our product on Product Hunt, a platform known for discovering new and innovative products. This helped us gain exposure and attract early adopters who provided valuable feedback."

2. HackerNews posting

Description: Posting on [HackerNews](https://news.ycombinator.com/), which is like Reddit for developers

Total mentions: 12

- No CS Degree: a blog featuring interviews with self-taught software developers with no Computer Science degree

"I got a lot of validation early on! I got to the [top of Hacker News](https://news.ycombinator.com/item?id=20506945) with a brand new user account and the site got 29,000 visits in a day. When I launched the job board, No CS OK, that stayed at the top of Hacker News for two whole days!"

- Dependabot: a tool to keep your software dependencies up-to-date (by creating pull requests)

" We spent two days crafting the perfect blog post for Hacker News. The result? Two points on Hacker News and something similar on Reddit. One signup."

- RunCloud.io: a PHP Cloud Server Management Panel

"Tried HackerNews, no success"

- Insomnia: a desktop application aimed to help developers interact with HTTP APIs.

"Shortly after launching the new site, Insomnia got posted to Hacker News and stayed at #1 for a full day.

The HN post attracted 40,000 website visits, with about a third originating from re-posts on Reddit and social media. This sudden surge of traffic gave the relaunch of Insomnia its first 10,000 users and kickstarted organic growth."

- Cronitor.io: a tool to monitor cron jobs/scheduled tasks, web services

"Our official "launch" was an obligatory [Show HN](<https://news.ycombinator.com/item?id=7917587>) post on Hacker News. It managed to appear on the front page for an afternoon, and we got about 25 sign ups from it. Only a few of those people actually created a monitor, and none of them signed up for a paid plan."

- Urlbox: a website screenshot API

"We then posted on Hacker News and made it to the front page for half a day. One of the journalists that we had previously emailed saw us on Hacker News and decided to write an article. To be honest, we didn't get tons of signups out of these attempts, but it helped with our SEO in terms of backlinks. (my note: another one also mentioned that it helped with SEO)"

- onboardX: a tool that helps web apps onboard new users via in-app guides

"The most cost effective launching strategy for products like this, I think, are sites like Hacker News and Product Hunt. So I submitted to both websites and waited... and nothing happened :) The Product Hunt post got 8 upvotes and the HN post only got 3, so I didn't make the homepage."

- SqlSmash: a productivity plugin for SQL Server

"I got my first few customers through traffic from Hacker News and Reddit. Those first few sales were a big confidence boost. Also, the posts on HN and Reddit were good initial validation that somebody would use the tool, and potentially pay for it, even if it takes some work."

- Keygen: an API for developers to implement software license keys into their products

"Even though I had a mailing list of over 300 people, had hundreds of trial sign-ups, even though I got on the front page of HN twice, and was #3 product of the day on Product Hunt, still, nobody stuck around, much less offered me feedback. Lots of radio silence.

But the main problem was that the people I was painstakingly going after weren't my target market they were users from Product Hunt, Hacker News, and Reddittire-kickers, as a lot of us like to call them. They want to try out the hot new thing, maybe poke around a bit, then rinse (i.e., churn) and repeat with the new hotness. (my note: makes sense, established tech isn't covered much on HN)"

- Requestly: Chrome/Firefox extension to modify network requests (HTTP requests, change user agents etc.)

"I also shared Requestly on platforms like Reddit and Hacker News, which boosted growth even further."

- Healthchecks.io: a tool for developers for monitoring cron jobs

"When there is something substantial to share I write a blog article, cross-post to Medium, and submit it to Hacker News. I've had only one article get upvoted to the Hacker News front page. This was in our first year and brought in a good amount of early users."

- No CS Degree: a blog featuring interviews with self-taught software developers with no Computer Science degree

"I got a lot of validation early on! I got to the [top of Hacker News](<https://news.ycombinator.com/item?id=20506945>) with a brand new user account and the site got 29,000 visits in a day. When I launched the job board, No CS OK, that stayed at the top of Hacker News for two whole days!"

3. Google Ads (AdWords)

Description: An online advertising platform by Google. Say you're selling men shoes and want to appear on the search results when someone types 'shoes for men'. Google Ads allows you to do this.

Total mentions: 11

- Skaffolder: a tool for developers to help them build a custom web application faster

"We launched the first Alpha version of the platform and with 150 in AdWords. This got us the first 300 users, but they were not very profiled, so we refined our campaigns and got users through new channels, such as tech events and developers' communities."

- Bugfender: a tool for viewing mobile or web application logs

"To come clean: we're engineers at heart. So when it came to marketing, we thought we'd stick a few paid ads on Google and Facebook and the new users would come a-clickin'. Better than nothing, right? Well, the truth is we ended up burning a lot of money month by month, without any tangible results.

Here's what didn't work:

- paid traffic (advertising) on Google, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn"

- BugTower: an issue-tracking tool for developers

"I set Adwords with a daily limit of roughly \$15-20 a day. It brought me some customers, but it was too expensive for a bootstrapped product. Moreover, I hadn't fully nailed down the long-term value of a customer just yet. (I still haven't!) (my note: this is imp, to nail down the lifetime value)"

- onboardX: a tool that helps web apps onboard new users via in-app guides

"In the days immediately following the launch, I created ad campaigns on Adwords, Twitter, and LinkedIn, but I ended up canceling them because the costs were too high (\$2-3/click)."

- Keygen: an API for developers to implement software license keys into their products

"What started working for me:

Shifting my focus away from those "social" marketing channels to focusing on marketing directly to people in my target audience (i.e. businesses and developers of said businesses) In my case, this was by utilizing Google Ads, and some cold emails, to bring in people who I knew would actually pay me.

What still works: Google Ads. Over the course of my time working on Keygen, I've been experimenting with Google Ads. I have a monthly budget of around \$100500, depending on how things are going, and it nearly always results in a nice multiple on my investment. Not sure how long this will continue, but it's working right now."

- fullPage.js: a JavaScript component to help you create full-screen vertical and horizontal sliders.

"I've tried using Google Adwords and Facebook ads, but I didnt get good results. It may be that my products SEO is already quite good and people who want to find it usually find it without ads."

- QuickAdminPanel: an admin panel for Laravel

"I also experimented a bit with Google and Facebook ads, but it didn't get any results. Perhaps because I'm not good at choosing all those target keywords and other parameters. Maybe one day I'll come back and try again, but it doesn't feel "natural" to me, when I have my own Laravel audience on my own channels, which are still actively growing. (my note: was there anyone successful a tall who marketed to devs?)"

- QuotaGuard: providing Static IPs For Heroku, Azure, GCP, AWS, IBM

"I did a few things to get customers to keep showing up at our door and knocking:

Google Adwords: Tons of self study to put up what I considered to be fairly noob ads, but they started to see conversions. (my note: woah, maybe devops are more open to ads)

The first negative keyword in your Adwords should be the word Free."

- ScreenshotAPI: an API that allows you to take website screenshots by only entering the website URL

"The thing that really worked well for me was Google advertising. I'm currently spending \$100/month on the "screenshot API" keyword on Google. And so far, 13 of the 20 paying users came from that paid Google advertisement.

If you look at the Google Analytics report you can see a spike in users when I started advertising on Google Ads.

![img](https://storage.googleapis.com/indie-hackers.appspot.com/content/screenshotapi__google.png)"

- Data Excavator: a skilled programmer with extensive experience in various programming languages and a passion for entrepreneurship.

"As a third step, we tried contextual advertising with Google.Ads and a few other things."

- Talent Service: a developer-focused platform for employer assessment and remote recruitment that uses a reversed recruitment approach, making recruiters prove their company's culture and working environment are suitable for the IT talent they are recruiting.

"We used Google Ads to reach potential customers who were actively searching for solutions that our product provides. This helped us attract high-intent traffic to our website and increase our conversion rate."

4. Marketplaces

Description: Big names like Amazon, Shopify or Apple have their own app stores where you can make various tools & participate in their ecosystem

Total mentions: 9

- Pull Reminders: a Slack bot providing reminders for code pull requests

"After releasing the app in the Slack App Directory, I started getting a small trickle of signups. I emailed every user that signed up to find out who they were and what they were hoping to get out of Pull Reminders. A couple of those early users were from larger companies and I could tell they were taking my product seriously because they asked for lots of changes. I kept making changes based on their feedback until they seemed satisfied. Then I asked if they would be willing to pay. I thought I had about a 30% chance of success but it worked.

I've been really lucky because I haven't had to do my own marketing to get to where I am so far. The Slack App Directory gives me a steady trickle of signups that convert pretty well. On April 1 I was able to get Pull Reminders published in the GitHub Marketplace. This felt like a big moment but it took a lot of work and I wasn't sure what the results would be. Thankfully, it's given me a nice boost in signups and accelerated my growth."

- Geocode.XYZ: a worldwide geocoding/geoparsing API (used by developers)

"AWS Marketplace is another revenue stream, clients pay for their own instances on the AWS cloud running my software. (I receive a software licensing fee billed by the hour)."

- Dependabot: a tool to keep your software dependencies up-to-date (by creating pull requests)

"Nowadays, being in the GitHub Marketplace is Dependabot's biggest source of customers. Two months ago we finally got into the GitHub Marketplace, which has transformed Dependabot's distribution. Our signup rate is literally 10x what it was before, 200 to 500, 900+. Github charges 25%."

- Insomnia: a desktop application aimed to help developers interact with HTTP APIs.

"I was lucky to have the Chrome Store drive initial growth, but that channel disappeared after the relaunch. ...

That all happened in early September 2016. Since then, I've been able to get Insomnia featured on OMG! Ubuntu! and the Electron home page but the traffic from those has been minimal compared to HN.

The final piece of advice I have is to ask for what you want. Opportunities don't just happen, you must create them yourself. A few weeks ago, I was hoping to get Insomnia featured on the Electron home page but I wasn't sure how the selection process worked. So, one day I just asked, and Insomnia was featured the next week just like that."

- Doorbell: a tool to collect customer feedback for your website or app

"In September 2015 I signed up for Baremetrics and decided to make Doorbell an "open company". Part of this was inspiration from getting to meet the Buffer folks in person earlier that year. I'm not sure if this qualifies as a marketing effort or not, but it has definitely drawn some attention to Doorbell!"

- React Native Starter Kits: providing starter kits for React native (helping you build your app faster)

"Originally, the kits were exclusively sold through a React Native market place. In the meantime, I've started to build my own sales channel through Medium stories and, more recently, via a YouTube channel. Today, half of the sales are made directly, of which I'm really proud. But the real volume of sales was made via the NativeBase marketplace. (my note: [This is](<https://market.nativebase.io/>) the marketplace website)"

- SnapShooter: a tool to backup your servers (DigitalOcean, AWS, Linode, etc.)

"My most effective channel for attracting new customers has been the DigitalOcean community products pages.

SnapShooter is listed as the 15th most popular project. I also try to be active in the community without being too spammy, only providing links back to myself when it is relevant to the conversation."

- Nick Janetakis: a person selling courses on devops-related topics

"I also use third-party marketplaces like Udemy for some of my older courses. In fact, this is how I initially started. I have a love/hate relationship with them. On one hand, they provide a decent chunk of my course income, but on the other hand, one of my goals is to build my own audience and decouple my dependency on Udemy."

- QuotaGuard: providing Static IPs For Heroku, Azure, GCP, AWS, IBM

"How have you attracted users and grown QuotaGuard?"

QuotaGuard was originally put on the Heroku platform marketplace as an add-on and I stuck with that model.

New Marketplaces: I put QuotaGuard on more marketplaces like Microsoft Azure and IBM Cloud.

An extra word about marketplaces: marketplaces do take a large cut of every customer revenue dollar. However, they also do all the work for marketing, refunds, billing, and most technical questions. Being on a marketplace can be very helpful to get your name and business in front of thousands of potential customers much faster than any of the other methods above. (my note: the other methods are StackOverflow/Quora/Google Adwords)

Being on a marketplace also conveys legitimacy where you can say, Microsoft, Heroku, IBM, etc. have reviewed our solution and promote it on their corporate marketplace to their own business units, partners, and clients. So what other assurances do you really need to trust our system can handle your use case?"

5. SEO (after being successful with another acquisition method)

Description: SEO often reveals itself as an acquisition strategy as you focus on other acquisition channels. You notice a certain % of people come from Google / convert as paying customers, you see what keywords they come from and then start to proactively focus on ranking higher for those & related terms.

Total mentions: 8

- No CS Degree: a blog featuring interviews with self-taught software developers with no Computer Science degree

"My biggest source of traffic just now is Google so my SEO must be pretty good. I'm the first result on Google for "no cs degree" and "no computer science degree" so I'm happy with that. I've interviewed over 70 developers now, so I think if you have that many articles about one niche then you will rank well in search results. I suppose that's one of the benefits of making the site just about developers without degrees; if I had just interviewed developers in general then there wouldn't be such a strong brand and it would be much more generic."

- Cronitor.io: a tool to monitor cron jobs/scheduled tasks, web services

"With this in mind we set out to write high quality docs that would help our SEO. We started writing docs that focused on using Cronitor to solve specific problems that people would be searching for like monitoring cron jobs, monitoring Windows scheduled tasks or cron job time tracking.

We knew that this wouldn't be an overnight win, but the more time we have put into our docs the better we have done on Google. For the past two years organic search has been our best acquisition channel."

- Doorbell: a tool to collect customer feedback for your website or app

"Currently the main sources of signups are organic Google searches..."

- Angular on Rails: a book & course to help Ruby on Rails developers learn Angular

"My traffic strategy is really very simple. I've found that the more blog posts I write, the more traffic I get.

My advice to people trying to build SEO traffic is this: Don't try to rank above competing blog posts. Find things to write about that are so narrow that your blog post is the only one that exists. For example, I wrote a blog post about deploying an Angular/Rails application to Heroku. If you google "angular rails heroku", my posts occupy the first and second spots, and then as far as I can tell the results below that aren't even really relevant.

I could probably write ten more successful books by choosing topics like React + Rails, Angular + Python, React + Python, etc. The trick is to choose a topic that's narrow but still popular. It would probably be hard to make money off of a book about, say, using CoffeeScript with ASP Classic.

As of April 2017, I get about 8,000 visitors a month."

- Pure React: an ebook teaching React.js

"Over time, organic search traffic to the blog has grown. I haven't done much intentional SEO, but most posts are built around a question or pain point I'd seen in a forum or Twitter or somewhere else. I think I've gotten some natural SEO just by writing about things people are wondering, and using the words they use."

- QuickAdminPanel: an admin panel for Laravel

"After a while I switched blogging for my Laravel blog to the new QuickAdminPanel blog, and six months later SEO results started to grow."

- No CS Degree: a blog featuring interviews with self-taught software developers with no Computer Science degree

"My biggest source of traffic just now is Google so my SEO must be pretty good. I'm the first result on Google for "no cs degree" and "no computer science degree" so I'm happy with that. I've interviewed over 70 developers now, so I think if you have that many articles about one niche then you will rank well in search results. I suppose that's one of the benefits of making the site just about developers without degrees; if I had just interviewed developers in general then there wouldn't be such a strong brand and it would be much more generic."

- Uplink: a marketplace connecting IT freelancers with companies (in the German market)

"Our website ranks quite well for a couple of keywords that clients search for when they are looking for a freelancer. When they find Uplink and like our approach, they can post a job directly from a form on our website (we check the job first, of course, and often contact the client with follow-up questions before posting) or request a callback from us."

The way to get our website to rank was simply on-page SEO, good (and a lot of) content, and a few high-quality backlinks through guest posts and interviews on startup magazines."