Tool and resource list for new founders

A braindump of the tools I frequently turn to for my projects. Some of these are super obvious, but I wanted to make a comprehensive list, so I put them in anyway. Others are more unusual.

Analytics

- Google Analytics – free and good enough for all your analytics needs
- Google Keyword Planner – see how many people are searching relevant terms
- Facebook Ads – use the targeting options to compare the approximate size and location of various interests and demographics

Talking to customers

- Intercom – tasteful chat and help widgets for your site, plus good automated email triggers
- Drip – email courses and signup widgets for your site
- Mailchimp – newsletters and decent signup widgets
- Buffer – easier way to run your twitter and facebook accounts

Team collaboration

- Slack – chat and messaging to reduce internal email load, with one room per major project
- Github – repository for your source code plus task lists and collaboration with your developers
- Dropbox – all company files should be here, not on email attachments or personal folders
- Streak – simple CRM plugin for gmail to manage and share your sales leads
- Trello – digital kanban board for project management
- Basecamp – I use it for project management with external teams who don’t know our Trello workflow
- Stormboard – digital sticky notes for remote brainstorming and workshops
- Meldium – team password sharing and management

Domains

- Lean Domain Search – suggests all available .coms with a given keyword somewhere in the name
- Instant Domain Search – quickly check specific domain availability
- Namecheap – register your domains without getting screwed

Payments
o **Square** (US) or **iZettle** (elsewhere) – accept credit card payments with your phone, e.g. for market stalls and contractors
o **Stripe** - best payment processing online
o **GoCardless** (UK) – accept direct debit payments
o **Gumroad** - easily sell digital files like PDFs, videos, and links

**Physical products and print-on-demand**

o **Createspace** - upload a PDF, sell a printed book via Amazon
o **Newspaper Club** - ever wanted your own newspaper?
o **The Game Crafter** - prototype and sell your board and card games
o **Shapeways** - high quality 3d printing in a wide range of materials including gold and silver (for jewelry) and ceramics (for household goods); great for prototyping and market-testing physical products
o **Alibaba** - cut out the middle man and buy anything you want directly from the manufacturer; if you’ve ever wanted a 40’ shipping container full of go karts, this is the place for you

**Building websites**

o **Squarespace** – visual site builder with good themes and integrations with stores, payments, newsletters, etc
o **Strikingly** – easy site builder for nice single-page sites like manifestos, personal/company pages, or landing pages
o **Shopify** – for ecommerce and online stores
o **ThemeForest** – if you need something custom, start by buying a $30 theme and editing it

**Art**

o **Glyphicons** – icon set
o **500px** – non-cheesy stock photography
o **Flickr Creative commons** – search for photos with the appropriate usage rights
o **Subtle Patterns** – pretty much what it says on the tin; for backgrounds and textures

**People**

o **Fiverr** – pay $5 (or a bit more) for tasks ranging from logo design to copywriting
o **99designs** – crowdsourc design tasks (especially logos) for a few hundred dollars
o **elance** – various freelancers (assume you’ll hire several for trial projects before finding good ones)
o **Clarity.fm** – pay-by-the-minute advice from various startup specialists
o **Dribbble** – browse designer portfolios, many of whom also freelance
Phones
  - TextIt – create SMS applications without programming (e.g. for the developing world)
  - Twilio – makes phone calls and SMS as easy to program as websites

Legals
  - Docracy – open source legal documents
  - Companies Made Simple (UK) – set up and manage a UK corporation for £19
  - Duedil (UK) – nice interface over companies house interface to research industry and competitors

Learning
  - Paul Graham’s Essays – read the whole archive
  - Tropical MBA – 250 podcast episodes comprising the best source of knowledge on location independence and manufacturing businesses
  - Seth Godin’s Startup School – 15 audio episodes covering a Seth’s take on getting entrepreneurial
  - Moz Learn – solid knowledge base on inbound marketing

News
  - Hacker News – daily news for startup folks and hackers
  - Product Hunt – daily new products

Investors
  - f6s – listing of all accelerator programs (and lots of other info) and a social network for startups and angels
  - AngelList – social network and funding platform for startups and angels
  - Capitalist – like Angellist, but focused on London and the UK
  - The Funded – reviews and testimonials of investors from the founders’ perspective; do your investor due diligence here

Crowd funding
  - Crowdcube (UK) – equity crowd funding
  - Seedrs (UK) – equity crowd funding
  - Kickstarter – crowd-fund via pre-selling your products
  - Indiegogo – crowd-fund via donations with a focus on arts and creative projects, including some which aren’t allowed on KickStarter