

Bootstrappers

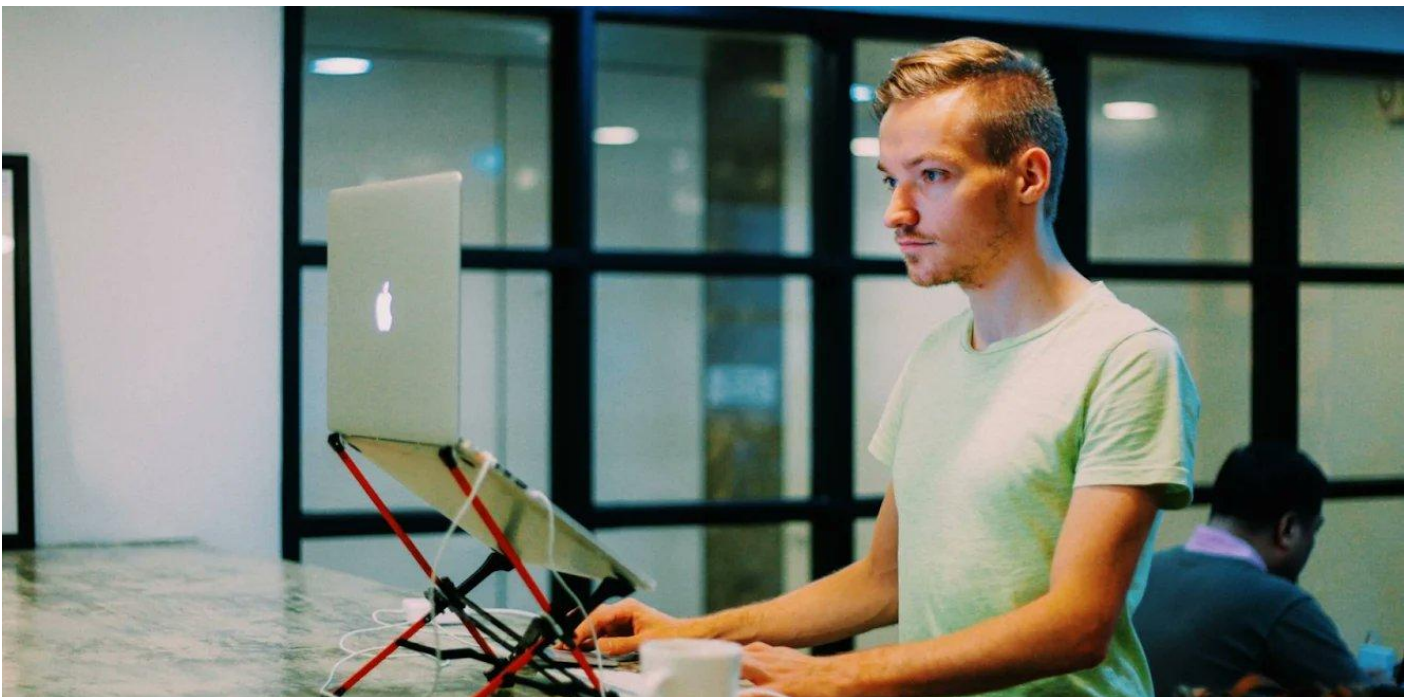
The indie makers who have a notable story.

- [Pieter Levels](#)
- [Marc Louvion](#)
- [John Rush](#)

Pieter Levels

Overview

Pieter Levels (the surname is not his real one) (born July 11, 1987) is a Dutch entrepreneur, indie maker, and digital nomad. He is known for creating successful bootstrapped startups and promoting the remote work lifestyle. Pieter is most famous for founding Nomad List, RemoteOK, PhotoAI and dozen of other profitable online projects without external funding.

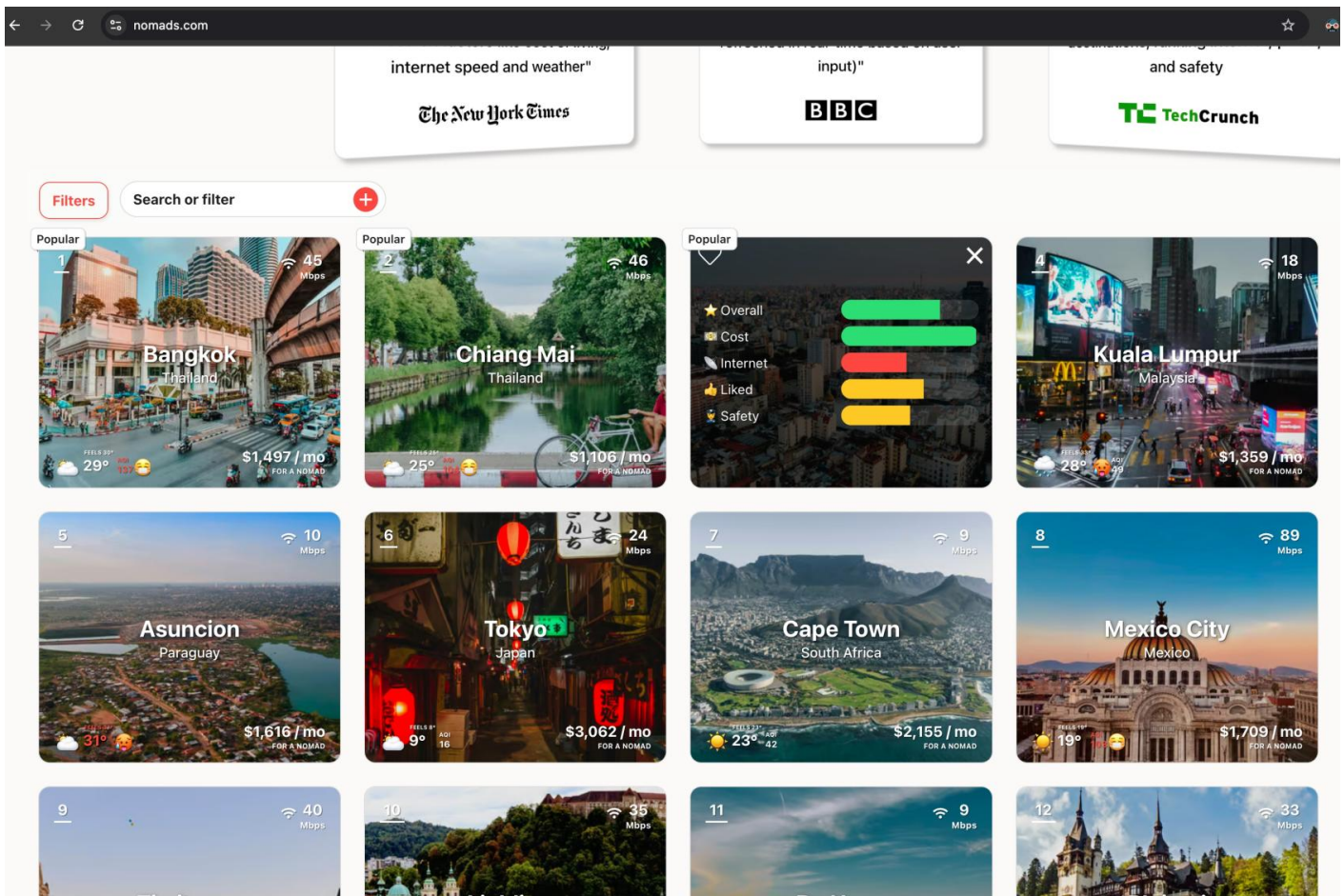


Early Life and Education

Born and raised in Amsterdam, Netherlands, Levels studied music production at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam. Before becoming an entrepreneur, he was a techno music producer and DJ, performing under various aliases.

Notable Projects

Nomad List (2014-present)



[Nomad List](#) is perhaps Levels' most influential creation. The platform helps digital nomads find the best places to live and work remotely by providing detailed city rankings based on various factors including cost of living, Internet speed, weather, safety etc.

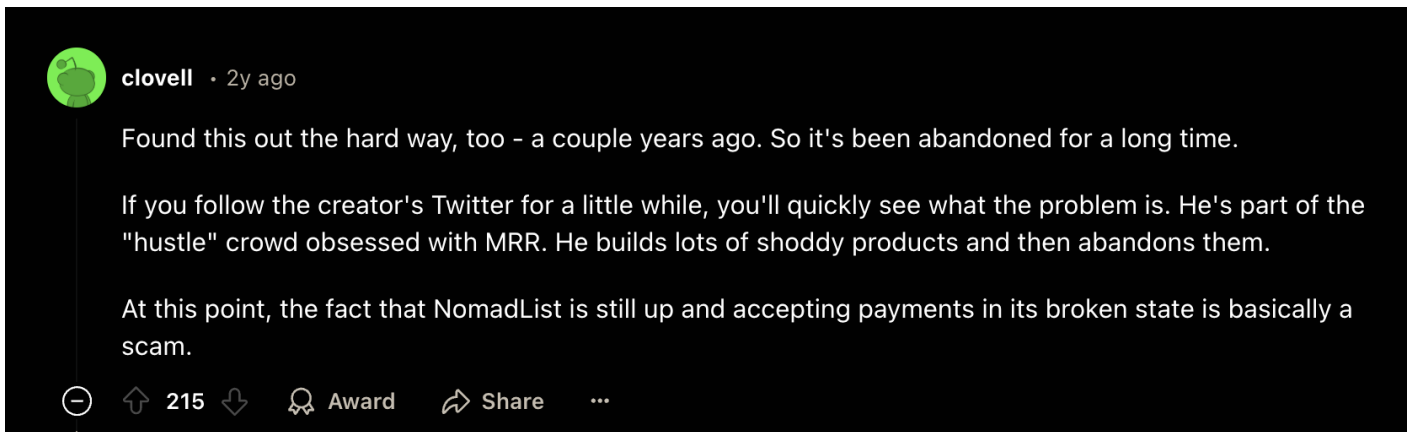
Numbers

The site has become the go-to resource for the digital nomad community, with over 100,000 members. As of 2024, Nomad List has:

- Generated over \$1.5 million in annual recurring revenue
- Collected data on 2,500+ cities worldwide
- Built a community of 100,000+ registered digital nomads
- Processed millions of data points about cities
- Created a social network specifically for digital nomads
- Implemented real-time cost of living updates
- Developed sophisticated climate and air quality tracking

Hate

Despite the huge impact of the digital nomad culture, the project generates some [angry users too](#).



RemoteOK (2015-present)

[RemoteOK](#) is one of the largest job boards globally, connecting remote workers with companies offering remote positions. The platform generates \$26K/m through job postings and has helped thousands of people find remote work opportunities. Key achievements include:

- Over 3 million monthly visitors
- 100,000+ remote jobs posted
- \$2M+ annual revenue
- Companies like Microsoft, Amazon, and Google regularly posting positions

RemoteOK has pioneered the trend of niche job boards. Also, the platform experienced [growth](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the global workforce shifted to remote work, with a 300% increase in traffic and a 150% surge in job postings between 2020 and 2021. This growth was fueled by the rising demand for remote opportunities, as companies adapted to hybrid and fully remote models.

MAKE Book (2018)

Product Hunt's [🏆 Book of the Year](#) and [#1 Startup Book](#) applied by [30,000+ indie makers](#)



THE INDIE MAKER BLUEPRINT

learn to **build profitable startups the indie way**

Last updated: 13 days ago. New **ePub and MOBI files** exported today! [See the changelog](#)

[Start reading now](#)

50% off — P.S. [My first merch](#) is now available too

29,233 copies (or ~~\$821,141~~) sold. 21 copies sold (\$765) today.

[Already bought it?](#)

by  Product Hunt's [2x Maker of the Year](#) + founder of [Nomads.com](#) + [Remote OK](#) + [Hoodmaps](#) + [Interior AI](#) + [Photo AI](#)  @levelsio

"[MAKE](#)" is Levels' comprehensive guide to bootstrapping successful internet businesses. The book has been a significant success:

Key Topics Covered

1. Finding profitable business ideas
2. Building MVPs (Minimum Viable Products)
3. Growth hacking and marketing strategies
4. Automation and scaling
5. Revenue optimization
6. Solo founder mindset
7. Technical implementation guides

Sales

- This book has sold over 30,000 copies and generated \$900,000+ in revenue

Reader Feedback

- Praised for practical, no-nonsense advice
- Highlighted as particularly valuable for technical founders
- Noted for its honest approach to bootstrapping
- Appreciated for detailed revenue breakdowns
- Commended for actionable strategies

Technical Infrastructure

Levels is known for his efficient technical approach across all projects:

Technology Stack

- PHP for backend services
- jQuery for frontend applications
- MySQL for databases
- AWS for hosting
- Cloudflare for CDN
- Stripe for payments
- Custom automation scripts

Development Philosophy

1. Rapid prototyping and deployment
2. Minimal dependencies
3. Server-side rendering for performance
4. Testing on production

Growth Strategy

1. Focus on organic traffic and SEO
2. Heavy automation of processes
3. User-generated content
4. Community-driven growth
5. Regular feature launches
6. Data-driven decision making
7. Transparent business metrics

Philosophy and Approach

Levels is known for his "build in public" philosophy, where he shares his business metrics, revenue, and learning experiences openly on Twitter and his blog. His key principles include:

1. Bootstrap instead of raising venture capital
2. Build simple solutions to real problems
3. Automate everything possible
4. Share knowledge and progress publicly
5. Focus on profitability from day one

Digital Nomad Lifestyle

Levels has lived as a digital nomad since 2014, having worked from numerous countries including:

- Thailand (Bangkok, Chiang Mai)
- Japan (Tokyo)
- Singapore
- Indonesia (Bali)
- Portugal (Lisbon)
- Netherlands (Amsterdam)

Business Philosophy

Levels advocates for simple, straightforward business models:

- No free plans
- No venture capital
- Focus on profitability
- Minimal team size (ideally, one)

Videos

- [Lex Fridman Podcast](#)
- [How to Build a Startup Without Funding](#)

Links

- [📄](#)
- [Personal site](#)

Marc Louvion

John Rush