

Build More Human

Why a custom app beats DIY and a pile of generic tools

A short brief for small business owners: one focused custom app (\$500 build) vs building it yourself vs stacking generic apps. After launch, hosting, API usage, support, maintenance, upgrades, and optional Custom AI are separate.

The real cost of “free” and “do it yourself”

Spreadsheets, notes apps, and generic CRMs look cheap until you count the hours your team spends copying data, missing follow-ups, and fixing broken processes. A custom app is not about fancy software — it is about one workflow that already costs you time, money, or missed leads.

	DIY / Excel mashup	Several generic apps	One custom app
Fit	You bend your process to the sheet	Each tool has its own process	Built around how you already work
Upfront	“Free” + your nights and weekends	Multiple subscriptions add up	\$500 for one defined workflow
Ongoing	You maintain formulas and files	Seats, plans, integration fees	Hosting/API/support as needed
Risk	Breaks when one person leaves	Data scattered; tools do not connect cleanly	Scope is one workflow — clear edges

All tables use a dark header with white labels so the top row stays readable on screen and in print.

Why custom is often cheaper than building it yourself

- Your time has a price. Ten evenings wrestling Excel macros is still expensive.
- Generic stacks charge per seat and per integration — easy to outspend a focused build.
- \$500 buys one defined workflow and one working app — not unlimited development.
- You avoid paying for five tools when you only needed one path: lead → job → done.

When multiple generic apps hurt

One app for leads, one for scheduling, one for invoices, a group chat for updates — and nobody sees the full picture. Duplicate entry creates mistakes. Missed callbacks happen between tools. A single custom app for that one bottleneck usually costs less than another year of overlapping subscriptions plus the chaos.

One thing you can build yourself in Excel (for free)

Missed-call callback log

If your only need is a shared list of who called and whether you called back, Excel (or Google Sheets) is enough. Freeze the header row. Filter by Status = New each morning.

Excel snippet — styling + example rows (not a full workbook)

Date	Caller name	Phone	What they need	Owner	Status	Next step
9/18/26	Maria Lopez	(714) 555-0142	Urgent AC quote for duplex	Jessyka	New	Call back before noon
9/18/26	Tom Chen	(562) 555-0198	Reschedule Friday install	Alex	Called	Waiting on parts ETA
9/19/26	Priya Shah	(949) 555-0177	Invoice #441 question	Jessyka	Done	Closed — paid online
9/19/26	Omar Ruiz	(626) 555-0133	Missed — left voicemail	Alex	New	Try again after 4pm

Copy these columns into a new sheet, freeze row 1, turn on Filter, and start each morning on Status = New. Header: dark fill + white type. Rows: alternating cream. Grid: thin warm gray.

When Excel stops being enough: more than one person updating at once, you need phone reminders, quotes use pricing rules, or jobs must move open → doing → done without version conflicts — that is when one custom app usually wins.

How Build More Human scopes \$500

\$500 covers one defined workflow, one working custom app, and one defined build cycle. Hosting, API usage, support, maintenance, upgrades, and optional Custom AI are billed separately after launch based on usage and support needs. If the request is larger than one workflow, we explain additional scope before work begins.

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