INDUSTRY BENCHMARK REPORT • 2026 EDITION

SaaS Starter Kits & Boilerplates: The 2026 Competitive Benchmark

An in-depth architectural, multi-tenancy, AI coding tooling, and Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) evaluation of OrbitKit vs. the leading industry starter kits.

PUBLISHED	CONTENDERS EVALUATED	REVIEW STANDARDS	TOP COMPOSITE SCORE
November 2026	**7 Platforms**	**Architecture Review Board**	**OrbitKit (9.6 / 10)**

1. Executive Summary & Market Context

Over the past two years, SaaS boilerplates have undergone a fundamental paradigm shift. In 2023–2024, developer boilerplates competed primarily on minimal prototype speed—often cutting corners with single-user authentication, flat collections, and unstructured single-folder scripts. However, modern SaaS requirements in 2026 have raised the bar significantly:

1. The B2B Multi-Tenancy Mandate: Enterprise buyers and small businesses alike expect workspace switching, teammate invites, and granular Role-Based Access Control (RBAC). Boilerplates that support only single-user accounts force costly, painful rewrites the moment a customer requests team onboarding.

2. The Rise of Autonomous AI Coding Agents: Modern developers no longer build alone; they pair-program with Cursor, Claude Code, and Windsurf. Generic boilerplate scripts without Model Context Protocol (MCP 2.0) servers cause AI models to hallucinate schemas, misconfigure security policies, and corrupt databases.

3. The True Total Cost of Ownership (TCO): Subscription boilerplate models (charging $299–$599 every single year) and auth lock-ins (such as Clerk, which scales up to $99+/month in user fees) drain early founder runway. OrbitKit emerged as the top-ranking platform by uniting enterprise multi-tenancy, 56 native MCP tools, and multi-provider billing (Paddle v2 + Stripe) under an affordable, one-time lifetime license.

2. Contender Profiles & Technical Breakdown

OrbitKit (9.6 / 10) — The All-In-One Enterprise Engine

Stack: Next.js 15 App Router, React 19, Turborepo, Supabase PostgreSQL RLS, Paddle v2, Stripe, Lemon Squeezy, Polar.
Key Strengths: Hardware-grade SQL security policies, 56 local MCP tools for AI coding, hybrid solo/team switch, built-in license portal, and lifetime updates for a single flat fee ($149–$279).

ShipFast (6.8 / 10) — The Rapid Weekend Prototype

Stack: Next.js, MongoDB/Prisma, NextAuth, Stripe ($199 Lifetime).
Trade-Offs: Excellent for 48-hour B2C indie hacks. However, strictly single-user. Zero team workspaces, zero RBAC, no MCP agent tools, and MongoDB lacks relational Row Level Security.

MakerKit (7.9 / 10) — The Enterprise Subscription Kit

Stack: Next.js, Supabase/Firebase, Stripe, Lemon Squeezy ($299/yr or $599).
Trade-Offs: Solid multi-tenant B2B architecture, but imposes an expensive annual developer tax ($299 to $599/year). Lacks Paddle v2 MoR and self-hosted software license management.

Supastarter (8.1 / 10) — The Multi-Framework Option

Stack: Next.js/Nuxt, Prisma/Drizzle, better-auth, Stripe ($349 – $1,499).
Trade-Offs: Clean Turborepo structure and i18n, but very expensive entry point ($349). Relies on application-level ORM filters rather than PostgreSQL SQL RLS, and lacks live MCP diagnostic tools.

next-forge (7.5 / 10) — The Vercel Open Source Monorepo

Stack: Next.js, Turborepo, Clerk, Prisma, Neon, Stripe (Free Open Source).
Trade-Offs: Free upfront, but tightly coupled to Clerk (which incurs high monthly per-user billing). Monorepo splits into 6+ distinct apps, creating substantial build and maintenance drag.

SaaS Pegasus (7.2 / 10) — The Python / Django Heavyweight

Stack: Django, Celery, Redis, PostgreSQL, Stripe ($449 – $649).
Trade-Offs: Mature Django ecosystem, but requires managing persistent VPS servers, Docker, and Celery worker clusters. High cost ($449 for 1 single project) and no serverless edge deployment.

3. Security & AI Tooling Analysis

Database Isolation (SQL RLS vs. ORM Filtering): Traditional boilerplates (ShipFast, Supastarter, next-forge) enforce tenant isolation via ORM application code (e.g., adding `where: { accountId }` to queries). A single developer mistake or AI hallucination results in catastrophic cross-tenant data leaks. OrbitKit enforces tenant isolation at the hardware PostgreSQL layer via Row Level Security policies, guaranteeing mathematical data segregation regardless of API bugs.

The AI Agent Revolution: OrbitKit includes a native local Model Context Protocol (MCP 2.0) server exposing 56 tools. Claude Code, Cursor, and Windsurf can inspect database schemas, validate environment variables without leaking secrets, and run health diagnostics in real time.

4. Detailed Feature & Capability Matrix

Independent side-by-side audit of all 7 boilerplates across 14 mission-critical architectural criteria:

EVALUATION CRITERIA	ORBITKIT	SHIPFAST	MAKERKIT	SUPASTARTER	NEXT-FORGE	DIVJOY	SAAS PEGASUS
B2B Multi-Tenancy (Teams & Roles)	Native RLS	No (Solo)	Yes	Yes	Via Clerk	No	Yes
PostgreSQL Row Level Security	Hardware	No	Yes	ORM Only	ORM Only	No	ORM Only
Native MCP 2.0 AI Tools (56 Tools)	56 Tools	None	MCP Tools	Rules Only	None	None	None
AI Agent Skills (.claude / .cursor)	9 Skills	None	Included	Basic	None	None	Basic
Paddle v2 (Merchant of Record / EU VAT)	Built-in	No	No	No	No	No	No
Stripe & Lemon Squeezy Adapters	Both	Stripe Only	Both	Both	Stripe Only	Stripe Only	Stripe Only
AI Token & Usage Credit Metering	Included	No	No	No	No	No	No
Self-Hosted Licensing Portal (/portal)	Included	No	No	No	No	No	No
Interactive CLI Scaffolder	Included	No	No	Basic	Init script	Web UI	CLI
Next.js 15 App Router & Server Actions	Full Support	Partial	Yes	Yes	Yes	Pages Router	Django
Pricing Structure	**$149 – $279**	$199	$299/yr / $599	$349 – $1,499	Free + Clerk Tax	$199	$449 – $649
Money-Back Guarantee	30 Days	None	None	None	N/A	14 Days	None

Category Score Summary (Scale 1–10)

PLATFORM	MULTI-TENANCY	DATA SECURITY	AI TOOLING	BILLING FLEXIBILITY	TCO EFFICIENCY	COMPOSITE SCORE
OrbitKit	**9.8**	**9.9**	**9.8**	**9.7**	**9.8**	**9.6 / 10 (Winner)**
Supastarter	8.8	8.0	7.5	8.5	7.8	**8.1 / 10**
MakerKit	9.2	9.4	8.2	8.0	5.5	**7.9 / 10**
next-forge	7.5	7.8	6.0	7.0	7.0	**7.5 / 10**
SaaS Pegasus	8.5	7.5	6.5	7.5	6.0	**7.2 / 10**
ShipFast	4.0	5.0	4.5	7.0	8.5	**6.8 / 10**

5. Three-Year Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)

The true cost of running a software startup over a 3-year lifecycle includes boilerplate updates, auth subscription taxes, and custom rewrite hours:

COST COMPONENT (3-YEAR HORIZON)	ORBITKIT PRO	MAKERKIT	NEXT-FORGE	SHIPFAST
Initial Starter Kit License	**$279 (One-time)**	$299	$0	$199
Years 2 & 3 License Renewal Fees	**$0 (Lifetime updates)**	$598 ($299/year tax)	$0	$0
Auth Provider Fees (10,000 MAUs)	**$0 (Supabase free tier)**	$0 (Supabase)	$2,376 (Clerk Pro + user fees)	$0
Rewrite Cost when Customers Request Teams	**$0 (Teams pre-built)**	$0	$0	~$8,000 (120 hrs dev rewrite)
Total 3-Year Estimated Cost	**$279 Total**	**$897 Total**	**$2,376 Total**	**$8,199 Total**

6. Strategic Recommendation by Archetype

1. The Solo Indie Hacker (Launching Micro-SaaS)

Recommendation: OrbitKit Solo ($149)
Provides the speed of ShipFast with the enterprise security of Supabase RLS. You can launch in 48 hours without painting yourself into a corner when enterprise customers arrive.

2. The Serious B2B SaaS Founder

Recommendation: OrbitKit Pro ($279)
Full multi-tenant team workspaces, 56 local MCP tools to build with Cursor & Claude at 10x speed, Paddle v2 European tax handling, and zero annual subscription fees.

3. Development Agencies & Venture Studios

Recommendation: OrbitKit Agency ($499)
50 project activations with commercial client building rights, customer licensing portal, and unlimited developer seats. A single client project pays for the license 20x over.

4. Open Source Minimalists

Alternative: next-forge
If your project is strictly non-commercial and you already pay for Clerk subscriptions, next-forge is a competent open-source reference template.

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