



Promoting Sustainable Youth Entrepreneurship
& Innovations in North East

UDYAMI NORTH EAST

EMERGING FOOTPRINTS OF STARTUPS
& YOUTH BASED ENTERPRISES AND
TRENDS IN NORTH EAST INDIA

January 2017

Editor:
Dr. Syed S. Kazi



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Produced by: Dr. Syed S. Kazi

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For more copies, contact:

North East Development Foundation
Farm Gate, Khanapara, Guwahati, Assam
TeleFax: +91-0361-2223204, Mobile: 9818292524

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INTRODUCTION

Keeping in mind the nascent startup and entrepreneurship environment in North East India as well as in consonance with the Government of India's focus on building and creating home grown startups under the 'Startup India, Stand up India' scheme programme of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, which was announced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi on August 15, 2015 and subsequently launched in early January, 2016, the North East Development Foundation (NEDF) and the Digital Empowerment Foundation along with the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), an institute of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, India, in association with other relevant agencies have come together to organise the 'UPSTART' North East Startup Challenge Program on January 20, 2017 at IIE Campus, Guwahati.

The objective of '**UPSTART 2016-17**' has been manifold - to provide a platform to amalgamate ideas with creativity, brainstorm, dream different, develop action plans, groom up the startup enterprises and lead projects that have potential to become popular brands from the NE region. It seeks to promote youthful entrepreneurship in the North East region for a wider publicity of entrepreneurial ventures through the Startup ecosystem; Recognise Startup entrepreneurs of the NE region for their pioneering leadership in the key sector areas of enterprise development; Promote the local and regional Startups throughout the country and abroad and popularize the products

and services developed in the region in a broader scale; Connect the Startup entrepreneurs from NE with the various stakeholders - including investors, Resource-based organisations, Banks etc.; Facilitate a meeting ground for the creative minds to come together and infuse ideas with Startup innovations; Promote Startup community-building, knowledge-networking, generating venture capital, forming market linkages and business development; and Create a Community of Entrepreneurs for the NE region who would relentlessly pursue the entrepreneurial dream of making it big.

Nominations were invited in 12 categories: Agriculture & Allied Sector ; Health Services ; Food & Hospitality ; Education Services ; IT Solutions ; Generic Technology Solutions ; Organic services ; Social Sector Services ; Energy Services ; Handloom & Handicraft; Water & Natural Resources ; Tourism & Adventure Sports.

We received 69 applications / nominations for the 'Pitch your Business' and 'Pitch your Ideas' broad categories. Out of these we had screened down to 54 nominations for final presentation and pitching on January 20, 2017. We intend to recognise, award and felicitate the top three winners with cash incentive and felicitate the semi-finalists and the finalists. We also intend to felicitate and award top 3 'Pitch your ideas' winners. All these are initiated for motivating and encouraging the existing startups and the young ideas and prototypes.

Here, I must thank and acknowledge all the nominees and applicants to become part of this programme towards collecting learning, sharing and understanding the startup ecosystem in the North East Region of India.

I must thank Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) to provide us maximum support to organise the programme in a joint collaboration.

Our sincere thanks and acknowledgement is reserved for the North Eastern Finance Development Corporation (NEDFi) for providing cash prize incentive support to the winning Startups through this UPSTART platform.

A special thanks to all our other partners including YouthNet, Eclectic North East, YourStory.com, Demi Solutions, TRIBAC and Assam Institute of Management.

The list of acknowledgement is incomplete without mentioning about Siddhartha (Sid) Chowdhary, CEO of Credence Management Solutions LLC (United States) for his continuous knowledge and advisory support and assistance.

Readers will find in this booklet few great articles about Startups pertaining to North East and otherwise with focus on issues around challenges for startups, funding, mentoring, incubation and other critical areas. You will find briefs about select Startup Finalists for UPSTART 2016-17 to get

a glimpse of how our startups in the region are shaping up.

Readers may find errors or mistakes in the booklet, but those are really not intentional.

Happy reading & wish you a great year ahead 2017!

With sincerely

Dr. Syed S. Kazi

Hon. President: North East Development Foundation
Deputy Director: Digital Empowerment Foundation
Member: Open Knowledge Community (Govt. of India & UNESCO)



kazi@nedfindia.org, syedkazi@defindia.net
www.nedfindia.org, www.defindia.org, http://
nstartups.in/

CREATING A VIBRANT ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM IN NORTH EAST INDIA

- Siddhartha Chowdhary*

As a founder and CEO of a successful business, I often have the opportunity to interact with some of the top entrepreneurs and business leaders in the US. Sometimes, when our discussions venture into our backgrounds, my peer groups are often curious to know how someone with very limited financial resources from a remote corner of India ended up starting one of the fastest growing firms in the midst of a global recession. Their curiosity stems from an observation that there are very few successful entrepreneurs or individuals in lofty positions from North East (NE) India.

From my experience of growing up in NE, I know that part of this imbalance stems from the fact that our youth does not have adequate access to resources and platforms and, therefore, does not look at entrepreneurship as a career option. Further, as a region, we have some unique geopolitical challenges that keep us isolated from the rest of the world.

The Government of India's current efforts to promote economic development of NE states through its Act East Policy, combined with its Start-up India initiative, have the potential to provide the impetus for creating socio-economic sustainability in NE. Consequently, the collaboration between the North East Development Foundation (NEDF) and Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF), along with the support of the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) to create a regional platform for start-ups through the UPSTART NE Start-up Festival can serve as the catalyst to kick-start the regional ecosystem and deliver on the promise of these government policies.

While definitions, as well as characteristics, of an entrepreneurial ecosystem may differ dramatically, an ecosystem from an entrepreneur's perspective can be categorised under several core characteristics—accessible markets, funding,

workforce, cultural awareness, support systems, regulatory framework, education and training

**ASSETS + CULTURE +
EDUCATION + NETWORKS
=
"SUCCESSFUL LOCAL
ECOSYSTEM"**



OUR REGION IS BLESSED WITH ABUNDANT NATURAL RESOURCES THAT WE SHOULD FOCUS ON

North East India has many assets—fertile land, ample water resources, an ideal habitat for horticulture, a rich cultural, and natural heritage and innovative people, among others—but it has not been able to link them together to produce a vibrant local economy. Our region has a great potential to contribute to India's economy as the gateway to South East Asia through the implementation of the Act East Policy. But to realise the full potential of this economic prosperity and the accompanying social transformation, we need to create a robust local ecosystem with high focus on innovation, problem solving, and entrepreneurship.

OUR CULTURE STOPS US FROM TAKING RISKS AND THAT SHOULD BE CHANGED

There is a mutually reinforcing relationship between thriving entrepreneurial activity and a culture that supports entrepreneurship—acceptance of risk-taking and greater tolerance for failure. In our culture, security in a mediocre professional career is mostly preferred over taking entrepreneurial risks and exploring one's potential. In reality, entrepreneurship, when planned and executed well,

is often the low-risk choice where one gets to chart their own journey and reap the benefits of their efforts while contributing to the economy and to the development of their communities. My personal journey has been a testament to this philosophy. In 2007, with all signs pointing towards a global recession fueled by the US fiscal deficits—at a time when we were preparing for our first child (Maya) and my wife (Leigh) was ready to quit her job to raise our daughter—I decided the time was right for me to launch my latest start-up, Credence. I am thankful my instincts were right as Credence proud to be named by Inc. 500|5000 as one among the fastest growing firms in the US for five straight years with an annual growth rate of above 65 per cent year over year since our inception, along with revenues reaching nine digits (in US dollars) with operations in all 56 US states & territories, and five countries.

I feel the way to create a cultural awareness that encourages entrepreneurship is to celebrate their success stories. The media—TV, print, social media—should disseminate entrepreneurial success stories to inspire and encourage entrepreneurship.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAN BE LEARNED, HENCE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EDUCATION HAS TO GO TOGETHER

Good education systems around the world focus on three important things—entrepreneurship, employability and ethics. However, the focus of our education system has primarily been on academic performance. As a result, our students remain ignorant about the information needed to start a business. While there is no common pattern to achieve success, the common theme among all successful entrepreneurs is the same—they worked hard for something that they were passionate about, they challenged the status-quo and changed the way business was traditionally done, they did not let others define themselves, and often went

against common wisdom. In other words, they took calculated risks and controlled their own destiny.

I view entrepreneurship as the discipline of deliberate risk-taking; and this can be taught and learned. Instead of continuing with traditional teaching methods, we need to create “real-world” entrepreneurship development programmes that rely on structured boot-camps and business-plan competitions designed to give aspiring entrepreneurs a sense of planning to start any venture.

ENTREPRENEURIAL NETWORK CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENTREPRENEURS AND START-UPS

I always make an effort to meet young aspiring entrepreneurs during my visits to Assam. From my interactions with them, I know that one of the common issues these entrepreneurs face is the need for a networking platform. Studies on ‘What makes a community entrepreneurial?’ have found that successful regions are not just relying on assets like intellectual/human capital, infrastructure, and venture capital. Rather, entrepreneurs thrive in regions where they can effectively network with other entrepreneurs. An ‘entrepreneurial network’ is an association of entrepreneurs organised, formally or informally, with the object of increasing the effectiveness of the members’ business activities. These networks provide entrepreneurs with critical opportunities for peer learning to enjoy higher levels of both entrepreneurial activity and economic growth.

INCUBATORS CAN SERVE AS ECOSYSTEM FACILITATORS AND INFLUENCE ALL ELEMENTS OF THE EQUATION

Incubators are essentially organisations designed to accelerate the growth and success of

Studies on ‘What makes a community entrepreneurial?’ have found that successful regions are not just relying on assets like intellectual/human capital, infrastructure, and venture capital. Rather, entrepreneurs thrive in regions where they can effectively network with other entrepreneurs.

entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support resources and services that are a critical part of any entrepreneurial ecosystem. To harness the true power of incubators, services such as mentoring, training, capital, business networks and common back-office services should be provided in addition to the physical space. Additionally, every institute of higher learning should establish an effective entrepreneurship cell and collaborate with incubators to ensure sustained engagement of entrepreneurs, angel investors and venture capitalists as mentors who provide aspiring entrepreneurs with real world advice. Further, academic institutions and incubators should promote creation of Intellectual Property and its commercialisation as a key element of their market strategy.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND INITIATIVES CAN ACCELERATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS ECOSYSTEM

Finally, the government can play a major role in the creation of a start-up. In NE, with the help of persistent support from the government, the region can gradually create a buzz and inspire people from both urban and rural areas to build something of their own. Government initiatives to support budding entrepreneurs and start-ups by easing financing options, incorporation time, and allowing tax benefits will ignite entrepreneurial spirit among people. Meanwhile, investments in infrastructure, both physical as well as digital, will contribute in making the ecosystem more favourable.

*Siddharth Chowdhary, based in the USA, is the founder of a professional services firm that has achieved sustained explosive growth since its inception. Prior to that, he was an integral part of several businesses that had successful exits. After graduating from IIT Kharagpur, he migrated to the US in 1994 with just \$50 and a dream of someday starting his own company. He is passionate about promoting entrepreneurship, and channels his philanthropic efforts through his foundation called 1000 Aspirations (হাজার আকাংক্ষা) and his participations in non-profit boards.

PARADOX OF START-UPS: WHAT IT NEEDS TO START UP IN NER

- Dr. Sriparna B Baruah*

Most middle class Indians never thought about giving up a crore-plus salary to try out a business idea until as late as 1990s but times have changed and people are enjoying the freedom. Three changes have ushered in this freedom. First is the gradual rising value of acceptance of enterprise as a career choice. Second is how career is seen in society and among investors. Though India is far more risk averse than the US, more and more young Indians are seeing failure as a learning and not as an ending. Another change is that founders of some of the biggest start-ups have no hesitation in reducing their stake to less than 50 per cent to ensure that their ideas and the business blooms even if they no longer have control.

Entrepreneurship is well known to be one of the key drivers for development in any nation. It is indicative of a country's prosperity; it's capability to be a job provider rather than be a job seeker. On the global map, the US is a world leader in entrepreneurship with the sturdiest global economy. And this thrust towards entrepreneurship development in the US is evident in its close relation between the industry and the universities.

India has a pioneering status among developing nations for its early start on a variety of entrepreneurship education programmes since the 1950s, and entrepreneurship education in post-Independent India had its aim to encourage self-employment and creation of SMEs. As the economy transitioned from being primarily agrarian into one that had significant contribution from other sectors, it was felt that the most pressing requirement was education that would enable need-based entrepreneurs to foray into these emerging sectors. Thus, in 1999, Ministry for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise (MSME) was set up. Gradually, the MSME sector began to grow and there was an increasing inclination towards entrepreneurship.

As the ecosystem developed, premiere education institutes began to lean towards setting up incubation facilities, mentoring programmes for igniting and nurturing ideas and this brought in the emergence of start-ups. But it is high time that the other educational engineering and management institutes, too, take up the responsibility to promote entrepreneurship and augment generation of ideas in campuses.

INDIA AND START-UPS

In the last five to six years, the start-up scenario in India has seen a lot of activity and has blossomed into a key contributor to the country's entrepreneurial economy. Major contributor to this trend has been the mega funding that has been pumped into the best start-up ideas. On the global map, India is the third largest start-up hub, with the US and China holding the first and second spots, respectively. Further, start-ups received a major boost when with the government launched its Start-Up India initiative in January 2016. With this initiative, a roadmap for the Indian start-ups has been envisaged.

India saw a mammoth funding of \$7.3 billion in start-ups in 2015. A major share of this funding came through venture capitals with 466 deals in 2015 alone (worth \$5394.58 million). Global VC firms like Sequoia Capital, Accel Partners and Tiger Global have invested in India in recent years. Be it Flipkart, Chaayos, Ola, OYO Rooms, Zomato, Paytm, Grofers — all have received VC funding.

However, it is notable that majority of the start ups and investors are from the metro cities. Last year, the highest numbers of start-ups were from NCR (1,060), followed by Bangalore (925), Mumbai (546), Hyderabad (243) and Pune (171). But it is necessary to ensure that these opportunities also reach the smaller cities and not just remains

confined to the metros. Lately, a favorable trend is seen to be catching up with Tier II and III cities. Jaipur, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Vadodara, Mysore, Udupi, Coimbatore, Goa, Nashik, Kochi, Indore, Bhubaneswar, Mohali, Kanpur and Thiruvananthapuram are some of the best non-metros to have come up with start-up ideas and receive funding. So it seems an ecosystem is slowly but steadily developing in smaller towns and cities as well.

So what makes an enabling ecosystem?

- **Enterprising individuals with risk-taking nature**
- **Scalable business ideas**
- **Investors**
- **Market access**
- **Incubation centers and mentorship programmes**
- **Favourable government policies**
- **Low-cost and high-quality infrastructure**
- **Private, financial and academic support groups**
- **Technological support**

START-UP SCENARIO IN NER COMPARED TO REST OF INDIA

While the whole of India is witnessing the start-up revolution, a state like Assam or, in fact, the entire North East Region (NER) is yet to wake up to fully realise its potential. With its magnificent natural beauty, the region is blessed with resources that offer potential for businesses to thrive, especially in sectors of agriculture, eco-tourism, food processing and handicraft, among others.

The government so far has been focusing on NER to push the MSME sector, and has even been successful. According to a report by International Finance Corporation, NER has 2,00,000 MSMEs. However, when it comes to start-ups, the region is lagging behind. Except for a few handfuls of young entrepreneurs who are trying to build a foothold in the start up segment, there is hardly any entrepreneurial activity in start-ups here. Reasons behind this are many:

- **Access to finance:** Financial institutions in the region do not play an aggressive role, which is evident from the fact that most of these institutions do not fund new projects/new ideas. Besides, the government's Angel Fund schemes are not reaching the right target groups.
- **Delays:** Be it registration, bank loan application or any other government formalities, processes are extremely slow and tedious. Planning becomes very difficult under such circumstances.
- **Power Failure:** This is a well-known factor that unreliable power supply makes production costlier and lowers production rate in NER, but there are hardly any steps being implemented to overcome this challenge.
- **Lack of Skilled Resources:** Since the rate of brain drain is excessively high in the region, lack of well qualified human resources seems to be affecting the sector. This proves to be a stumbling block for tech & IT start ups to come up.
- **Lack of Big Industries:** The recent surge in start-ups in India is dominated by the service sector. Most of the start-ups, especially tech start-us, formed in the last few years in India cater to big

While the whole of India is witnessing the start-up revolution, a state like Assam or, in fact, the entire North East Region (NER) is yet to wake up to fully realise its potential.

organisations. Lack of such organisations in the region makes it difficult for new service companies to sustain.

- No proper documentation: Another issue in the region is that there is no properly documented data available on start-ups from NER in order to judge the exact scenario. This is a big gap.

Having said that, some major trends have been visible in the start-up scenario in NER, especially in Guwahati. Young men from the region, who were holding plush jobs in metro cities outside NER, are now returning to their hometowns to start off their own venture. This is a positive sign but it is important to give them a platform and an enabling ecosystem to assist them in scaling their business ideas. Yet, it seems that NER has a long way to go to match up with the country's start-up boom. This calls for proactive initiatives from all stakeholders, including the government, and a sense of synergy between them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

What is needed at the moment is to attract investors to NER. An enterprise trying to set up a business faces three obstacles – costs, procedural completeness and delays. These need to be addressed and eliminated to increase private investments into start-ups. Start-ups by rural enterprises across the agricultural, handicrafts and manufacturing sectors also need focus. Further, clarity on the definition of start-ups is becoming essential to identify a business as a start-up and, thus, qualify for availing the start-up schemes. In this context, the Government of India's Start-Ups India initiative can play a key role in building the future of start-ups in NER. Besides, the government can ensure that a good business idea is nurtured into a great business instead of allowing it to be killed due to the absence of basic infrastructure such as uninterrupted power, reliable mobile network, seed capital and a responsible administration. Hundreds of start-ups are looking for such assurances today.

*Dr. Sriparna B. Baruah is Head, Centre for Industrial Extension, Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), (Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India)



SEVEN TIPS FOR ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS

- Nikki Barua*

In my journey as a serial entrepreneur, I've often been asked for advice by aspiring entrepreneurs. I've had many successes and just as many failures. Regardless of the outcomes, I learnt that the fundamentals always remained the same. When you stay true to the guiding principles, you have a greater chance of success. When you stray away, you are likely to hit roadblocks and learn some hard lessons. But remember, apart from these tips, you have to make your own decisions and learn things your way. After all, entrepreneurship is a process of self-discovery that gives you the insight and the opportunity to become the best version of yourself.

Here are the seven tips for aspiring entrepreneurs:

- 1. A great idea is not a great company:** Customer needs constant change; competitors launch better products and emergence of enhanced technology disrupts the marketplace. There are many reasons for your idea to fail. But, if you know the answer to why you want to be an entrepreneur, your purpose and passion will guide you in your journey. Remember, if all it took was a great idea, we would have seven billion entrepreneurs today.
- 2. In co-founders, great skills matter but aligned values matter more:** Find a co-founder who is in complete alliance with you on the basic elements of your enterprise. It's easy to fall in love with a pedigreed profile and impressive skills but alignment towards what you believe and what you care about matters more. Don't let the important relationships in your business turn into miserable ones because of your misalliance with mission, vision and values. Choose wisely.
- 3. Don't just scratch the itch; cure the pain:** It's not enough to have a product that serves a need; it has to be something that a large enough market is willing to buy. You have to build something that many customers would want and would be willing to pay for. Don't be overly optimistic about the addressable market size without looking at competitors and product alternatives. Test and validate your customers' appetite for spending and readiness to buy.
- 4. Make your idea better; share it.** If you think your idea is so precious that you can't share it with anyone, you are mistaken. We live in a connected world of constant innovation. While you're working on solving a big challenge, chances are that someone else is doing it too. Rather than hiding your idea, share it with advisors and customers. The feedbacks are the greatest teachers. Iterate constantly.
- 5. Care about revenue, but obsess about cash flow:** As your business grows, you will be celebrating every rupee of revenue earned. Top line growth is thrilling but cash flow is the king. Most businesses fail due to poor cash flow rather than due to poor profits. Estimate the cash needs of

Entrepreneurship is a process of self-discovery that gives you the insight and the opportunity to become the best version of yourself.

your business and keep a close eye on it. Negotiate favourable terms with customers and suppliers while managing shortfalls through debt financing or investments.

6. **Stay focused;** – say YES to the right things: When the going gets tough, you'll be tempted to chase every opportunity or opt for a safer path. Even if it seems promising in the short run, the cost of losing your focus can be very damaging in the long run. Don't clutter your world with too many things. Say "no" to all the things that don't matter so you can make room for the things that do.
7. **Don't just have the eyes for greatness, have the stomach for it, too:** Being an entrepreneur sounds glamorous, but the reality is far from it. Everyone has the vision and desire for grand successes but not everyone has the stomach for it. Be honest with yourself and be willing to give up everything to achieve your vision. The journey of an entrepreneur is filled with obstacles that can only be overcome with limitless passion, relentless persistence, and sheer hard work.

AN OPPORTUNITY WAITING TO HAPPEN

- Nigel Eastwood*

The North East is an opportunity waiting to happen. My goal is not only to invest in budding entrepreneurs, but more importantly to showcase to a diverse group of international stakeholders, the investment opportunities and huge potential of the North East.

To create more jobs and build a more stable growing economy in the NE of India, we need to catalyse become competitive and grow businesses. We aim to inspire, motivate and mentor entrepreneurs in the region. There is an urgent need to create a more favourable climate for entrepreneurship; a stronger 'entrepreneurial ecosystem' is the key to the NE's competitiveness and development.

To be socially and economically sustainable, India's growth story needs to be inclusive. However, the country's North East has been experiencing a comparatively slower pace of industrialisation and socio-economic growth. Though the region is blessed with abundant natural resources and manpower for industrial and social development, they have not been able to utilise their full potential. This creates a unique set of opportunities that entrepreneurs in the region should leverage.

The region has certain distinct advantages. It is strategically located with access to the traditional domestic market of eastern India, along with proximity to major Indian states in the east and neighboring countries like Bangladesh and Myanmar. The region is also a vantage entry point for the South East Asian markets. The resource-rich North East with its expanses of fertile farmland and a huge talent pool will transform the economy into one of India's most prosperous regions, if it is able to

leverage its potential.

North-East India has great potentials for development and could well become the growth engine that will give the next big push to the Indian economy. In the next three years, the area will be transformed into an economic corridor connecting Myanmar, Bangladesh and ASEAN countries.

Recent research suggests that by 2021-22, the region will be a major contributor to the sustainability of national GDP. During this period, the region will emerge as one of the country's fastest growing territories, becoming a hub of connectivity for trade and commerce for South-East Asia and India's gateway to the east.

The fundamental conditions for active investment are already well evidenced. The trickledown effect of investment in the region is expected to deliver five million new jobs in the next five years. With the governments' 'Act East Policy', it is anticipated that the region will account for around 40 per cent of India's trade with Myanmar, Bangladesh and Bhutan, and an ever-increasing percentage of the trade with ASEAN countries.

**Nigel Eastwood is an independent investor and corporate advisor. Eastwood successfully founded NCT in the UK to become the sixth largest ISP. He is the Co-founder and Advisory Board Member of New Call Telecom Holdings BV, an international multi-platform investment vehicle specialising in emerging markets. Eastwood has lived and operated businesses in India for over 12 years and is now an overseas citizen of India. His wife Vijaya is from Imphal in Manipur.*

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THINK AGAIN!

- Himanshu Sikaria*

The entrepreneurial wave has hit India and everyone wants to be a part of it; everyone wants the freedom. An alternative to the frustrating and unsatisfying nine-to-five job obviously seems tempting, but it doesn't come without cons which many are unaware of. I believe entrepreneurship is a mental disorder, an affliction, and definitely not a choice but a compulsion. Relationships, bank accounts and mental stamina reach to the extreme in an entrepreneurial journey. We surveyed hundreds of students and young entrepreneurs and the results were unprecedented. Students start planning a start-up right after college if they fail to secure a job and are left stranded. Moreover, more than 80 per cent of the entrepreneurs do not have prior experience or background knowledge in the sector they want to start-up in.

The Indian startup ecosystem is undoubtedly improving, with tons of incubators and co-working spaces coming up in almost all the cities across India. There are gatherings and workshops happening every weekend with millions poured in by the government, private angels and venture capitals. But, is the growth in the right direction and are the entrepreneurs really solving real-life pain points? Here are a few problems I observed while working closely with over 25 early stage startups during my journey at Startify.

IT'S EASY

It is very easy to be called an entrepreneur these days, all you have to do is buy a domain name for fewer than a 100 bucks, and update your social media profile to 'Founder and CEO'. The truth is that entrepreneurship is the latest fad and everyone

wants to have the tag. Starting a company on papers is very easy but when reality hits in the face, it's a bad fall.

Learning: Make sure you are not into business just because it's a trend and you want to make money; know the realities well and make sure you are ready for the hardships.

THE FIRST STEP

How did the idea come up? This question is very critical and can give a good insight about the startup. There is lack of innovation and most entrepreneurs serve as middlemen today. For example, nowadays, every city has at least 10 food delivery startups with each following the same pursuit. People end up copying each other; they choose to solve a problem which either does not exist or they themselves do not believe in. We need to encourage more food product companies rather than food delivery companies. The Indian ecosystem needs more products than services. Most people still think 'startups' are only app or web based.

Learning: Do not be passionate about being an entrepreneur, but be passionate about the problem you want to solve. Solve a problem which you have faced or have seen other's face. Understand what your competitors are doing and research on what your customers want. Solve a problem that really matters!

BRAKE OR BREAK

More than 35 per cent of the startups shut down even before they get their first customer; and one of

the main reasons is the team. Even worse, there are a lot of people who are not starting up because they do not have a co-founder or a developer in their team. Many entrepreneurs end up building castles on paper but nothing at all in real. Others try to make a perfect product with all the features and end up launching it too late or not launching at all.

Learning: Your startup is your ship and you are the captain. You need to figure out everything and get things done. Just planning for a startup and waiting for things to happen imply lack of dedication.

Launch an alpha version first. As someone once rightly said, "If you are not ashamed of your first product, you probably launched it too late."

INVESTORS VS. CUSTOMERS

Unfortunately, investors are winning this battle! Even before one is aware of their plans, they seek for funds. I strongly feel that online media is to be blamed for this mindset. With news of startups getting millions of funds every other day, people consider their startup to be successful if they are funded. Everyone is trying to build a business plan which investors will like, not the one which would benefit their customers. It is true that investors are required at some stage of the startup but they end up burning the cash too soon; without a plan or by running after investors without even a prototype.

Learning: Get the first 10 customers so that you have a proof that people want your services and products. Create a roadmap to reach the stage you want and investors will follow. Early investment can be dangerous!

*Himanshu Sikaria initiated Startify, an online incubation portal during his sophomore year at IIT Jodhpur. Startify, which was recently acquired, had over 100 startups on their platform and more than 140 mentors, investors and incubators. Sikaria has also been involved in budding various entrepreneurial ecosystems in Assam and Rajasthan.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER DISCOVERY AND ITS KNOW-HOW

- Rajeev Barua*

I founded SecondWrite, a company that builds cyber security products, in 2013. We got an early lesson on what the value of customer discovery is in our initial days of starting SecondWrite.

My co-founders and I attended the iCorps programme, organised by the National Science Foundation (NSF), a US government agency. This is a seven-week intensive programme, where several companies participate, each with a team of founders. Each team is required to conduct 100 meetings with potential customers, write blogs about the meetings, and then refine their business model based on feedback. We learnt a lot of lessons that have served us well since. Here is a summary of all the ones that are important for any entrepreneur to keep in mind when beginning a company:

- Develop a framework of what you want to build, based on your own vision and experience. Fill in as many details as you can in a short amount of time. Your customers may not imagine the future, but you can!
- Once you know what your product is, identify and interview as many customers as you can find. Identifying customers is not always easy, especially for business-to-business sales. The customer is not the person who uses the product, but the person who pays for it. For example, if you are selling a new hospital gown, your customers are not the patients who wear it. Rather, you should interview the hospital administrator responsible for purchasing supplies. Their criteria for purchasing may be entirely different from the patients.
- Identify your target group. Here are some ways to find possible target groups. Think of everyone you know and everyone

connected to you on LinkedIn for a start. However, for a lot of products, this may yield very few people. Therefore, ask people in the same organisation or local area to get introduced to the right person. For example, you may not know any hospital administrators, but you may know a doctor in a hospital who could introduce you to the administrator. In most cases, people are willing to help if asked.

- Warm introductions are always more effective than a cold call to a person whom you don't know. Be well dressed, polite and persistent in talking people! If you are shy about introducing yourself to strangers, get over it!
- Ask at least 20 customers for feedback on your product.
- Between interviews, constantly evaluate if your product is likely to succeed. You don't need all your potential customers to like your product, but a significant number (say 40 per cent) should like it.
- If there are not enough potential customers who want your product, pivot to a new feature set or even a new product, based on the needs you hear expressed during your interviews. Then try out your new product hypothesis on new customers. For example, a hospital administrator might tell you that they have no need for new hospital gowns, but they are really unhappy with their nurses' uniforms. Ask them why, and think if you can design a better one.
- Only after you have finished the above process and stabilized on a product design, should you build the product. Even then, before undertaking the time

Do not be passionate about being an entrepreneur, but be passionate about the problem you want to solve.

and expense to build the final product, build a product demo, and show it to your customers for feedback.

- The product demo could be a simplified version of the product, or even a sketch or block model of the product. For example, if building a nurse's uniform is too expensive, show a sketch of the uniform along with the fabric and quality specifications. Repeat the process of customer interviews until you converge on a specific design that your customers like.
- Once you have the final design in accordance with the customer demands, produce it and try to sell it. Your customers should be willing to pay for it. If not, they were not your customers in the first place.
- Conduct field trials of your products, and find out how your product actually works in the real world. Start with a few early adopter customers to keep costs down. Keep improving your product, until your early adopter customers are happy.
- Once you know you have a winner, start to scale up your investments and hiring! Continue to listen to your customers, so you can design next year's product even better.

When interviewing a customer, here are some of the questions you can ask them:

- Do they face the problem you are trying to solve?
- What do they currently use to solve the problem?
- Are they happy with that solution?
- How much does it cost them?
- Describe your hypothesised product. Tell them about its features and ask them if they need any additional ones. Once you

agree on a set of features, ask them if they will consider buying it?

- There is no point in asking a customer the price they are willing to pay for a product. Most people would prefer all products they buy to cost zero. It would be better to ask them how much their current solution costs them, or how much the lack of a solution is costing them.
- For recreational and entertainment products, you might want to ask or consider what alternative recreations might cost the customer, and how much enjoyment they would derive from them.

The moral of the story: sales start with listening to your customers, rather than only you telling them about the product. Work hard to satisfy your customer's real needs (not what you think their needs are), and you will succeed!

*Rajeev Barua is the founder and CEO of SecondWrite, a cyber security company based in College Park, Maryland in the US. He is also a Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Maryland. Barua has received his Ph.D. in Computer Science and Electrical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has over 20 years of experience in cyber security, binary rewriting, and program analysis

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR A START-UP

- Tilak Das*

The process from ideation to revenue generation in a business needs capital. Money is the bloodline of any business. Funding requirements largely depend on the nature and type of the business. Mentioned here are a few, among many, sources of finance commonly used by start-ups.

- 1. Bootstrapping the start-up:** Self-funding, also known as bootstrapping, is an effective way of start-up financing, especially when you are just starting your business. First-time entrepreneurs often have trouble getting funding without a proof of concept and plan for potential success. So, you can invest your savings or ask your family and friends to contribute. This will have much less formalities/compliances. Self-funding or bootstrapping should be considered as a first funding option because of its advantages. When you have your own money, you are tied to a business. On a later stage, investors consider this as a good point. But this is suitable only if the initial requirement is small.
- 2. Crowd funding as an option:** Crowd funding is one of the newer ways of funding a start-up. An entrepreneur can put up a detailed business plan on a crowd funding platform; mention the goals of the business, plans for making a profit and the amount he needs to raise (and for what). Netizens can then read about the business and contribute towards the idea, if they like it. Those crowd-funding your project, will make an online pledge to pre-buy your product or make a contribution towards it. Anyone can contribute money toward helping a business that they really believe in. The best thing about crowd funding is that it can also generate interest and, hence, helps in marketing the product alongside financing it. A good pitch on the crowd funding platform might also attract venture capitals down the line, if a company has a particularly successful campaign.
- 3. Angel investment in start-up:** Angel investors are generally high net worth individuals who have a keen interest to invest in promising upcoming start-ups. They also work in groups of networks to collectively screen the proposals before investing in one; and offer mentoring or advice alongside capital. Angel investors have helped many prominent companies, including Google, Yahoo and Alibaba. This alternative form of investing generally occurs in a company's early stages of growth, with investors expecting up to 30 per cent equity. They prefer to take more risks in investment for higher returns. Angel investment as a funding option has its shortcomings, too, though. Angel investors invest lesser amounts than venture capitalists.
- 4. Venture capital for business:** Venture capitals are professionally-managed funds that are invested in companies that have huge potential. Venture capitalists (VCs) usually invest in a business against equity; and exit when there is an IPO or an acquisition. VCs provide expertise and mentorship; and evaluate the business from sustainability and scalability angles. VC investments are most appropriate for small businesses that are beyond the start-up phase and are already generating revenues. However, VCs often look to recover their investment within a three to five year time frame.
- 5. Funding from business incubators & accelerators:** Early stage businesses can consider incubator and accelerator programmes as funding options. Found in almost every major city today, these programmes assist hundreds of start-ups every year. Though used interchangeably, there are a few fundamental differences between the two terms. Incubators are like parents to a child, who nurture the business providing shelter, tools, training and network to a business, while accelerators help businesses to run/take a giant leap. These

An exhaustive business plan with pragmatic future projections will always help a start-up to mobilise funds easily.

programmes normally run for four to eight months; and require time commitment from the business owners. Individuals are also able to make good connections with mentors, investors and other fellow start-ups through these platforms.

6. Raise funds by winning contests: An increase in the number of start-up contests has tremendously helped young entrepreneurs maximise the opportunities for fund raising. It encourages entrepreneurs with business ideas to set up their own businesses. In such competitions, one either has to build a product or prepare a business plan. The entrepreneur can either present the idea in person or pitch it through a business plan. However, it should be comprehensive enough to convince anyone that the idea is worth investing in.
7. Raise money through bank loans: Normally, banks are the first place that entrepreneurs go to when thinking about funding. Banks provide two kinds of financial models for businesses. One is a working capital loan, and the other is long-term lending. A working capital loan is a loan required to run a complete cycle of revenue generating operations, and the limit is usually decided by hypothecating stocks and debts. Term loans are given for creating productive assets. Funding from banks would involve the usual process of sharing the business plan and valuation details, along with project report(s), based on which the loan is sanctioned. Almost every bank in India offers SME finance through its various programmes.
8. Get business loans from microfinance providers or NBFCs: Microfinance is basically access to financial services for those who would not have access to conventional banking services. It is increasingly becoming popular for those whose requirements are limited and credit ratings not favoured by bank. Similarly, Non-Banking Financial Corporations (NBFCs) are corporations that provide banking services without meeting legal requirement/definition of a bank.

9. Government programmes offering start-up capital: The Government of India has allocated a Rs. 10,000-crore start-up fund or the 'Fund of Funds' to encourage the start-up ecosystem in India. In order to boost innovative product companies, the government has also launched the 'Bank of Ideas and Innovations' programme. Meanwhile, the government-backed 'MUDRA' scheme, which started with an initial corpus of Rs. 20,000 crore, extends benefits to around 10 lakhs SMEs. Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), too, offers business loans to the MSME sector. Then there is the example of the Assam government that has set up an angel fund to provide loans to start-ups at nominal interest. For this, proposals need to be routed through DICCs in the district. North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (Nedfi), too, has set up an equity fund worth Rs. 100 crore for funding start-ups in the region.

Having listed these option, it must be noted that if you want to grow really fast, you probably need external sources of capital. If you bootstrap and remain without external funding for too long, you may be unable to take advantage of market opportunities and expand the business. An exhaustive business plan with pragmatic future projections will always help a start-up to mobilise funds easily.

Always remember, it is good to start from the beginning with good corporate governance and adhere to the business plan, as it might get hard to go back later and try to enforce fiscal discipline in the organisation.

*Mr. Tilak Das Retired as Deputy General Manager, State Bank of India. He is adviser to Drishtee a social enterprise and Director, Grameen development Finance Pvt Ltd.



FINALISTS

STARTUPS OF UPSTART 2016-17



JEEV ANKSH ECO PRODUCTS PRIVATE LIMITED

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Jeev Anksh Eco Products Pvt. Ltd. is a social venture started by a bunch of crazy IIM Indore alumni, who believe that it is better to work for a cause than just to make money. We are from the foothills of the Himalayan mountain ranges of Northeast India. The name “JeevAnksh” is an amalgamation of the Hindi words “JEEVAN Ka Ansh”, which means “Ingredients of Life”. The name is an identity to our philosophy of organic lifestyle and the spirit that life itself has to offer. We are an equal opportunity company. We practice fair trade, helping our farmers live a sustainable life and get the true value of their produce. Our products have reached the store shelves in India, South East Asia, Middle East and Europe.

Category:

Agriculture & Allied Sector

Registered:

2012

URL (If Online):

www.jeevanksh.com

Contact Person:

Gunajit Brahma

Email(s):

gun@jeevanksh.com



FRESH AHEAD

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

“Fresh Ahead” is an agro-based startup, with a basic effort of minimizing the gap of the need of fresh food for the society and its production. Despite having large area of virgin land, the unavailability of fresh food for the people at large is the prime drive behind this startup, for which a large amount of food products are imported from outside.

Basically “Fresh Ahead” has two module of operation- 1) Production, 2) Marketing. The production module includes the production of various crops, fishes, poultry and so. Moreover transformation of the agricultural products to value-added products like pickles, animal feed, hand-rolled organic green tea etc. are done in this module.

Category:

Agriculture & Allied Sector

Registered:

2015

URL (If Online):

N.A.

Contact Person:

Hemanta Madhab Gogoi

Email(s):

hgogoi.356@gmail.com



KHETGYAN FARM SOLUTION

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Khetgyan Farm Solution envisions improving the productivity of farmlands in North East India by empowering farmers with modern farming knowledge through its agricultural learning portal. Another perspective of Khetgyan is to promote rural tourism which will enhance farmer's annual income. Rural tourism will be a major income generating activity for our venture as well as for the associated farmers. The other sources of income will be trading of farm produces (organic, natural and inorganic included) through our marketing & distribution channel and channel partners. Combining both, an economically sustainable model for villages can be developed.

Category:

Agriculture & Allied Sector

Registered:

2016-17

URL (If Online):

www.khetgyan.com

Contact Person:

Moloy Borah

Email(s):

moloy@post.com



UMANANDA DAIRY

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

As the first Guwahati-based captive dairy farm with an FSSAI license, Umananda Dairy is delighting customers by home-delivering fresh milk in bio-degradable pouches. The customers are making advance payments on monthly basis, an indication of the superior value perceived by the customers. The successful implementation of the 24 hours helpline ensures customer focus. With current sales of around 9,000 Litres of fresh milk per month, it achieved a turnover of Rs 41 Lakh in the last fiscal. At present, there are over 150 households which are being catered to every day.

Category:

Agriculture & Allied Sector

Registered:

2013

URL (If Online):

[umanandadairy/facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/umanandadairy/)

Contact Person:

Niraj Pareek

Email(s):

nirajpareek@gmail.com



AGROPRATYAKSHA

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Pratyaksha Agrotech Private limited is established on Nov 2014. It has its registered office at New Delhi and area of operation in North-east India. It runs the only private sector tissue culture lab in North east and produces 20 lakh plants per year. Pratyaksha Agrotech Private Limited is collaborated with BHABHA ATOMIC RESEARCH CENTRE for production of a Cancer medicine CAMPTOTHECIN from renewable sources. It is also involved in production of other phytochemicals like turmerone and psoralen. Pratyaksha Agrotech Private limited is engaged in production of fresh horticulture items; like strawberry, pineapple, etc under buy back arrangements with farmers.

Category:

Agriculture & Allied Sector

Registered:

2014

URL (If Online):

www.agropratyaksha.com

Contact Person:

Supratim Roy Choudhury

Email(s):

supratim@agropratyaksha.com



K K AGRO ASSAM

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

KK Agro Assam is engaging the economically backward and hilly and remote village society in manufacturing of Natural Disposable Leaf plates and bowls from Betel nut leaf to uplift their livelihood and make families financially independent and bringing an economically competitive, quality product to accept the market. The product itself stands out among disposable serving dishware due to its values of naturally compostable, Stylish, Sturdy, Healthy and Hygienic. It is a product of green close loop lifecycle without need to cut a tree or left any impact to the environment. At present capacity, we have a manufacturing unit employing 11 employees directly and engaging more than 300 indirect employees as raw material suppliers.

Category:

Agriculture & Allied Sector

Registered:

2015

URL (If Online):

www.facebook.com/kkagroassam

Contact Person:

Rajib Kr Singha

Email(s):

kkagroassam@gmail.com



BOOBER

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Boober is a Venture dedicated to the craft produced by using bamboo and timber. We design interior and exterior craft pieces for decorations and basic utility. Our design range includes Lamps, Furniture and many more. We the “Boober” group feed to promise you with innovative and best Bamboo products. Boober promotes environment friendly superior hand crafted bamboo lights and home decor products. BOOBER concentrates in 3 key points - Product Research, Development & Design ; and Manufacturing with major thrust in Skill Development (Urban & Rural); Training & Employment Generation.

Category:

Handmade, Handloom & Handicrafts

Registered:

2016

URL (If Online):

www.boober.in

Contact Person:

Keshav Bora, Audhiraj Goswami

Email(s):

booberkrat@gmail.com



ELRHINO ECO INDUSTRIES PVT. LTD.

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Elrhino is a handmade paper making organization enterprise located in Assam. Its mission is to generate awareness for Assam's One-Horned Rhino and Asian Elephant and to help create an environment that is conducive to the survival of these species. Its activities include making tree free paper from natural and cotton waste including dung and spreading awareness about the endangered species.

Category:

Handmade, Handloom & Handicrafts

Registered:

2014

URL (If Online):

www.elrhinopaper.com

Contact Person:

Nisha Bora

Email(s):

nisha@elrhinopaper.com



KRAFTINN HOME DÉCOR INDIA PVT LTD

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Kraftinn is a unique manufacturing company that focuses on creating handmade items leveraging the skills of artisans in the North Eastern region of India and deliver designer home decor products to a wide audience across India primarily via online channels. Kraftinn was incorporated as a Kraftinn Home Décor India Pvt Ltd company on 3rd June 2015. They sell their products primarily in all the leading marketplaces.

Category:

Handmade, Handloom & Handicraft

Registered:

2015

URL (If Online):

www.kraftinn.com

Contact Person:

Parikshit Borkotoky

Email(s):

parikshit@kraftinn.com



DEALSBUCK

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Dealsbuck deals with a new kind of buying and selling experience especially for the people of North Eastern region. We offer satisfactory deals from our merchants at appropriate price. Dealsbuck strives to get the best deals out for people, possibly unheard. We are working to cover each and every segment like home appliances, electronics, fashion, home décor, health etc. to enhance human lifestyle. Dealsbuck presents amazing promotional choices and up-to-date internet technology to promote businesses in digital media in order to sell their products to maximum possible customers within a short span of time.

Category:

e-Commerce & Business

Registered:

2015

URL (If Online):

<http://dealsbuck.com>

Contact Person:

Nayanjyoti Baishya

Email(s):

support@dealsbuck.com



AKUREE

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Akuree is an e-commerce platform. It aims to help people store their money in a virtual wallet which aids transactions such as paying or lending someone or institutions. A person using akuree application has to deposit money first in his unique akureeaccount and he will be awarded e-coins of the same value. Using this e-coin, the person can recharge mobile, order or book things from shop or similar institution, pay whether it be electricity bill or auto fare etc. The virtual wallet will also act similar to bank and the customer can also withdraw his money whenever he wants.

Category:

E-Commerce & Business

Registered:

2016

URL (If Online):

www.akuree.com

Contact Person:

Pankaj Kumar Kalitai

Email(s):

pank.grt007@gmail.com



ASSAMKART

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

AssamKart offers Assamese ebooks and English e-books of the Assamese writers. AssamKart e-books can be read using Android mobile phones, Android Tablets, Windows laptops and

Desktops. It also wants to help the writers and publishers to reach out to more and more readers around the world. As anyone from any part of the world can buy these e-books right from their homes, so the possibility of increasing the popularity of Assamese language and the numbers of Assamese readers is very high with AssamKart. AssamKart wants to be a cultural ambassador for Assamese language and literature, helping in increasing the popularity of Assamese literature and language.

Category:

Education & Advisory

Registered:

2012

URL (If Online):

www.assamkart.com

Contact Person:

Bikash Kalita

Email(s):

support@assamkart.com,
biki.kal@gmail.com



BARABAZZAR.COM

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

BARABAZZAR.COM aims at bringing convenience to people's life by ensuring day to day grocery & household goods free home delivered at customers location and giving them an option to experience the pleasure on shopping a wide range of merchandise sitting at their home – getting discounts – COD. SODEXO & Online payment facilities and most importantly getting goods at their specified place at their specified time slot..

Category:

e-Commerce & Business

Registered:

2016

URL (If Online):

Barabazzar.com

Contact Person:

Abhishek Killa

Email(s):

abhishek.killa@gmail.com



E-BOZAR

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

E-BOZAR is an online shopping site dedicated towards the handloom and other ethnic products of North-East India. It came into existence on 25th December 2012 with the aim of providing a worldwide platform to the excellent craftsmen of Assam and North-East India by showcasing their wonderful creations to the world and also making them easily available to people around the world with 100% authenticity at reasonable price. We encourage our weavers and other craftsmen to make new and innovative products. E-BOZAR is dealing primarily in three categories – Assam Silk, Designer Collections and Assamese Jewellery.

Category:

e-Commerce & Business

Registered:

2012

URL (If Online):

www.e-bozar.com

Contact Person:

D. Kalita

Email(s):

admin@e-bozar.com



POPTALES

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

POPTALES introduced the first ever t-shirt of Pyrokinesis, the cultural fest of our Almamater (Assam Engineering College). We made a profit of Rs. 35,000 after working hard for a month. The idea clicked that there are numerous campuses across the state and North-East India. So far then the leading colleges like NITs, IIT etc. were procuring the tees from companies based in Bangalore, Delhi. Even though there are numerous local players the deals were given to companies outside the Northeast due to lack of consistence in quality, lack of proper brand image etc.

Category:

E-Commerce & Business

Registered:

2013

URL (If Online):

www.poptales.in

Contact Person:

Maharnav Gogoi

Email(s):

ceo@neway.co.in



JOBSENZ

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Jobsenz is a marketplace for coaching centers and tutors to sell their content directly to job seekers. It also includes a job search engine. Users are able find local jobs, create a multilingual pdf/ online resume and also prepare for interview/ exams with live mock question papers/ flashcards/ study notes submitted by coaching centers and educators. This is creating a new revenue source for coaching centers. We are available in India including all 8 North Eastern States (as separate mobile apps), Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Currently, they offer exam materials related to English, Current Affairs & GK, Aptitude, Logical Reasoning, Programming, Banking, IAS, UPSC, etc.

Category:

Education & Advisory

Registered:

2015

URL (If Online):

<http://bit.ly/1OA5EzX>

Contact Person:

Monish Karam & Kavita Kumar

Email(s):

MONISH@MOBSENZ.COM,
KARAM.MONISH@GMAIL.COM



DAWAI LO

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Dawai Lo is health product services delivery startup. It operates with a call center with no. 8822555555(10 AM to 7PM), make home delivery of medicine, medical equipments and necessities at a discounted price (* only when we have the prescription of the patient we make the home delivery who is ordering), with a view to make genuine medicine home delivery system which will definitely make life easy for elderly people who are suffering from chronic issues like Pressure, thyroid, Sugar etc. Their upcoming services are Medicine home delivery (ongoing), Lab services (Upcoming in 2 months), Doctors Appointment (Upcoming in 2 months), Hospital booking (Upcoming in 2 months).

Category:

Health Services

Registered:

2015

URL (If Online):

www.dawailo.com

Contact Person:

Pankaj Maheshwari & Abhimanyu Modi

Email(s):

rxdawailo@gmail.com



HEALBOT: YOUR HEALTH COMPANION

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Healbot is a Software-As-A-Service product that serves as a personal healthcare assistant. The primary problem being solved by Healbot is the common man's lack of medical knowledge. Using innovative technology and extensive medical research, the Healbot app will allow users to receive pre-diagnosis information about their medical condition by answering some relevant questions, similar to a doctor-patient conversation. With that information, the user can then book an appointment with a doctor around their vicinity using the app itself.

Category:

Health Services

Registered:

-

URL (If Online):

www.healbot.co

Contact Person:

Rahul Sarma

Email(s):

healbotservices@gmail.com



OXYSQUARE

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Oxysquare is to explore every doctor and help out finding the best doctor for people. It seeks to be a pioneer in North East India providing fast and efficient one stop solutions for all the medical situations. Oxysquare aims in being the catalyst between the doctors and patients word wide.

Category:
Health Services

Registered:
2016

URL (If Online):
www.oxysquare.com

Contact Person:
Nabajyoti Das

Email(s):
nabajyoti@oxysquare.com



FOFATT IT SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Fofatt provides Fofatt Search, a facility using which people can find businesses, services and professionals available at Duliajan, Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Silchar and Tinsukia. It can be accessed at fofatt.com from smartphones, tablets and computers with internet connection. Additionally, we provide Fofatt Brochure (an online e-brochure), and custom cloud based software and website development.

Category:
Education & Advisory

Registered:
2015

URL (If Online):
www.fofatt.com

Contact Person:
Chandan Hazarika

Email(s):
hello@fofatt.com, chandan@fofatt.com



GROFSHOP

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Grofshop (Group of Shops), is a Hyperlocal Real Estate websites where showrooms and restaurants can open their Virtual self in under a minute. They define their area of delivery and deliver themselves. They are accessible as a standalone Virtual showroom and all the showrooms/ restaurants are also accessible as a Hyperlocal marketplace. We plan to charge the industry lowest commission on products sold.

Category:

IT Solutions & Services

Registered:

2016

URL (If Online):

www.dawailo.com

Contact Person:

Partha Borthakur

Email(s):

partha@grofshop.com | support@grofshop.com | parthajy@gmail.com



CRAFTLOOM

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Craftloom is an omni-channel platform for handmade products. It is creating a platform (both online and offline) just for handicrafts and handloom thereby creating a brand for North East in the future. The online store runs on LAMP stack and offline store is having its own POS RMS system on Ruby on Rails. Along with that offline stores are having digital kiosks that connect all the stores together.

Category:

Handicraft & Handloom

Registered:

2016

URL (If Online):

www.craftloom.com

Contact Person:

Angshuman Gupta

Email(s):

angshu.gupta789@gmail.com;
angshuman@craftloom.com;
support@craftloom.com



FIDGETY FINGERS

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Fidgety Fingers' is a social entrepreneurship project started in September 2015. It aims to help women become financially and socially empowered. Women, mainly belonging to various necessitous backgrounds are trained in making handcraft (precisely, knit and crochet). 20 percent of the sale amount on every product goes to the women who make them.

Category:

Handmade, Handloom & Handicraft

Registered:

2015

URL (If Online):

NA

Contact Person:

Devika Gurung

Email(s):

thecreativesoul87@gmail.com;
emi_1710@yahoo.co.in



AWE RIDES

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Awe Rides (Awesome Rides) is a self-drive car and bike sharing startup. It is operational in Guwahati, Chandigarh & Pune. They are in process of launching their services in Goa, Gwalior, Jaipur and Chennai by March 2017. Awe Rides was started with a vision to make daily commute easy and traveling more enjoyable. At Awe Rides anyone has the liberty to hire a car or a bike (both budget and luxury) without the hassle of hefty security deposits, complex documentations, agreements etc. They encourage travelers to opt for a self-drive car or bike instead of a cab, be it a half day city ride or a month long road trip.

Category:

Travel & Tourism

Registered:

2016

URL (If Online):

www.awerides.com

Contact Person:

Rahul Sharma

Email(s):

rahul@awerides.com



FAINTAIN

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Fantain is a fan relationship management company. We provide a 360 view of a fan which helps to understand the fan in terms of their likes, dislikes and favourites. We also provided Sponsorship Analysis to the teams as well and ticketing data analysis of the matches or of events

Category:

IT Solutions & Services

Registered:

2012

URL (If Online):

www.fantain.com

Contact Person:

Anshuman Dutta

Email(s):

anshuman@fantain.com



JAOBOL

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Jaobol is a location based automobile rental platform. Starting with self drive motorcycles, they have recently entered in the four wheeler rental scene. What makes them different is that they aggregate vehicles but not in the traditional way. They connect customers with people having a spare vehicle (of course self drive registered) through their website www.jaobol.com (soon to be app).

Category:

Travel & Tourism

Registered:

2016

URL (If Online):

<http://jaobol.com>

Contact Person:

Bhargav Khanikar

Email(s):

khanikarbhargav@gmail.com



CRIMATRIX

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Crimatrix is a community based real-time crime monitoring platform for police and citizens to collaborate and prevent crimes in cities. The platform will use multiple mobile and web apps to collect, analyze and share real-time crime data among police officers. Relevant data like crime trends, hotspots and modus operandi will be shared with public as preventive alerts via mobile app, Crimatrix website and social media.

Category:

IT Solutions & Services

Registered:

2012

URL (If Online):

www.Crimatrix.com

Contact Person:

Sarfaraz Hassan

Email(s):

sarfaraz.hassan@glomindz.com;

saifur.rahman@glomindz.com



ULEAP

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Uleap "Movement", enables you to view real-time movement of your friends, family or assets online. It is an internet service that we have developed, which allows 3rd party developers and business to integrate real-time location tracking capabilities into their application as per business requirements.

Category:

IT Solutions & Services

Registered:

NA

URL (If Online):

www.uleap.co

Contact Person:

Nayan Manna

Email(s):

nayan@uleap.co; tuhin@uleap.co;

founders@uleap.co



WAAGN

ABOUT THE STARTUP:

Waagn is a technology based intra-city logistics service provider company. Currently they have launched the service only in Guwahati, Assam and gradually they will expand it to pan India. They will have a web application and a mobile app for our customers to make their vehicle bookings. Customers can make their bookings through phone call as well. The vehicles would be fitted with a GPS tracker so that customers can track their cargo any time from starting till the end of the trip. Currently they would provide the service on cash after the service delivery payment mode.

Category:

IT Solutions & Services

Registered:

2016

URL (If Online):

www.waagn.com

Contact Person:

Mirza Md Rubul Hassan & Mirza Md Ikramul Hassan

Email(s):

mirza@waagn.com; info@haxtech.in

PARTNERS & ASSOCIATES

ORGANISED BY



CO-ORGANISER



INSTITUTION PARTNERS



MAGAZINE PARTNER



STORY PARTNER



KNOWLEDGE PARTNER



STATE PARTNERS



NETWORKING PARTNERS



NOTES



North East Development Foundation

Towards sustainable development in North East India



Research, platform creation, field programmes, skill enhancement, technology solutions and policy & citizen consultations

Contact NEDF@

North East Development Foundation
House 168, First Floor,
Saikia Commercial Complex,
Opposite, NRL Petrol Pump,
Jayanagar Road, Sixmile,
Guwahati - 781022
Telefax: 0361-2363204 |
Mobile: 8011051307

New Delhi Correspondence Address:
House 44, Third Floor,
Kalu Sarai, New Delhi - 110016
Telefax: 011-26532787
Mobile: 9818292524

www.nedfindia.org, www.enortheast.in,
www.eassam.in, www.schollresearch.in,
www.nesi-award.org

North East Development Foundation, a not-for-profit entity, since 2006, is working towards finding sustainable solutions to bridge development and digital divide in North East India. Since 2006 the efforts have been towards developing capacities among youths and women to address immediate and long term sustainable needs.



UDYAMI NORTH EAST

EMERGING FOOTPRINTS OF STARTUPS
& YOUTH BASED ENTERPRISES AND
TRENDS IN NORTH EAST INDIA

NOMINATIONS /
APPLICATIONS
RECEIVED

69

FINALISTS

54

CATEGORIES

12

STATES

8 NORTH EAST STATES
& 4 OTHER STATES

