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FOUNDERLABS

OCT 2025 | ISSUE #4

AI DISRUPTION

How Indian Startups Are Leveraging AI to Disrupt Traditional Industries



Uttar Pradesh
International Trade
Show - Sept 2025

Stem Education : Equipping
India's Next Generation for a
Future-Ready Workforce

Build community
for Your Startup Not Just
Customers

Your Personal
Brand : Your Startup's
Secret Weapon

TalentOnLease

A new age online platform providing
"TECHIES ON DEMAND"

Our Motto

Making available the Right Resources at
the Right Time and at Right Cost

Our UPS



A strong founding team,
comprising of Technology
Industry veterans



Verified and vetted
IT professionals



Available within 24 to
48 hours

Our Industry Coverage

- ✓ Consulting (Including big 4)
- ✓ Travel & Hospitality
- ✓ Information Technology
- ✓ Healthcare
- ✓ Manufacturing
- ✓ Ecommerce
- ✓ BFSI
- ✓ Education

Technologies



From the Editor's Desk



As we turn the pages of the October 2025 issue of FounderLabs, one thing becomes unmistakably clear — India's startup ecosystem has moved from experimentation to execution. The cover story, "AI Disruption: How Indian Startups Are Leveraging AI to Reshape Traditional Industries," captures a defining shift. From healthcare diagnostics and fintech underwriting to agritech drones and conversational AI, founders are no longer dabbling with technology — they're redesigning industries with it.

But technology alone doesn't define the new-age entrepreneur. Our feature "Build Community, Not Just Customers" reminds founders that loyalty is built through belonging, not advertising. Startups like CRED and boAt thrived not on discounts but on tribe-building — proof that in an era of automation, trust remains the ultimate currency. The vibrant E-Cafe Delhi Meetup echoed this sentiment, as founders and creators shared ideas that brewed stronger than coffee.

Another highlight, "STEM Education: Equipping India's Next Generation for a Future-Ready Workforce," underscores how innovation begins in classrooms. With initiatives like the Kr8ivity League, India's students are being trained to think beyond textbooks and toward entrepreneurship. With these educational foundations being laid, the potential for a dynamic and forward-thinking workforce is immense. Young minds are being nurtured to not only adapt to technological advancements but to lead

them. This proactive approach ensures that the next wave of entrepreneurs is equipped with the skills and mindset necessary to tackle global challenges and seize opportunities with creativity and confidence.

This is India's startup decade. It will be defined by the intentions we hold, the communities we uplift, and the voices we amplify.

In conversation with Ashutosh Agarwal of Scriphonix, we decode how AI and product thinking can transform early-stage ventures when paired with the right culture and clarity. Our "Personal Brand" feature closes the loop between visibility and value. In 2025, investors don't just fund startups; they back founders whose credibility, voice, and authenticity inspire belief. Beyond the features, this edition celebrates community movements — from CMD Business Club's leadership sessions to TiEcon Delhi's deep-tech vision and IIMA Ventures x E-Cafe outreach in Jodhpur — each reaffirming that India's startup story is a collective one. As we navigate this decade of disruption, one truth stands out: technology builds scale, but intention builds legacy. The startups that will define the future are those that pair AI with empathy, innovation with inclusion, and ambition with authenticity.

Keep building. Keep believing.

Happy Reading

MANOJ PAL
Managing Editor

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AI DISRUPTION

How Indian Startups Are Leveraging AI to Disrupt Traditional Industries



CHANGING THE GAME ACROSS INDUSTRIES



MARKETING



DESIGN



HEALTHCARE



India's \$250B IT services industry, a talent pool of 5M developers, and the \$1.25B India AI Mission are turning the country into a global breeding ground for AI-led disruption. By 2030, an estimated 10 million jobs will be reshaped by agentic AI (as per report by BCG, 2025), making it both a massive risk and an even bigger opportunity for founders.

To stay ahead, startups must rethink workflows, identify one clear wedge where AI can deliver immediate value, and reskill teams in areas like prompt engineering and data operations. Embedding AI ethics early is equally critical, as data bias can quickly erode trust. Most importantly, founders need to measure ROI not just by hype, but by tracking efficiency, cost savings, and revenue growth—turning AI from a buzzword into a real competitive moat.

AI is no longer just a competitive edge—it's table stakes. Startups that embed AI into every layer of their business—from product development to customer engagement and operations—can scale faster, operate efficiently, and deliver truly differentiated experiences.

**— Ankit Prasad
CEO of Bobble AI**



Case Studies of Disruption



1 Healthcare: AI as a Doctor's Co-Pilot

Bengaluru's Niramai uses its Thermalytix™ engine for early breast cancer detection. Non-invasive and affordable, it's reaching Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities where diagnostic infrastructure is scarce.

SigTuple automates pathology reports, speeding up lab results. Jivi, meanwhile, acts as a digital assistant for overworked doctors—automating notes, suggesting treatments, and easing admin burdens.

Quick Stat: The Indian AI-in-healthcare market is projected to hit \$6.4B by 2030 (NASSCOM, 2025).

2 Fintech: From Credit Deserts to Credit Access

ZestMoney and Razorpay are making lending smarter with AI-driven fraud detection. Signzy reduced KYC onboarding from 3 days to under 3 minutes using facial recognition and government data sync.

Meanwhile, Yubi and Dhan are betting on generative AI to personalize lending decisions at scale.



For fintech founders, AI isn't about automation—it's about trust. If your AI can underwrite risk better, you unlock millions of first-time borrowers.



— **Lizzie Chapman**
Co-founder, ZestMoney

3 Agritech: AI on the Farm

From drones to robots, AI is touching soil. CropIn's SmartFarm predicts yields with climate models. AgNext uses computer vision to assure food quality at mandis.

TartanSense's BrijBot helps small farmers kill

weeds precisely, reducing input costs by 30%. For agritech founders, the focus should always be farmer-first—design interfaces in local languages or voice-based formats to ensure accessibility. Partner with government agri-extension programs to scale impact and credibility. Avoid building solutions just to impress investors; instead, solve real crop-to-market challenges that truly improve farmers' lives.

4 Retail & Fashion: Predicting Trends Before They Exist

Stylumia powers demand forecasting for brands like Myntra, cutting waste. Lenskart's AI try-on boosted conversion by 22% in 2024.

Fynd is combining recommendation engines with supply-chain AI, ensuring the right product meets the right buyer—at the right time.



5 Conversational AI: India's Multilingual Edge

India's linguistic diversity is an AI advantage. Haptik and Yellow.ai run chatbots in Hindi, Tamil, and Bengali for banks and telecoms.

Ringg AI, which raised \$1M last year, is scaling voice-agent infrastructure in 15+ languages, enabling real-time call handling.

AI's Contribution to GDP: According to a McKinsey report, AI could add up to \$957 billion to India's GDP by 2035, making it a core driver of economic growth in the coming years. This contribution will mainly stem from improvements in productivity, automation, and data-driven decision-making across industries.



Customers may use your product. But with AI, they start to depend on it. That's when you know you've built something that lasts.



— **Ankit Prasad**
CEO of Bobble AI

In 2020, AI was a buzzword. By 2025, it's a survival strategy. Indian startups are rewriting industry playbooks with AI-driven solutions.

For founders, this isn't about whether to adopt AI, but how fast and how deeply.



AI is no longer the future, it's the present. Indian startups that integrate AI into their DNA are not just disrupting industries; they're building unbeatable moats. Stay ahead. Build responsibly. And remember, your biggest risk is waiting too long.

For fintech founders, AI isn't about automation—it's about trust. If your AI can underwrite risk better, you unlock millions of first-time borrowers.

— **Maya Bazzi**
Co-founder, Sea.dev

The Road Ahead

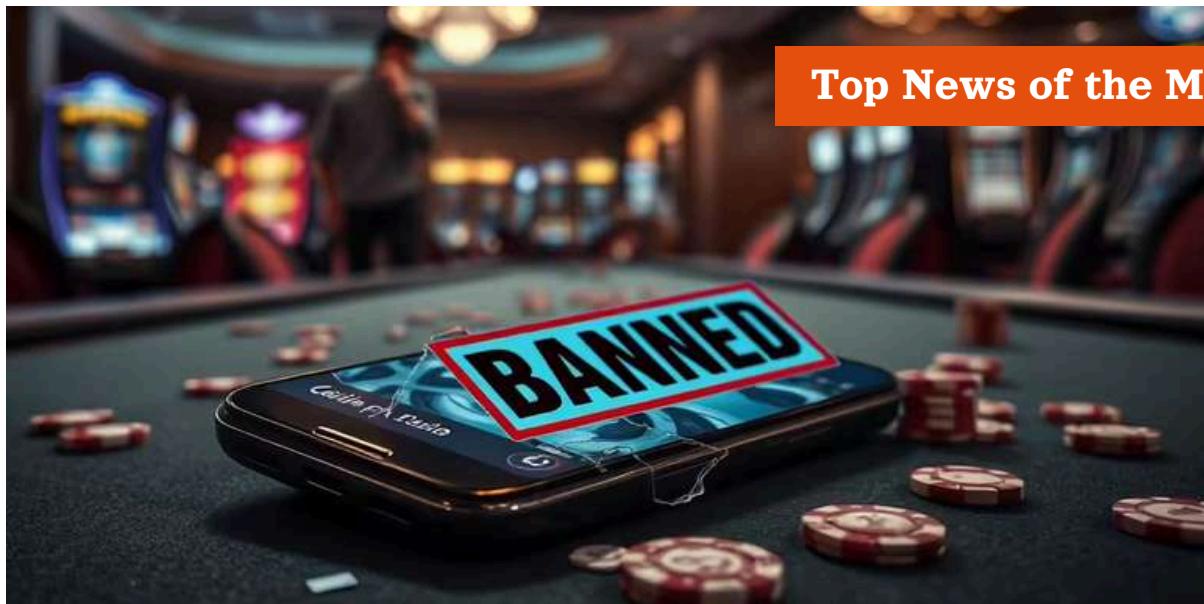
The rapid adoption of AI by Indian startups is not only disrupting traditional industries but also positioning India as a global leader in AI innovation. With a growing number of AI startups and increasing investment in AI research and development, the future looks promising for India's AI-driven transformation.



However, challenges such as data privacy concerns, regulatory frameworks, and the need for skilled talent remain areas that require attention to ensure sustainable growth in this sector. Additionally, fostering collaboration between startups, academia, and government bodies will be crucial to accelerate AI adoption. Startups will also need to focus on creating ethically responsible AI solutions that are transparent and inclusive, ensuring that innovation benefits all segments of society.

The Founder's Digest

This Month's Must-Reads from FounderLabs



BAN ON ONLINE MONEY GAMING SETS STAGE FOR SUPREME COURT SHOWDOWN

The Indian government has introduced a sweeping ban on online money gaming, bringing fantasy sports, rummy, poker, and other cash-based games under a nationwide prohibition. The move, framed under the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025, has sent shockwaves across the gaming and startup ecosystem.

founderlabs.in/aws-backs-indias-booming-spacetech-sector-expands-global-accelerator-programme/



APNA.CO LAUNCHES 'CAMPUS TANK' FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Apna.co launches Campus Tank to support student entrepreneurship in India, offering mentorship, funding, and networking for young innovators.

<https://founderlabs.in/meta-shifts-gears-from-buying-ai-startup-to-hiring-its-ceo/>



SARVAM LIKELY TO ROLL OUT INDIA'S FIRST LLM NEXT YEAR

Sarvam AI, the artificial intelligence startup, plans to launch India's first large language model (LLM) next year. This step marks a turning point in India's mission to build sovereign AI capabilities.

<https://founderlabs.in/sarvam-ai-set-to-unveil-indias-first-sovereign-llm-next-year/>



ZOMATO PARENT FACES ANOTHER TAX HURDLE AMID BLINKIT BOOM

Eternal — the parent company of Zomato and Blinkit — has been slapped with a ₹128.4 crore GST demand by the Uttar Pradesh State Tax Department.

<https://founderlabs.in/zomato-parent-faces-another-tax-hurdle-amid-blinkit-boom/>



INDIA LAUNCHES ₹10,000 CRORE FUND FOR DEEPTECH STARTUPS

Union Minister Piyush Goyal, announced the launch of the second edition of the Fund of Funds (FoF) with a substantial ₹10,000 crore allocation at Startup Mahakumbh 2025 in New Delhi,

<https://founderlabs.in/india-launches-10000-crore-fund-for-deeptech-startups/>

UPCOMING EVENTS



Taj Palace, New Delhi

TiEcon Delhi-NCR 2025

A premier conference for founders, investors, and researchers. This edition will focus upon India's rise in AI, quantum computing, semiconductors, space, defense, biotech, and life sciences.

Oct
29
2025

Nov
8
2025

Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Global Startup Summit 2025

Start-up showcases, B2B networking, and investor meetups. A platform for entrepreneurs to present their products and ideas to potential investors.



Hyderabad, Telangana

ICONN Summit 2025

Industry-Startup Connect, fostering partnerships between corporates and startups.

Nov
24
2025



Bengaluru

Bengaluru Tech Summit 2025

Asia's leading technology summit, this event brings together global leaders in technology and innovation to discuss the future of startups and digital transformation.

Nov

18
2025

Nov
2025

Entrepreneur 2025 Summit

A platform for entrepreneurs to present their products and ideas to potential investors, fostering an environment for collaboration and growth.



Mehboob Studio, Mumbai

HP Dreams Unlocked Festival

An event aimed at connecting young innovators with industry experts, providing them with the tools and ideas to live

Nov
2025



SCIENCE. TECHNOLOGY. ENGINEERING. MATHEMATICS

STEM EDUCATION

Equipping India's Next Generation for a
Future -Ready Workforce





Chetanya Sahu, Author / Innovator / Passionately helping Schools build Innovation Ecosyste, CEO, ABL Education

India's education sector is witnessing a great shift as schools across the country embrace STEM education, an interdisciplinary model combining Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics to gear young learners for a technology-driven, innovation-led future. Through this model, students are encouraged to connect classroom theories with real-world applications, explore solutions and think critically.

From Tier-1 city classrooms to schools in smaller towns, STEM education is reshaping the way children engage with knowledge. By encouraging hands-on experience, problem-solving, and critical thinking, this approach goes beyond rote memorization to connect classroom theories with real-world applications.

Building Skills for the Future

Educators argue that STEM is not about teaching isolated subjects but creating an integrated learning ecosystem that mirrors

real-world scenarios where knowledge from multiple fields is applied simultaneously. "STEM builds logical reasoning and adaptability, preparing students not only for traditional careers but also for entrepreneurial journeys," say education experts.

Beyond academic excellence, STEM fosters creativity, teamwork, communication skills, and socio-emotional learning, competencies vital in an era dominated by Artificial Intelligence.

Overcoming Challenges

Despite its promise, STEM adoption in India faces multiple roadblocks. The absence of a national framework often leaves schools experimenting independently, while the integrated nature of learning means results may take time to reflect. Additionally, without proper structuring, implementation can become costly.



The Importance of Early Exposure

Research indicates that early childhood is the most critical phase for cognitive development. Introducing STEM at this stage nurtures sharpens problem-solving skills, and builds confidence through experiential learning. Such early interventions equip students for emerging industries, where 70% of jobs by 2035 are expected to demand STEM-based skills.



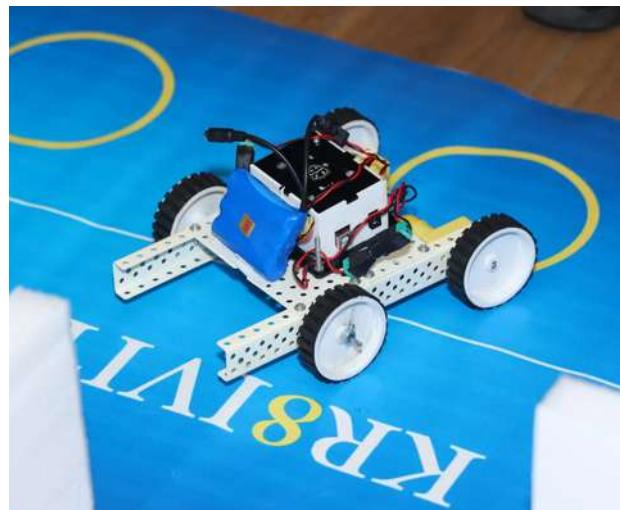
Kr8ivity League: A Festival of Creativity

Accelerating this movement is the Kr8ivity League, a national-level competition that challenges students to showcase their skills in Coding, Robotics, and Entrepreneurship. Regional rounds take place across multiple cities, with winners advancing to the finale at IIT Delhi.

Described by organizers as a “festival of creativity,” the event attracts thousands of students from progressive schools nationwide. The 2025 edition is now open for registrations, inviting schools, students, and parents to participate. For more details, visit www.KreativityLeague.com

Looking Ahead

With India’s ambition to become a Viksit Bharat by 2047, equipping its youth with



future-ready skills is both an opportunity and a responsibility. By adopting STEM education at scale and fostering platforms like the Kr8ivity League, India can cultivate a generation of innovators, problem-solvers, and leaders who will power the nation’s growth story.

The article is written by Chetanya Sahu, CEO, ABL Education & Author of the Book "Future Ready School"

An Indepth Conversation On

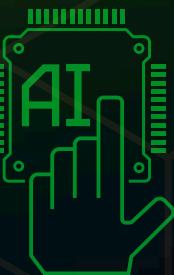
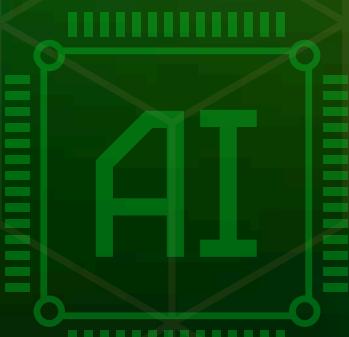
SCRIPTHONIX

With Ashutosh Agarwal

CEO, SCRIPTHONIX

DATA
STORAGE

EXCITING
TOOLS





➡ How did the idea of Scriphonix come to you?

Scriphonix started as an edtech company where we wanted to solve the problem of unproductive screen time for kids by giving them Human+AI generated content which helped them learn 21st century skills in a fun way rather than scrolling reels or watching random videos.

We built a great team of instructors and trained them on a few of the best AI tools - which resulted in a lot of story based content to learn areas like Art, Culture, Design, AI, Science etc. It was self paced, low cost for mass affordability delivered via market leading LMS. However after a few quarters we realized even though everyone liked the content, most parents did not have time to spend time with their young kids on self paced content - which led to very high GTM costs for us. As founders we had to take a tough call to take a hard pivot.

Some of the content that team created is now available freely on our youtube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/@KidsNagri>



What problems are you solving now at Scriptphonix in its current form after a major pivot?

So I have been a technology + product guy for 25 years and with experience working with few of the data engineering and AI startups across the world in domains like edtech, healthcare, finance. I thought why not utilize this experience to help startups, small businesses and schools in India to not only build products using technology including AI as a strategic advantage but at the same time focus on user research based product development as core to their development process.

We devised three core offerings 1) Fractional part time CTO (in few cases CPTO) who would bring technology and product leadership available to early and growth phase startups at 15-25% of the cost of the full time hire 2) AI leadership workshop for SME's 3) Technology and Data Audit for Schools for compliance, operations and pedagogical needs



In your journey as a Fractional CTO, what are the biggest technical gaps you've seen in early-stage startups in India, and how can founders bridge them?

Let me highlight few of the major ones that I am seeing 1) Poor tech vs business alignment which leads to unwanted features getting built 2) As knowledge lives in 1-2 engineers head, any attrition means months lost 3) Security, backups and compliance blind spots which can lead to business discontinuity / fines 4) No tech due diligence for fund raising

Founders, especially non tech founders, need technology guidance early on - I would recommend budget at least 10-20% of your technology burn on a technology leader who also understands a bit of product management. I have seen scenarios where early stage founders have burned upwards of 50 lacs without any real technology or product direction

taking shape, which just makes them and potential investors more anxious.



You've been leading AI workshops for SMEs. What mindset shifts do Indian founders and small businesses need to adopt to really leverage AI instead of just experimenting with it?

Five things to keep in mind to begin with 1) Prioritize high impact use cases (important to know what not to work on) 2) Have an AI leader in place to move the flywheel in the right direction 3) Check if you have required quality data in place for your use cases 4) Have a sandbox in place for rapid testing 5) Budget both build and server costs



Many startups rush into building products without validating. From your perspective, what's the right balance

between speed of execution and building scalable, reliable tech?

For idea validation, based on the founder's thesis, use vibe coding / no-code solutions and just get it out to get user feedback - even a technical product manager can do this in today's world.

Once validated at least with few users the real tech work starts and this is where my earlier point of user research which probably you can start during the idea validation phase itself plays an important role. Have an early core team whom you can rely on for the long term for quick iterations (as speed still matters in early and growth phase), infra / deployments, security - they are a set of people who are willing to learn, smart and understand the domain over a period of time.



Jugaad is good but not in deep tech. To build your own IP takes time, money and a great culture.

--- Mr. Ashutosh Agarwal
Chief AI Officer, Scriphonix

For venture capitalists and investors, what are the key tech readiness signals they should look for in a startup before backing them?

A solid tech first startup typically has a clear, documented architecture (even a monolith is fine), clean repos with version control and basic testing, and at least minimal DevOps maturity with staging and automated deployments.

Security hygiene like HTTPS, role-based access, and encrypted storage is non-negotiable, as customer trust and compliance risks can sink companies.

Importantly, the tech team should be aligned with business goals and knowledge should be documented instead of locked in one engineer's head. For investors, the real question is - if this startup grew 10x tomorrow, would its tech collapse or scale?

India's startup ecosystem is booming, but also crowded. How do you think technology and AI can help new founders stand out in this competitive space?

So two broad areas where founders can utilize technology and AI - first is operational efficiency, where AI tools act as force multipliers. This includes coding assistants that accelerate development, intelligent support desks that reduce customer service costs, automated content creation that scales marketing, and AI driven workflows that keep burn rates low while increasing output. Startups that master this are able to operate with leaner teams and still deliver at enterprise-grade quality.

The second is high-value innovation, where AI becomes the differentiator rather than just a cost-saver. This spans hyper-personalized user experiences in fintech, edtech, health, and commerce - the kind of personalization that builds trust and drives retention. It also extends to deeptech applications such as robotics, computer vision, and edge AI chips that create defensible IP and set startups apart in global markets.

Finally, what's your message for startup founders who are building in the tech and AI space today?

This is the best time to build in India - you have a talent pool, govt support and so many high value problems across pretty much all domains which need solutions. But again do not miss building the right culture and research based IP part.

As we say in Hindi - "Sahaj pake so mitha hove" - so speed matters but remember it's a marathon not a sprint.



BUILD COMMUNITY

FOR YOUR STARTUP NOT JUST CUSTOMERS

In the early days of a startup, every founder obsesses over customer acquisition. But if you stop there, you'll always be chasing the next lead. The smartest founders today are asking a different question:

**How do I build a
community that
grows with us?**

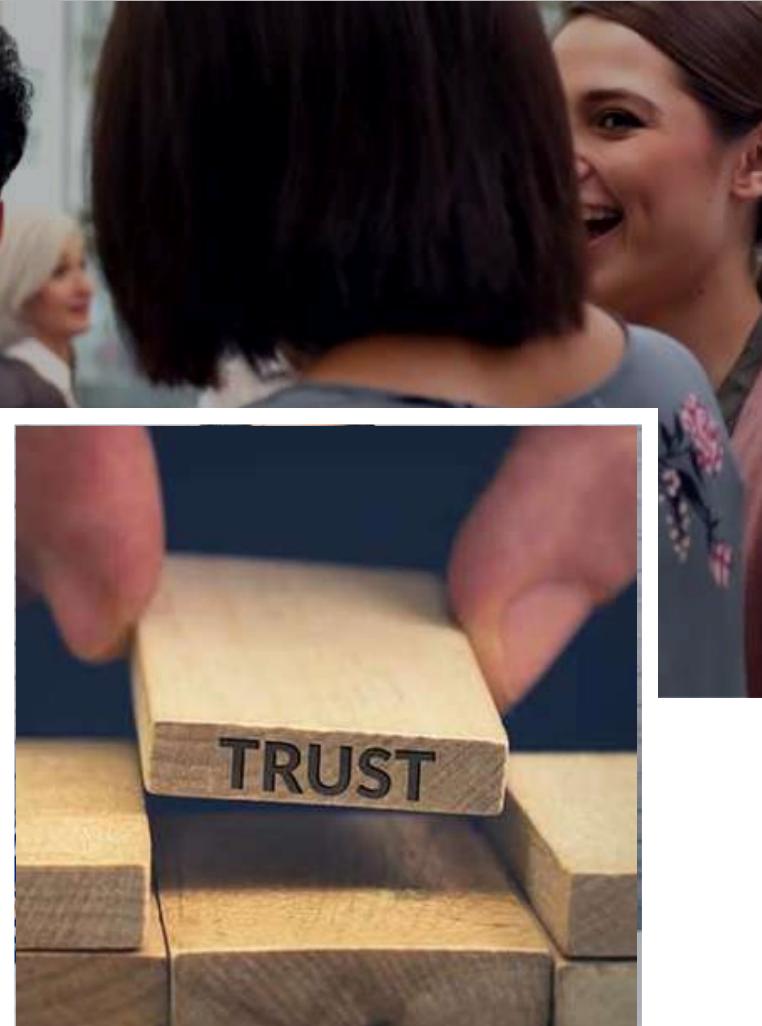




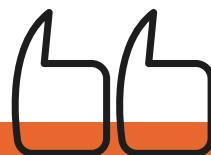
BUILDING *Trust, Not* TRACTION

Customers are transactional—they buy once or twice, and the moment a competitor offers a better price, feature, or convenience, they switch. Communities, however, are transformational. A community member doesn't just consume your product; they become part of its journey. They defend your brand when it's criticized, suggest improvements that make it better, and advocate for it without being asked. Think about it: a customer may attend your webinar as a passive participant, but a community member will step up to host the next one. That's the difference between short-term revenue and long-term loyalty. When you build communities, you shift from chasing users to cultivating evangelists.

Paid advertising can bring users, but it's expensive and unsustainable. Communities, on the other hand, create organic and compounding growth. In India, brands like boAt, CRED, Zerodha, and Mamaearth didn't just run ad campaigns—they built fan-led movements where users proudly identified with the brand. This not only reduced acquisition costs but also generated user-generated content that spread like wildfire.



SO HOW DID INDIAN FOUNDERS EARN THEIR TRUST?



In a market like India—saturated, brand-savvy, and value-driven—the future belongs to startups that don't just sell, but invite users to co-create and connect.

**— Ankur Warikoo
Founder of WebVeda**

More importantly, communities offer real-time feedback loops that companies dream of. Instead of waiting for quarterly surveys, a WhatsApp group or Discord community channel provides daily insights.

You can beta-test new features with early adopters, quickly identify bugs, and prioritize features based on the pain points that matter most to your users. This transforms your product roadmap from a set of assumptions into a collaborative, user-driven evolution.

Starting Small, Scaling Big

You don't need millions to build a strong community—every movement starts small. Define your "why," choose the right space (WhatsApp, Slack, Discord), and begin with 5–10 passionate members. Create simple rituals like weekly check-ins or AMAs, and recognize contributions to keep members engaged. Over time, this small circle grows into a magnet for talent, investors, and loyal customers. You're not just scaling a product—you're building a movement.

Too many founders see community as a "nice-to-have." In reality, it's a strategic moat that drives growth, retention, and meaning. Because in the end: Customers pay for your product. Community fights for your brand.

Building an Uncopyable Moat

Startups often worry about competitors copying features, undercutting prices, or replicating models. But here's the truth: while anyone can clone a product, no one can clone trust and belonging. Communities are the moat that

66

Focus
Solve
Scale



competitors can't buy. That's why global startups like Notion, Figma, and Airbnb became more than tools—they became ecosystems. In India, The Ken and IndieHackers India have built communities where people stay, not because of flashy features, but because of a sense of shared identity and belonging.

This defensibility shows up in retention. Churn happens when a product is seen as replaceable. Communities reduce churn by adding an emotional layer—leaving a product community feels like leaving friends behind. This emotional cost of switching keeps members far more loyal than discounts or promotions ever could.

Indian
Founders

FROM BURNOUT TO BALANCE

Work-Life Balance Lessons From
Startup Founders

In the high-octane world of Indian startups, where long hours, tight deadlines, and constant innovation are the norm, achieving a work-life balance can seem like a mythical goal.

Yet, many successful Indian founders have managed to maintain their sanity while scaling their ventures. Their journeys offer valuable lessons for aspiring entrepreneurs and professionals alike.

Work-life balance for Indian startup founders is less about rigid schedules and more about intentional living. By prioritizing, setting boundaries, maintaining wellness, disconnecting strategically, and leaning on support networks, founders manage to thrive professionally and personally.

For aspiring entrepreneurs, the takeaway is clear: sustainable success comes not from relentless hustle alone, but from a balanced, mindful approach to life and work.

Built With Purpose Backed By Visionaries

Founders like Byju Raveendran of BYJU'S emphasize the importance of focusing on what truly matters. Early-stage startups are often flooded with tasks, but not all of them contribute to the bigger vision. By learning to prioritize high-impact activities and delegating or dropping non-essential tasks, founders create space for personal time. Many Indian

Founders, including Falguni Nayar of Nykaa, advocate clear boundaries between work and personal life. Whether it's fixed family dinners or unplugging from work emails over the weekend, these boundaries help recharge mental and emotional energy.

Tech founders like Naveen Tewari (InMobi) rely heavily on calendars, task management apps, and strict scheduling to manage both work and personal commitments. By batching similar tasks and allocating time slots for family or personal hobbies, founders reduce stress and increase efficiency.

Exercise and Wellness As a Non-Negotiable

Founders such as Deep Kalra (MakeMyTrip) have publicly shared their routines involving daily exercise and mindfulness practices. Physical activity and wellness routines not only boost energy but also help in making better decisions under pressure. In a culture of hustle, founders like Kunal Shah (CRED) emphasize "digital detox" periods—moments where phones, emails, and notifications are put aside. Disconnecting doesn't just prevent burnout; it fosters creativity and strengthens relationships outside work.

Indian founders often credit their families, mentors, and trusted teams for helping them maintain balance. Bhavish Aggarwal (Ola) mentions that having reliable support at home and at work reduces the emotional load of entrepreneurship. You don't have to do it all alone—leverage support systems to sustain both growth and well-being.

The Breaking Point

We Don't Talk About

There's a moment that quietly sneaks up on you — when your morning coffee no longer energizes you, your to-do list feels endless, and even small tasks feel like mountains. That's burnout — the silent exhaustion that comes not just from overwork, but from the constant pressure to be "on."

In a world that glorifies hustle and productivity, slowing down can feel like a luxury. But the truth is, it's survival.



Beyond Exhaustion Understanding Burnout

Burnout isn't just about feeling tired. It's a state of emotional, physical, and mental depletion caused by prolonged stress. You might still be functioning — showing up to meetings, hitting deadlines, replying to messages — but you're running on empty.

- Chronic fatigue even after rest
- Irritability or detachment from work and relationships
- Loss of motivation or sense of purpose
- Physical symptoms like headaches or insomnia

“

Burnout doesn't happen because we're weak; it happens because we've been strong for too long — for everyone but ourselves.

Burnout is not the price you pay for success. It's the signal that you've been defining success in someone else's terms for too long.

— Robin Sharma

Leadership Expert & Author of
The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari

”

The most dangerous part? Burnout tricks you into believing you just need to "push through." But that's exactly what keeps the cycle alive.

Balance Isn't Static It's a Practice

Finding balance isn't about achieving perfect calm. It's about creating a rhythm that allows rest and ambition to coexist. Some days will tilt toward chaos, others toward calm — and that's okay. What matters is learning to recognize when you're running low and giving yourself permission to pause. Burnout is not a badge of honor. It's a warning sign that something needs to change. Balance, on the other hand, is not about doing less — it's about doing what sustains you.

Because when you nurture balance, you don't just protect your health — you protect your potential.

Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show Sept 2025





NARENDRA MODI
Hon'ble Prime Minister
India

UP INTERNATIONAL TRADE SHOW

3rd Edition

Date : 25 - 29 September, 2025
Venue : India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida



YOGI ADITYANATH
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Uttar Pradesh

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Unlocking Talent Beyond Borders

The India Expo Centre & Mart recently concluded the third edition of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS), a massive five-day event that reinforced the state's standing as a formidable economic force and global business hub. Running from October 25 to 29, 2025, the trade show, inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, successfully brought together thousands of exhibitors and buyers from around the world.

Under the ambitious theme of "Ultimate Sourcing Begins Here," UPITS 2025 served as a powerful platform to showcase the best of Uttar Pradesh's industrial and cultural offerings. With Russia joining as the partner country, the event drew significant international attention and facilitated new bilateral trade opportunities.



The event saw over 31,650 B2B meetings, resulting in more than 3,900 MoUs worth approximately USD 425 million.

Aligning with national economic vision

The inauguration by Prime Minister Modi highlighted how the trade show aligns with and actively contributes to the national vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) and Vocal for Local. Speaking at the event, the Prime Minister praised Uttar Pradesh's rapid industrial transformation, citing milestones such as its leadership in expressway and airport development, as well as its dominant role in domestic mobile phone production. The Prime Minister also highlighted the state's growing role in national strategic sectors, such as defence,

Event Highlights

Diverse exhibits:

Diverse exhibits: Over 2,400 exhibitors displayed a wide range of goods, from traditional handicrafts under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme to modern electronics, automotive parts, and more.

Massive visitor turnout:

The expo drew a huge crowd of over 1.25 lakh B2B participants and more than 4.5 lakh B2C visitors, creating vast opportunities for networking and business expansion.



with the Defence Corridor and partnerships like the AK-203 rifle manufacturing with Russia.

Fostering growth for MSMEs and startups

A crucial aspect of UPITS 2025 was its focus on supporting Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and startups. Special pavilions and forums were dedicated to providing smaller businesses with the resources to scale up and connect with investors and international distributors.

The event included dedicated spaces for innovative start-ups to showcase their business models, supported by the CM Yuva scheme.

Looking ahead: Sustaining the momentum

As the curtains close on UPITS 2025, the message is clear: Uttar Pradesh is not just a participant but a driver of India's economic growth story. The overwhelming success of this year's event builds on the momentum of previous editions, signaling a new chapter of

industrial excellence and global engagement for the state. For global buyers seeking quality, scalability, and innovation, and for local entrepreneurs ready to take on the world, UPITS has firmly established itself as a must-attend event. The stage is set for a new, economically vibrant Uttar Pradesh.



Yogi Adityanath, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh

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FounderLabs



Your

PERSONAL BRAND

Your Startup's Secret Weapon
in 2025

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× × × × × ×



In today's fast-paced startup world, your personal brand isn't optional—it's your startup's first impression. Investors, employees, and customers decide whether to trust your product based on the story of the founder behind it. Bhavish Aggarwal of Ola recalls that early investors cared less about the tech and more about whether he could lead through uncertainty. Your credibility fills the trust gap until your startup itself can stand on its own.

“

Features don't create loyalty—stories do. Sharing struggles, late nights, and small wins makes your brand relatable. Shradha Sharma of YourStory notes that her personal journey helped turn early users into evangelists, long before the product gained traction.

Why Founders Matter More Than Products

72% Early-stage investors in 2025 valued founder credibility over product

1.6x Startups with visible founders raised more capital on average

Story = Belief – Personal story bridges potential and trust

Investors and partners back people, not slides. Kunal Shah's thought leadership helped CRED form international partnerships because people trusted his vision and insight.



Your Personal Brand Is Your Startup's Superpower

Top talent joins missions, not jobs. Investors bet on founders before products. And audiences connect more with authenticity than polished success stories—founders who share struggles see 3x more engagement. By showing your culture, vision, and values, you don't just attract hires or capital—you inspire belief.



Quick Tips

- Pick one platform — LinkedIn, X, or YouTube.
- Post weekly — consistency beats perfection.
- Share the journey — wins and lessons.
- Engage actively — comment, connect, converse.
- Stay authentic — your voice is your edge.
- Add value — teach, don't just tell.
- Refine often — track what works and repeat.

Make Your Story Work for You

In 2025, startups compete with personalities, not just products. Founders who share real stories build more trust than those hiding behind logos. Your personal brand is your moat. In a world of AI noise, authenticity cuts through.

Consistency beats virality. Post weekly, engage, and own your niche on LinkedIn, X, or YouTube. Share both wins and pivots. Your brand outlasts your startup—credibility keeps doors open. Start now. Visibility is currency, and your voice is the best investment.



Startup Pitch Decks In *Regional Languages*

■ The New Trend Transforming
Indian Innovation

India's startup ecosystem is no longer confined to English-speaking founders in metros. From the streets of Indore to the tech parks of Coimbatore, entrepreneurs are rewriting the rules — and their pitch decks. A growing number of founders are now presenting their startup ideas in regional languages, making investor communication more inclusive, relatable, and powerful.

This emerging shift isn't just about language; it's about access, understanding, and representation in India's rapidly expanding innovation landscape.



Why the Shift? India's Multi-Lingual Startup Reality

With over 20 official languages and 1,600 dialects, India's linguistic diversity is unmatched. Yet for years, English dominated the startup ecosystem — from investor meetings to pitch competitions.



But that's changing fast. As Tier II and Tier III cities contribute significantly to India's startup boom, founders are realizing that their first pitch doesn't have to be in English to be effective.

- AI tools like Dubverse and Katha AI enable professional-quality multilingual decks and translations.
- Over 70% of India's population speaks regional languages, yet English dominates most startup presentations.
- Startups from Tier II and Tier III cities are increasingly using Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, Marathi, and other languages to pitch ideas.
- Government initiatives like Startup India and state innovation councils provide multilingual support for founders.

Incubators, accelerators, and even state government initiatives are encouraging founders to present business ideas in

languages like Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, Bengali, and Marathi. This shift allows entrepreneurs to express their vision more confidently and authentically.

Empowering Founders from Bharat

The regional-language pitch trend is particularly empowering for first-generation founders from smaller cities and rural regions. These entrepreneurs often have deep insights into local problems but limited exposure to formal English communication.



By allowing them to pitch in their own language, the ecosystem is helping them bridge the confidence gap and focus on substance over style.

This inclusivity opens doors for thousands of innovators who were once left out of the conversation simply because of a language barrier.

Government & Ecosystem Push

Several state startup missions — including those in Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra — are integrating regional-language options into their accelerator programs. Even major events like

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The language of innovation is clarity, not English. Great ideas can emerge in any language if told with conviction. A well-structured Hindi or Tamil deck that clearly explains market opportunity and traction often stands out more than a jargon-heavy English one.

— **Aneesh Sharma**
Bengaluru-based VC

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Startup Mahakumbh and Startup India Innovation Week have begun offering multilingual support during pitching sessions, workshops, and mentoring.

This structural support signals a larger goal: to make India's innovation truly inclusive, reaching every aspiring founder — not just those fluent in English.

A Step Toward Truly Democratic Innovation

Language inclusion in startup storytelling marks a turning point in Indian entrepreneurship. It proves that innovation doesn't belong to one language — it belongs to everyone with an idea worth sharing. By embracing regional-language pitch decks, India is not just breaking linguistic barriers — it's expanding the definition of innovation itself. The next unicorn might just emerge from a deck written in Marathi, Telugu, or Bengali.

In the race to build global startups, India is learning an important lesson: great ideas sound powerful in every language. The more inclusive our ecosystem becomes, the more diverse — and unstoppable — our innovation story will be.

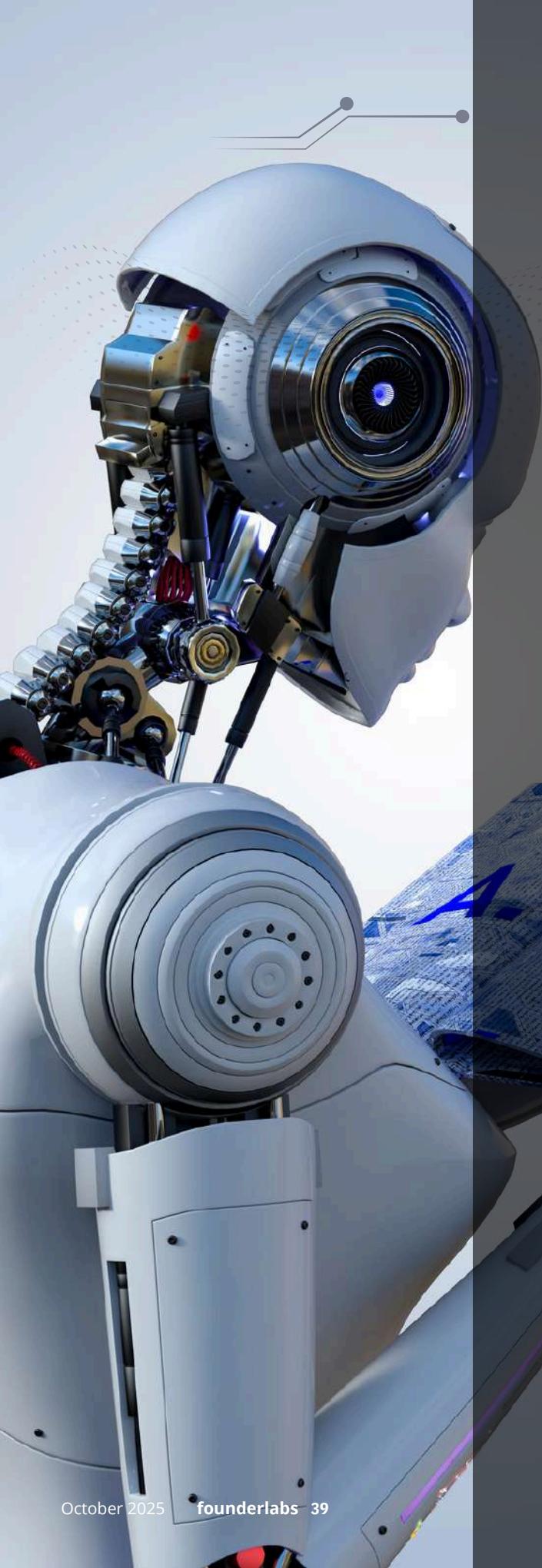
TOP
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SPOT THE NEXT UNICORN BEFORE IT TAKES OFF

Emerging Sectors to Invest in Indian Startups

As we step into 2025, India's startup ecosystem is buzzing with opportunities. Massive funding inflows, innovation-led industries, and policy support are fueling entrepreneurship across sectors. For founders and investors alike, identifying emerging industries in India is crucial to staying ahead. Here's a look at the top startup sectors in 2025 and why they are attracting attention.

**1**

Artificial Intelligence in India

AI is redefining industries with solutions like chatbots, predictive analytics, and automation. Indian startups are building AI products for global consumption, making it one of the best sectors for startup investment in India 2025.

2

Renewable Energy Startups

With sustainability becoming a priority, solar, wind, and bioenergy ventures are scaling fast. These renewable energy startups in India are not only reducing carbon footprints but also attracting global investors.

3

Healthcare Innovation 2025

Telemedicine, diagnostics, and personalized healthcare continue to rise post-pandemic. The demand for affordable and accessible healthcare makes this one of the strongest growth sectors.

4

AgriTech Investments India

Agriculture is being reshaped by drone technology and IoT-driven solutions. Startups helping farmers improve yields are gaining investor confidence.

5

Cybersecurity Market in India

As digital adoption surges, so do cyber risks. Startups developing innovative cybersecurity solutions are becoming highly investable.

Growth Areas for 2025 Startups

This book on human psychology and decision-making has influenced product and business strategy thinking in many startups. Founders reference it when speaking about customer behavior and leadership judgment.

1 Electric Vehicle Startups India

Government incentives and rising awareness about pollution are driving the EV market. Startups focusing on affordable EVs and charging infrastructure are scaling quickly.

2 IoT in Indian Startups

IoT is reshaping healthcare, manufacturing, and agriculture with connected devices. The sector is pulling strong investor interest.

3 Drone Technology in Agriculture

From crop monitoring to pest control, drones are revolutionizing farming. This is one of the hottest AgriTech investment opportunities in India.

India in 2025 is a fertile ground for entrepreneurs. From AI startups to renewable energy ventures, opportunities are vast. Success lies in spotting the right trend, innovating boldly, and connecting with the right partners. For founders, this is not just the time to build—it's the time to lead.



Economy

Gen Z & Startup



How Gen Z is Redefining Indian Startups

The Indian startup ecosystem has transformed into one of the most dynamic in the world. While millennials dominated the early wave, Gen Z entrepreneurs are now at the forefront—bringing bold ideas, digital-first thinking, and a culture of inclusivity that is reshaping how startups are built and scaled.

For Gen Z, startups go beyond profit. Many businesses are rooted in lived experiences and social responsibility.

Bluelearn, a student-led professional network, was born out of frustration with traditional education gaps.

- Thrifty Baazar, a circular fashion marketplace, caters to Gen Z's growing focus on sustainability.
- These ventures show how young founders are tackling real-world problems that directly affect their peers.
- Platforms like The Indian Idiot and CloutNews grew from social pages into businesses monetizing ads, merchandise, and branded content.



The Indian startup ecosystem has rapidly evolved into one of the most dynamic in the world, and Gen Z entrepreneurs are now at the forefront of this transformation. Unlike earlier founders, they bring bold ideas, digital-first thinking, and a culture of inclusivity that is reshaping how businesses are built and scaled. Born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, this generation grew up with

smartphones, social media, and on-demand content—making them true digital natives. Their approach is leaner, faster, and community-driven, challenging traditional hierarchies and creating startups that feel authentic and relatable.

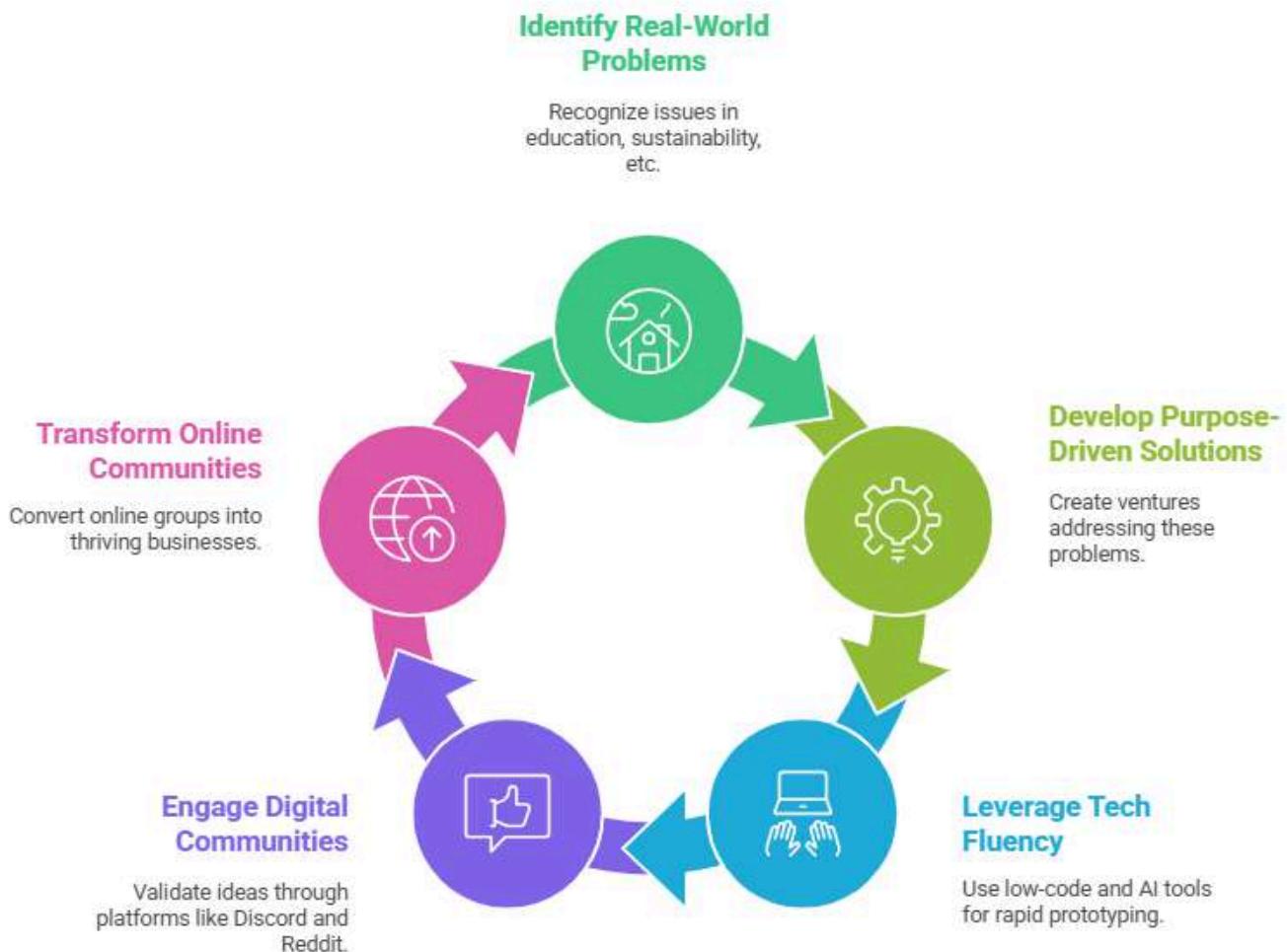
Purpose-Driven, Tech-Savvy, and Community-First



For Gen Z, startups go beyond profit—they're often purpose-driven and rooted in lived experiences. Ventures like Bluelearn, a student-led professional network, and Thrifty Baazar, a circular fashion marketplace, highlight how young founders are tackling real-world problems tied to education, sustainability, and inclusivity.

Many of them thrive in the creator economy, transforming online communities, meme pages, and influencer-led brands into full-fledged businesses. At the same time, their tech fluency enables them to build and launch prototypes quickly using low-code, no-code, and AI tools, validating ideas instantly through digital communities like Discord and Reddit.

Gen Z Startup Cycle



What The Future Holds

Gen Z is not just entering the Indian startup ecosystem — they are reshaping it from the ground up. This generation brings a fresh perspective, valuing purpose over profit, authenticity over hierarchy, and innovation over convention. They are driving new business models, embracing socially conscious solutions, and experimenting with funding approaches that challenge traditional norms.

Their natural fluency in technology, digital platforms, and social media allows them to connect directly with customers, investors, and

communities, creating a level of engagement that previous generations rarely achieved. Gen Z founders are more willing to take risks, learn from failures, and pivot quickly — making their startups more agile and resilient in a fast-changing market.

For investors, founders, and ecosystem builders, the lesson is clear: the future of Indian startups will be defined by bold thinking, inclusivity, and a relentless drive to innovate — traits that Gen Z embodies fully. To succeed in 2025 and beyond, embracing this mindset isn't optional; it's essential.

TiEcon Delhi 2025

India's deeptech sector in focus

TiE Delhi-NCR has announced the TiEcon 2025 at the Taj Palace, New Delhi, with a strong focus on India's Deeptech Ascent. The conference will highlight how deeptech and artificial intelligence (AI) are becoming central to India's innovation and economic growth story.

Bringing together top founders, researchers, and investors, the event will explore India's strategic roadmap in AI, semiconductors, quantum computing, space, defence, and biotechnology. The discussions will revolve



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TIECON 2025'S AIM

- Bridging academia, industry, investors
- Scaling research into business
- Advancing AI and computing
- Driving India's DeepTech leadership

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around accelerating research-to-market translation, promoting homegrown innovation, and building AI-driven solutions for global competitiveness.

Union Minister Piyush Goyal has emphasized the government's commitment to nurturing deeptech ventures through policy support and funding initiatives. The sessions will underscore the goal of making India a global hub for responsible AI and deeptech startups, capable of solving challenges in climate tech, national security, and healthcare.

Ecafe, empowering Startups



Panel Discussion

Building the Next Startup Wave from Tier 2 & 3 Cities



Prince Kaushik
Founder & CEO
NPrep



Vikram Ahuja
Senior Mentor & Founder
Homeguru



Vaibhav Kathju
Founder
Inka Insurance



Dr. Rajesh Kumar Rolen
Co-Founder & CEO
Microlent Systems

Moderated by



Jitendra (Jatin) Dhoot
Co-Founder
Microlent Systems

Outreach Partner:



IIMA Ventures, in partnership with Kotak Mahindra Bank, will organize the Jodhpur edition of Kotak BizLabs Season 2 Roadshow to strengthen the city's entrepreneurial landscape. The event aim to bridge startups with corporates, investors, and mentors, fostering collaboration and innovation.

With a mission to empower emerging founders, the initiative focused on helping startups co-create scalable business solutions and gain access to funding, expert guidance, and market exposure.

E-Cafe proudly joins as the Outreach Partner for the event, driving community engagement and connecting visionary entrepreneurs with the broader startup ecosystem.

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Special acknowledgment to Deepesh Sir, Mayor of Jodhpur, for his instrumental efforts in bringing this initiative to the city.



Ideas brewed stronger than coffee at the **Ecafe Delhi Meetup**

CMD Business Club organise Special Session on Business Leadership and Networking

Held in Gurgaon, the event brought together leading entrepreneurs and professionals for engaging discussions on innovation, business growth, and collaboration. It aimed to strengthen networking, encourage idea exchange, and foster partnerships among members. The evening stood out for its vibrant energy and impactful conversations driving future opportunities.

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