

India's Best Known Knowledge & Information Magazine

# SME WORLD

The logo for SME WORLD features the words "SME" and "WORLD" in a large, bold, red, sans-serif font. The letter "O" in "WORLD" is replaced by a stylized globe with a blue and green color scheme and a white outline. The globe shows the continents of Asia and Australia. The entire logo is set against a white background with a grey horizontal bar at the bottom.

*The Next Level*

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Union Budget 2018-19

## No Handholding for Massive Small Sector





*Shantanu Singh Chauhan*

# Helping Startups Sail Through

## What is the start-up scenario in India especially in the small business sector?

MSMEs form the backbone of Indian economy. As of now there are 51 million SME which constitute over 37% of Indian GDP. The startup segment in India is comparatively very small with over 17000+ business classified as technology enabled startups.

Startups differ from SMB on scalable business model, technology based innovative problem solving and ability to utilize and create disruption in market. India hosts world 3rd largest startup hub growing at the rate of 20% plus a year. Unlike SMB, 88% of Indian startups are located in tier I cities.

## What are the challenges startups face?

The biggest challenge startups face is related to unverified business need. Start-up is all about creating massive value through disruptive and scalable idea. Which means when you start, you have an amazing idea, which

potentially can bring 10 x values, however something which is never been done before. You really don't know whether market will finally adopt your product. This inherent risk is downside of a startup and also is definitive piece of startup identity. As a startup you not only create business you also create a market. Downside of it, most startup fails due to unable to find right market for their product.

The second important challenge is fund. To create value, a startup need to scale, and scaling comes at a cost. At this time, not able to manage funds leads to failures. Not enough or not able to manage fund for scale is second biggest reason of a startup failure. Other challenges which startup faces are related to finding right people, creating awesome product and responding to market need.

## Marketing is an issue which affects the small businesses since there is no hand holding for the startups; how Startup Arena is designing its agenda towards this?

Very true. Marketing today and especially for small business is all about digital. Hyper local directory listing coupled with massive internet penetration has enabled better ROI through digital marketing compared to other channel even for small business. The above can be easily deduced from the fact that India is second largest online market and world largest mobile-data consumer.

While above is true, digital marketing is still difficult. With repetitive updates and technological advancement, keeping abreast with latest in digital marketing is not only time consuming, but also practically impossible for small business.

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**S**tartup Arena is the largest network of deals for Startups and Small Businesses, providing comprehensive, end-to-end solutions for Startups and SMBs. The company acts an enabler for Startups and SMBs to do what they do best; INNOVATE and connects them to the right vendors who take care of all that are required in running a successful business.

Their team of experts who understand the pulse of Startups and SMBs, including the ones that are bootstrapping, go out and find the best deals and make them exclusively available to those registered with Startup Arena. The company provides end-to-end solutions by generating sales for the Startups and SMBs and ensuring that their customers get the best of the services and are satisfied with them.

SME WORLD interacted with Shantanu Singh Chauhan, Co-Founder of Startup Arena.

This is where StartupArena plays its role. We at StartupArena help small businesses/startups to focus on what matter most, and leave rest to us. For an offline business StartupArena provide a schema, SEO and mobile friendly website and also help them to get business prospects. These prospects are verified for genuineness, authority and budget. This way a business continue to focus on its core strength while leaving their digital marketing, sales management and prospecting to us.

### **What is the USP of Startup Arena?**

The idea behind StartupArena is to help small business and start-ups business incept, succeed and scale.

For Start-ups and Small Business who are looking to fulfil their requirements this is what we do:

All Product & Services for starting and growing business in one place.

Clearly Stated Price Point – You have a fair idea of what price you are going to pay for required services.

Better than Market Price – We look for high-quality vendors who are willing to give better value to customers.

Multiple Vendors to Choose – We list multiple vendors for a service under a category, this way customer can choose the vendor whose price, as well as, terms & conditions are more acceptable to him.

Verified Service Provider – All service provider listed with StartupArena are evaluated for work quality, experience with working startups and also delivery capability.

No Freelancer – Only Full time committed businesses are listed. We understand a business needs a business commitment to serve customers

### **For Start-ups and Small Business who need leads to grow their business this is what we do:**

1-to-1 Lead: All leads provided by us are not shared with any other customers. All our end-customers visit vendor deal page, they go through his prices, his terms, and condition and

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finally connect with him by providing his details. This is a one-2-one process and we keep things this way only. Each lead is passed to each vendor only. We follow up with Vendor to make sure customer is served. We believe sharing leads with the customer only increase cost based competition (who can provide cheaper) and quality is always forgotten or set aside while delivering services.

Verified Leads: All leads provided by us are verified by our team for authenticity. If we find a customer not interested on verification call, we mark that leads as invalid.

### **What strategy StartupArena has drawn for its sustainable growth?**

For our sustainable growth we are focusing on following pain area of small business:

**Online Presence:** StartupArena provide a schema compliant, responsive, SEO and google complaint web presence for service provider listed with us.

**Aggregator Listing:** StartupArenacurrently lists over 10 K businesses in over 34 different business categories. We have over 500k B2B buyers visiting every month. Businesses listed on StartupArena are benefitted by quality business leads and relevant visitors.

**Lead & Sales Management Tools:** StartupArena provide an extensive leads and sales management tool, that

allow a business to not only manage leads generated to StartupArena, but through other channels too. With Feature like unified communication, multi-users support, scheduled tasks, multi-channel communication, reputation management, what we have created here is an extensive mini CRM with focus on sales management.

The above categories constitute 1.21 Billion USD market. We indent to improve on existing offering and reach to continue growing as a formidable partner of SMB.

### **About Shantanu Singh Chauhan**

With a Masters degree in SMU and Post Graduate Diploma in Management from IMT, Chauhan has been a Fellow Member of The Open Group's Association of Enterprise Architects for over 6 years (2010-2016). Besides, Chauhan has studied Strategic Management from IIMC and Organizational Leadership from Insead. He is a Technopreneur with over 2 decades of experience in creating next-generation products and services that helped business scale and has brought immense delight to customers & investors. Amongst his many accomplishments include Co-founding DealPlexus India's only platform ecosystem built around financial deal-making. He also helped in finding ValueFirst India's top Digital media and Messaging Company in 2003. He has led the organization as senior executive in various roles including CTO/CIO, Head of Engineering, NOC, and Technical Operations. He played an integral role in turning around ValueFirst International Business in Asia, Africa & local VAS business.

Chauhan aims to build up Startup Arena as growing up to become India's most preferred way for searching, connecting and managing customer and supplier.