

START-UP TO SCALE-UP

UNLOCKING NEXT WAVE OF GROWTH FOR EMERGING BUSINESSES

JUNE 2025

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leverage in their scale-up journey

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Experts Speak



“In today’s dynamic times, startups that think smart and act fast to evolve will lead the charge. At Meta, we’re proud to be partners in this journey, equipping them with cutting-edge AI-driven tools to help them scale and turn bold ideas into impact.

**Sandhya Devanathan, Vice President,
India & SEA, Meta**

“The startup ecosystem in India is ready to expand to the world. It’s striking that nearly 70% of startups in India are using AI to boost their marketing. With Meta’s AI-driven advertising tools and expertise in reaching new markets, we can help businesses expand into Tier 2/3 cities in India and go international.

**Dhruv Vohra, Managing Director,
Small & Medium Business, APAC, Meta**

“A successful startup is defined by several factors; an exceptional founding team, products that customers love and compelling product-market-fit, extraordinary execution, and finally, a very large market in which a giant company can be built.

**Rajan Anandan, Managing Director
Peak XV & Surge**

“For new-age consumer startups, community is no longer tactical. It’s very strategic. And founders are leveraging it to create tangible competitive advantage. Across our portfolio, brands are using their community as a consumer lab, a feedback loop, a network of evangelists, and much more. It’s a very powerful tool.

**Kanwaljit Singh, Founder &
Managing Partner, Fireside Ventures**

“NASSCOM plays a pivotal role in empowering AI-driven startups by fostering innovation, providing strategic mentorship, and facilitating robust partnerships. Through targeted programs, we enable tech entrepreneurs to scale transformative AI solutions, strengthening India’s startup ecosystem.

**Sangeeta Gupta, Senior Vice President,
NASSCOM**

“Indian startups are reshaping the business landscape by innovating across categories and unfolding newer consumer segments. Their continued success will depend on their understanding of emerging consumer priorities and building solutions that are not only differentiated, but also capable of scaling impact in a rapidly shifting environment.

**Himanshu Bajaj,
MD & Head – Alvarez & Marsal India
and GCC**

“Indian startups are the sparks that ignite economic growth. Our aim is to strengthen this by creating an ecosystem that fosters innovation, reduces barriers, and empowers entrepreneurs to turn their ideas into reality. We have diverse programs for entrepreneurs around policy advocacy, community engagement and enabling brands to tap global markets.

**Shweta Rajpal Kohli,
President & CEO, India SPF**

“The Indian consumer is demanding world-class products and willing to pay a premium. They are no more swayed by just marketing claims and hence startups need to build for long term. Right team capability, attitude and org culture, go a long way in building sustained businesses.

**Arjun Vaidya,
Co-Founder, V3 Ventures**

New India, New Rules: Decoding the growth path for emerging businesses

<p>1 India, as the world's 5th largest economy, is driven by rapid GDP growth fueled by a young, expanding workforce and rising discretionary spending from higher income.</p> <p>100 Mn+ workforce in India</p>	<p>2 Rising incomes, premiumization, and preferences for customization are reshaping consumer demand, particularly in smaller cities, driving businesses to innovate and cater to specific needs.</p> <p>+19% in Tier 2+ income (FY23-24)</p>	<p>3 The shift towards omni-channel shopping coupled with diverse payment options is enhancing customer experience and fostering growth across sectors.</p> <p>70% consumers shop omni-channel</p>
<p>4 Startups evolve by focusing on product-market fit early on and scale through omnichannel, AI-driven growth, creator-led branding, and cross-border expansion.</p> <p>76%+ startups cite 'product leadership' as a key goal</p>	<p>5 Omni-channel strategies, increasingly adopted early by startups, drive higher conversion rates by blending online discovery with offline sales, with product-based startups leading the trend.</p> <p>2x conversion through online-led discovery in stores</p>	<p>6 Businesses are rapidly expanding into Bharat (Tier 2/3), leveraging conversational commerce, vernacular marketing, and influencer-led outreach to tap into strong demand and drive growth.</p> <p>~95% startups have expanded to Tier 2/3</p>
<p>7 Businesses rapidly expand into new categories within their first three years, leveraging digital tools, brand equity, and synergies to drive cross-selling and unlock incremental growth.</p> <p>65% startups explore new categories in first 3 years</p>	<p>8 Businesses are increasingly leveraging creator-led brand building for niche engagement and building trust towards their brand.</p> <p>85%+ brands leverage creator economy</p>	<p>9 Over half of Indian startups expand cross-border, targeting markets like the USA, UAE, and UK, leveraging localized marketing and tailored strategies for product and service scalability.</p> <p>Up to 25% higher profitability in cross-border</p>

AI has become essential for startups, driving efficiency across business processes, with widespread adoption in marketing strategies

30-35% increased efficiency through AI-driven marketing

Key Insights

India's Thriving Ecosystem

Macros and Economic Indicators

Economy 6.5% GDP growth (FY19–24)
now 5th-largest economy

Workforce Median age 30; 100M+ added
to 20–24 workforce cohort

Rising Income Boost in ownership of durables,
spending power & internet access

Startup Surge 150K+ DPIIT-recognized
startups in 2024

Consumer Landscape

Tier 2/3 surge Rural MPCE outpaced
urban (FY12–24)

Premiumization High-end segments
outgrew mass market (FY19–24)

Omnichannel 70% shoppers blend
online research with offline trials

Demand shift Hyper-personalization &
fast delivery is new norm

Startup Journey: Growth Drivers

Omni-channel 67% startups went omni-
channel; 57% by year 3

Bharat focus Tier 2/3 entry led by media &
agri-tech; chat commerce is key

New Category 84% startups go cross-category,
aided by strong brand equity

Creator-led 88% startups use creators for
niche and celebs for mass reach

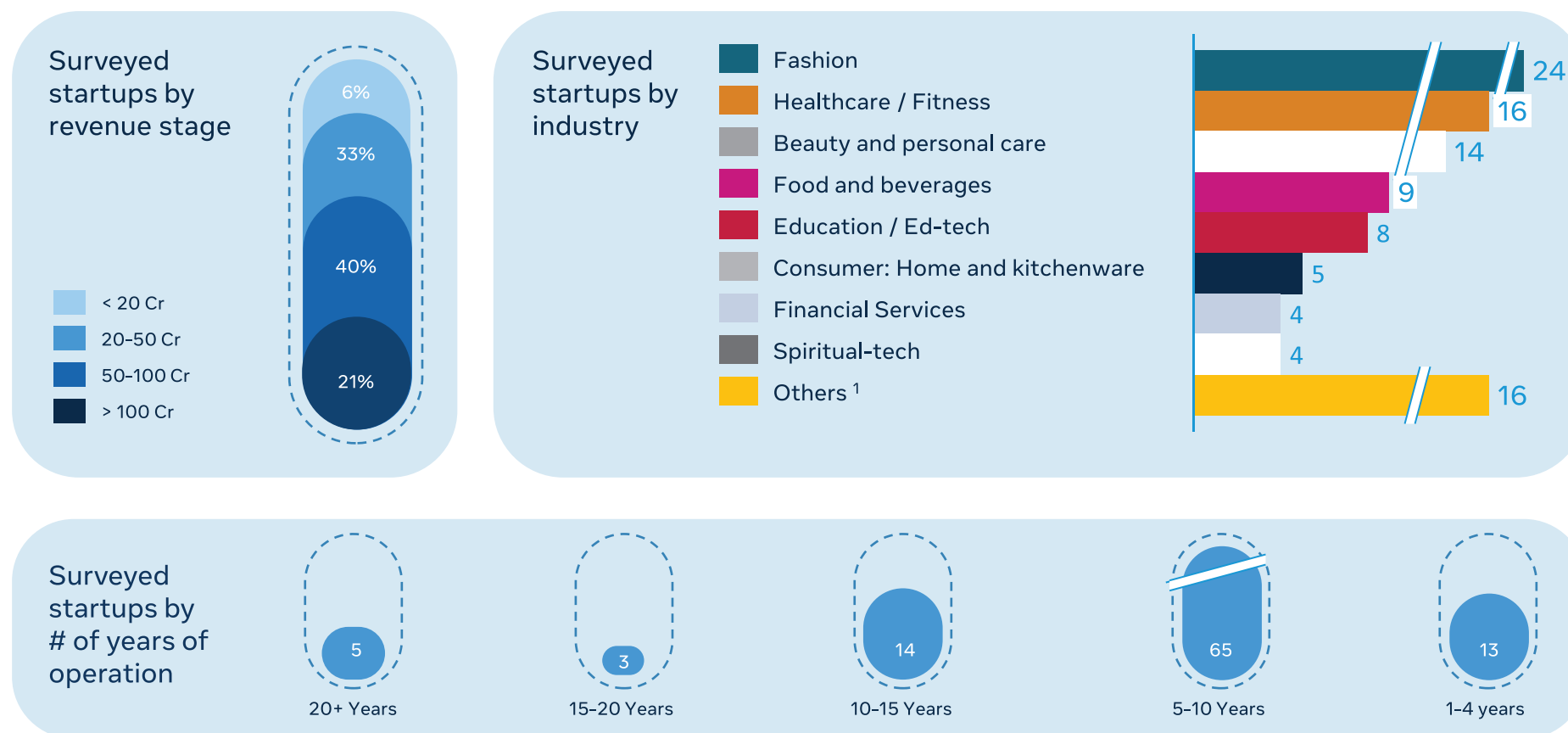
AI adoption 70% post-2021; up to 30%
lower CAC via marketing AI

Cross-border 52% startups expand globally;
USA, UAE, UK are top regions

Methodology: 100 Startups | 20+ Ecosystem Partners

STARTUPS PROFILED

100 Startups surveyed



INVESTORS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED



nasscom

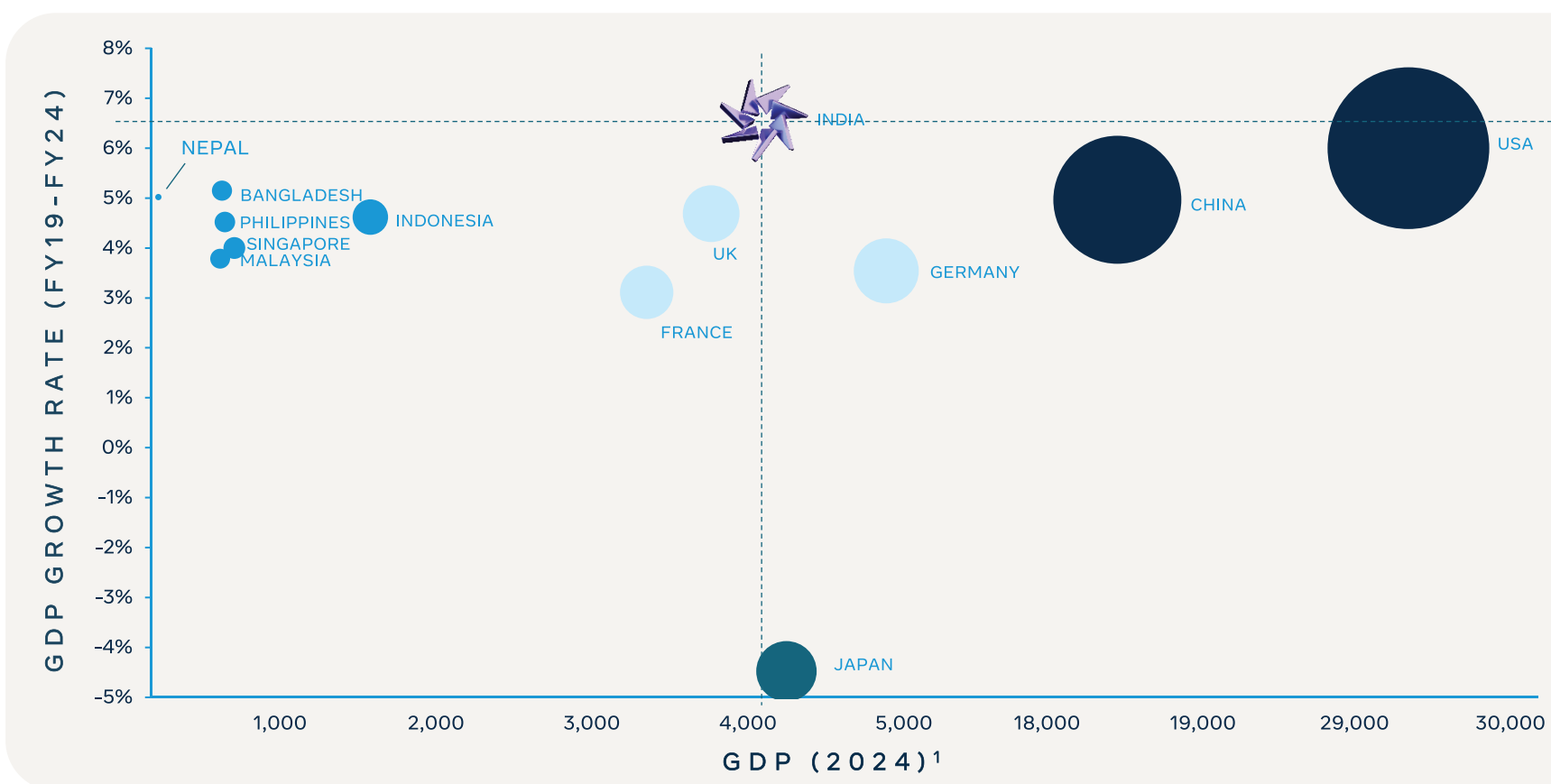


Demographics x Demand x Doubling Wallet: India's Startups Surge...



INDIA IS THE 5TH LARGEST ECONOMY IN THE WORLD

Growing faster than most major global economies



Overtaking the UK

5th largest global economy in 2023

Set to surpass Japan

For 4th place by 2025

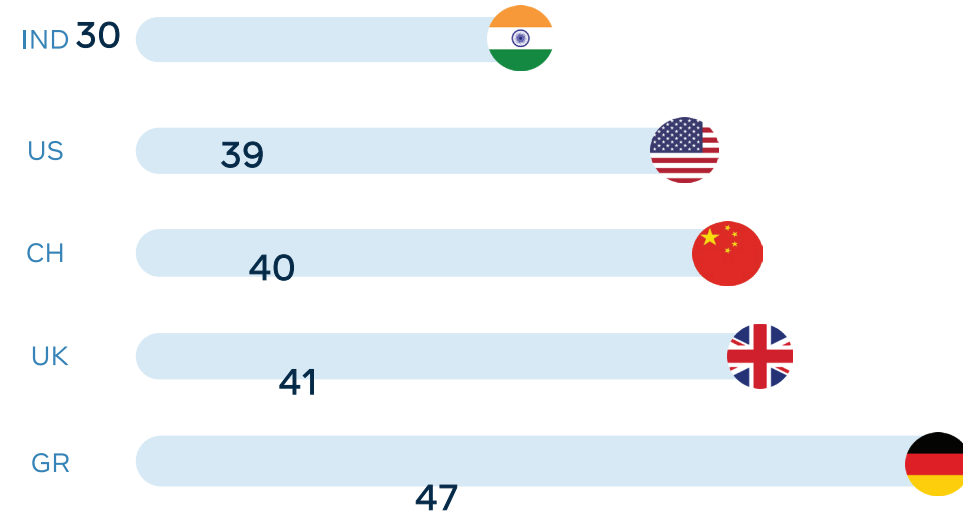
6.5% GDP Growth

3rd Largest economy in Asia

A YOUNG DEMOGRAPHIC AND ACCELERATING EDUCATION GAINS

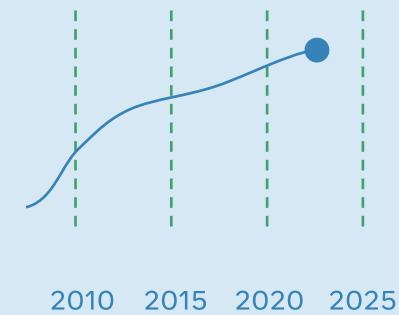
Young and growing workforce

India has one of the youngest median ages in the world¹

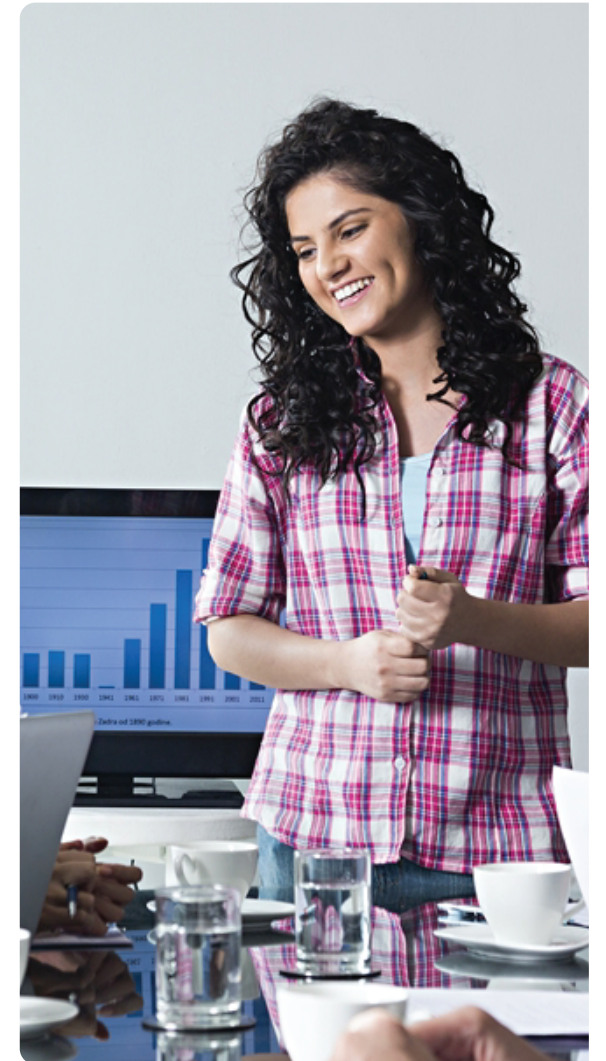


STEADY RISE OF INDIA'S
LITERACY RATE² IN 2022 TO

76%



Driven by government
initiatives and emergence of
digital learning platforms



AN EXPANDING LABOR POOL DRIVING INDIA FORWARD

Larger young workforce than most countries

India surpasses China in 20–24 age group with 100Mn+ strong workforce¹



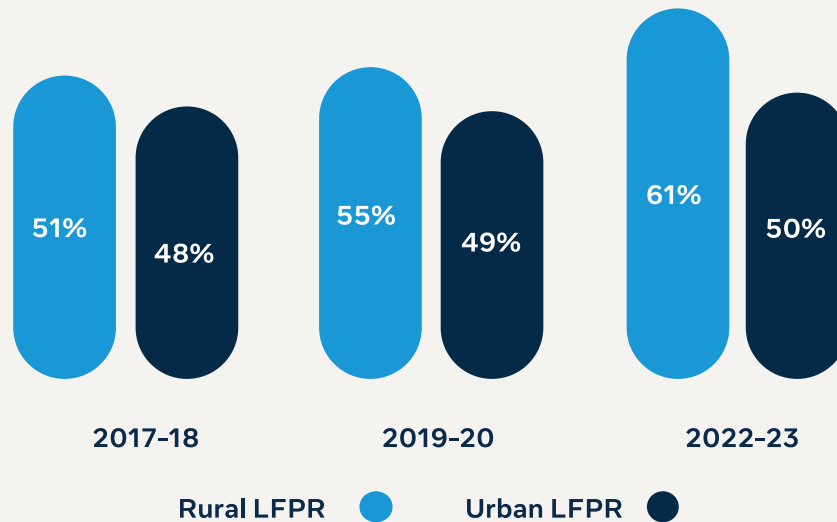
RISING INCOMES FUELLING DEMAND ACROSS CATEGORIES

Consumption driven economy

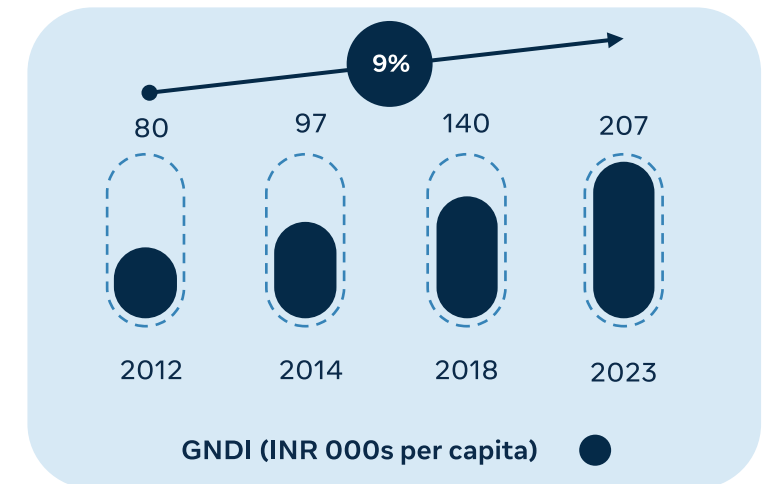
India's growing middle class, set to hit

400Mn by 2025, fuelling domestic demand³

Rural and female participation boost India's Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)²



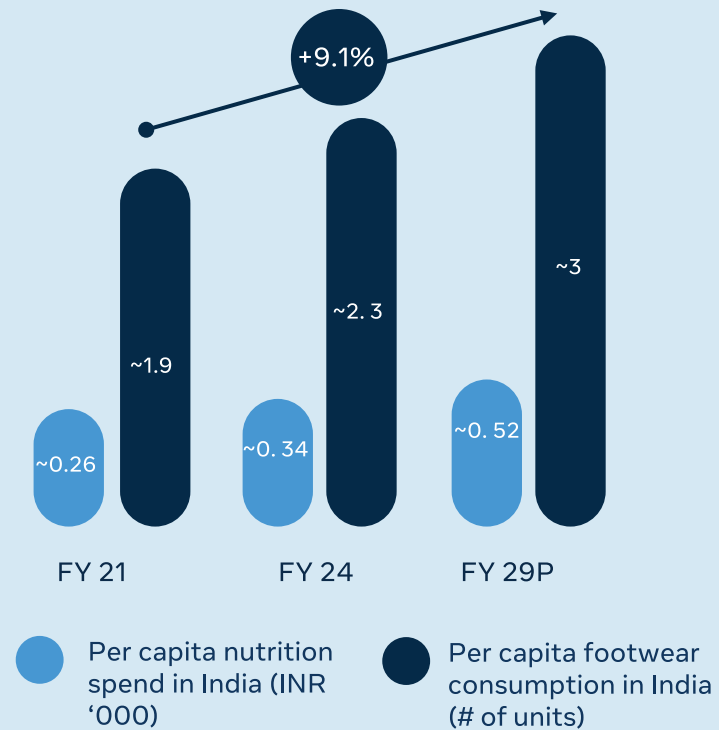
Increasing Gross National Disposable Income is a leading indicator for consumption growth⁴



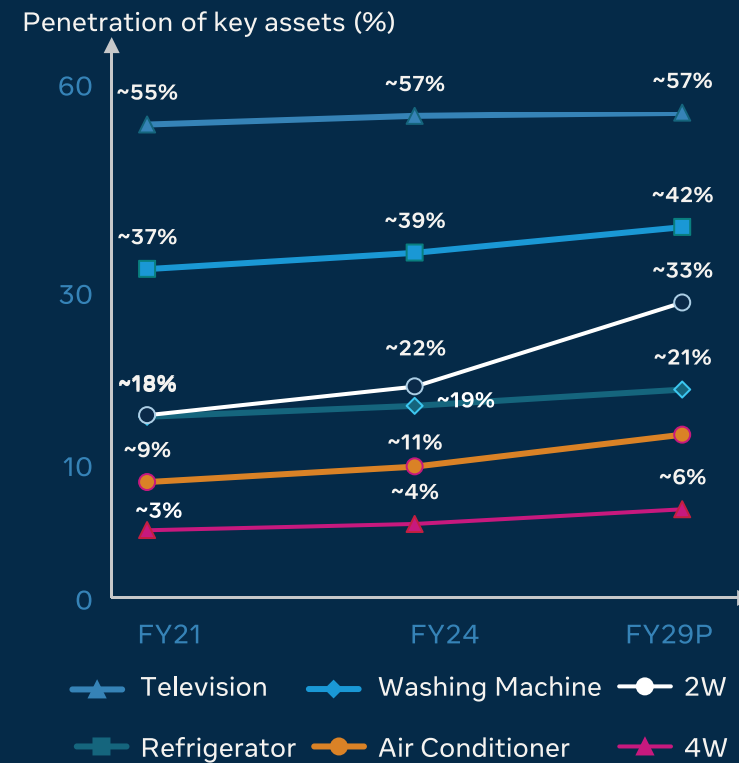
CONSUMERS TRADE UP AS INCOMES RISE, EVEN OUTSIDE METROS

Bigger Paychecks → Bolder Buys

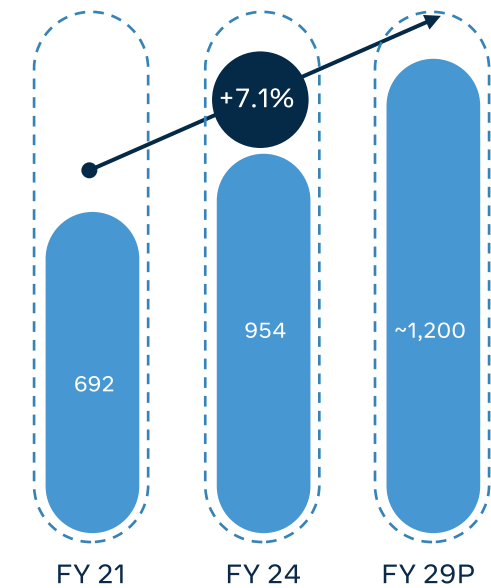
Increasing spends on discretionary categories such as personal health, footwear etc.



Increasing ownership of consumer durables and vehicles



Increasing internet penetration is expected to support digital-India story

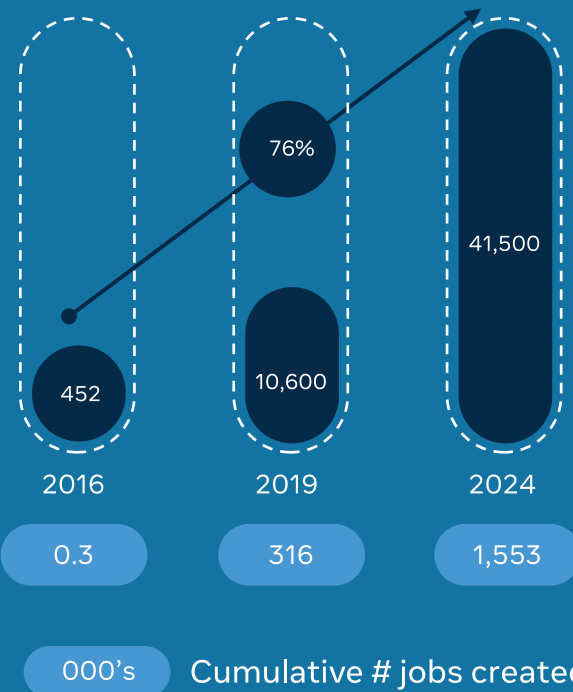


No. of Internet users in India (in Mn)¹

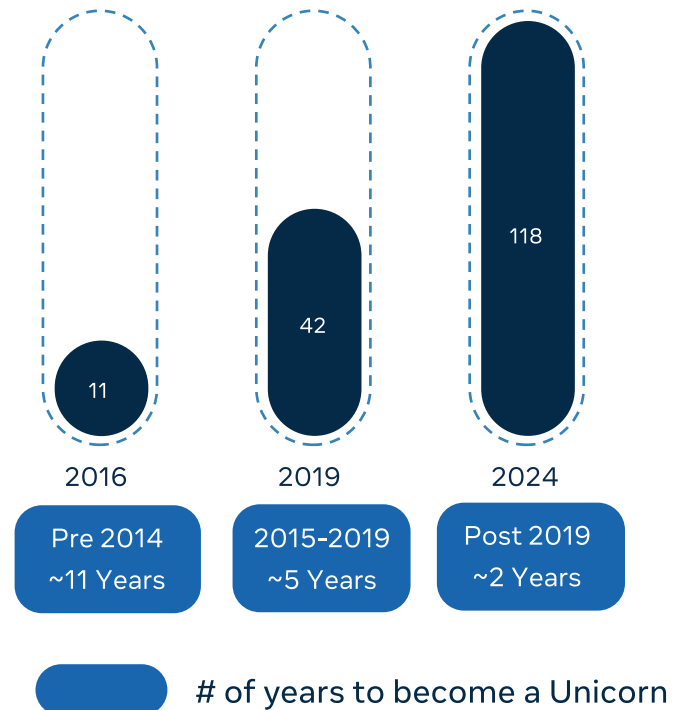
India's startup surge Hitting the inflection point

THRIVING ON THE BACK OF INDIA'S CHANGING LANDSCAPE

of unique registered startups per year¹



Cumulative unicorn count in India (#)²



Evolving Consumers



Evolving Startups

Spending Power

The New Indian Consumer

Informed



Connected

1 Rising Incomes:
India beyond Metros

Boosting demand for
branded goods

2 Aspirations Rise:
Luxe leads the way

Premiumization across both
products and services

3 Personalization is key:
One-size doesn't fit all

Consumers want
tailored solutions

4 The Dual Presence:
Online & Offline

Shoppers expect seamless
omnichannel experiences

5 Easy Payments:
Easier Decisions

Turning aspirations to
real purchases

6 The Ripple Effect:
All sectors must keep up

Brands pushing innovation
across the value chain

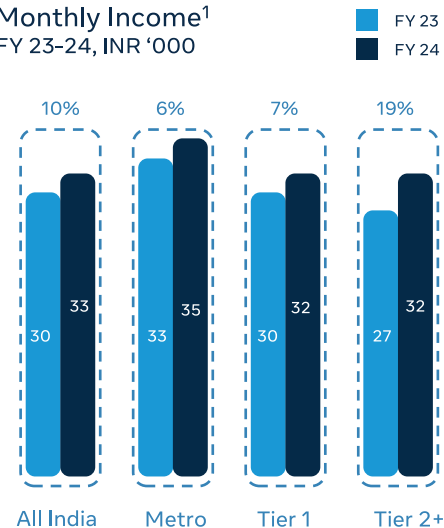
1. Rising Incomes

India beyond Metros

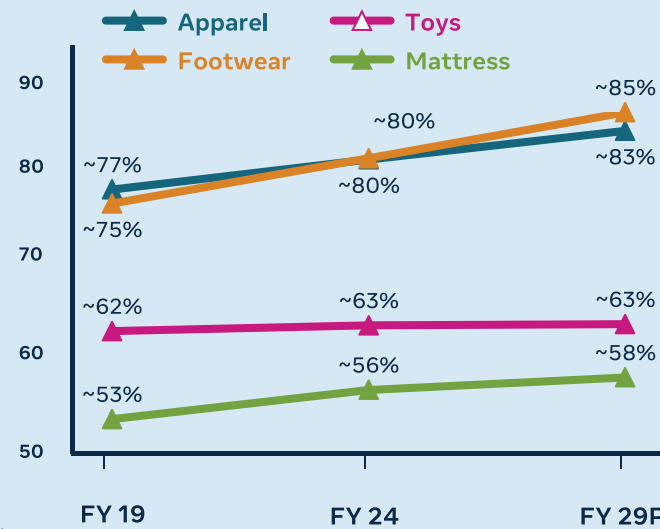
Smaller cities are shaping the next wave of consumer demand



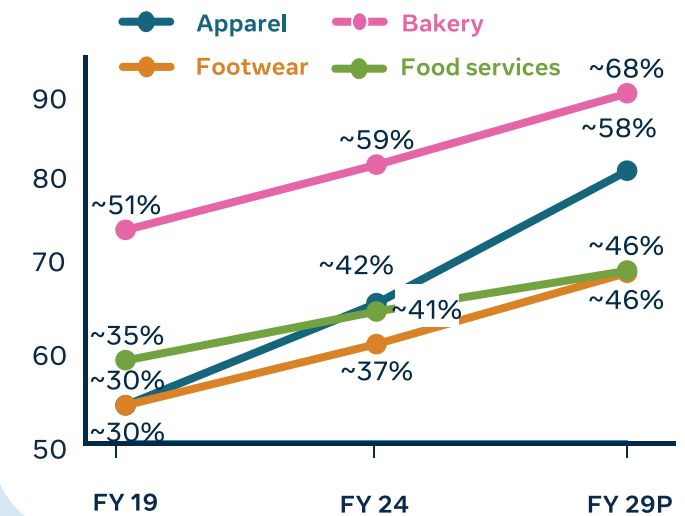
Monthly Income¹
FY 23-24, INR '000



Non-Metro Demand (% of total demand)²



Organized demand (% of total demand)²



New Rural

More choices, more spends

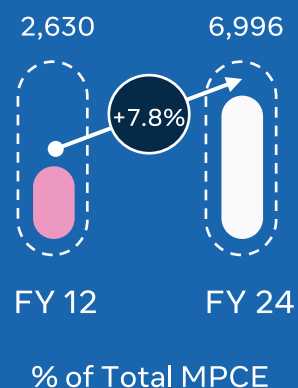
Rural demand is evolving fast, driving growth across categories

Urban-to-Rural MPCE ratio fell from 1.84 to 1.7 (FY12-24), signalling faster consumption growth in rural vs urban.



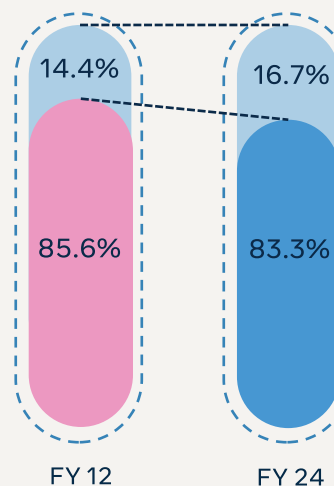
URBAN INDIA

MPCE (INR)



Discretionary

Non-Discretionary



Biggest Winners (%)

Durable Goods
(+1.27%)

Mobility
(+1.94%)

Beverages & Processed Food
(+2.11%)

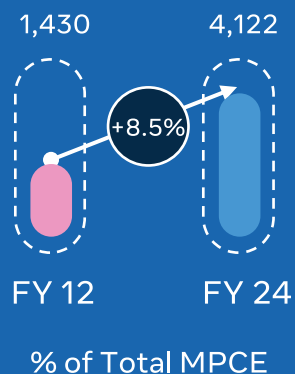
Biggest Losers (%)

Cereal
(-2.87%)

Fuel & Light
(-1.1%)

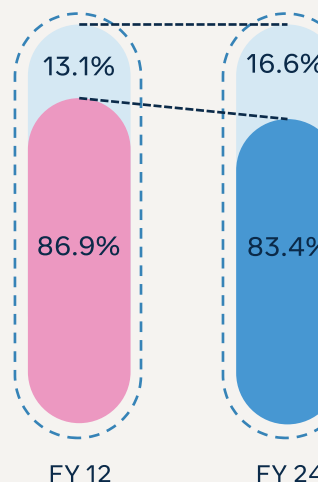
RURAL INDIA

MPCE (INR)



Discretionary

Non-Discretionary



Biggest Winners (%)

Durable Goods
(+1.63%)

Mobility
(+3.39%)

Beverages & Processed Food
(+1.94%)

Biggest Losers (%)

Cereal
(-5.72%)

Edible Oil
(-0.97%)

Note:

MPCE - Monthly Personal Consumption Expenditure

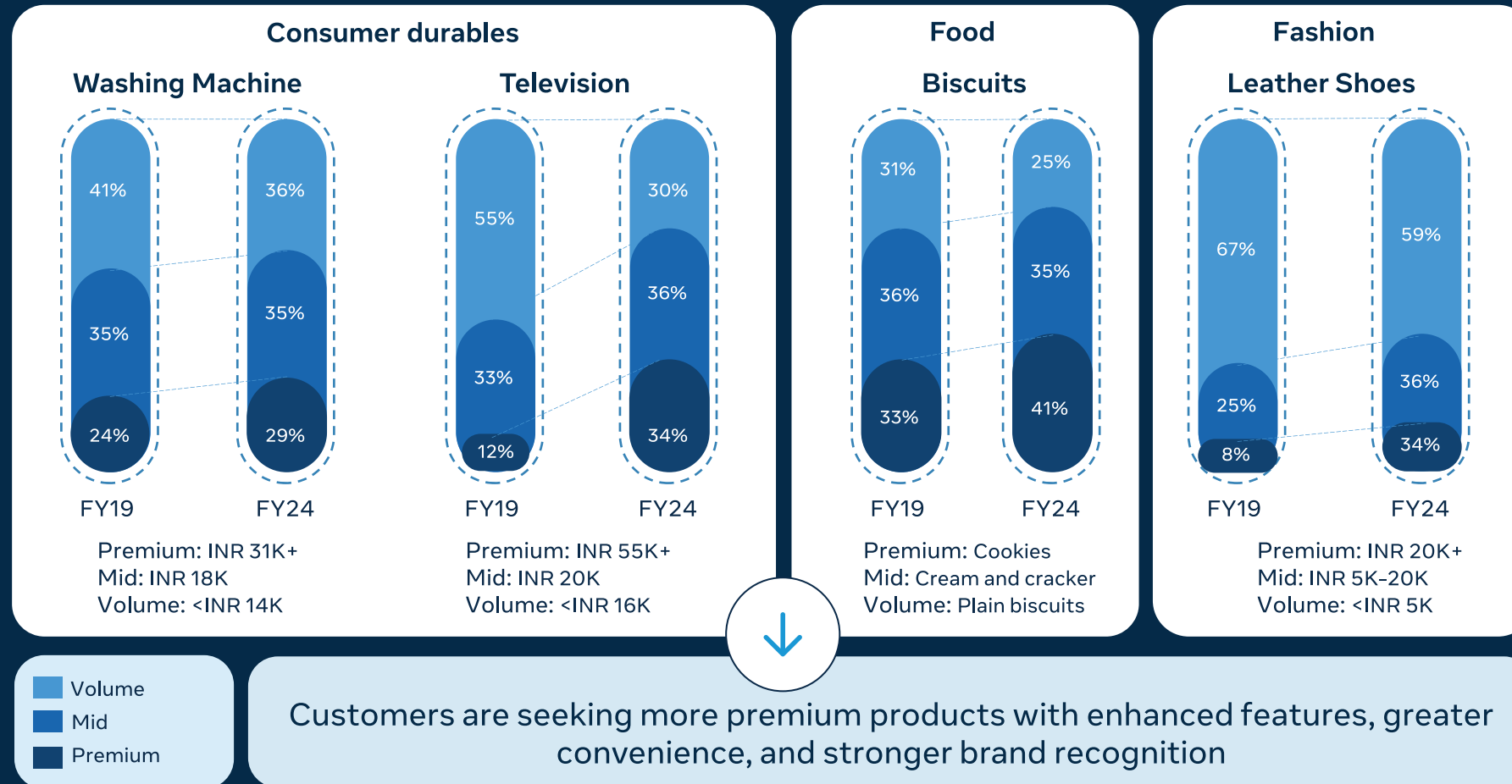
Discretionary: pan and tobacco, consumer services, entertainment, durable goods;

Non-Discretionary: food, fuel & light, toilet articles, education, medical, conveyance, taxes, cloth and bedding, footwear, rent

2. Aspirations Rise

Luxe leads the way

Split of sales by price segmentation¹ %



Revenue CAGR FY19 - FY24, %

Fashion



2-wheeler



Automobile



3. Personalization is the key

One-size no longer fits all: Personalized journeys are shaping loyalty engagement & purchase

Early 2000's

From dominance of 'one-size fits all' products...

Post 2020

To rise of hyper-functional and hyper-customized products

Hair Care



10 to 15

Brands of shampoo, oil and conditioners from FMCG brands



100+

hair care brands offering hyper-customized solutions by concern (anti-dandruff, hair fall) and formulation (serums, sprays, etc.)

Key Niches

Natural / Ayurvedic

Customized for hair type

Salon / Professional



Skin Care



15 to 20

Brands of creams, face-wash, sunscreen offered by skincare brands



80 +

skin care brands enabling personalized routines

Key Niches

Advanced skin science

Customized for skin types

Organic / Ayurvedic



Ready-to-Drink

Non-carbonated beverages



10 to 15

Brands of non-carbonated soft drinks; based on processed fruit juices



50+

non-carbonated and traditional drink brands serving niche preferences

Key Niches

Sugar free

Cold pressed

Organic / Ayurvedic

Functional /detox



4. The Dual Presence

Online & Offline

The lines between digital and physical retail are blurring fast with omni-channel



70%+

customers leverage both online and offline channels in their purchase discovery and consideration journey



>40% of Indian consumers are fluid to make purchases across both online and offline channels

5. Easy Payments

Easier Decisions

EMIs, UPI, and BNPL are boosting affordability and access

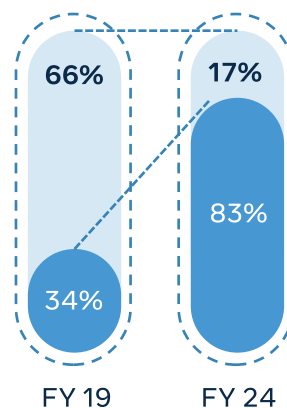
Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

Volume of digital Transactions (%)¹

UPI removes friction, enabling seamless mobile payments.

UPI drives India's shift from cash to digital-first economy.

■ UPI ■ Others

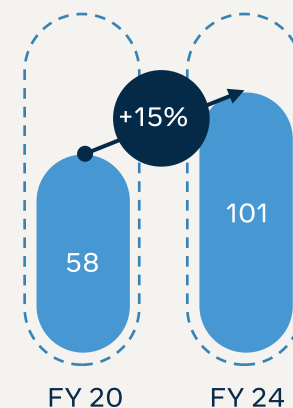


Credit Cards

of active credit cards (Mn)¹

Credit cards offer zero-interest grace periods, bridging aspiration and affordability.

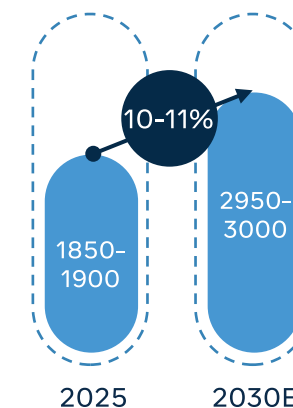
Perks like rewards, discounts, and lounge access boost credit card appeal.



Buy-Now-Pay-Later (BNPL)

BNPL Transaction value (INR Bn)²

Buy-Now-Pay-Later enables instant gratification and access to aspirational products.



Cash-on-Delivery

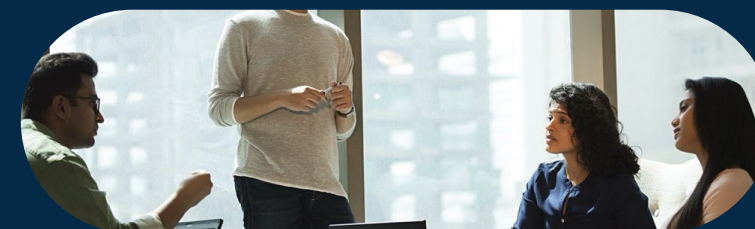
Cash-on-Delivery only new online shoppers (2024)³



105 Mn

44% rural users
52% of female users

Cash-on-Delivery builds trust by allowing payment on delivery.



6. The Ripple Effect

All sectors must keep up

One good experience sets the bar for every brand

Pre
2020

**Food Delivery in
30 to 40 min**

Food delivery players
(~17 Mn MAU¹ combined)*

**E-com Delivery in 3
to 4 days**

E-commerce players
(~210 Mn MAU combined)*

* MAU as of FY20

Post
2022

**Food Delivery in 10
min**

Food delivery players
offering 10-min delivery (~25
Mn MAU combined)

**On-call service
personnel within a
short timespan**

Home services player aims
to provide house help
within 15 min (~5 Mn MAU)



Fast Delivery in quick commerce is creating a ripple effect across entire value chain



2020
to 2021

Quick Commerce delivery in 10 min

Quick-commerce gained prominence
post Covid

Customers now expect faster
delivery across industries

Same day e-com delivery

Same day delivery by E-
comm players for select
categories like fashion and
BPC (~290 Mn MAU)

**Customized product
with 1 day delivery**

Eye-wear player delivering
customized glasses within
24 hours (~2.5 Mn MAU)

* MAU as of FY22

Core Winning Themes



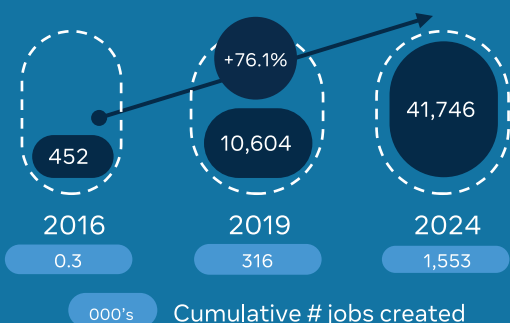
Startup to Scale-up

Tailwinds at play: Couldn't get better for startups

India's macro story is setting the stage for startup success

INDIA'S STARTUPS UNIVERSE IS THRIVING...

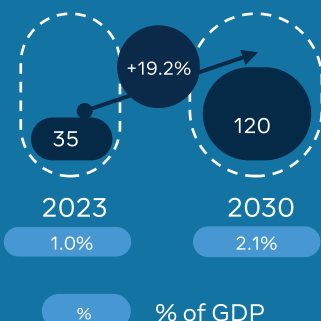
of unique registered startups per year¹
150,000+ DPIIT recognized startups



Cumulative unicorn count in India¹

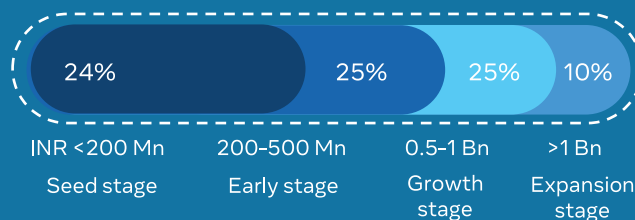


Startups' contribution to GDP (USD Bn)²



Startups by revenue stages

Early and growth stage startups
comprise of 50% of startup universe



Note: Extrapolated from analysis of 275 startups

SUPPORTED BY ECOSYSTEM

Venture
Capital



INR 83.3 Tn
Cumulative deal value
(2014-24)³



INR 100 Bn
Fund of funds deployed
by Government of India¹

**Government
and
policymakers**

Technology
providers



INR ~30 Bn
Marketing technology
market size in India⁴

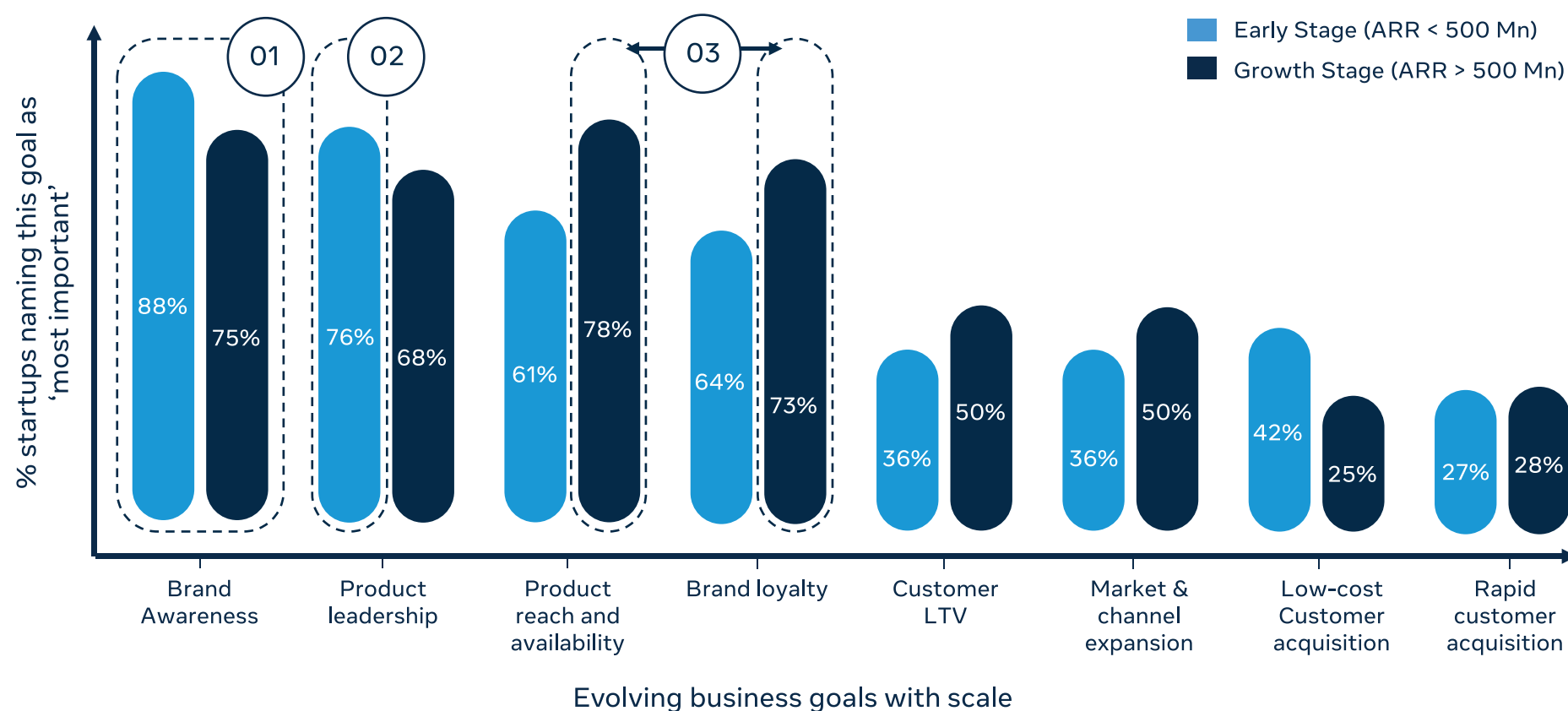


INR 1.6 Tn
Digital advertisement
spend of Indian companies⁵

**Digital
advertising
agencies**

First Product Market Fit Then Reach & Loyalty

Startups focus on PMF in the early stage, shifting to reach and brand loyalty as they scale



01

Brand awareness is key from early to growth stages

02

Early-stage startups focus on product-market fit

03

Growth-stage startups pursue reach and drive loyalty

Startup to Scale-up: Growth Drivers

Startups ranked the following levers by relevance to past and future growth...



1. Expanding Categories

2. Winning with Omni-Channel

3. Tapping into Global Markets

4. Revving the AI Engine

5. Cracking the Bharat Market¹

6. Creator led- Brand Building

Loyalty Programs

Corporate Partnerships

Inorganic Growth

Price led growth: Discounting based

6 levers emerge as highly relevant for growth of Indian startups

Core Levers

Proven and high relevance in future



Omnichannel expansion



Engage Bharat with conversations



Category Expansion



Creator led-brand building

Emerging Bets

Emerging levers with low past presence



Leveraging AI



Cross border expansion

Myth-busting

Growth tactics that are not necessarily effective for early- and growth-stage startups



Corporate Partnerships



Loyalty Program



Inorganic growth



Price led growth: Discounting based

From Core to More:



1. Expanding Categories

1. Expanding the basket:

Startups widen reach

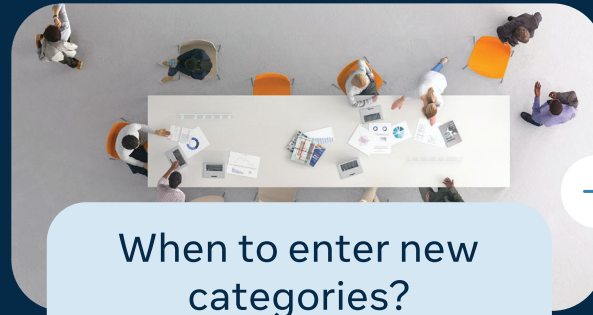


Why focus on category expansion?

Leveraging customer and product synergy with core category are the key reasons for which startups expanded into new categories

84%

Startups have expanded to new categories



When to enter new categories?

Most sectors diversify within 3 years of operations in core category to unlock adjacent revenue streams, except low frequency purchase sectors like real estate

65%

Startups expanded to new categories within 3 years



Who: Businesses which expand to new categories?

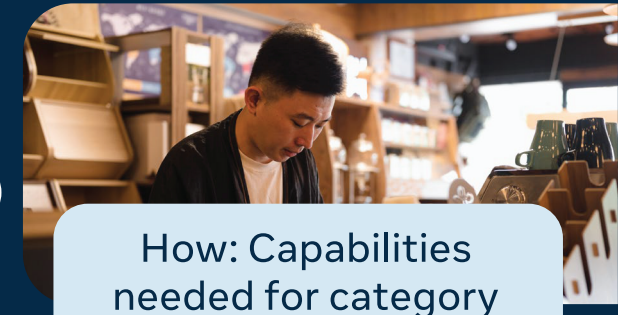
E-commerce, consumer-centric sectors i.e. F&B, BPC, fashion, healthcare and services have expanded to new categories

89%

of product-based startups and

67%

of service-based startups have expanded to new categories



How: Capabilities needed for category expansion?

Product-based startups build robust supply chain and R&D, while service based startups focus on tech scalability

94%

Startups leveraged digital tools such as search keyword trends to identify new categories

Why do businesses expand across categories?

Broaden the portfolio: Growth via synergy

84% moved beyond core into new categories
Startups

Startups grow by unlocking value across interconnected categories

Startups grew from their core business to adjacent/non-core categories — e.g., mattress brand adding recliners & chairs.



To leverage product synergy

96% expanded into adjacent or value-add categories tied to the core

To leverage customer synergy

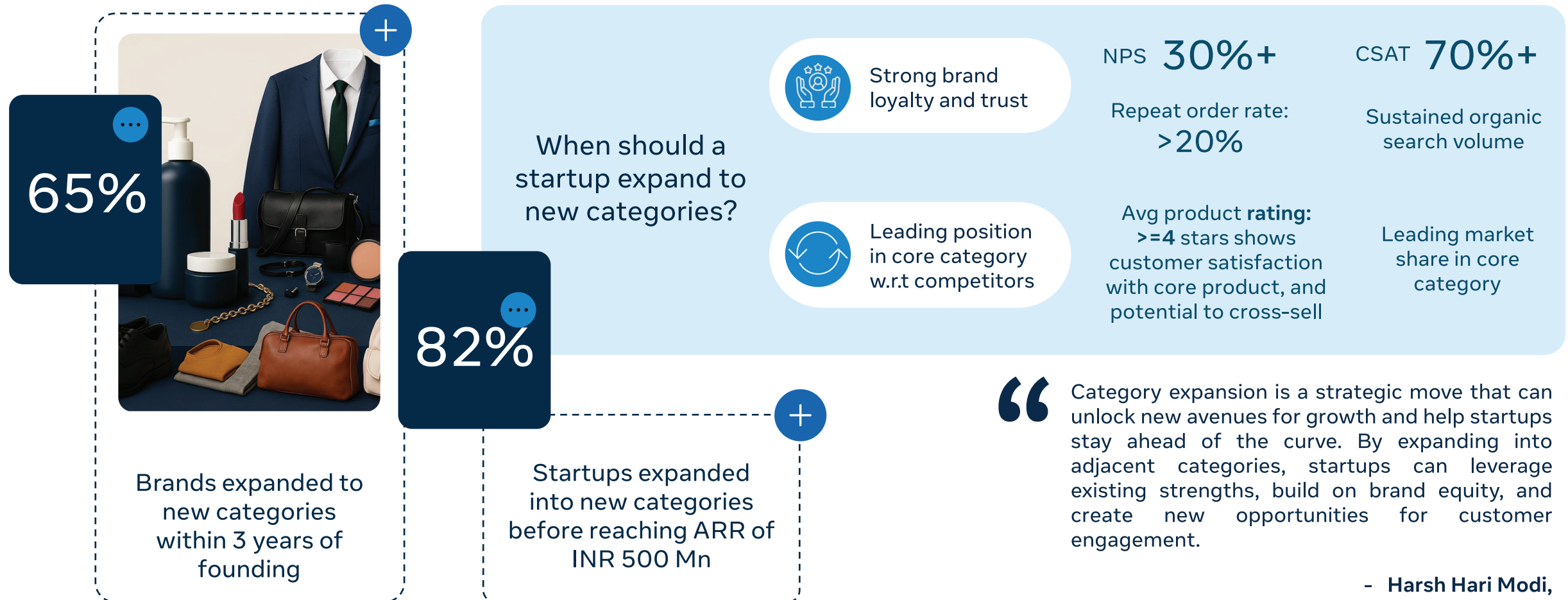
95% tapped new categories to cross-sell to existing customer base & grow LTV

To leverage channel synergy

90% used existing channels & partners to scale new lines

When do businesses expand across categories?

Win the core, widen the play: Founders act quick when brand & core category click



“Category expansion is a strategic move that can unlock new avenues for growth and help startups stay ahead of the curve. By expanding into adjacent categories, startups can leverage existing strengths, build on brand equity, and create new opportunities for customer engagement.

- Harsh Hari Modi,
Co-founder and CEO, Mulmul

Who: Type of businesses expanding across categories

Startups across product and services are chasing adjacent categories to drive revenue

Startups from most sectors leverage category expansion as a growth driver¹

89%

Product-based

startups have expanded to new categories



E-commerce / Marketplace

95%+



Beauty and personal care

95%+



Healthcare / Fitness

94%



Food and beverages

89%



Fashion

88%



Education / Ed-tech

88%



Spiritual-tech

75%



Media and entertainment

67%



Real estate

33%

67%

Service-based

startups have expanded to new categories

Product synergy

Customer synergy

Channel synergy



E-comm startups share partners & distribution networks to scale

Consumer-first brands expand via natural adjacencies for same TG

Service startups cross-sell via high usage & frequent touchpoints

Real estate sees low expansion due to niche, low-frequency buys.

How do digital insights enable category expansion?

Category decisions are now backed by digital consumer insights

Startups leverage digital tools to identify new categories ...

94%
(overall)

Startups use digital tools to identify suitable categories to expand¹



Product startups
95% +

Service startups
88% +

Using digital tools such as²:

	Search keyword trends	80%	100%
	Social listening	83%	56%
	Marketplace data	66%	
	Online customer surveys	17%	31%
	Browsing patterns	3%	6%

...and build relevant capabilities for a successful expansion

Top-most capabilities ² :	Product startups	Service startups
Build brand equity through marketing	93%	88%
Ensure availability across distribution channels	91%	25%
Build procurement and manufacturing	84%	
Develop R&D infrastructure	87%	69%
Ensure platforms and tech scalability	79%	100%
Leverage partnerships and collaborations	74%	88%

Case Study

noise

A design-first lifestyle tech brand that brings smart innovation into everyday routines—seamlessly, expressively and accessibly, focusing on quality and aesthetics

Category expansion timeline

FY14



Cases and accessories

FY18



Smartwatches

FY19



Truly wireless Earbuds

FY22



Smart glasses

FY24



Smart ring

Target Audience:

18 to 35-year-olds in Tier 1 & Tier 2 cities who value smart design and seamless tech, seek self-expression through everyday tools and desires premium quality without the premium price

Category Expansion Strategy

How did Noise expand to new categories

Customer Synergy

New categories tap same TG, enabling strong cross-sell

Channel synergy

Scaled reach via 20K+ retail touchpoints in MBO format



Identified emerging categories and reacted quickly to market trends



Leveraged customer feedback and sales data to predict winning products



Assessed metrics like CTR, pre-booking rate to test demand for new products

Signals of significant demand

CTR > 1.5%

200% pre-booking rate

Impact of Category Expansion

Revenue

>25%

Revenue contribution from new categories within 2 years of expansion

“Wearable tech isn’t just a hardware game anymore. As Noise expands globally and enters new categories, our focus is on building performance-oriented smart tech that takes the ‘Make in India’ story to the world

– Gaurav Khatri,
Co-Founder & CEO, Noise

Everywhere, All-at-once:



2. Winning with Omni-Channel

2. Winning with omni-channel: Discover anywhere, shop anywhere

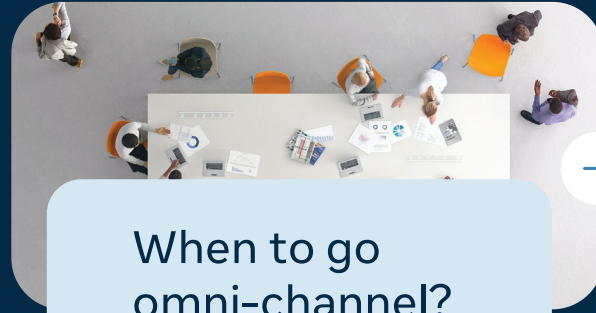


Why focus on omni-channel strategy?

Customer Journeys are fluid from discovery to demand fulfilment

80%+

Startups say omni-channel drives trust and awareness

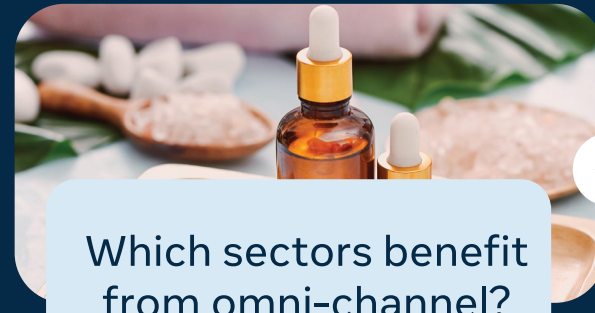


When to go omni-channel?

New startups adopt omni-channel 1.5 years sooner; no longer just late-stage.

57%

Startups go omni-channel within 3 years

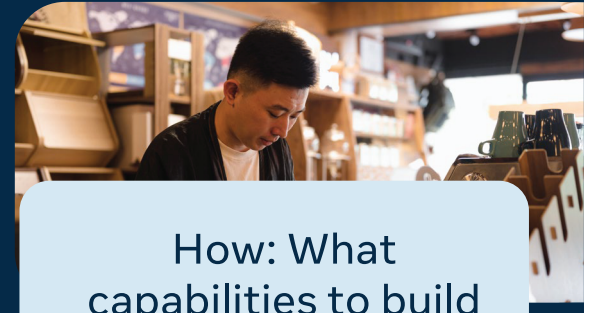


Which sectors benefit from omni-channel?

All sectors adopt it, product startups lead.

~75%

of F&B, health, home, and fashion startups use omni-channel.



How: What capabilities to build for success?

High-involvement brands use exclusive stores, mass brands use general trade.

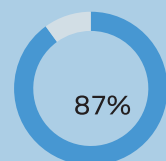
43%

prefer exclusive stores; 19% multi-brand; others mix both

Why adopt omni-channel strategy?

~2x more sales:
Omni boosts conversion

Online channel
drives discovery and
consideration...



founders
believe
online is a
point of
discovery²



Online-first brands
leverage first-party
data including
location to drive
precise online ad
targeting

... while offline serves as the final
confirmation stage
Online-aided customers visit the store after
considering to purchase



Online assisted walk-ins have ~1.8 -2X
higher conversion rate

In-store
conversion rate¹



25-40%

Omni-channel
players

15-20%

Industry
Average

Key Insights:

70% customers engage across online and offline channels to discover products and evaluate purchase¹

67% startups expanded from online-only to omni-channel² of which –

- 97% view it as a key driver of growth
- 81% view it to be a driver for brand visibility/awareness
- 78% view it to be a trust-builder via physical touchpoints



Attributing online spends to walk-ins and offline conversions is the most critical aspect to driving an efficient omni-channel business with focus on online spends.

- Priyanka Salot,
Co-Founder – The Sleep Company

When to expand omni-channel ?

Young businesses expand omni-channel within 3 years

of years to go Omni-channel



 3 - 3.5 Years

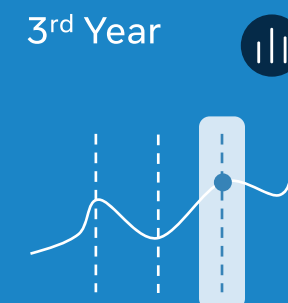
Startups existing for
> 10 years

 1.5 - 2 Years

Startups existing for
< 10 years



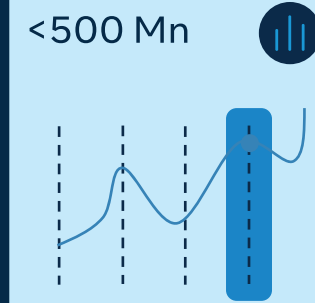
3rd Year



57%

went omni-channel within
the 3rd year of operation

<500 Mn

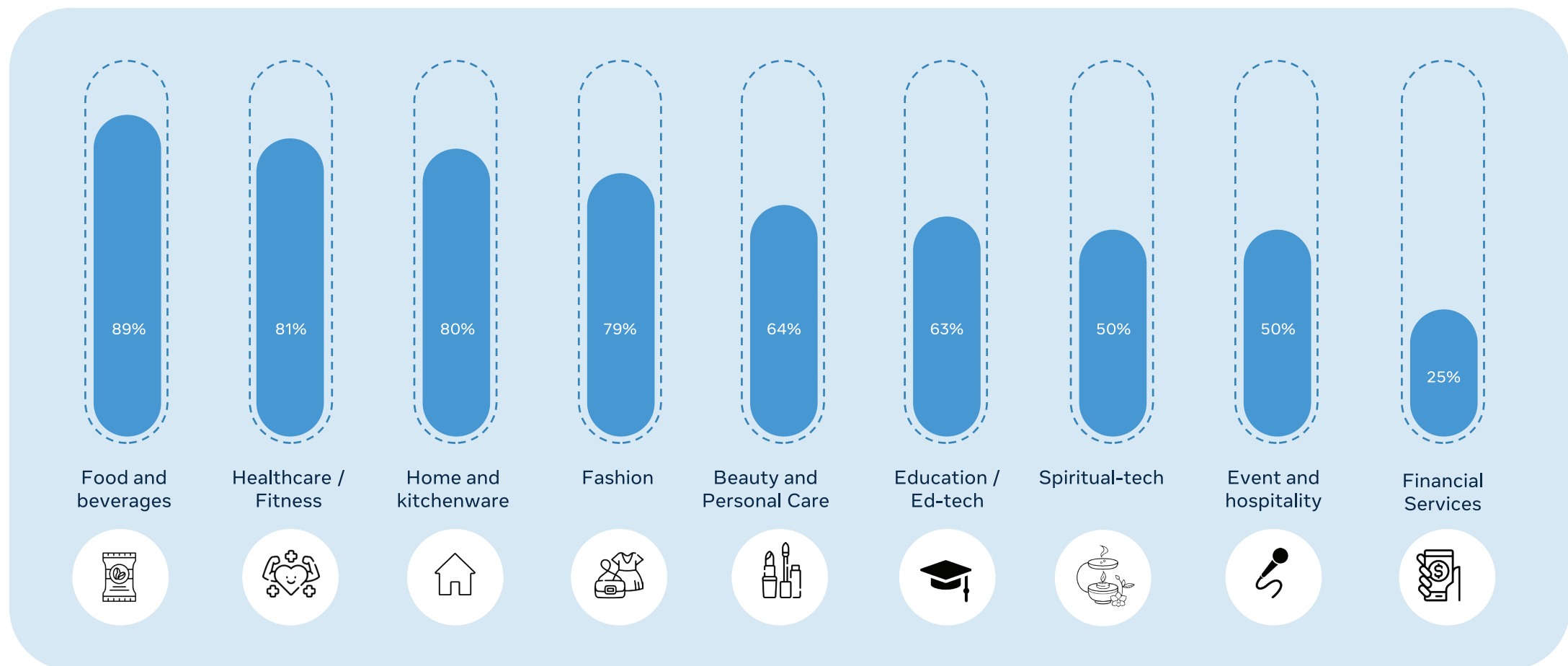


82%

went omni-channel at
ARR < INR 500 Mn

Sectoral Differentiation

~70% product startups adopted omni-channel, vs ~50% service startups



How: Depends on customer experience and reach objectives

Startups dealing in high-involvement categories prefer exclusive outlets

GTM FORMAT

Preference of GTM format (as a % of startups that went omni-channel)

Rationale

Exclusive
Brand Outlets
(EBO)

43%¹



80%
Ed-Tech



53%
Fashion



46%
Healthcare
& Fitness



50%
Home &
Kitchenware



95%+
Financial
Services



Strong brand visibility, while curating the customer experiences



For mass premium to premium category products

Multi
Brand Outlets
(MBO)

19%¹



50%
Beauty and
Personal Care



38%
Food &
Beverages



Access to existing footfall and wider geographic reach



Mass-market products or discovery categories

Hybrid

37%¹



50%
Spiritual
Tech



50%
Events Travel
and Hospitality



EBOs build brand equity, while MBOs drive volume and reach - Balance of scale and control

Dealer/ Distribution led model



Insurance



Auto-mobile



Real-Estate



Discovery is through digital, but conversion is mostly physical, aided by personal consultation and trust factors.

Case Study



Modern science & tech-led mattress disruptor

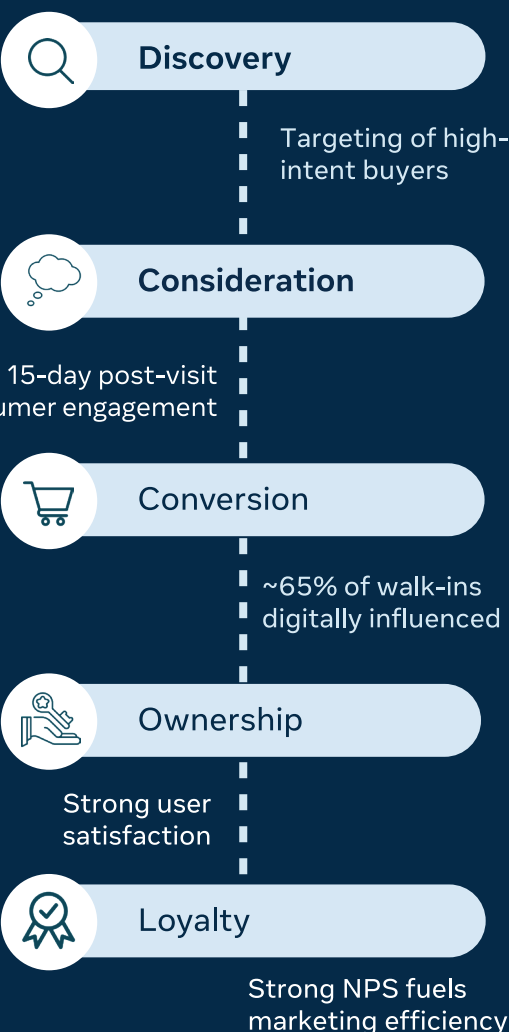
The Need:

- 85%+ of mattress purchases still happen offline
- Feedback on customer drop-off led the business to invest in offline engagement channels

The How:

- ~3 years spent in fixing product market fit before launching offline
- Efficiently leveraged online sales data to identify locations of outlets

Success across the consumer funnel



CPC dropped from

₹20 to ₹6-7
in 3 years

~40% of
spends

dedicated to retargeting

37% in-store
conversion

One of the highest customer satisfaction scores in its category, exceeding 4.5/5

Over 50% repeat
purchase rate

Establishing Journey Fluidity...

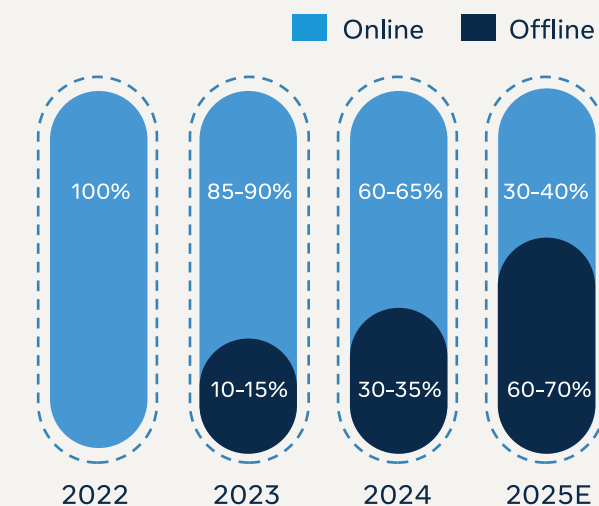
“

Once we went offline, digital became a strong medium for discovery of the brand instead of sales. More than 80% of customers who walk in have found the company online first

- Priyanka Salot, Co-Founder

Omni-channel Bet: A Growth Multiplier

Revenue CAGR of 190% FY22-FY24



Store Count	0	20	70	~140
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Passport to Success:



3. Tapping into Global Markets

3. Tapping into global markets: A blueprint for expansion



Why startups go global

Startups explore new geographies to expand demand & boost margins

Cross-border play via Exports
or NRI Diaspora Targeting



52% startups
have expanded cross border

Motivations
to go global



Expanding
the TAM



92%¹

Expanding globally
unlocks larger
TAM



Latent demand for
Indian Origin products



87%¹

Interest for Indian-origin
products increased by >30%
from 2021-24²



Better
ROI



~25%³

higher margins in key export
markets via cost & pricing
edge

When is the right time for cross border expansion

Faster flight : Services go global 1–2 years before product startups

3 to 3.5
Years

Average # of years of operations to go cross border

Years of domestic
operations before
going cross border

1 year

2 year

3 year

4 year

5+ years

1

Early adopters:
Service startups

Financial &
Taxation Services

Astrology, Dating
and Matrimony

Media, Gaming and
Entertainment

Education & Skill
Development

Service startups expanded
cross border relatively
earlier, owing to:

a High scalability
enabled by digital
mode of delivery

b Ease of customer
acquisition due to digitally-
native global audience

c Easier customization to
service offerings based
on local preferences

“

Our repeat purchase rate was quite high (~60-70%). While that is a great sign that our customers love our products, it also meant that we were mostly hitting the same customer base. That is when we realized that we needed to expand the top of our funnel.

- Dushyant Baravkar,
Founder, Bhumi Organic Cotton

2

Late Entrants:
Product startups

Fashion &
Accessories

Beauty and
wellness

Food and
Beverages

Home and
Kitchen

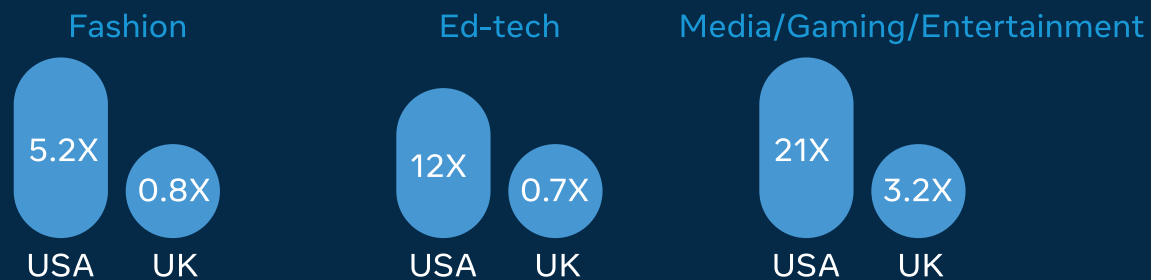
Healthcare and Fitness

What are the global hotspots

USA, UAE & UK



Relative market sizes w.r.t. India



START-UP TO SCALE-UP: UNLOCKING NEXT
WAVE OF GROWTH FOR EMERGING BUSINESSES

Note: 1: % of startups that expanded cross border from the total number of startups in that sector; 2: % of startups that have expanded to this country of the total startups that expanded in the sector

Key sectors for cross-border are...¹

95%+
Spiritual-Tech



75%
Ed-Tech



67%
Fashion



67%
Media, Gaming,
Entertainment



Top countries of expansion for these sectors..²

>50%

USA

>50%

UK

83%

UAE

67%

USA/Canada

88%

UAE

56%

USA/UK

67%

UAE

67%

UK

How: Cross-border playbook

Products go omni, services stay online

**65%
startups**

sell through a mix
of both online and
offline channels

Most popular
online channels are¹ ...



88% Own Website /Apps

74% Marketplaces

Most popular
offline channels are¹ ...



91% International
Distributors

59% Multi-Brand
Retailers

**35% startups sell
ONLY online**

Service startups sell online-only...



Ed-tech



Financial, Spiritual Tech



Media, Gaming

*Remote, online mode of service delivery,
making offline presence redundant*

**Product
startups**

adopt omni-channel for
cross-border expansion
across



Food & Beverages

Build brand equity
Drive volume and reach



Healthcare & Fitness

Instill trust
Enable guided purchases



Beauty & Personal Care

Look & Feel via In-Store
Enable trials

How: Cross-border playbook

Geo-targeted marketing propels cross-border growth

Startups build the following capabilities before expanding cross border¹



Developing region-specific product proposition*

98%



Localized marketing

75%



Robust supply chain

60%



Strategic partnerships and alliances

56%



Discounted pricing w.r.t. international players

12%

* Excluded because developing region-specific product proposition is imperative for all startups across sectors

Heavy reliance on digital advertising, creator economy and SEO

% startups

Action

Insights



92%

Digital Advertising

Increase marketing focus during regionally significant holidays / events (e.g. Black Friday) to capture demand spurs

Consumers in USA and UK are **1.4x** times more likely to purchase a product after seeing it on social media ads vis-à-vis Indian consumers



67%

International Influencers

Tie up with international marketing partners and educate audience through influencers on India-specific brand story

Compared to India, consumers in USA, UK and UAE trust influencers **1.1x** times more than traditional advertising



46%

Search Engine Optimization

Pivot brand positioning from focusing on price-proposition to features and benefits

“Best noise-cancelling headphones” has **11x** higher relative search interest² cross border than India while interest for “Earbuds under 1000”³ is **2x** higher in India than cross border

Case Study

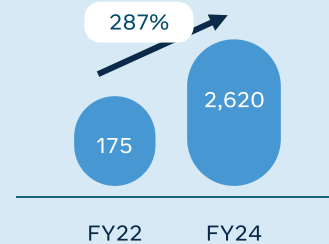
Going international with product innovation

Overview



Experience high quality audio entertainment, including immersive storytelling driven by audio series

Revenue (INR Mn)



Key markets



USA

70%



INDIA

15%



GERMANY

10%

% of FY24 revenue

Cross Border Playbook

Product adaptation and localisation

Global storyline, adapted locally. Tailored content with adaptations differing across languages and markets

Category innovation

Pivoted from knowledge-based content to pioneering multi-episode audio series successful in India and globally

Micro-transactions model

Gamified payment (freemium approach); 30 min free daily listening and in-app wallet-payment for additional episodes

Impact of Cross Border

85%

Revenue from overseas after launch of monetization through micro-transaction model

135 min

Average time spent by user on the app in US vs. 115 min globally

Case Study

Going international with right channels

Overview



Provides access to mentor-led courses that help users acquire industry-relevant knowledge

Revenue growth

Grew ~9x from

FY22 → FY24

Key markets



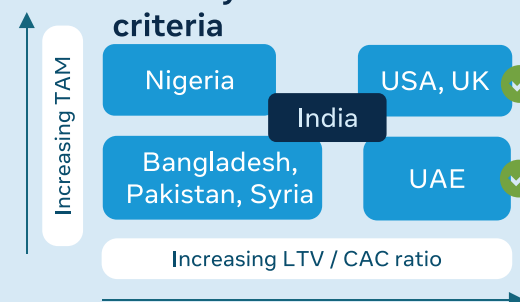
USA

UAE

UK

Cross Border Playbook

Country selection criteria



Timeline of expansion

Cross-border expansion from its inception in 2021, given its digital delivery model

Key marketing channels



International influencer partnerships



Performance marketing led funnel



Leveraging founder as an influencer

Impact of Cross Border

40%

Revenue from overseas in 4 years of operations

10-15%

Higher Profitability than domestic markets despite Higher CAC

Smarter, Faster, Leaner:



4. Revving the AI Engine

4. AI is here and now: Startups adapt fast



Why leverage AI for business?

AI has evolved from 'nice-to-have' to 'must-have': Startups are already leveraging AI in their business processes

80%+

Startups witness increased service levels and higher ROI through AI-driven marketing



When do startups deploy AI?

All startups can now unlock value from AI through solutions tailored for their level of digital maturity

60%+

Startups embraced AI in their business processes in the past 4 years



How are startups leveraging AI?

Startups are adopting AI across core functions, such as marketing, support services, customization, pricing and product development

80%+

Companies leveraging AI in marketing capability; Marketing function is front-runner in AI deployment



Who: Which sectors have leveraged AI?

Both product and service startups are leveraging AI; Healthcare, education and BPC lead the way in AI deployment

85%+

Companies in healthcare education and BPC are leveraging AI

Why startups use AI?

From add-on to essential

Startups are deploying AI across marketing, support, product & pricing

AI Adoption is Reshaping Businesses Now



2021-22 AI capabilities & funding surged



VC funding in AI startups grew 108% in 2021¹



Breakthrough demos like GPT-3 & DALL-E sparked enterprise pilots

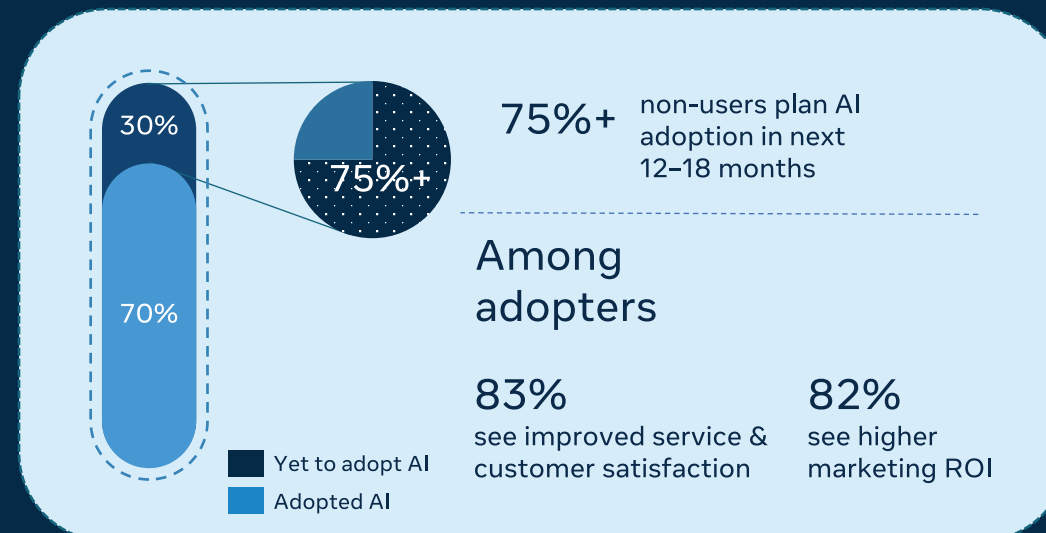


AI deployed across marketing, support, ops, pricing, design & customization

2023 Onwards Urgent integration into business workflows

Of the startups surveyed...

70%+
startups already
use AI in business
processes



AI myths debunked: From hesitation to adoption

From cost to complexity, busting myths that stall progress


01

AI investments are a cost drain



AI tools & open-source models now offer better access & ROI

76%

Indian companies report positive ROI from AI¹

3.6x

Return on GenAI investments in Asia Pacific²


02

I don't have a talent pool



Plug-&-play, no-code AI solutions simplify adoption for startups

India has a growing pool of skilled AI talent

Growing AI Talent pool (~20% CAGR)³

AI talent in India (# Mn)


86%

Startups are actively hiring AI talent⁴


03

I will lose control on data



AI tools offer strong privacy, compliance & data control

India advancing data protection laws for AI safety



India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 (DPDP Act)


04

My startup's scale is small to get started



AI models can learn from limited data using techniques like transfer learning, or leverage pre-trained models


74% startups

(with ARR < INR 1000 Mn) use AI across functions

When is the right time to leverage AI? “Now”

AI tools now accessible for startups at different stages



60% + 

Startups started leveraging AI post-2021

330 Mn 

Average ARR of startups when starting to adopt AI

Current Digital State

AI Readiness

Startups Tailor AI Adoption by Digital Maturity

Level 1

LOW
Siloed data,
no CRM/ERP

Early AI
No-code chat bots,
spreadsheet AI add-
ins, AI-driven
creatives and ad
placement

Level 2

MID
Centralized data,
basic dashboards,
unlinked tools

Growing AI
AI Assistants,
demand-forecasting
using low-code ML, AI-
driven Ad ranking, AI-
driven creatives

Level 3

HIGH
Unified systems, real-
time KPIs, automated
workflows

Advanced AI
Recommendation
engine, dynamic
pricing and creatives
optimization, NLP
insights on chat logs

How: Core ops to campaigns

Startups embed AI everywhere

Marketing & Growth

Predictive marketing, Gen-AI Creatives, AI-driven Ad ranking, Social media sentiment and engagement Analysis



% of AI-adopter startups that have used AI in these functions

89%

Customer Experience

AI chatbots, Multi-language Conversation, Virtual try-on, self-service portal



80%

Customization and Pricing

Product customization and recommendation, real-time price optimization, localized pricing strategy



79%

Operations

Supply chain optimization, inventory management, store location optimization



52%

Product Development

Consumer insights, design automation



28%

% of AI-adopter startups using AI for marketing



89%

AI based predictive marketing



80%

Generative AI in creatives development



68%

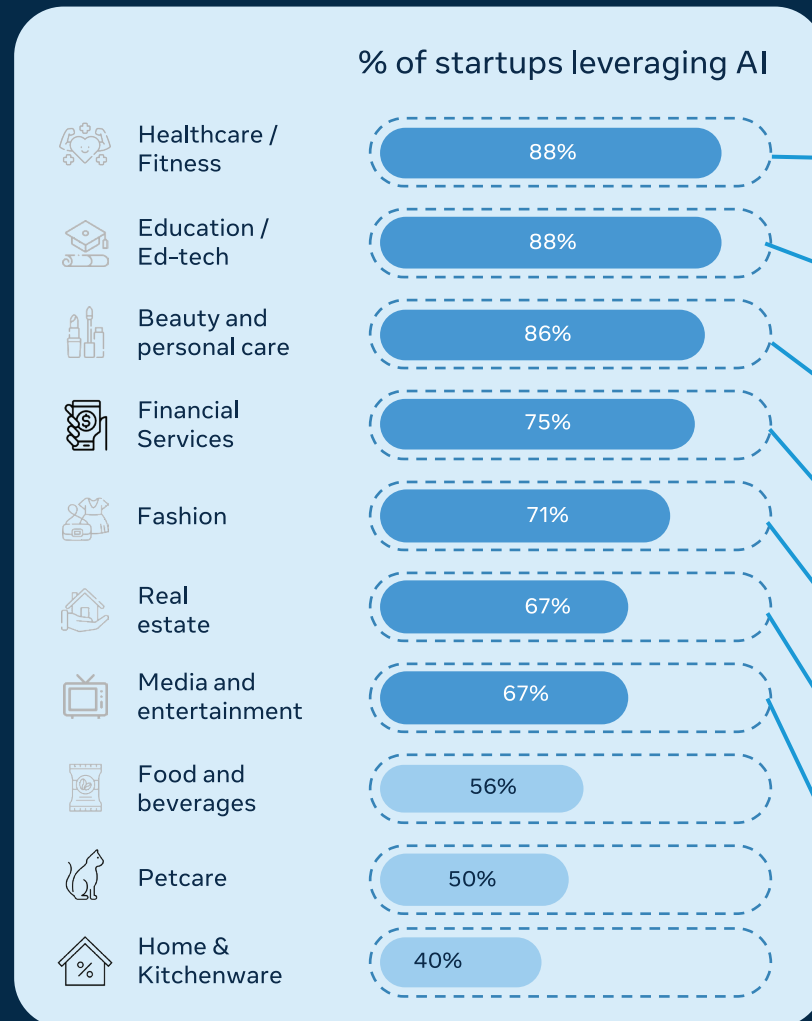
Social media sentiment and engagement analysis

“ AI has revolutionized our operations: cutting content TAT up to 75% for trending topics, boosting daily active users by ~10%, and scaling ad creatives efficiently, with a fairly lean team of just 6 marketers

- Keertay Agarwal,
Founder, Seekho

Who's going AI-first?

AI is driving engagement in care, classrooms & cosmetics



Areas where AI is leveraged



Healthcare

NLP chatbots assess symptoms, collect history & schedule consultations 24x7

EdTech

AI tutors offer academic help, analyze performance & recommend lessons

Fashion

Voice assistants, virtual try-ons, AI stylists & “shop the look” boost CX

Real Estate

AI-led property match, virtual tours, CRM targeting

Media

AI drives performance marketing via dynamic content & automated testing

How to win with AI:

Spend less, win more

AI-led marketing delivers measurable results through automation & optimization



Key considerations when leveraging AI for marketing

Data Completeness

Collect data across web, CRM, social, purchase history & offline touchpoints

KPI Framework

Define ROI, ROAS, CAC, LTV, conversion rate & engagement rate as success metrics



~30%

Reduction in cost per acquisition for marketing tools leveraging AI



30-35%+

Increased efficiency through AI generated diversified creatives



Case Study

Shaping marketing and content creation with AI



*Easy, goal-based lifelong learning
with curated expert-led videos*

Key statistics

Subscribers
3.8 Mn

Ad spends
INR 400 Mn

Start of AI adoption
2022

Meta Advantage+ spends
INR ~250 Mn

AI Use Case



Content creation

5-10% content is AI generated, specifically where TAT is crucial such as trending news

1 day TAT for content creation with AI vs 3-4 days manually



AI-led marketing

Optimizes targeting, ad placement and ROI

Enables testing ~600 hooks per month from ~175 earlier, to identify the right attention-grabbing 'Hook' of the video



Lean operations

400 Mn ad spends managed with ~6 employees

Impact of AI implementation

3X

More content in the same budget

4X

Faster ad testing cycles

+10%

in Daily Active User Base

Case Study

Shaping marketing and content creation with AI

**BOMBAY
SHAVING
COMPANY**



Premium, personalized grooming products delivering targets younger, Gen Z consumers

Key Sub-Categories



Shave

For clean-shaven look



Trim

Bearded look and body grooming



Spray

Hair removal sprays

AI Use Case



Performance Marketing

Targets customers based on what customers are likely to buy, when, and through which channel, re-engages leaked customers, and customizes ads and messaging by cohort



Content Creation

Develops contextualized content for each customer journey phase, boosting engagement



Customer Service Automation

70% of customer queries are managed through automation



New Product Development

Assesses consumer trends, past product metrics and market data to guide new product development

Impact of AI implementation

30-40%

Increase in ROAS based on AI-driven performance marketing

“ AI is at the heart of not only innovations we do, but how we do our core effectively. From leveraging AI for organizational processes, to portfolio review to leveraging AI in driving marketing efficiencies, it is built in our DNA. If we don't, we won't be able to leapfrog innovations, and build for future

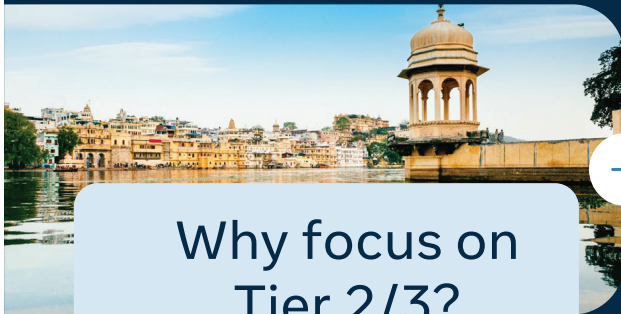
**- Shantanu Deshpande
Founder, Bombay Shaving Company**

Small Cities, Big Impact:



5. Cracking the Bharat Market

5. Rising demand: Bharat drives scale

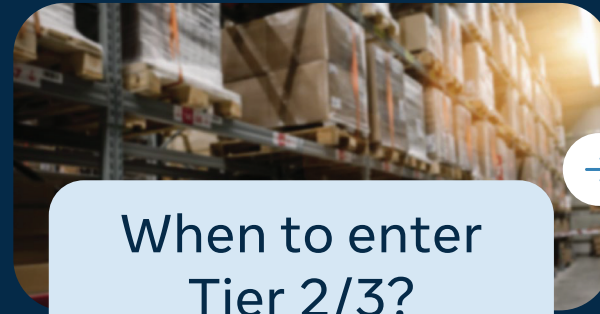


Why focus on Tier 2/3?

Startups have expanded into Tier 2+, driven by strong demand and significant supply gaps

85%+

startups believe rising digital penetration and large untapped customer base are key reasons to enter Tier 2/3



When to enter Tier 2/3?

Service startups launch earlier due to easier setup and distribution

~2 years

of operation in metro/tier 1 cities, on average, before launching in Tier 2/3

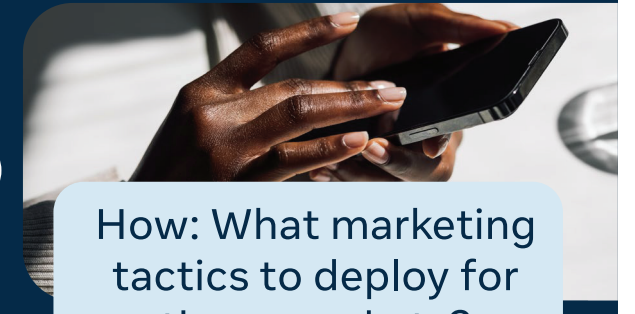


Who: Which sectors have entered these markets?

Media and agri-tech startups generate the highest share of revenue from Tier 2+

~45%+

Revenue share from Tier 2/3 markets for media/entertainment and agri-tech startups



How: What marketing tactics to deploy for these markets?

Conversational commerce and vernacular ads drive success in Tier 2/3 markets

70-75%

startups witness significantly higher conversion from WhatsApp engagement in Tier 2/3

Why 'Bharat' beckons startups?

Unmet demand, gaps in supply

New markets, new users, and untapped needs fuel the growth

95% Startups have launched in Tier 2/3 markets

60% Startups expanded to non-metro markets at ARR < INR 200 Mn

Bharat (Tier 2/3 markets):
 Rising incomes and growing digital awareness—driven by increasing internet penetration—are fuelling strong demand from Tier 2+ cities

Key reasons to launch in Tier 2/3 markets

Demand



94%

Rising digital adoption & smartphone penetration¹

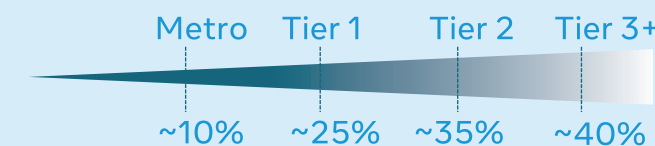


88%

Large untapped consumer demand¹

Supply

Significant supply gap despite strong demand
 In consumer industry, share of unorganised sector is higher in Tier 2/3 cities:



Example:
 Mattress sector: Though only ~30% of exclusive stores are in non-metros; they cater to 65%+ of the demand

When is the right time to expand beyond Metros?

Service startups expand to Tier 2/3 markets earlier than product startups

~2 years

of operation
in metro/tier
1, on an
average,
before
launching in
Tier 2/3



Service
Startups

1.5-2 Years

Average time to
launch into Tier 2/3



Media and
Entertainment



Real-Estate



Spiritual
Tech



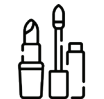
Ed-Tech



Product
Startups

2-2.5 Years

Average time to
launch into Tier 2/3



Beauty and
Personal care



Home &
Kitchenware



Food &
Beverages



Fashion



Healthcare /
Fitness

Reasons why service startups launch earlier

Low Entry Barrier

Service startups **require minimal upfront capital**, making them easier to launch

Digital Enablement

Growing **internet penetration** and widespread **smartphone access** have simplified distribution

Catering to local needs

Services can be **easily tailored** to meet local preferences, cultural nuances, and regional demands.

Which sectors are seeing most traction?

M&E and Agri-tech generate revenue (~45%+) from Tier 2/3 markets



30-35%

Average revenue contribution from Tier 2/3

High revenue contribution from Tier 2+



Media	58%
Agri-tech	45%
Real estate	40%
Kitchenware	40%

Smartphone and TV access is driving content reach across metros and Tier 2+ markets

Agri-tech, real estate, and kitchenware sectors benefit from high house ownership; coupled with factors such as **high farmer density and rising incomes**

Moderate-High revenue contribution from Tier 2+



Fashion	39%
Ed-tech	35%
E-com	35%
Healthcare	35%

Rising affluence and awareness are boosting fashion, ed-tech, e-commerce, and healthcare adoption in Tier 2+ markets

Digital delivery, improved logistics and flexible payment options further enable sales in Tier 2+ markets for these sectors

Low-Moderate revenue contribution from Tier 2+



F&B	34%
FS	31%
BPC	28%
Petcare	26%

F&B and BPC brands must focus on gaining **consumer trust** through **look and feel**

Access to credit and financial inclusion is important for FS startups in Tier 2/3 cities

Pet care is **underpenetrated** in Tier 2+ cities

How to talk local, sell smart:

Referrals, vernacular, & chat commerce fuel deeper reach



What works best in 'Bharat'

Consumers in Tier 2/3 increasingly rely on conversation-based channels (WhatsApp etc.) to seek personalized support and place orders.

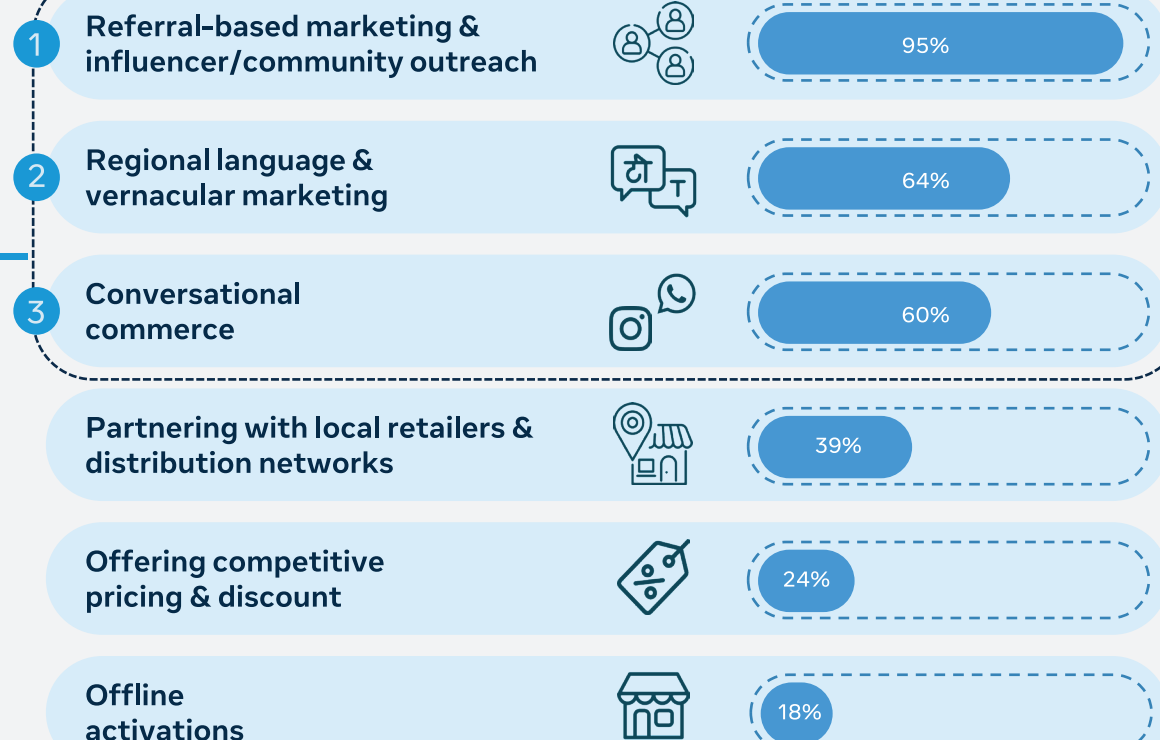
Businesses are leveraging conversational commerce to build trust and unlock growth in Tier 2+ cities

“WhatsApp is an effective channel for re-targeting and driving bottom-of-funnel conversions, delivering conversion rates of 15-25%, compared to <10% on other platforms

- Romita Mazumdar,
Founder, Foxtale

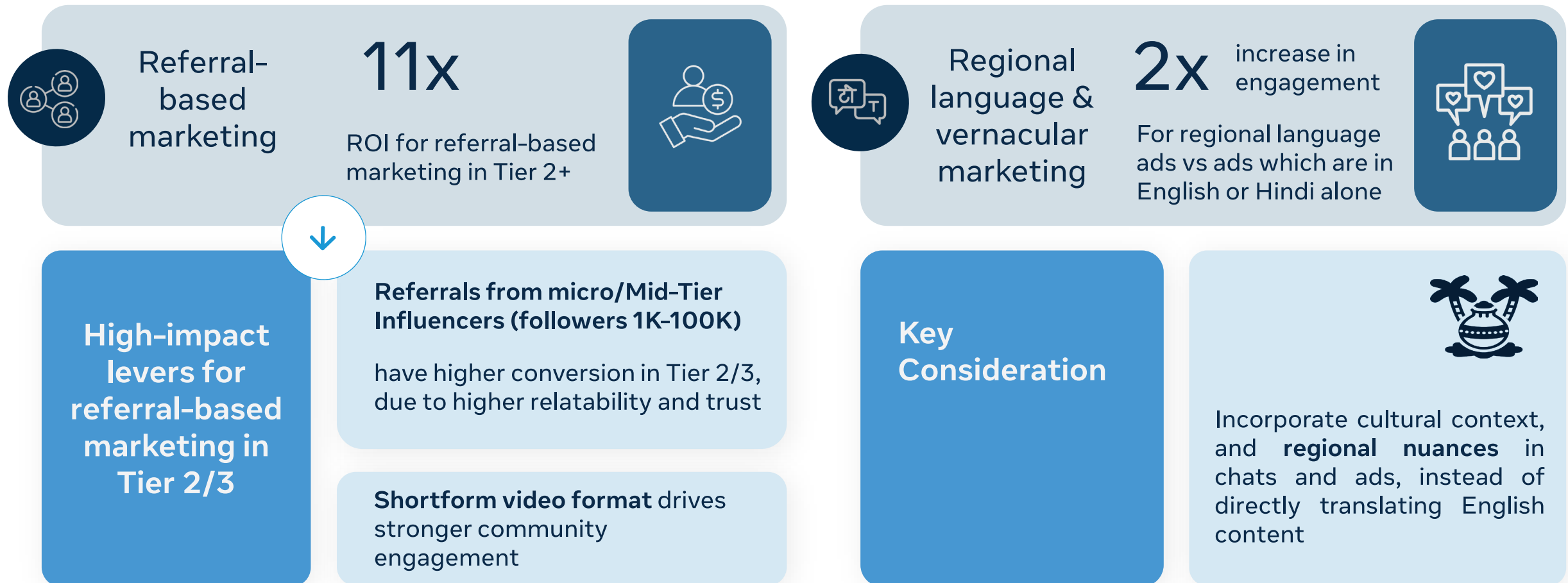
Focus Themes

% of startups that selected this as a priority



Going Hyper-Local:

Doubles engagement and boosts ROI



Impact of WhatsApp leads: 75% higher conversions

Conversational commerce, a winning tool to engage the Tier 2/3 customer



60% WhatsApp users in India interact with WhatsApp Business every week¹

70-75% startups witness significantly higher conversion from WhatsApp engagement in Tier 2/3 markets²



Top KPIs to track success in conversational commerce



% of startups choosing it as a key metric



Customer Satisfaction

80%



Conversion rate

78%

Case Study

smytten



Product trial platform
enabling product discovery
through sampling

- Enables D2C brands to reach consumers through a "try-before-you-buy" model
- Focused on Bharat post 2020, banking on post-Covid digital adoption, after it achieved ARR of INR ~750 Mn
- Grew userbase to 25 Mn+ users across 27,000+ pin-codes
- Delivers trials for 1,500+ brands
- TG: High-aspiration segments such as young professionals, homemakers, and Gen Z

Founder vision for expanding to Tier 2/3

Opportunity:

- No trial infra in Tier 2/3

Tailwinds:

- Digital literacy
- Affordable smartphones
- Aspiration-driven demand

Tier 2/3 Expansion Strategy

Playbook for Tier 2/3 expansion:

01

Market identification
basis parameters
such as...

High internet
penetration

Strong e-commerce
demand

Consumption
potential

Proprietary consumer
data (SmyttenAI)

02

Omnichannel with
online & experience
centers...

Launched

Experience Centres

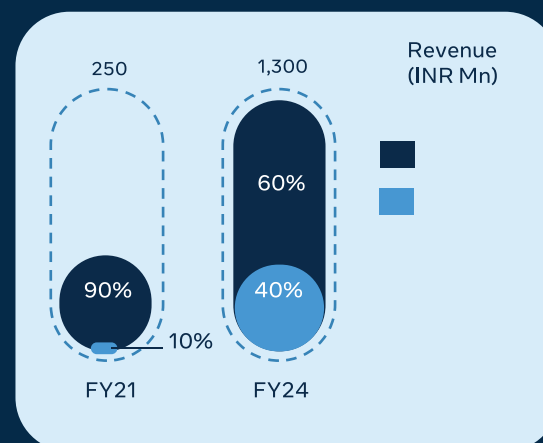
Location: Malls

Avg Size: 800-1000 sq. ft.

Marketing initiatives

Conversational commerce

Vernacular campaigns with
communities and influencers



Impact of Expansion

40%

revenue from Tier 2+ in 4 years

30-40%*

higher engagement in Tier 2+ than
metros, based on vernacular
campaigns

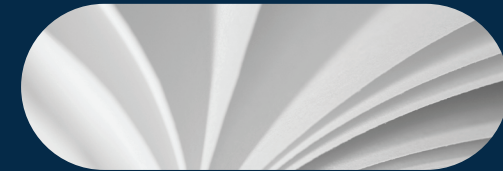
20%

lower CAC than metro cities

“India’s next billion consumers are not waiting to catch up—they’re leapfrogging. In Tier 2/3 markets, relevance isn’t about scaling down your offering, it’s about showing up with empathy, accessibility, and trust. That’s where the real brand loyalty is born

- Swagat Sarangi
Founder, Smytten

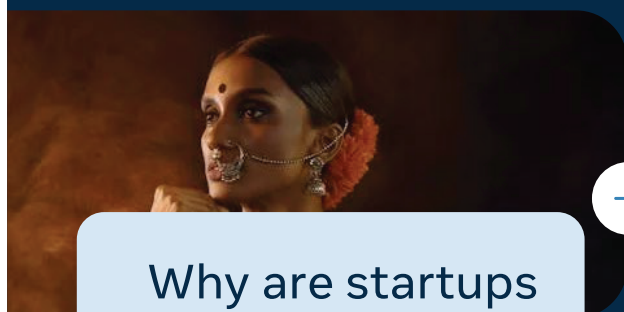
From Clicks to Community:



6. Creator led-brand building

6. Co-creating with influencers:

Brands build trust by associating with a relatable, authentic voice resonating with its audience

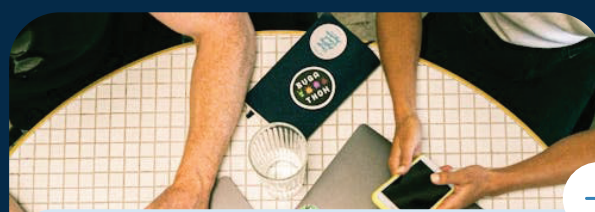


Why are startups investing in creators?

Brands are tapping into the rapidly growing creator ecosystem to build trust and reach niche audiences

85%+

Brands have partnered with content creators

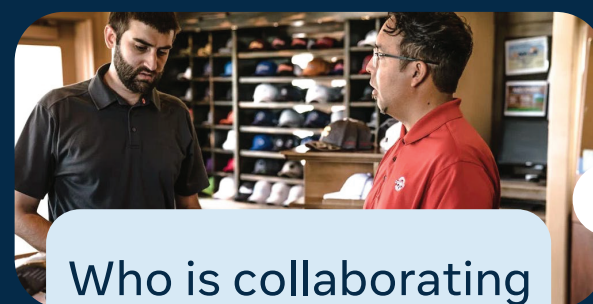


When do businesses start creator collaboration?

Startups having a basic level of digital-marketing maturity can tap into the influencer market

60%+

Brands start leveraging creators within 2 years of founding

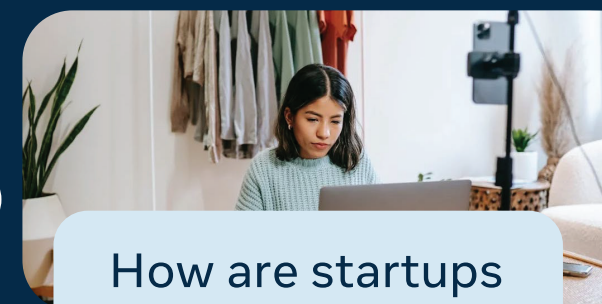


Who is collaborating with creators?

Both product and service startups have equally leveraged creators for building trust and targeting niche audiences

>95%

Startups across products and services incl. Fashion, BPC, food, spiritual-tech & media - are collaborating with creators



How are startups driving this collaboration?

Affiliate marketing and barter partnerships for creators, Co-branding initiatives and brand ambassador programs for celebrities

84%+

Startups leverage affiliate marketing or barter partnerships to collaborate with creators

Why startups leverage creators: Trust meets reach

Creator boom fuels trust & targeted growth



What makes creator
collaborations more compelling
than other digital ads?

88%
startups have
invested in creator-
led brand building

**Market Dynamics: Large developing creator
market**

80 Mn+

of creators and
knowledge
professionals in
India¹

**INR
1.6-2 Tn**

Creator
economy market
size (FY24)²

**INR
29-33 Tn**

Consumption
spend that is
creator influenced
(FY24)²

01

98%

Startups believe creators
develop higher brand trust
among customers²

02

83%

Startups believe creators can
reach niche targeted audience²

03

47 Secs

Human attention span per
screen; making short-form
videos an impactful ad format³

Fast-tracking influence:

Startups adopt creators early

Influencer trust-building starts sooner than ever



60% +

Brands start leveraging creators within 2 years of operations

When is a startup ready to leverage the creator economy?

Startups having even a basic level of digital-marketing maturity can tap into the influencer market

A startup having...

A Minimum Viable Product or product pilot

+

Basic digital channels (website, social handles)

+

A modest test budget (~INR 50k per campaign)

...is ready to partner with micro-influencers (influencers with 5k-50k followers)

Who can & should leverage creators? “All”

Which sectors are collaborating with creators the most?



Product Startups¹

Fashion

98%+

Beauty and
personal care

97%+

Food and
beverages

95%

Healthcare /
Fitness

88%

Home and
kitchenware

80%



Service Startups¹

Spiritual-tech

98%+

Media &
Entertainment

96%

Events, Travel
and Hospitality

95%

Personal /
Home Services

95%

Education &
Ed-Tech

75%

Why do product companies leverage creators?



Visual Appeal & Demonstrability

Easily featured in influencer content
(e.g. unboxing, tutorial videos)

Product categories such as Fashion,
BPC can trigger quick buy decisions
on influencer recommendation.



Sampling & Trials

Brands can ship free samples, limited editions
or trial kits to influencers at scale.

Creates a natural entry point for collaboration



Educational storytelling

Influencers can explain a service's
workflows, use cases and benefits
through tutorials, walkthroughs or
“day-in-the-life” content.

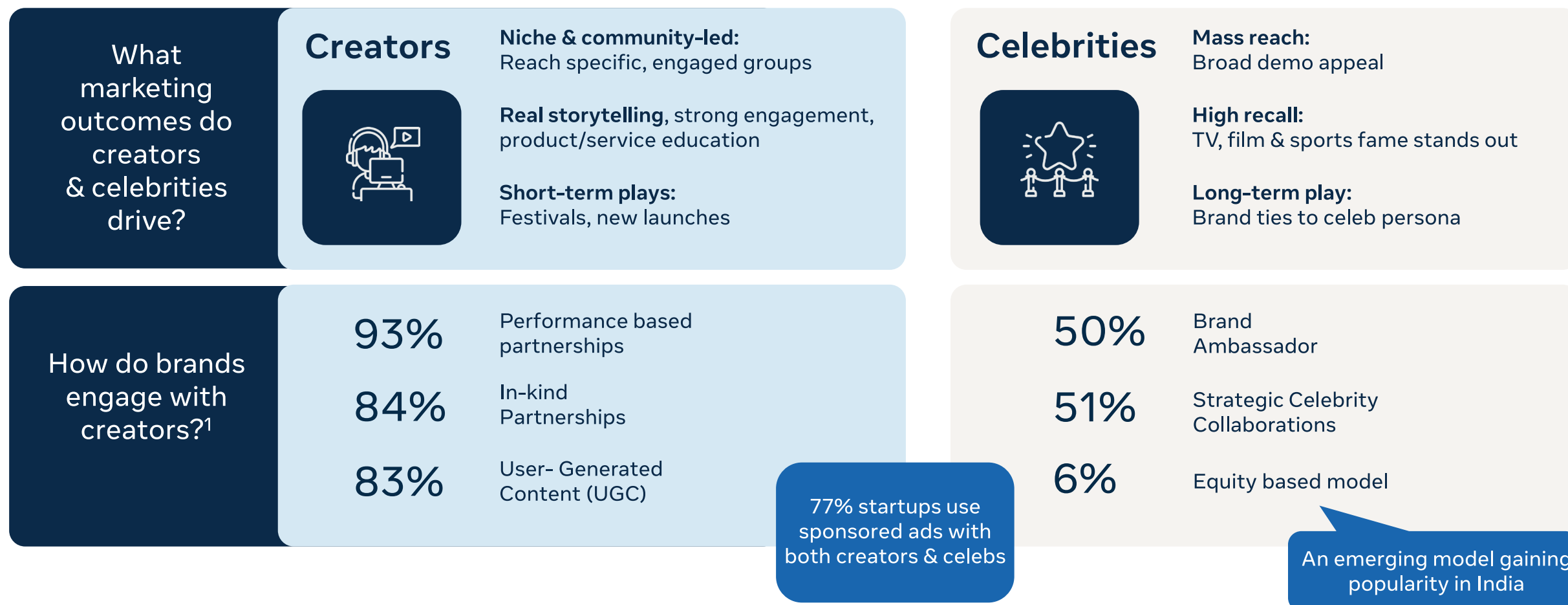


Community and referral engine

Purchase of services relies on peer
recommendations. In this case, creator
communities with high credibility can drive
word-of-mouth and referrals

Creators win niches, celebrities win crowds:

Creator playbook works across startups and their desired marketing outcomes



Case Study

RAS
LUXURY SKINCARE



Farm-to-Face luxury skincare brand, focusing on organic ingredients sourced from sustainable farms

Launched as 'face oils' and 'essential oils' company in 2018, it expanded its product range to 100+ items including skincare products

Grew from online-only presence to foraying offline with 3 physical stores

Unlocked B2B segment with hotels like Trident and Oberoi for spa and gifting, and with Vistara for in-flight kits in line with their premium positioning

Utilized experiential marketing, such as hosting top beauty creators at its farm, to build trust and authenticity

Influencer Strategy

Affiliation Models

01

Performance-based partnerships

- 50% of all influencer collaborations
- Useful for new product launches and hero SKU campaigns

02

In-kind partnerships

- 20% of all influencer collaborations
- Useful to increase campaign reach, while optimizing costs
- Seeds newer creators

03

User generated content

- 30% of all influencer collaborations
- Useful for lower funnel, building trust and authentic connection

50+

Creators leveraged in a month in 2025, compared to 2-3 in 2022

Impact on Business Metrics

25% Higher ROAS



20% Lower Cost of acquisition



“Influencer marketing has been a core pillar of our growth. For us, content isn't just a piece of the puzzle—it *is* the puzzle. Working with creators allows us to tell real, relatable stories that build trust and emotional resonance. When you work with the right creators, you're not just marketing—you're building a community.


Suramya Jain,
Co-founder, Ras

Stronger Ecosystem


Smarter Startups

Funding flows, *Policy follows*


A thriving ecosystem
backed by capital,
comprehensive
policies and marketing
partners



98% startups cite funding access as a key enabler
97% founders credit mentorship from investors



87% startups value govt. support & policies



94% startups use ad & tech partners for marketing

Investment & Mentorship Partners

Fund, guide & unlock industry access

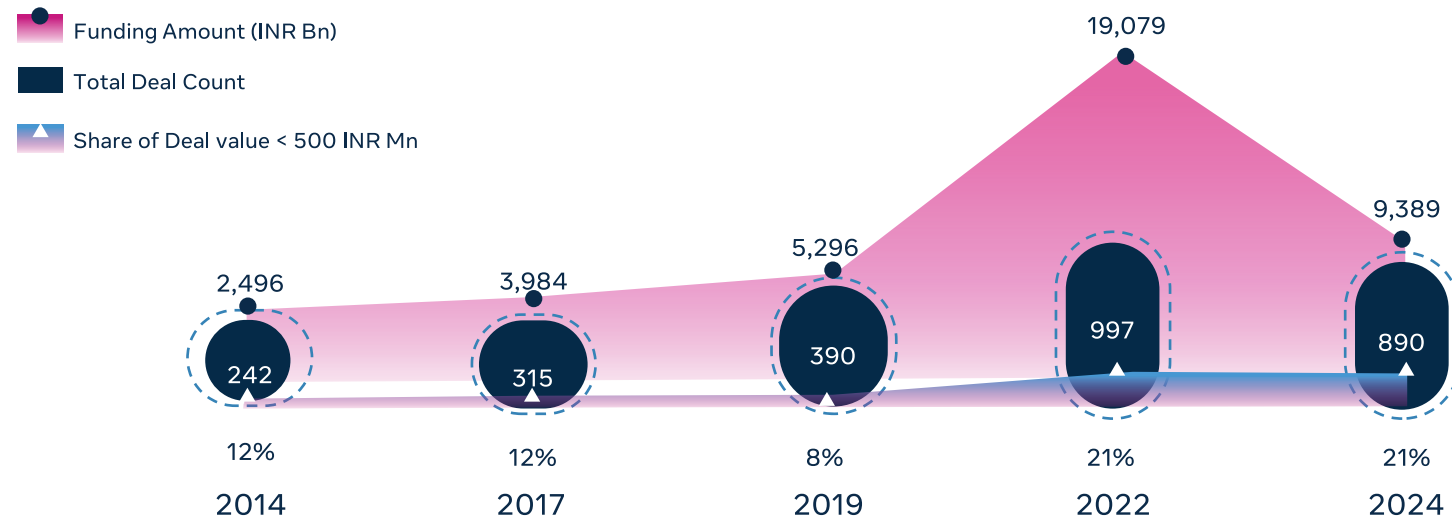
Policy & Ecosystem Enablers

Shape reforms, offer incentives & boost ease of business

Marketing Partners

Drive digital campaigns to target the right customer, leading to growth

Big stakes, bigger gains



Funding from
foreign investors
(INR Bn)

~965

~1435

~ 3,115

~ 4,755

~ 2,780



Highest funded Sectors (2022-24)



24.3%

Financial
Services

10.7%

Technology



9.9%

Telecom



9.2%

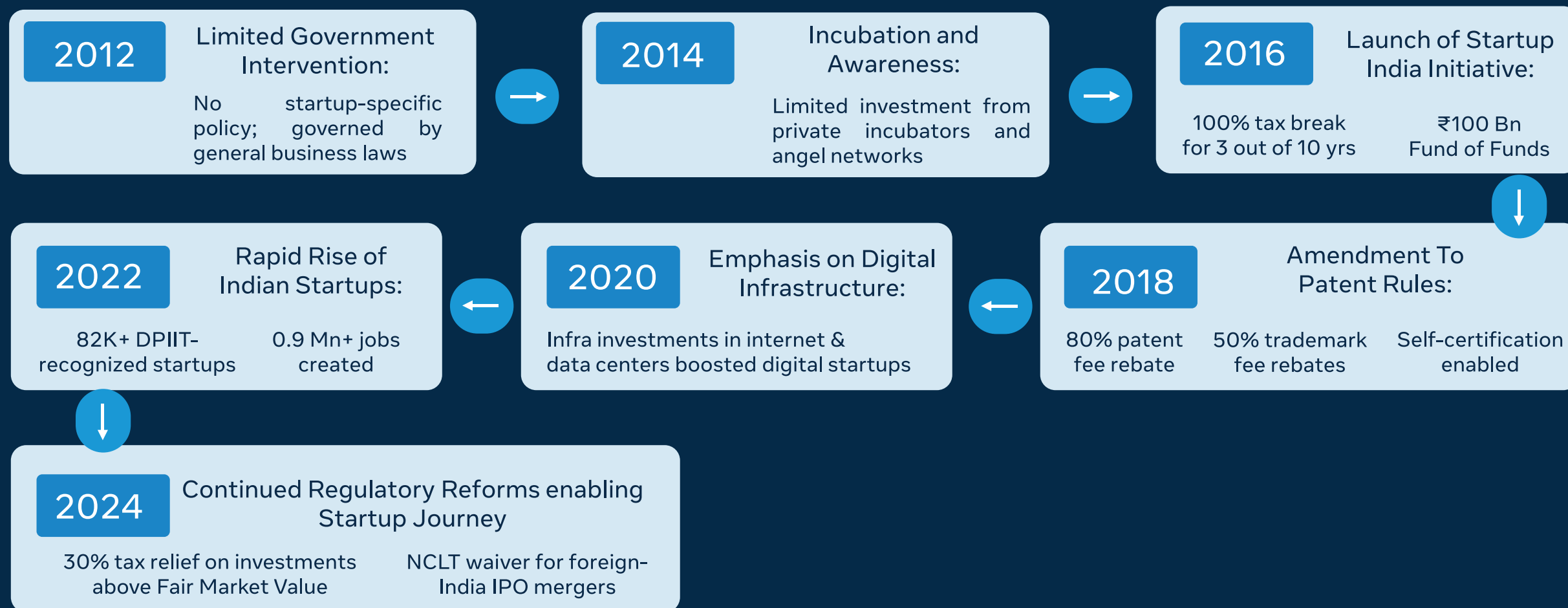
Energy

“Beyond capital, VCs play a pivotal role in shaping startup scaleup—sharpening product-market fit, guiding founders on hiring a strong team, and steering them away from the pitfalls of premature scaling

- Sunitha Viswanathan
Partner, Kae Capital

Smart regulations: Fueling innovation

Policies designed to accelerate growth and innovation



From insights to business impact:

Ad & tech partners fuel brands

From campaign planning to execution, partners shape visibility & scale

Key Impact Areas

Content creation
(visuals, copywriting)

Brand Messaging Ideation
& Positioning

Customer Journey
Analytics

Performance
Marketing

Media Campaign
Strategy & Execution

Spend Attribution Across
Online & Offline Channels

Role in Empowering startups

Own creative strategy in line with brand ethos

Use analytics to drive business expansion discussions

Performance marketing (including strategic decisions)

Avenues with influencers, AI tools & global partnerships

Voice of the Ecosystem

“We have seen businesses evolve from relying on partners for executing campaigns, to becoming thought partners in their growth journeys”

Suneil Chawla, Co-founder, Social Beat

“AI-driven targeting outperforms manual targeting by 25-30%, shifting focus from demographic-based targeting to creative optimization”

Abhishek Maity, Co-founder and partner, Adbuffs

“Tech partners like us accelerate startup growth by optimizing marketing spend and bridging their omnichannel journeys across web, app, physical stores and call centers on all digital platforms”

**Gaurav Chhapparwal,
Founder & CEO, Datahash**

 **95%**

startups use agencies to bridge marketing & brand awareness gaps

 **87%**

Adopt advanced methods: LTV analysis, incrementality studies & A/B testing

Glossary

AI	Artificial Intelligence	IPO	Initial Public Offering
ARR	Annual Recurring Revenue	JPY	Japanese Yen
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka	LTV	Lifetime Value
Bn	Billion	MAU	Monthly Active Users
BNPL	Buy-Now-Pay-Later	MBO	Multi-Brand Outlet
BPC	Beauty and Personal Care	Mn	Million
CAC	Customer Acquisition Cost	MPCE	Monthly Per capita Consumption Expenditure
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate	MYR	Malaysian Ringgit
CNY	Chinese Yuan	NASSCOM	National Association of Software and Service Companies
CRM	Customer Relationship Management	NLP	Natural Language Processing
D2C	Direct to Consumer	NPR	Nepalese Rupee
DPIIT	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade	PHP	Philippine Peso
EBO	Exclusive Brand Outlet	PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning	ROAS	Return on Ad Spend
EUR	Euro	ROI	Return on Investment
FY	Fiscal Year	SGD	Singapore Dollar
GBP	British Pound Sterling	TAM	Total Addressable Market
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	TAT	Turnaround Time
GTM	Go-To-Market	Tn	Trillion
IDR	Indonesian Rupiah	UPI	Unified Payments Interface
India SPF	India Startup Policy Forum	USD	United States Dollar
INR	Indian Rupee	VC	Venture Capital

Disclaimer

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Acknowledgement

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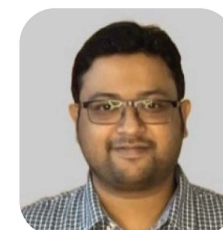
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STARTUP TO SCALE-UP: UNLOCKING NEXT WAVE OF GROWTH FOR EMERGING BUSINESSES