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GENERAL NEWS

China's SMEs Had a Tough 2020; Underperform Larger Peers

Fitch Ratings-Shanghai-26 February 2021: China's micro as well as small and medium enterprises (SME) experienced a plunge in business activity during 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, says Fitch Ratings. Indices also revealed that SMEs underperformed larger enterprises, particularly in the retail sector.

Hotel, catering, transport and logistics were the worst hit. Manufacturing, retail and real estate showed a speedy recovery from 2Q20, but the indices for all sectors remain well below pre-pandemic levels.

Smaller retailers underperformed larger retailers, reversing the trend in 2013-2019. This was most likely due to small retailers being more financially strained and lacking the resources to sustain their operation amid the supply-chain disruption. National retail sales dropped by 3.9% yoy in 2020, lagging larger enterprises' fall of only 1.9%.

Despite the contraction in business activity, financing, liquidity and funding conditions have eased for SMEs since 2Q20, as the government quickly responded with a series of supportive policies, including easier financing, tax exemptions and administrative assistance.

The report "China Corporates Snapshot - February 2021: Small Enterprises Underperform; Policies Support Recovery" is available at www.fitchratings.com

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Source: [China's SMEs Had a Tough 2020; Underperform Larger Peers \(fitchratings.com\)](#)

How data and analytics can boost SME performance

"Insight not hindsight" should be the guiding force for decision-making among small and medium enterprises in a post pandemic world - according to a new RSM Australia report that highlights the value of data in a competitive market.

The report challenges the common notion among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that data analytics is a tool for big business. Data has value for optimising operations, cutting costs, expanding the customer base, better serving existing clients and consequently boosting revenues.

Core business objectives aside, each of these outcomes has become a crucial ticket to SME survival in a pandemic-stricken economy - as noted by Srdjan Dragutinovic, a Melbourne-based data analytics director at RSM.

"Uncertainty about the future and anxiety around next steps are new realities for many SMEs. The question "what will happen next" is high on the agenda for virtually every business and needs to be addressed, quickly." Analytics can add value here, although SMEs tend to shy away from it for several reasons.

"Some businesses don't realise just how much quality data they have to help grow their business, whilst others have so much data they're overwhelmed by it and don't know where to start." Instead, businesses use hindsight to speculatively inform their next steps, rather than using their data repositories to make concrete forecasts.

Strategy and culture

An insight-driven approach is crucial - built on two fundamental principles of strategy and culture. Strategy comes into play when selecting the type of data to gather and analyse. Sifting through all enterprise data is wasteful and time-consuming. SMEs should define a clear set of problems that they hope to solve, and collect only relevant data.

At the same time, the most relevant of data - accurately analysed - comes to no avail if the business lacks a data-minded culture that "that values and seeks out data driven insight, to help identify and prioritise strategic initiatives and new opportunities," according to Dragutinovic.

And much like most behavioural practices, a data-driven culture is better inspired than instructed. "Culture change starts at the top. Business owners and managers should lead by example and set expectations that employees will focus on data-led insights in decision-making." The rest can be managed through a combination of training and technology.

Combining these strategies can help SMEs lay a concrete foundation for their future. No doubt, hindsight is a key tool to have in the armory. But the experts recommend an approach of "understanding the past, and predicting the future."

Source: [How data and analytics can boost SME performance \(consultancy.com.au\)](https://www.consultancy.com.au)

Strategy& partners with Facebook on Lebanese SME initiative

Facebook has launched a new initiative to support struggling small- and medium-sized businesses in Lebanon, with leading global consulting firm Strategy& among the program partners.

While many smaller businesses around the world were still coming to terms with the global pandemic, those in Lebanon were in August last year suddenly dealt another devastating blow; the powerful Port of Beirut explosion which levelled city blocks and left behind \$20 billion worth of economic damage.

Not surprisingly, the impact from the blast is still being felt by small and medium businesses today, especially when coupled with the country's already tattered economy. Aimed at helping such enterprises get back on track and build stronger for the future, social media giant Facebook has launched a new multi-faceted initiative, the #LoveLocal Lebanon SMB Program.

Together with its program partners, including leading global consultancy Strategy&, the package will see Facebook donate \$600,000 in cash and ad credits to ailing SMBs along with providing individual coaching and training in areas such as ecommerce and digital marketing.

"Running a business is tough at the very best of times, but the last few months have been especially challenging," said Facebook's Middle East & North Africa managing director Ramez Shehadi in an address to local business owners, outlining the company's hope that

the support measures would allow their businesses to not only survive, but thrive. "We want to do what we can. Small businesses are the backbone of the global economy, and your financial recovery is a priority."

As a first step, Facebook and Shehadi, who took on the MENA managing director role at the end of 2018, turned to Shedadi's one-time former employer, Strategy& (then Booz & Co, prior to its rebranding upon joining PwC). Strategy&, which has an office in Beirut among its five in the Middle East, was brought in to give expert advice on the socio-economic complexities of the Lebanese market in order to best tailor the program to the specific needs of local SMBs.

And it is not the first time that Strategy& has provided pro bono support in response to the fatal explosion. In the immediate aftermath, the firm volunteered its resources to conduct an impact and needs assessment to aid local and international donors and humanitarian agencies to most effectively channel their relief efforts. In addition to providing other online updates and resources, Strategy& team members also supported recovery organisations with their on-the-ground responses.

Half of Facebook's \$600,000 financial support package has already been donated in the form of cash to the worldwide non-profit Lebanese diaspora organisation LIFE (which is also politically unaffiliated). LIFE will leverage its local knowledge to allocate the funding to selected SMBs, with Lebanon-based third sector quality assurance organisation 3QA in turn offering support during the vetting and proposal stages.

Source: <https://www.consultancy-me.com/news/3499/strategy-partners-with-facebook-on-lebanese-sme-initiative>

Start up

Cloud platforms and startups provide fertile ground for experimentation as pandemic begins to ease

Last year was a difficult one on many levels, but the opportunities for startup companies actually improved.

Venture capital funding in 2020 increased 14%, and 66 venture-backed firms achieved "unicorn" status, a private company valuation above \$1 billion. That still doesn't change the harsh reality of survival. Seventy-five percent of venture-funded startups fail, and 77% faced potential failure in 2020.

Yet, the broader picture still offers a silver lining for much of the world when it comes to the ambitions of startup entrepreneurs. As the global economy begins to emerge from the impact of a global pandemic, the work of startup companies has gained added significance. It provides a fertile ground for experimentation and the hope that bold new ideas will become game-changing innovation.

"Startups are important because, as we come out of COVID and the economy is recovering, it's a great way for engineers and companies to try different things out," said Jerry Chen, partner at Greylock Partners. "Think of startups as running multiple experiments at the

same time across the globe trying to figure out how to do things better, faster, cheaper. A lot of startups don't work, unfortunately, but a lot of them turn out to be multi-billion-dollar companies."

Chen spoke with John Furrier and Dave Vellante, co-hosts of theCUBE, SiliconANGLE Media's livestreaming studio, during today's opening session of the AWS Startup Showcase Event: Innovators in Cloud Data. Furrier and Vellante also spoke with Jeff Barr, vice president and chief evangelist at Amazon Web Services Inc.; Jeremy Arnon, senior partner development manager at AWS; and Michael Liebow, cloud platform leader at McKinsey & Co. in separate interviews. They discussed how cloud platforms provide critical support for startups, a recent report that quantifies cloud's potential business value, technology's contribution to world health and the expanding scale of innovation being witnessed today. (* Disclosure below.)

Trillion-dollar value

With an array of cloud services on the market, founders of startup companies have a more extensive platform on which to launch a new venture than did their predecessors of a decade or two ago. Compute, storage, databases and machine learning are all just a click away.

"We're in this incredible time right now where it's so easy to get those basic resources," Barr said. "They are really looking at cloud as part of a bigger picture. In Amazon terms, we'd say they are thinking big, looking beyond who they are and where they are to what they could be and what they can grow into."

That growth is helping to fuel a cloud computing industry that is redefining the meaning of business value. In February, McKinsey released a report - "Cloud's Trillion-Dollar Prize Is Up for Grabs" - that forecast a more than \$1-trillion run rate earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization across Fortune 500 companies by 2030.

The report's quantification of business value highlighted the key role that emerging technologies, such as machine learning, quantum computing, edge processing and the blockchain, can play in driving success for enterprises.

"The business value is 2x the technical value of cloud, and there is a whole unlock of additional value where organizations can pioneer on some of the newest technologies," Liebow said. "Cloud democratizes compute. It provides these capabilities, and small companies with the skills can leverage these ahead of slow-moving incumbents. Organizations specific around the Fortune 500 that aren't leveraging these capabilities today are going to get left behind."

Largest vaccination drive in history

For some firms, embracing capabilities early can accelerate product development at a critical time not just for the business, but for the world. The McKinsey report cited the example of Moderna Inc., which made a decision to build its mRNA research and development platform on the public cloud and create what the company's chief executive labeled "software for life."

The ability to quickly analyze and design mRNA sequences for protein targets has contributed to the largest vaccination drive in U.S. history.

"They couldn't have delivered the vaccine as fast as they did without cloud," Liebow said.

For venture capitalists such as Chen, the Moderna example merely confirms what he has seen among the startup firms he invests in. The cloud offers the most suitable choice in a fast-moving world governed by data and application-powered workloads.

"The way you build apps is very different in the cloud than the way you build apps on-premises," Chen said. "For a vast majority of startups and a vast majority of customers, the network effect you get from being in the cloud, the network effect you get from having everything in this elastic cloud service outweighs any other cost."

Providers such as AWS have a front-row view of the innovation taking place, as companies, such as the fast-emerging Snowflake Inc., build entire global businesses on the cloud platform. The elasticity offered by hyperscalers has created an environment where the sheer magnitude of activity becomes difficult to comprehend or quantify.

"It's kind of amazing when you hear the scale of requests per day or per month," Barr noted. "We toss around terms like trillions or quadrillions like they're pennies. Fifteen-plus years into this, I still wake up every morning thinking about what cool new thing I'm going to get to learn and write about today."

Barr won't have long to wait.

"We've been looking for ways to highlight all of the great work that startups are doing," Arnon said. "We're making this a quarterly series, and the next one is Wednesday, June 16, so mark your calendars."

Source: [Cloud platforms and startups provide fertile ground for experimentation as pandemic begins to ease - SiliconANGLE](#)

Why this Swiss startup believes the world needs to be compensated for data sharing

Swiss startup Streamr has forged partnerships with Indian and global telecoms to make blockchain-based compensation a reality. Here's how it does it. 29 CLAPS +0 Data is the new oil, and every company wants a piece of it. World over, there is a new movement that wants customers to have control over how companies use their data. This activism has led governments, especially in the European Union, to frame the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in 2018 to protect consumers from companies using their data. However, what happens when the customer decides to let the company monetise their data? Do they get compensated in return? Streamr Blockchain

Swiss startup Streamr - founded by Henri Pihkala in 2017 - helps customers in this regard. A decentralised open-source platform, the startup uses blockchain technology to enable consumers to track how their data is used and compensates them with its Ethereum-based cryptocurrency - StreamrDATAcoin or DATA. These data content are traded through a peer-to-peer network without involving third parties. "At the heart of traditional data pipelines is a central server or cloud service where all data flows through, connecting all the stakeholders. This creates vulnerable silos that additionally suffer from vendor and data lock-in. In Streamr, this central server is removed and replaced with a peer-to-peer network. To applications, it feels like any traditional message queue or pub/sub message broker, but

the observed data transport service is delivered by a swarm of independently operating nodes working together," explains Henri. Streamr's decentralised marketplace for real-time data helps everyone across the globe benefit from the information, enabling companies to better build and market their products in the world of AI and IoT. "Our vision is to create an open-source ecosystem around data and value, where applications and devices, such as IoT sensors or connected cars, can share and trade their data; where data crowd-sourcing and crowd selling becomes the norm; open data in smart cities can thrive, and the default choice for application builders is no longer to get married to cloud platforms and hand over the data," the founder tells YourStory.

"This way, people will regain control of the data they produce, and society, too, will be better off when the data is not concentrated in the hands of a few giant companies," says Henri. How does it work? For instance, an individual driving a connected EV car wants to know where they can find a charging station, a retail shop, or their favourite book store. For this, the car's telematics unit talks to partner apps (charging stations, retailers, malls, etc.) in different cloud servers (Amazon Web Services and Microsoft Azure) and telecom networks by pulling it out of these network nodes. The Streamr network makes these parties (retailers, car driver, or charging networks) share data and allows them to use it with the user's consent. Post the data sharing, transactions are settled by these parties through Streamr's cryptocurrency payment after verifying them on the startup's network. The Streamr network is agnostic to any node in a centralised network, where data can be shared with advertisers, smart cities, and others, thereby getting compensated for it. Henri Pihkala, Founder

The early days Henri Pihkala graduated from the Helsinki University of Technology with a Masters degree in computer science in 2010. He has been a serial entrepreneur with Unifina and Data in Chains - startups that use algorithms to make sense of data. "I have always been fascinated by data, and I have founded three companies in the data space. Before becoming a founder, I worked in an algorithmic trading company. However, I wanted to be accountable for my successes and create new ideas, instead of just executing others' ideas," Henri shares. At algorithmic trading company Unifina, Henri's team leveraged real-time data to make trading decisions at high frequency. Following this, he started Data Chain - a blockchain-based platform - that offered more generic real-time data to allow companies to leverage analytics and automation, commonly employed in trading. He saw the only way to power a healthy global data economy was via a neutral and open infrastructure. Eventually, he decided to pivot towards building a decentralised open-source platform and started Streamr in 2017.

"We're creating an alternative model for data transport, sharing, and monetisation, where data is inter connectable, secure, and controlled by those who produce it. With the technologies we are creating, data-flow becomes easily shareable and monetisable, giving rise to new business models. This accelerates the birth of efficient and scalable global data economies," Henri explains. Streamr brings in consumer safety and transparency within companies, especially when data is widely used in the advertisement and marketing industry, raising the issue of privacy breaches and global scandals.

The startup wants to change all this through the development of 'data unions,' where it wants to unlock new data sets, enable data providers to earn with their data, and promote its fair use. A shift towards fully decentralised systems will empower internet users globally by giving them control over their data, Henri says. A data union is a term used where

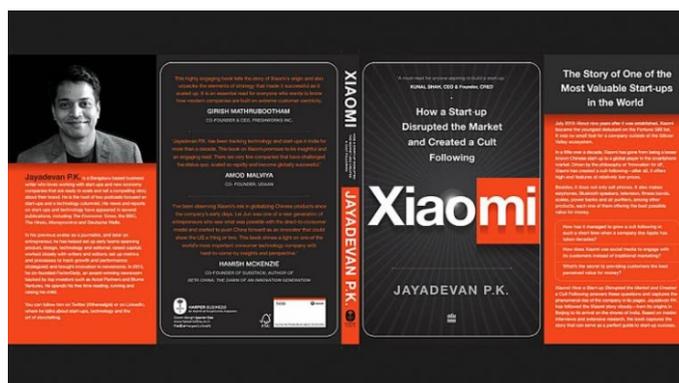
consumers have their data protected as a collective. If anyone wants to use this data, they need to ask for permission of the individual and the collective to use it. The business Decentralisation, blockchains, cryptocurrencies, data marketplaces, and data economies are relatively unfamiliar concepts within industries.

As per a Gartner, Inc. report, data marketplaces will peak in the hype cycle in three-five years. According to another report, the business value added by blockchain technology will grow slightly over \$176 billion by 2025, and may surge to \$3.1 trillion by 2030. In 2017, Streamr made an initial coin offering - an IPO in a crypto exchange - and raised \$30 million. "The funds gave us enough runway to deliver our ambitious roadmap as an open-source technology for around five years," says Henri. In fact, Streamr doesn't operate as a traditional company. Instead of revenue, it strives towards creating value and transparency. Its rewards come from the potential growth of the ecosystem - as and when the network of stakeholders use data on the platform, captured by the 'data token,' and use cases built on the platform. At present, it helps enterprise clients implement solutions based on the Streamr stack and blockchain technologies. It charges these companies for implementing its blockchain stack, where the cost of the project varies as per the complexity of the stack implemented in a network.

For instance, Streamr's blockchain network ensures transparent interactions within two cars if they are carrying SIM cards of different telecom companies. In India, Streamr runs a data challenge in partnership with GSMA, which involves engaging in a pilot project with three global telecoms, looking into rewarding users for providing valuable data. "On the development side, we're working on delivering the next milestone of the Streamr network, which will be achieved in 2021, enabling anyone to run nodes on the network. This means the network can start to decentralise data without limit. With untrusted parties running nodes, features like end-to-end encryption to keep data safe are essential," Henri explains. In the next 18 months, the Swiss startup will consolidate its 10 enterprise partnerships. It is working with a dozen of developers to build services on top of the Streamr network. "Teams developing with the Streamr protocol can create new kinds of business models around real-time data - be it data crowd-sourcing, IoT connectivity, global data sales, or purely technical improvements - over the data pipelines provided by cloud services today," says Henri.

Source: <https://yourstory.com/2021/03/swiss-data-startup-streamr-blockchain-ethereum-bitcoin-compensation>

Xiaomi's growth: A blueprint for global startup success



How did Xiaomi grow from a little-known software company in Beijing to one of the youngest enterprises to enter the hallowed Fortune 500 list. Our columnist's book, released for preorders, captures that journey.

'Xiaomi: How a Startup Disrupted the Market and Created a Cult Following' follows the journey from a little-known software company in Beijing to one of the youngest

companies to enter the hallowed Fortune 500 list.

Note to readers: Hello world is a program developers run to check if a newly installed programming language is working alright. Startups and tech companies are continuously launching new software to run the real world. This column will attempt to be the "Hello World" for the real world.

In 2008, I had joined the local news desk of a prominent newspaper in Bengaluru, which was soon to become India's Silicon Valley. Among other things in the mid-noughties, I had half a page in the paper to feature new gadgets every week. Nokia, Blackberry, Samsung, and a few other companies were regulars on the page. Around 2012, I moved to a business daily to write on technology services companies.

Soon I got bored with tracking quarterly results and rehearsed statements. India's startup ecosystem was in its infancy and I quit the paper to join a start-up blog. It was something new, and their excitement was infectious.

As start-ups became the buzzword, I went back to the pink paper to write about them. I was able to upgrade my life a little. I moved into a middle-class apartment with my family. I got some furniture and so on. After selling the Nokia phone, I had to upgrade my phone. After much research, I zeroed in on a Micromax handset.

Experiences With Indian Products

Micromax, a Gurgaon-based company that began making handsets in 2008, had some smartphones that were affordable on a young journalist's salary. Going from a phone that ran on Symbian (Nokia's proprietary operating system) to an Android-based phone was like suddenly being able to breathe after being underwater for a while.

There were tens of thousands of apps to play with and an operating system that worked really well. But I soon realized that I was running out of memory faster than I could delete apps, music, and photos. The phone began to slow down, and I was starting to get that same sinking feeling I had the evening I sold the Nokia phone.

Around the same time, I had the opportunity to visit the office of e-commerce firm Flipkart for a story about how it scaled its back-end systems to meet the unprecedented demand for a new phone from an unknown brand called Xiaomi.

Everybody was surprised it sold out so quickly. In fact, they even thought their website had a glitch when buyers complained that they were getting 'out of stock' messages.

But it turned out that, just like me, there were millions of Indians waiting for a credible (and affordable) alternative to the models then available. The phone was priced unbelievably low for the features it offered, and that was its main draw.

This was the sweet spot Xiaomi hit. As the years went by, I watched Xiaomi's phenomenal growth in India. It became India's largest smartphone company and rivaled Samsung.

Close Encounter With Xiaomi

In the winter of 2018, I went to Beijing on a reporting assignment. I hung out at Xiaomi's first store in Beijing, near its headquarters in Haidian. I also took a stroll in Haidian Park, where I saw real-world applications of artificial intelligence (AI)-such as a running track that could

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identify runners and keep score of their mileage, a virtual Shifu who taught tai chi to visitors, and an almost autonomous bus. It was a stunning display of China's technological progress.

My previous visit to Beijing was in 2011, and the difference was evident. China's Silicon Valley was evolving rapidly. And in it, companies like Xiaomi were hatching world-domination plans. I was awestruck and a little sad. My admiration was tainted with melancholy because I had seen Bengaluru, India's Silicon Valley, evolve into an urban mess just like most Indian cities that once held promise.

At the same time, China seemed to have pulled ahead to become a global superpower. I had begun to track Chinese technology companies and their growth back in India closely. I wondered often, what made these Chinese companies so successful? Is there something we can learn from them? The seeds of a book were sown in my head then.

Xiaomi's rise and global success is an amazing story of many factors that came together. It is as if someone has masterfully knit together a future-proof strategy, carefully picking elements from many different industries and backed it with heads-down execution.

I have tried to capture Xiaomi's journey from a little-known software company in Beijing to one of the youngest companies to enter the hallowed Fortune 500 list. I've also interspersed the book with elements of strategy that may be useful for other start-ups to understand. The book attempts to throw light on the company's strategy to become an internet company and how user-centricity is core to it. It also talks about the factors that made China fertile grounds for several billion-dollar companies.

As a growing startup ecosystem and a nation of techno-optimists, India has much to gain from tracking the journey of China and companies like Xiaomi. Micromax and the previous generation of phone makers may have lost the battle but the opportunity for us to create economic growth is still ahead of us and the key to it will be collaboration, not confrontation, as is evident from the way Xiaomi has embraced the Make in India program, creating a win-win for both the company and India's fledgling electronics manufacturing sector. India has many things going for it, especially in sectors like enterprise software and internet products, minus the negative sentiments that Chinese companies often have had to face.

Source: [Xiaomi's Growth: A Blueprint For Global Startup Success \(moneycontrol.com\)](https://www.moneycontrol.com)

Women Wing

10 Best Online Startup Ideas for Women in India

Women Entrepreneurs have become a vital part of the business world. These women, on the other hand, have taken this in step and have turned into employment creators rather than job seekers. The number of women entrepreneurs, as well as the success rate of their inventiveness, has skyrocketed in recent years. Women from all walks of life have always been multitaskers, balancing home and challenging jobs.

A detailed strategy is crucial to success as an entrepreneur. This will help you map out the nuances of your company and discover some uncertainties.

The below Business Ideas are best for women and can be pursued from anywhere. These startups do not require any huge investments or a place to start. These can be started online. The important thing to consider here is investing in yourself before starting the business. If you are planning to start any of the below business, make sure to be thorough and make a certification on the same. Having no proper knowledge can create confusion in a long run.

Yoga Trainer

Today's yoga industry is booming, and many women are too preoccupied with their daily lives to devote time to their physical health. Women entrepreneurs in India can focus on their health and wealth by turning their passion for yoga into a lucrative market. With pandemics hovering around the world, an online yoga class is the best choice for most people. Because of the work-from-home culture, people are more interested in fitness than ever before. Yoga studios are now switching to digital lessons, allowing yogis the opportunity to stay away from the crowds and teach peacefully. There is no huge investment for design studios, you can teach from anywhere. Your students can be from all over the world. The only investment you have to make is to invest in your certification as it is very important. People usually trust trainers who are certified from a reputed institution.

Image Consultancy Business

Image consultancy is one of the trending businesses in India. Now more people are conscious of the value of a good image, resulting in a greater demand for skilled Image Consultants in the industry. And this is reflected in the enormous business opportunity for Image Consultants, which is estimated to be worth thousands of crores. Image consultancy does not confine you to a cubicle. As an Image Consultant, you can work from home and connect with clients all over the world through the internet. You can recruit and handle professionals. This helps you to earn a consistent income without having to work a certain amount of hours per day.

Graphics Designing

The offers will start flowing at once you've built your portfolio and established yourself as a credible individual. This is one of the best home business ideas for women with your creative mind and expertise. Visual designs are created by graphic designers to express ideas that empower and educate customers. Graphic designers are required in almost all the field as it is very vital to show their business in pictures. Professional graphic designers are required by businesses to create successful marketing materials such as brochures, business cards, leaflets, and banners. Graphic design entails the creation and development of a logo that can aid in the development of a brand image. There's a fair chance that a company would need a logo, t-shirt design, website, or some other design project that you can assist with at some stage.

Financial Advisory

Women financial planners will be better able to interact with their female clients. This makes it easier for them to find the right options for their clients. Women advisors acknowledge and can contribute to women's problems, such as job advancement, work-home dilemmas, and child college savings versus retirement savings. Although both men and women will benefit from consulting with a female advisor, women can benefit more because they take the time to connect. Start your career by advising your family and friends and slowly start charging a fee for a consultation

Language Instructor

Children and teenagers, business executives, doctors and nurses, and people who simply enjoy the adventure of travel are all potential students for a foreign language instruction business. Offering lessons in one or more world languages are how a foreign language business makes money. Students may pay for individual classes or buy a set number of classes in advance. The selling of language-learning resources such as books, study material may be another source of revenue. Providing online classes allow you to meet an almost limitless number of people. Online learning is a rapidly growing industry, with Skype, Google Hangouts, and other internet networks providing easy and effective ways to host classes over the Internet.

Blogging Businesses

of all types are beginning to blog as a means of establishing a long-term audience. Blogging is more than just a way for companies to advertise their goods and services. It may potentially be the driving force behind a variety of companies. There are many options if you want to start your own blogging company. Freelance Blogger, Ghost Blogger, Affiliate Marketer, Blogger with Advertisers, Online Course Creator, Business Blogger, Social Media Blogger to name a few.

Online Tuition

Being an online tutor is currently in high demand, and it gives a lot of space for advancement. Online tutoring is a huge business opportunity for both individual tutors and training companies. By making it easier for tutors to meet students, the increasing number of online tutoring platforms and innovations has significantly bolstered the online tutoring industry.

Music Instructor

You should start tutoring children and adults in these art forms if you are a talented artist with skills in art, music, or dance. Becoming a private tutor does not entail a large financial commitment, and the benefits far outweigh the costs. You can open a franchise in major cities and towns in India and abroad for organizations truly involved in the promotion and growth of performing arts - music and dance.

Life Coach

As a Coach, you'll be able to assist yourself and other women in finding the answers they're looking for. You're not only making a living as a life coach. You are making a difference in the lives of tens of thousands of people.

Cook/Baking Many bakers began selling cakes, cupcakes, and cookies from their homes and have since expanded into regular retail bakeries and even franchises.

Conclusion Women's entrepreneurial skills have influenced the country's economic standing. They've carved out a place for themselves in all walks of life, contributing to their families and the economy. Starting a company comes with its own package of risks and difficulties. These low-cost business ideas for a startup in India are suitable for getting started, and they also encourage female entrepreneurs to expand their businesses over time without having to leave their homes.

Source: <https://www.goodreturns.in/personal-finance/planning/10-best-online-startup-ideas-for-women-in-india-1208177.html>

Women-Led Startup Take Handmade Pesto, Buckwheat Tea From Ladakh to India & the World

Kangla-Nyishar, a Leh-based startup established by four Ladakhi women, makes artisanal food like walnut pesto and buckwheat tea with locally sourced organic produce that benefit small growers, producers and the local economy.

In September 2018, Rigzin Angmo met three friends who would a year later join her as co-founders of Kangla-Nyishar, which means sunflower in Ladakhi. The Leh-based startup makes artisanal food with locally-sourced organic produce that benefit small growers, producers and the local economy.

Joining Rigzin Angmo, you have Rigzin Yangdol, Padma Angmo and Padma Angmo in the Martselang village, who source their raw materials from local farmers and make products like three varieties of pesto-walnut, apricot and sun-dried tomato-and buckwheat tea.

All four had first met as part of the Naropa Fellowship programme, a one-year course focussed on creating "agents of change" working towards "fostering an ecosystem of entrepreneurship and growth" while preserving the "heritage of Ladakh" and the larger Himalayan region. Naropa Fellows are housed inside a residential campus in Hemis village, which lies 40 km away from Leh and barely a 1km from the banks of the Indus river.

By the end of this one-year course, they were awarded a postgraduate certificate in Leadership and Entrepreneurship. As part of the programme, students are required to come up with an idea for a business venture and the means of developing it. These four women were part of the very first batch of Naropa Fellows, who graduated in August 2019.

What inspired these women in their twenties to establish this startup? Speaking to The Better India, Rigzin Angmo recalls a class in Design Thinking, which took them on a field trip to Leh Bazaar. Their brief was to observe the different commercial establishments inside Leh Bazaar, identify a major problem and present those observations back on campus.

"We were divided into groups of four and that's how we came together. One thing we noticed during our survey of Leh market was that most shops were run by non-Ladakhis. Even the shops run by Ladakhis were selling products manufactured in Himachal Pradesh.



Funnily enough, raw materials for the products we saw in Ladakhi-owned establishments like apricot scrub and apricot oil were sourced from Ladakh. Besides Ladakhis getting shut out at the lower end of the supply chain, it was evident there weren't many indigenously made or manufactured products that had a distinct local identity," Angmo says.

Co-Founders (From L-R): Padma Angmo (Takmachik), Rigzin Angmo, Padma Angmo and Rigzin Yangdol. Their startup makes different varieties of pesto and buckwheat tea.

Going Local

Backed by a strong desire to make indigenous products representative of Ladakh, the four

women felt that a venture most likely to succeed would be one which maintains a close relationship with the land and local community. Following the conclusion of the programme, they spent time researching different plant species, herbs and crops grown in Ladakh, and the possible products they could make based on them.

"We visited different parts of Ladakh like Hanu and Markha Valley, met with farmers who told us about their endangered food culture, learnt their recipes and took down the names of these local plants. Upon returning to Leh, we went online and visited experts at research institutes like Defence Institute of High Altitude Research (DIHAR), where we learnt the English names for these locally-found plants and crops. Surprisingly, many of them are considered premium products outside India. For instance, buckwheat is considered a superfood in the West. In fact, during our research, some people from Mumbai asked us whether we could supply cloudberries to them. But we did not want to be the ones supplying local raw produce outside. Instead, we decided to do something with such locally-found raw produce ourselves," says Angmo.



That's how Kangla Nyishar was born. "We were just looking through a list of Ladakhi names for different plants and came across Kangla Nyishar. It's just something we felt sounded nice," she adds.

After some initial brainstorming, they narrowed down the products they would make to pesto and buckwheat tea.

Packet of their Buckwheat Tea

In a March 2020 Instagram post, one of the captions read: "Pesto also known as Barims in Ladakhi has been prepared in Ladakhi kitchens since time immemorial. We bring to you the recipe not inspired by Liguria (Italy) but from our very own ancestors. We present you the richness of this traditional pesto made with organic produce foraged from the different regions of Ladakh sans artificial preservatives." Barims or pesto is made and consumed locally in areas like Sham and Hanu. In the Hanu area, it is consumed daily for breakfast.

"We initially focussed on buckwheat, barley and sea buckthorn tea since they were easier to prepare. Also, we were figuring out how to preserve pesto without harmful chemical preservatives. A month before COVID struck last year, we launched buckwheat tea and three different varieties of pesto-walnut, sun-dried tomato and apricot. We also showcased these products at the three-day National Organic Festival in February 2020 in New Delhi. There, we bagged a prize for the most unique products," recalls Rigzin Angmo.



Three varieties of their locally-made Pesto

Working with the community

Kangla-Nyishar sources their raw materials largely from farmers in Takmachik, a certified eco-model village where farming is completely organic. It's located 112 km west of Leh. From there they source walnut, buckwheat and apricot kernel, etc. Padma Angmo, one of the co-founders, is a native of Takmachik, and her relatives assist in procuring them.

They have recently ventured into making nettle tea. It is an herbal 'tea' made from the leaves

and roots of the stinging nettle plant. The leaves and roots are sourced from Rumbak village, but they are also reaching out to farmers in villages like Tukla in Nyoma tehsil. Since they don't export their products and largely cater to the Leh market, their raw material demands aren't very high. In Takmachik, for example, they source from just six farmers, but they procure buckwheat, walnut, apricot kernel, nettle, Himalayan chives and cumin as well.



Sitting alongside local farmers from whom they source their raw produce.

As a result of COVID-19, they stepped away from creating their own large manufacturing unit, for which they were about to take a loan. Instead, they rented out a unit in Leh. And they do possess a Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) license and are subject to operational checks by officials for hygiene and other requirements.

"We sell our products to retail stores in Leh. Once we enter the market in full swing, we will leverage one of the many schemes offered by the Ladakh Union Territory administration for small businesses and apply for a loan. For the time being, the four of us handmade jars of pesto weighing 200gm each and buckwheat tea packets weighing 100gm each. While each 200gm jar costs Rs 250, one 100gm packet of buckwheat tea costs Rs 100," says Angmo.

"We have held discussions on whether to mechanise the entire process, but I have reservations about what this can do to the natural and organic process. While making pesto takes some amount of time, we can prepare 30-40 packets of Buckwheat tea in 2 to 3 hours. Besides Leh, we have received orders via Facebook and Instagram, and shipped our products to Mumbai, Bengaluru, Delhi, Himachal and Dehradun so far," says Yangdol. In the field.

Spirit of Ladakhi Entrepreneurship

Like many young Ladakhis, these four women have made the journey back home after studying in other cities. They have come back home to start various businesses, whether it's in food processing, apparel wear, construction or tourism. They are leveraging the region's natural resources, familial and community networks to create something



distinctly Ladakhi, but with a flavour of the world outside. After all, Ladakh has the resources to make it happen.

All four women are from different parts of Ladakh. Angmo is a native of Thiksey village, while Yangdol is from Basgo. One Padma Angmo is from Martselang village, while the other bearing the same name is from Takmachik. They have studied in schools and universities outside Ladakh in cities like Delhi, Jammu and Chandigarh.

Having said that, Kangla-Nyishar is still in its nascent stages as a venture. A few of them even work in local non-profits, while working on their startup's products from 6pm onwards, all the way into the wee hours of the next morning.

"As a result of COVID, we couldn't launch our products in a major way. We are currently at the stage of rebranding, coming up with a new label, different stories to describe our products and alternative packaging design. In fact, we are in the process of changing our name from Kangla-

Nyishar to Nima Goos Goos, which we feel registers better in the minds of our customers outside Ladakh. Nima Goos Goos is also another name for sunflowers in Ladakhi. Once this is done, we will launch our own nettle tea and you will find our products on different e-commerce platforms," says Angmo.

Selling their products during a recent sale.

Making Pesto and Buckwheat Tea

Yangdol goes on to explain the process of making these products.

One of the examples she cites is walnut pesto or Barims which is often used as a sauce, spread or dip.

Here is how they fill up a 300 gm jar of pesto:

Ingredients:

- ½ cup walnut
- 1 clove garlic
- ¼ of a bunch of coriander
- 2-3 sprigs of mint leaves
- Salt as per taste
- Olive oil to drizzle over the top

Method:

- Put the ingredients except the salt and olive oil in a stone pestle or mixer till it forms a paste.
- Take the paste out in a bowl and mix some water to get the consistency you like.

-Add salt for taste.

-If not consuming immediately, add olive to thinly cover the top to maintain its freshness

and colour.

"This can fill a 300gm jar, but that is up to the person on how much water/buttermilk they want to add. One point to note is to store it in a non reactive container. You can replace water with buttermilk for a refreshing spread," says Yangdol.

With a light nutty taste, the main ingredient in buckwheat tea is whole grain buckwheat.

Method:

- Handpick the impurities in the grains.
- Put the pan over the wood fire or stove.
- Put the grains into the pan and once the pan heats keep stirring with a wooden spatula to roast uniformly.
- When it turns light brown or releases a nutty aroma, take the pan off the fire and spread the grains on a cotton cloth.
- Allow it to cool before storing in an airtight container.

A point to note: If the grains start to pop, stir more frequently.

Steeping method:

- Put half tea-spoon buckwheat into a cup.
- Pour boiling water.
- Keep it covered for 2 mins.
- Buckwheat tea is ready to drink.

A point to note: Add honey for sweetness

"Chew on the goodness of soaked grains after you finish the tea," adds Yangdol.



Source: <https://www.thebetterindia.com/251418/ladakh-women-startup-entrepreneurs-kangla-nyishar-nima-goos-goos-handmade-pesto-buckwheat-tea-farmers-india-nor41/#:~:text=Careers%20at%20TBI-,Women-Led%20Startup%20Take-%20Handmade%20Pesto%2C%20Buckwheat%20Tea%20From%20Ladakh,producers%20and%20the%20local%20economy.>

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