



i-CONN SPOTLIGHT

Innovation in Focus

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India's Enterprise Tech Boom: Powering Startups & Industry

India's enterprise tech sector is surging, driven by cloud adoption, AI-led automation, and cybersecurity. With a \$50 billion SaaS market projected by 2030, Indian startups and enterprises are leveraging tech to scale, optimize, and compete globally.

Fuelling Startup Growth

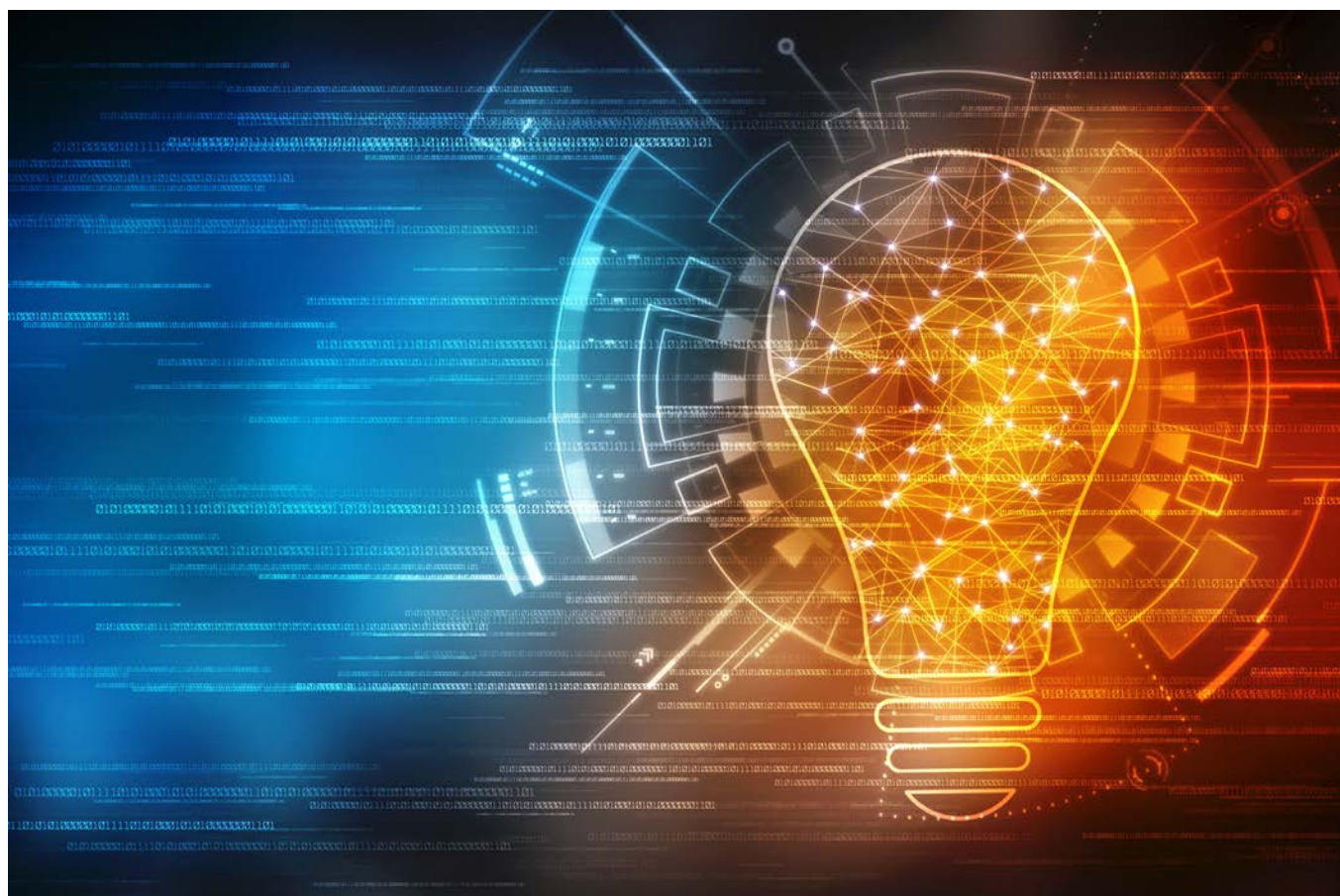
- India now boasts over 3,500 SaaS startups, with leaders like Freshworks, Zoho, and Postman expanding globally.
- AI-driven automation and cloud solutions are helping startups scale faster, with 70%+ of Indian enterprises accelerating cloud adoption.
- Cybersecurity investments are up 35% YoY, ensuring compliance with the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act.

Transforming Traditional Industries

- Industry 4.0 adoption is boosting manufacturing efficiency, with IoT and AI reducing downtime by 20-30%.
- BFSI and healthcare are rapidly digitizing, with fintech alone attracting \$5B+ in VC funding in 2023.
- The enterprise blockchain market is growing at 40% CAGR, revolutionizing supply chains and financial transactions.

Outlook

Backed by Digital India and Make in India, enterprise tech is reshaping industries and fuelling startup innovation. With strong VC interest and increasing global competitiveness, India is on track to becoming a global enterprise tech leader.



Empowering Startups through Policy Support and Infrastructure Development

India is undergoing an entrepreneurial renaissance, fuelled by a collective resolve to transform the nation into a global hub for innovation and technology. At the heart of this transformation lies the Startup India initiative, which has played a pivotal role in empowering startups through enabling policies, robust infrastructure development, and enhanced access to funding.

Key measures, including simplified regulatory compliance, tax exemptions, and funding support through the Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS), amendments to Section 80-IAC of the Income Tax Act, and measures addressing angel tax concerns have created an ecosystem conducive to innovation and growth and fostered trust. The Startup India Seed Fund Scheme has bridged the gap between ideation and implementation, ensuring that startups can focus on building robust solutions without worrying about initial capital constraints.

Apart from supportive policy measures, infrastructure plays a foundational role in the success of startups. The establishment of incubation centres, innovation hubs, and technology parks has provided startups with access to critical resources, cutting-edge facilities, and collaborative networks. Flagship innovation labs within incubators, such as T-Hub, iHub, and KSUM, serve as excellent examples of how infrastructure can nurture entrepreneurial growth. These hubs not only provide physical spaces but also connect startups with mentorship, technical expertise, and industry networks.

The Indian start-up sector, spanning diverse areas such as fintech, ed-tech, healthtech, agritech, and e-commerce is today the third-largest ecosystem in the world. From just 452 in 2016, India currently has over 157,000 recognised startups, with over 100 unicorns to its credit – a number projected to surpass 300 by 2023. Between 2016 and 2024, start-ups are estimated to have generated 20 to 25 per cent of all new employment, especially among Gen Z who constitute about 25 per cent of India's workforce and represent an important and emerging consumer segment.

The rapid growth of startup in India is indeed remarkable. But there is immense potential for even greater contribution to Indian economy. For example, it is estimated that this sector contributes nearly 53 per cent of Israel's exports in

2023. While Israel's leadership in areas like cyber-security is well known, its agri-tech startups are also making significant impact towards promoting food security. Technology companies in the US constituted approximately 27 per cent of the S&P 500 Index companies' market capitalisation, positively impacting wealth creation across income segments. Reports on projections in India suggest that this sector can contribute \$1 trillion to the country's GDP by 2030. The prospects of the emerging DeepTech sector are even more exciting. Reports suggest that Gen AI alone can contribute an additional 5.9 per cent to 7.2 per cent to India's GDP by 2030.



Sanjiv Puri, President,
CII, and Chairman &
Managing Director,
ITC Limited

In this context, corporates have emerged as key stakeholders in fostering startup success. By partnering with start-ups, corporates offer mentorship, market access, and collaborative opportunities for co-creating solutions to pressing challenges. Such partnerships are critical for startups to leverage existing expertise and resources to refine their products and scale effectively. Startups also help diversify investment portfolios, reducing risk across various sectors and stages of development. Additionally, engaging with startups provides access to talented entrepreneurs and innovators, besides gaining valuable insights into emerging market trends and consumer behaviour.

Equally, family offices with their long-term investment horizon are ideal partners for startups needing patient capital to grow. They offer more than just capital, providing mentorship, industry expertise, and valuable networks. Many family offices are interested in impact investing, supporting startups that align with their values and contribute to social or environmental causes. Investing in high-potential startups also helps family offices preserve and grow their wealth over generations.

Both corporate and family offices thus play a crucial role in the startup ecosystem, providing essential capital, resources, and support to drive innovation and economic growth. CII is strongly encouraging the corporate sector and family offices to consider investing in startups, and propel a higher growth trajectory.



India's impressive startup journey is a testament to the power of collaboration between policymakers, corporates, investors, and entrepreneurs. By fostering a culture of innovation, addressing policy gaps, and investing in infrastructure, the nation can unlock unprecedented opportunities for start-ups to thrive.

We in CII are committed to championing initiatives that align with the vision of Startup India – driving innovation, creating jobs, and fostering economic growth. In this direction, CII's Centre of Excellence for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Startups works on strengthening the linkages in the start-up ecosystem. The centre works with different stakeholders to facilitate collaboration and consequent increase in innovation pipelines.

Clearly, Indian startups are catalysts for societal transformation and economic empowerment, as India continues its journey towards becoming a \$5 trillion economy. By building an inclusive and sustainable ecosystem, we can ensure that startups not only fuel economic progress but also address some of the most pressing societal challenges of our time.

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entrepreneurs. By fostering a culture of innovation, addressing policy gaps, and investing in infrastructure, the nation can unlock unprecedented opportunities for startups to thrive.

In the coming years, ITC aims to deepen its engagement with startups by expanding its collaborative programs and creating platforms for innovation-driven growth. Our endeavour is to build an ecosystem where startups can access the tools, resources, and networks needed to solve critical challenges and create lasting impact.

As the President of CII, I am committed to championing initiatives that align with the vision of Startup India—driving innovation, creating jobs, and fostering economic growth. CII also has a Centre of Excellence that works on strengthening the linkages in the startup ecosystem. The centre works with different stakeholders and bridges the gap ensuring collaboration and increase in innovative pipelines. By building an inclusive and sustainable ecosystem, we can ensure that startups not only fuel economic progress but also address some of the most pressing societal challenges of our time.

How Collaboration, Policy Support, and Innovation Can Future-Proof Fintech

India's payment ecosystem has expanded rapidly over the past decade, driven by technology advancements, policy push, and shifting consumer habits. In January 2025, digital payments reached a record high of 16.99 billion transactions.

However, with expansion comes greater challenges for fintech startups, in the form of regulatory uncertainty and concerns regarding profitability.

One of the main problem areas that a lot of fintechs are facing is the elimination of the merchant discount rate on UPI and Rupee debit card transactions. This has significantly impacted fintech companies because it is a crucial revenue stream.

It has also become difficult for a lot of fintechs to keep up with the day-to-day operations while at the same time innovating and providing high-quality digital payment services.

So, we believe that regulators should consider introducing a fair and flexible MDR structure that is tailored to specific industries. The stakeholders can look at turnover-based MDR so that a lower rate is applicable for MSMEs and a high rate can apply to large corporates. We are assuming that bigger companies might be in a better place to absorb the costs.

In addition, a tier-based structure can also be implemented where small businesses and low-value transactions come with zero MDR and there can be higher fees for large merchants and high-value transactions.

We believe that by implementing these measures, fintechs would be able to sustain their operations and build a better ecosystem in the process.

As a result, it could be a win-win-win for merchants, consumers and fintechs.

Another much-needed initiative is letting fintechs offer a line of credit based on UPI.

RBI had recently launched an initiative to offer pre-approved credit on UPI.

However, it needs to bring fintechs into the fold as well, if the regulator is serious about financial inclusion. Currently,

only banks can offer a line of credit via UPI because transactions take place through their bank accounts.

By allowing fintechs to offer credit lines based on UPI, they can help MSMEs and rural enterprises with much-needed credit to manage their working capital requirements.

And, to manage risks and prevent misuse, regulators should have guidelines that will define who can provide credit and who can receive it. Setting limits on loan amounts, interest rates and repayment periods is also necessary.



Bipin Preet Singh,
Co-founder, MD and
CEO, MobiKwik

Fintechs can work together with banks, using a co-lending model, to extend credit lines to businesses and individuals.

If implemented, this can be a better and low-cost credit alternative to informal lending practices that are still widespread in smaller towns and cities.

We believe that credit via UPI would only fuel economic growth, which would benefit both fintech players and the broader economy as well.

Extending the credit line on UPI is a great initiative. But will it be enough? Not really.

For financial inclusion, regulators can look at promoting cashflow-based lending where fintechs and banks can assess the real-time business performance of the firms. In this case, there won't be any need for collateral.

This would help MSMEs and rural businesses to fulfill their working capital requirement in a much more efficient manner, without resorting to high-risk borrowing.

The second initiative is encouraging asset-backed, low-interest credit options such as offering credit against invoices, machinery, inventories, and land.

By incorporating these solutions, fintechs can drive financial inclusion and support small businesses to create jobs.

Heading into FY26, future-proof and sustainable fintech needs to be well-harmonized between regulation and innovation. For this, collaboration between industry stakeholders and regulators is a must-have.

Startup Affiliation Programme:

Startup Affiliation Programme is designed to certify growth-stage startups, providing them with a powerful platform to connect with corporates, investors, and other key ecosystem enablers.

As part of the affiliation programme, we have launched Pitch 360, a monthly pitching initiative where we give an opportunity to affiliated startups to pitch to a wide audience, comprising of corporates, investors, and the ecosystem stakeholders.

Startups Pitched at Pitch 360

ZeroCode: AI-Powered No-Code/Low-Code Digital Transformation

Founded in 2021 and headquartered in Hyderabad, ZeroCode is revolutionizing digital transformation with its AI-powered "Conversation to Code" technology. The platform enables businesses across industries—consulting, automotive, finance, education, smart cities, and more—to build applications 10x faster, achieving 65% cost savings with zero resource dependency. Offering flexible licensing models, including a DIY framework and on-demand developer support, ZeroCode addresses challenges like integration bottlenecks, data security, and legacy system migration. Committed to scalable and sustainable innovation, ZeroCode empowers enterprises to streamline operations, enhance agility, and future-proof their digital initiatives.

Intellemo: AI-Powered Marketing & Sales Automation

Businesses often struggle to scale digital marketing due to inefficient agencies, complex DIY tools, and resource constraints. Intellemo is transforming this landscape with AI-driven marketing automation, enabling businesses to effortlessly launch, optimize, and scale campaigns. Our AI Agents streamline the entire process—from campaign strategy and creative generation to ad deployment, performance optimization, and customer engagement. Trusted by brands like UrbanCompany, Virohan, and Neetprep, Intellemo helps businesses maximize revenue and marketing impact with speed and efficiency. Experience seamless, AI-powered growth with Intellemo's automated marketing solutions.

Techdome Solutions: Empowering Businesses with Innovation

Founded in 2020, Techdome Solutions is a global provider of cutting-edge technology solutions, enabling businesses of

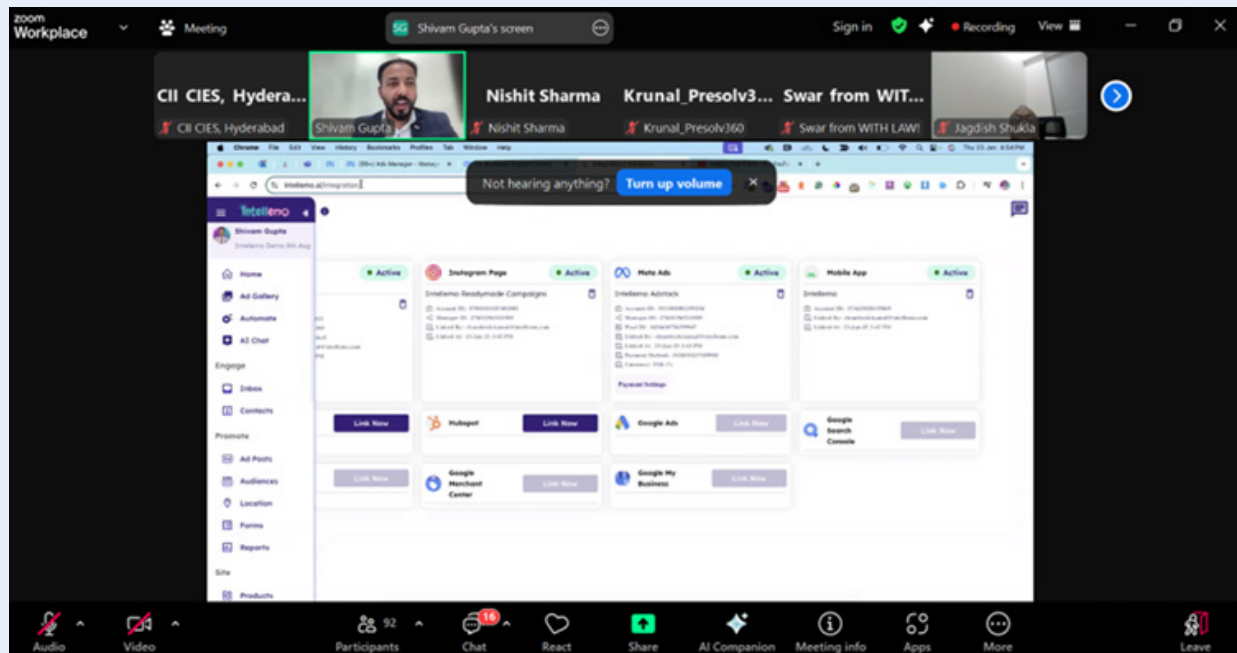
all sizes to enhance efficiency and drive growth. We specialize in Cloud & Automation, Business Analytics, Blockchain & Crypto, Web 3.0, Machine Learning, and Artificial Intelligence. Our scalable, cost-effective solutions integrate seamlessly with existing systems, optimizing operations for sustainable success. Techdome is committed to revolutionizing business technology worldwide.

Presolv360: Revolutionizing Online Dispute Resolution

Presolv360 is a pioneering Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platform digitizing mediation, conciliation, and arbitration to provide seamless, cost-effective dispute resolution. Empanelled by the Bombay High Court, Kerala High Court, and five other courts, Presolv360 has achieved an 80% success rate in pre-institution mediation matters. Recognized by NITI Aayog, the Ministry of Law & Justice, and the MSME Ministry, we have facilitated 1,75,000+ dispute resolutions across financial, consumer, insurance, and real estate sectors. Guided by a distinguished Advisory Council, we are committed to making justice accessible, efficient, and technology driven.

Invenzo Labs: Transforming Retail with Unified Commerce Solutions

Invenzo Labs is a NASSCOM Emerge 50 award-winning software product company enabling retail businesses and brands with holistic, unified, and quick commerce transformation solutions. Based in Bengaluru, our team hails from ISB, SP Jain, Anna University, and IIM. Our flagship products—Izoleap, Izowhiz, and Izoware—empower retail chains, D2C brands, and B2B distributors with plug-and-play omnichannel solutions. We drive 10-15% ROI improvement, 20-25% cost optimization, and enhanced customer engagement. With clients across India, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, we serve industries including FMCG, Pharma, Apparel, and Home Décor.



PITCH 360 1ST SESSION

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