



Why Start-ups Fail: The Myth of "Fixing It After Launch"

Most start-ups don't fail because no one notices them—they fail because too many people do, too soon. When the excitement surpasses the ability to deliver, growth stops being a win and starts to become a problem.

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Introduction

In the rush to create the big thing start-ups are launching faster than ever. Start-ups rely on cloud platforms, viral marketing and the hope of growth. However behind the landing pages and rapid user growth of start-ups is a quieter more serious issue: most of these start-ups products are not designed to manage the success they seek.

As users pour in the systems of start-ups break down the performance of start-ups declines and what felt thrilling about start-ups soon becomes frustrating. This exposes a truth that the start-up world often overlooks.

In Pakistan the tech scene is still developing, making this problem more intense for start-ups. Start-ups in Pakistan face pressure to demonstrate quick progress especially to investors who prioritize numbers and visibility. As a result founders of start-ups often concentrate more on marketing of creating systems that can support the growth of start-ups.

Here peoples trust in start-ups is pretty fragile. One bad experience with a start-up can be enough to make someone leave the start-up and never come back to the start-up. Things like apps of start-ups payments that fail for start-ups or systems of start-ups going down do not just annoy users of start-ups; they push them toward options that feel safer and more reliable than start-ups.

This also shapes how the rest of the world sees Pakistans tech scene and start-ups. When products of start-ups struggle under pressure it makes people doubt whether local start-ups can really grow big. That hurts the reputation of the whole tech community of start-ups not one start-up company.



For you especially if you are a student or just starting to build things for start-ups this matters more than it might seem for start-ups. Growing quickly feels exciting for start-ups. Being stable is what truly keeps start-ups going. If a product of a start-up cannot handle becoming popular then that very popularity turns into a problem for the start-up.

"When start-ups chase growth without building for it, success does not expose their strength, it exposes everything that is broken"

Technology Overview

When we talk about this problem of start-ups it really boils down to infrastructure – the systems that keep an app or website of start-ups running smoothly.

Things like servers, databases and payment gateways of start-ups need to handle users without a hitch especially when things start to take off for start-ups. If these systems of start-ups fail, the whole product of a start-up feels broken no matter how good the original idea of the start-up might have been. This is pretty obvious in countries like Pakistan for start-ups. A start-up might get a lot of attention from ads. Once new users actually try to use the start-up they often run into slow performance payments that do not go through or even crashes of the start-up.

Unsurprisingly they just leave the start-up. Go back to what they know works. From a users perspective these are not just 'technical glitches of start-ups. If something does not work for a start-up it's simply a product of the start-up.. In todays crowded market people are not usually willing to give a broken product of a start-up a second shot.



Figure 1: Hype on a House of Cards. Credit: Gemini

Key Findings & Impact

It turns out that 70% of new companies including start-ups expand too quickly focusing on getting bigger instead of making sure they are ready for growth. Even tiny problems can make a difference for start-ups. For instance if something takes a second or two longer to load for a start-up you might see 30% or even more people leave the site or app of the start-up right away which obviously hurts how many customers stick around and how much money the start-up makes. This problem is more noticeable in places like Pakistan for start-ups. People there are quick to switch if their payment fails or an app of a start-up crashes so start-ups can lose peoples trust fast. What all this means is pretty simple: growing the user base of start-ups might get people in the door but its really being dependable that makes them stay and helps start-ups succeed for the haul.

What's Next?

Pakistans start-up world is just getting louder and more competitive for start-ups. The tricky part now is not simply about getting something built quickly for start-ups. About building it correctly for start-ups. Founders of start-ups really need to think about their priorities and see things like how the systems of start-ups are put together how well they work and if they are dependable as central to what they are offering not just problems to sort out later for start-ups.



At the time this brings a real chance for start-ups. Start-ups that invest early in creating systems will totally stand out in a crowded market. There is also a growing need for people skilled in cloud computing, designing systems and making things reliable—areas Pakistani developers can dive into away for start-ups.

The path ahead is clear for start-ups. The next successful start-ups will not be the ones that grow super fast but the ones that manage to stick around the longest. Because ultimately attention might get you users, for start-ups. Its trust that keeps them with start-ups.

About the Author

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