

The startup toolkit: How to build the tech stack of your dreams

The importance of carefully selecting your tech stack as a new startup business cannot be understated. As a startup, you have numerous factors to consider in the immediate term that might require quick decisions and will be crucial to the success of your business. However, quick or rushed decisions on your tech stack may come back to bite in years to come!

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Focus on addressing what your business really needs

One of the main considerations when choosing your tech stack is whether it aligns with your core business needs. For example, if your work requires flexibility in both working location and hours, then cloud-based technology is an ideal solution. If you plan to grow your team quickly, having the appropriate HR tech in place will be a great benefit when managing a growing team.

By first establishing what your startup needs from its tech stack, you can then begin to whittle down the choices available based on other key criteria; cost, time, functionality and future-proofing.

Cost, time, functionality and future-proofing

Cloud-based solutions are often more cost-effective than installing office-based hardware and require less time to set-up. But again, it comes down

to what works best for you. High-quality, office hardware may be a good investment if the reliability of wired connections is more important than the flexibility and mobility of remote tech.

It is also good practice to build a tech stack that is easily adaptable. Startups are prone to significant changes as they grow, and your stack should be able to accommodate this. First, it's important to consider how well your chosen tech will integrate with other systems in your business to ensure it is worth the time and money you are spending.

Is it going to help streamline your day-to-day operations, or will it add another step in a process that already needs to be more efficient? Choosing platforms and software that integrate with each other and share information greatly improves the functionality of tech and its usefulness to your business.

The next consideration that is often overlooked in the early stages of a startup is whether the technology you're implementing is future-proof. In three, five or even ten years' time, will this technology still be useful? Does it have the ability to grow and adapt with your business or will it have a limited lifespan? If so, perhaps consider investing in technology with a little more longevity.

A well-implemented tech stack will act as a core pillar on which your startup builds and grows. With that in mind, there are a few technologies that I would recommend as essential to your startup tool kit.

1. Communications

Communication is key to any business and so having the right phone system will be important. As business and society becomes increasingly digital, cloud-based technology is becoming the future of business and is now a popular option thanks to its long list of benefits. Flexibility, cost savings, increased productivity, speed, performance and security

capabilities are all pros to using this technology versus traditional phone systems.

If you are looking to upgrade or if this is the first time you are considering your business comms, then a cloud-based VoIP (voice over internet protocol) system should be a top consideration, particularly with the rise of 5G connections making this technology perform even better.

2. Finance

Fintech is another key tool for your startup journey. It's a tough enough job to manage spending the right amount to make your business a success but not so much that making profit seems impossible. There are many finance tools and technologies out there that can help overseeing this important function a little bit easier and I highly recommend finding one that suits your business at this early stage.

You can find all-in-one finance solutions that give you complete oversight of your expenses and even help with automated invoicing and receipts, mileage tracking if your work involves a lot of driving, and they can help you manage multiple company cards. You will not regret this kind of support as a startup founder.

3. Data storage

My final tech stack recommendation is for data storage. In the very early days of your business, you'll likely be storing various important files on your laptop or PC or even in the first cloud drive you could find, just to get it saved *somewhere*. Increasingly small businesses need to access their data on the go and as your business grows, you'll want a solution that is cost-effective but also functional and future-proof. Imagine trying to transfer all those files to another system in a year's time because you've outgrown your storage system is a nightmare.

Make sure you choose a solution that is easy to access whenever you need and one that integrates well with your email provider, Slack or Teams so that information finding and sharing is quick and efficient, while you're busy spinning 50 other plates!

Whatever industry you're in and whatever goals you have for your business, taking time to carefully consider and build your tech stack will never be a waste of time. There are tools and technologies out there that can make your life as a founder easier and help you take your new business from strength to strength. Embrace digital and always keep your core business needs in mind and you'll soon have an enviable tech stack that continues to support and benefit your business for years to come.

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