



Ditch the suits, embrace the hustle: Why startups need your IR expertise

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Let's face it, the world of investor relations (IR) can seem a bit... stuffy. Board meetings, bespoke suits and endless financial reports – not exactly the picture of innovative thinking. But here is the thing: This image is out of date. The start-up world is not only where the real action is but also where your skills are desperately needed.

Why start-ups, you ask?

With the Turkish government's recent initiatives to attract foreign investment, the startup scene offers a wealth of opportunities for IR professionals. In early September 2024, Turkish Finance Minister Mehmet Şimşek announced significant changes for the Turkish startup ecosystem to encourage foreign investment. The Turkish government is revising regulations to simplify the process for foreign investors to support Turkish startups. While this is good news for ambitious founders, it will also lead to a more diverse and demanding pool of investors with stricter criteria. As highlighted in a report by Bloomberg HT, developing a solid investor relations strategy is crucial to attracting not only local but also international capital. This influx of investment represents a great opportunity, but it also creates a more competitive landscape.

Start-ups need to stand out from the competition — and that's where we, the IR wizards, come in to help them shine.

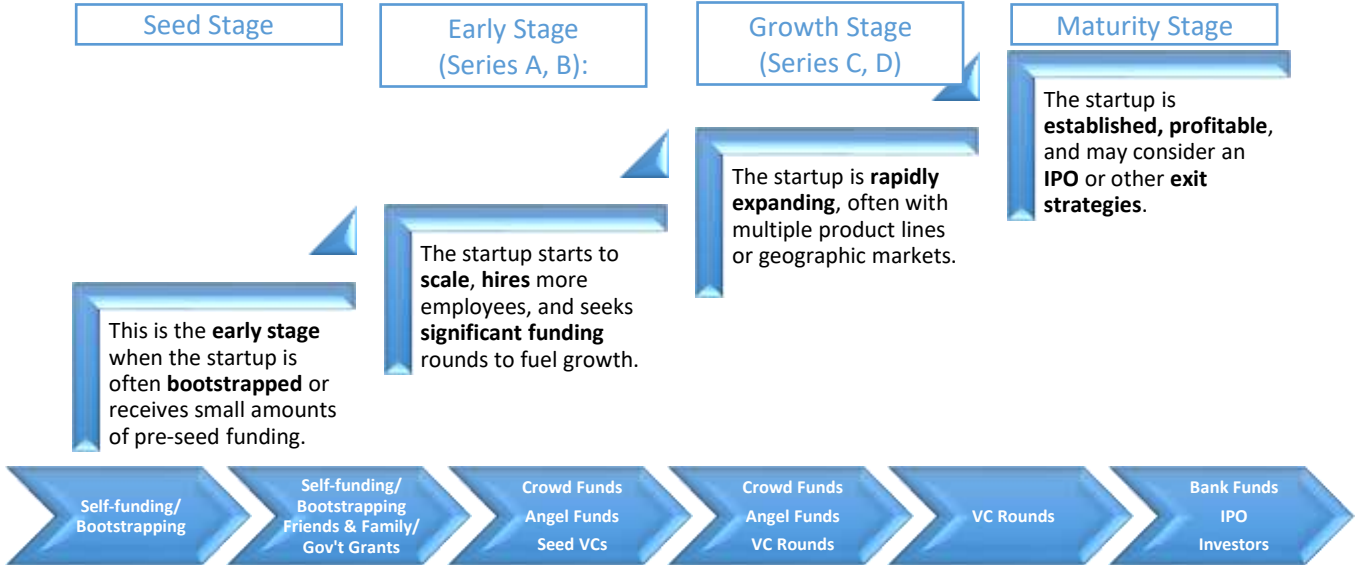
Consider yourself the secret weapon that helps these young companies navigate the complexities of investor relations right from the start. Here's why your expertise is essential to the success of a start-up:

Build trust before the billions flow

Imagine a young athlete entering the professional scene. He has talent, but not the necessary experience to convince established teams (read: investors) to give him a chance. That's the situation most start-ups find themselves in. My job, as an IR, is to help them establish themselves as a trustworthy and well-managed company before their trophy cabinet overflows.

Understanding the Startup Lifecycle

Before we dive deeper into the specific responsibilities of an IR professional, let's quickly recap the typical lifecycle of a startup.



IR's Role at Each Stage

An IR professional's role evolves throughout a startup's lifecycle, but there are core responsibilities that remain constant:

Seed Stage:

- Develop a compelling narrative and pitch deck to attract early-stage investors.
- Build relationships with angel investors and venture capital firms.
- Manage investor communications and updates.

Early Stage:

- Prepare for and participate in fundraising rounds.
- Manage investor relations, including quarterly updates and investor meetings.
- Develop a public relations strategy to enhance visibility and attract media attention.

Growth Stage:

- Prepare for potential IPO or other exit strategies.
- Manage investor relations, including quarterly earnings calls and investor conferences.
- Develop a corporate sustainability strategy to enhance reputation.

Maturity Stage:

- Maintain strong investor relationships and manage shareholder expectations.
- Consider transitioning to a more traditional IR role with increased focus on financial reporting and compliance.

In addition to the stage-specific responsibilities, investor relations professionals are responsible for a wide range of tasks, including communicating with investors, preparing financial reports, managing media relations, ensuring regulatory compliance, and educating investors about the company's business model and performance.

You're not just a data juggler, you're a storyteller

Let's face it, financial reports can be very soporific. Your job as an IR expert in a startup goes beyond just crunching numbers. You're a storyteller who translates the company's vision and innovative ideas into a compelling narrative that resonates with potential investors.

Remember, investors aren't just looking at the financials – they're backing a dream. Your job is to help paint that dream by emphasizing the startup's market potential, competitive advantage, and long-term growth strategy.

More than just a press release: building an online presence

Forget the dry press releases from the corporate world. In the startup scene, social media is king. As an IR professional, I help startups leverage these platforms to build a powerful online presence that captures the attention of investors and industry leaders. Engaging content, thought leadership posts, and strategic social media campaigns are your tools to stand out and showcase your startup's true potential.

The startup world needs your agility (and maybe your jeans)

Okay, the jeans might be optional (but comfort is key!). The startup world thrives on agility and innovation, and your IR skills are a perfect fit for this environment. You need to be able to adapt to changing conditions, think outside the box and come up with creative solutions - all on a shoestring budget.

So swap the stuffy boardroom for a collaborative co-working space. Let yourself be infected by the energy, passion and rapid growth of the start-up world. By utilizing your investor relations expertise, you can help startups stand out in this increasingly competitive environment. From creating compelling presentations to building strong relationships with international investors, your skills will be invaluable when it comes to securing the capital needed to grow and succeed.