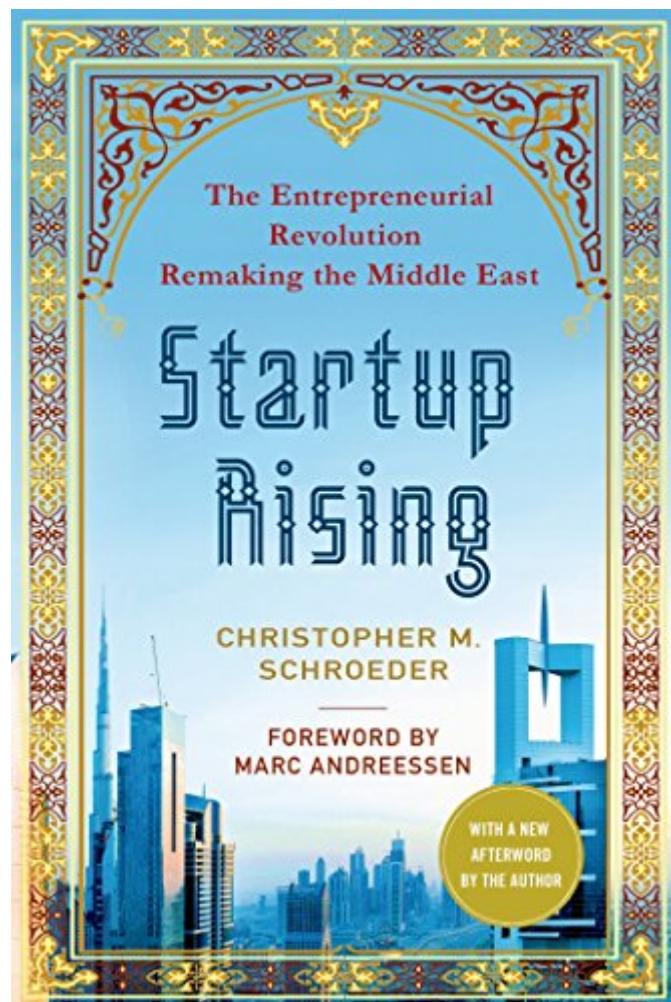


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# Startup Rising: The Entrepreneurial Revolution Remaking The Middle East



## **Synopsis**

Despite the world's elation at the Arab Spring, shockingly little has changed politically in the Middle East; even frontliners Egypt and Tunisia continue to suffer repression, fixed elections, and bombings, while Syria descends into civil war. But in the midst of it all, a quieter revolution has begun to emerge, one that might ultimately do more to change the face of the region: entrepreneurship. As a seasoned angel investor in emerging markets, Christopher M. Schroeder was curious but skeptical about the future of investing in the Arab world. Travelling to Dubai, Cairo, Amman, Beirut, Istanbul, and even Damascus, he saw thousands of talented, successful, and intrepid entrepreneurs, all willing to face cultural, legal, and societal impediments inherent to their worlds. Equally important, he saw major private equity firms, venture capitalists, and tech companies like Google, Intel, Cisco, Yahoo, LinkedIn, and PayPal making significant bets, despite the uncertainty in the region. With *Startup Rising*, he marries his own observations with the predictions of these tech giants to offer a surprising and timely look at the second stealth revolution in the Middle East—one that promises to reinvent it as a center of innovation and progress.

## **Book Information**

File Size: 3094 KB

Print Length: 256 pages

Publisher: St. Martin's Press; Reprint edition (August 13, 2013)

Publication Date: August 13, 2013

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00BU4948E

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #305,864 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #24

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Business & Money > Economics > Urban & Regional #83

in Books > Business & Money > Economics > Urban & Regional #234 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Business & Money > Entrepreneurship & Small Business > Entrepreneurship > Startups

## **Customer Reviews**

On p. 202 of the Kindle edition, Schroeder writes, "If I have one hope for Startup Rising, it is that it will inspire people to rethink our conceptions about the Middle East and engage." In more than four decades as a political scientist and peacebuilder, I have read dozens of lines like that, but been disappointed most of the time. Until I read Startup Rising. It is hard to be upbeat about the Middle East. Certainly, conventional political processes have come up short time and time again. However, there is reason to believe that the wave of startups and their entrepreneurs Schroeder describes just might help. I first heard of him during a visit by Breaking the Impasse, an organization that uses the corporate sector to inject life into the moribund Palestinian/Israeli peace process. On reading his book, I realized that Breaking the Impasse is far from the most impressive organization. Entrepreneurship, startups, IT, innovation, and the like are all buzzwords these days. However, Schroeder digs deep enough to demonstrate that not all startups in the Middle East will be game changers. Will peace really come sooner if people there can order packages by mail, arrange their marriages, or do a better job of raising their children? But, enough of the initiatives he describes could both change the nature of life in the region and have side effects that include more cooperative problem solving. What's more, the more successful of them have done well precisely because they fit into the ecosystem of life in the Middle East, a point that is sorely lacking in much of the writing on innovation. Thus, one of his interviewees spoke of "disconnected development."

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