

Heavy Chef names top 5 most exciting startups for 2018

By  Juanita Pienaar

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Heavy Chef announced its top 5 most exciting startups for 2018 on Tuesday, 4 November at Workshop 17 at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town.



Packed venue as Heavy Chef announced their top 5 most exciting startups in South Africa.

Heavy Chef has always been about stimulating the entrepreneur economy and this segment within the economy said CEO, Fred Roed, who welcomed everyone at the event.

Being an entrepreneur himself Roed said that the truth is that entrepreneurship is hard. And the reason for the evening and Cape Town Startup Week (last week) is really about celebrating. Because being an entrepreneur is hard work and sometimes we forget to celebrate.

He said that entrepreneurship is the fastest way to affect change in this country and that what they are trying to do with Heavy Chef is to build an education company that creates a curriculum of learning experiences. "The events are super important and all about inspiration. The masterclasses that we run are all about inspiring people to start new things and empowering them to succeed."

Selecting the top exciting startups

Heavy Chef called out through their newsletter to their community of about 20,000+ people and asked them to nominate their most exciting company. Roed pointed out that the competition was about celebrating technological innovation, looking at interesting and inspiring leadership and creative output.

They received 1,600 entries. After removing all the spam, they ended up with about 900+ total entries, which then got sent to about 20 people within the South African context - persistent leaders, people who have been part of the Heavy Chef community and contributors that they trust. Their feedback was aggregated and then they voted for 12, and finally the top 5.

Roed said that he couldn't help but notice the beautiful diversity of the startups that have been selected. He said Heavy Chef really wanted to shine a light on the work these startups were doing and they wanted to celebrate what's happened.

Last year's winners were SweepSouth, Wala, Zoono, Jumo and Yoco. They shared the stage with this year's winners to explain how they're changing the world.

Aerobotics

Using satellite and drone mapping, Aerobotics monitor crops and warn farmers about potential risks, scouts. The mobile app increases accuracy and saves time by planning targeted scouting trips. Farmers can receive accurate statistics for orchards with every drone flight, including tree health, tree counts, individual tree size and canopy area. Co-founders Benjamin Meltzer and James Paterson are creating a global agri-tech business that's solving age-old problems for farmers, worldwide.

Meltzer said that it was very difficult breaking into the local agricultural industry because it's an industry built on trust and quite a traditional market. Aerobotics is a young business and as a result, just building that trust in the industry was one of the big challenges they faced. "The strategy we adopted was to partner with existing companies in the market that have that trust already and that are leveraging it."



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DataProphet

DataProphet is an AI startup that reduces risk in manufacturing by analysing data in factory production. It uses machine learning to identify and eliminate defects and minimise downtime. Its primary product, Omni, seamlessly works on top of existing platforms and manufacturing environments. Isaac Matsa, a natural-born salesman, is driving growth for this startup.

Matsa said that one of the ways they are changing the world is by quantifiable return on investment and preserving institutional knowledge.

“ All that data, all that knowledge and all that experience, we need to preserve it and pass it on to the new engineers that are coming in. ”

Great innovation also does not have to come from abroad. Matsa said that DataProphet is a proudly South African company, using local talent, punching way above their weight and competing with the guys in Silicon Valley.

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Tom Jackson 23 Mar 2018





LifeCheq

LifeCheq is making financial advice credible and authentic by moving personal financial advice from a biased, commission-based advisor to a subscription service that gives users access to a team of actuaries and experts. Co-founder Abu Addae is an actuarial scientist who cut his teeth at Old Mutual and is now shaking up the industry by providing legitimate, non-biased financial advice at an accessible rate.

It's a tech and touch business and Addae said it's the combination of these two things that makes LifeCheq work. It is also a very unique offering in terms of being holistic and entirely independent, i.e. not tied to any product provider.

"If we have more people that are taking that step to build a business and buy a home or taking that career step that is going to confirm where you are going, then we can really grow South Africa. It's about people actually having plans and having those roadmaps and building them. And by making this service that we provide affordable to everyone, we are helping to make that possible," he said.

LifeQ

LifeQ is a world-leading science and technology company that aims to enable people from all walks of life to enjoy optimal health. LifeQ has made significant strides into international markets with its tailored health solutions. The startup aims to help people live longer, higher-quality lives. Founder Riaan Conradie said that LifeQ usually works in the background and behind the scenes alongside quite a couple of large companies. A few years ago the company became known for building the first open-source metabolic chamber in the world.

Zille praises world's first open-source metabolic chamber in Stellenbosch

19 Dec 2012



He said that the entrepreneurial ecosystem in South Africa is "simply amazing": "This ecosystem of VCs [venture capitalists] are starting to support each other. You can see that the VC ecosystem is also building up and this is very exciting for us all. This combination of deep science and deep technology and the combination of money - this is a fantastic space to be in. We need to support each other. If we support each other, then we can set each other up for real success."

Thursdays

E-commerce startup Thursdays (allegedly named because it was founded by Shona Macdonald on a Thursday) focuses on swimwear and lingerie for women C-cup and up. Focused on empowering women in the clothing sector, this is a truly inspiring, fun and heartwarming social entrepreneurial venture. Macdonald is tackling the most challenging segments in business and has made healthy strides over the past year.

She said that in South Africa the textile industry went through a massive dip-line with the huge increase of imports of Chinese products. "A lot of our factories have closed, in fact, we have lost two thirds of clothing sector jobs in the last few decades," she said, suggesting that she's working on manufacturing their lingerie locally. She encouraged the audience to continue to support local entrepreneurs and to help change the world themselves by buying proudly South African products.

For more info on future Heavy Chef events, visit their [website](#) and follow them on the following social media platforms:

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ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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