



# Smartups: Lessons from Rob Ryan's Entrepreneur America Boot Camp for Start-Ups

*Rob Ryan*

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Building successful start-ups was never quite as easy as it seemed, and the changing economic climate has raised the stakes, reduced the margin of error. New entrepreneurs can't stumble into wealth on the power of half-formed ideas, or turn dreams into reality without doing a lot of homework. It's time to get smart. This book teaches would-be entrepreneurs the skills they need to get through the venture capital process with companies that will survive to grow and succeed.

Rob Ryan, a pioneer in the high-tech industry, founded Ascend Communications in 1989, and throughout the nineties provided firms with the infrastructure they needed to keep up with the rapid growth of the Internet. At the beginning of 1999, Ascend was sold to Lucent for \$25 billion. Since retiring from Ascend and starting Entrepreneur America, Ryan has helped launch a string of successful companies, including Virtmed, RightNow, and Virtual Ink. All provide electronic solutions to real-world problems, meet existing-rather than manufactured-needs, and save their customers time and money.

In *Smartups*, Ryan focuses on methods he's developed over the years for building a sustainable business that makes money. He emphasizes the importance of testing ideas on customers and making sure that a product offers something new and important. Recognizing a team's key competencies is crucial, Ryan says. He also finds it necessary to take certain steps at the correct stages of a company's inception. *Smartups* will show you how to turn your idea into a real product, take it to investors, and get your start-up started right.

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