

# Arizona Entrepreneur's Start-up Empowers Private Equity-Backed Companies

## Demetrius' journey: From a web enthusiast to a tech entrepreneur

Demetrius Bethea's journey is a true tale of entrepreneurial resilience and success. From his early days as a web services enthusiast, Demetrius climbed the corporate ladder at Vanguard and GoDaddy before venturing into his first business at just 21 years old. This initial venture, a healthcare technology staffing agency, gave him invaluable insights into workplace dynamics and employer challenges.

After selling his company to a larger staffing agency, Demetrius decided to pivot back to technology. Dozens of iterations finally came to fruition in the form of Marro Technologies - bridging the gaps and inefficiencies he had observed in his staffing agency days.

Quoting Demetrius, ***"We wanted to help businesses run better, faster and leaner, and that's what we've been able to do with our software at Marro Technologies now."***

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## How Arizona's State-wide Accelerator Empowered Demetrius

Demetrius's vision for Marro was clear - help businesses run better, faster, and leaner. His focus initially was on small businesses who are paying for several software packages yet not using or underutilizing several of those.

Marro identifies relevant software for various processes for its clients and recommends to get rid of redundant or underused software.

Demetrius saw some initial success in this segment but the rate of growth was far from what he was looking for.

Hoping to achieve accelerated growth, Demetrius joined a state-wide business accelerator program run by Arizona's economic agency. The virtual accelerator was powered by StartupWind Innovation & Mentoring platform.

Using the accelerator program Demetrius went deeper with customer discovery, spoke to mentors using StartupWind platform and identified the market segment that would value the technology immensely – the private equity-backed companies in the midst of restructuring proved to be a the right market for Marro.

Sure enough, the Virtual Accelerator did wonders for Marro Technologies. Some of the biggest takeaways from the StartupWind program for Demetrius were:

- 1. Identified right customer segment:** As part of the accelerator, the mentors who Demetrius spoke to using StartupWind platform guided him to delve deeper into customer discovery and find the market segment that is a perfect fit - private equity-backed companies that are in the midst of restructuring.
- 2. Improved Storytelling:** The connection to mentors empowered him to communicate business value using stories. In his words, this enabled to, *“shorten our time to the punch, get our story out, and explain it in a way that is easy to understand and digest, while also having the information necessary for someone to walk away with a good idea of what we do.”*
- 3. Improved Pitch Deck:** The accelerator, the mentors, the StartupWind idea canvas and business planning tools helped Demetrius develop a more compelling pitch deck that was ready for investors to examine, improving his likelihood of securing funding.
- 4. Financial Know-how:** Demetrius gained a better understanding of the company’s financials, not only how much the company is making but also the best way to forecast and account for it to ensure that their financials are ready for investors and other stakeholders.
- 5. Mentorship and Networking Opportunities:** Meeting mentors and coaches during the accelerator gave Demetrius the ecosystem he can count on as he continued his journey toward accelerated growth.

## StartupWind’s role in the state-wide accelerator

Demetrius used the StartupWind platform for the first time to apply for pitch competitions. He immediately noticed how easy and simplified the process was with StartupWind compared to the long application processes with other platforms.

He spent a lot of his time during the accelerator, utilizing StartupWind tools for ideation, business model canvas, business planning and mentoring. He extensively used StartupWind platform for managing deliverables and connecting with experienced mentors and coaches.

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Demetrius appreciated the centralization of information as the StartupWind platform provided him a single place to hold all his business info in an organized and confidential place for future reference.

With the newfound connections and the right market segment to target, Demetrius feels confident about the year to come, knowing they can onboard customers and expand their team.

## **How StartupWind's Mentoring & Customer Discovery helped Demetrius?**

StartupWind's Customer Discovery module was a key feature for Demetrius. At the start of the program, Marro Technologies was utilizing a monthly SaaS subscription model, but after receiving the guidance from the mentors and doing deeper customer discovery, he found out that most customers preferred a quarterly or annually payable model over a monthly payment.

StartupWind's Customer Discovery Module helped Demetrius to organize crucial information at one place that is editable, accessible and private. He also benefited using StartupWind's Business Model Canvas tool to develop the economic story of his business which he found very user-friendly and easy to use.

According to Demetrius, one of the best parts of StartupWind platform was reaching out directly to mentors. Scheduling meetings was very easy and frictionless and the mentor connections had a profound impact on Marro's trajectory.

***“StartupWind's Idea Canvas and Business Model Canvas provided me with a single place where I could reference customer interviews, the business model canvas, and other essential business information. The customer discovery and business model canvas tools are user-friendly and relevant. The insights and connections acquired through the Accelerator run on StartupWind Platform played a pivotal role in our accelerated growth, ultimately leading us to pivot toward private equity-owned start-ups and securing \$1.1 million in signed contracts”, as quoted by Demetrius.***

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## What's Next for Demetrius and Marro Technologies?

Marro Technologies has been recently selected as one of five start-ups to join the University of Arizona's inaugural Arizona FORGE Accelerator. The program is an accelerated course designed for swiftly growing companies. It refines strategies and prepares entrepreneurs to pitch effectively to investors and secure funding necessary for accelerated growth.

Looking ahead, Marro Technologies is gearing up for an epic growth spurt.

**With the momentum the company has gained, Marro Technologies is currently attempting to raise half a million dollars to double its team size, turbocharge its marketing and sales efforts, and continue to rapidly expand the customer base. By the end of next year, Demetrius is expecting to double the revenue to \$2 million!**

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Demetrius is an inspiration for budding start-ups, proving that with the right mentorship, and support from the digital innovation ecosystem that provides the skills, frameworks and tools, a start-up can unlock its true growth potential. His journey is a testament to the remarkable potential by start-up entrepreneurs who can not only succeed but to reshape their markets, and leave an indelible mark in their industries.