





LATIN AMERICA ENTRY POINTS

White Paper Startup Ecosystem - Brazil



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GENERAL ASPECTS



Brazil is unique in Latin America, not just because they speak Portuguese, but also because the way they do business differs from their Spanishspeaking neighbors.

Brazil, the saying goes, is really many Brazils—regional differences across this enormous country are striking.

With one legal system, one language,

one currency, with a population of 200 million consumers—Brazil is tantalizing for foreign investors, but oh-so-tricky to pull off in practice. Brazil has one of the most advanced financial systems in the world, but also presents one of the most complicated and bureaucratic taxation systems in the world. This intimidates companies wanting to do business in Brazil but these obstacles are manageable. By partnering with a local company, or hiring a Brazilian representative on the ground, you can better take advantage of the many opportunities to do business in the country.

Today in 2016, Brazil is going through one of the worst economic crises in its history, and some people ask, is it still worth seeking business opportunities in Brazil right now?

The answer is yes—especially in the tech sector.

Although only half of Brazil's population is online (estimated to be around 100 million people), it's already the fifth largest internet and mobile economy in the world, a top five market for Facebook, Google, LinkedIn and Twitter, and one of the fastest-growing smartphone markets globally. Brazilians are passionate users of technology and social media.

With a large local market, Brazil can be a good test bed for expanding solutions, depending on the vertical. A company can grow and do extremely well just in Brazil, and can go abroad to other Latin countries afterwards, if they want.



For many sectors, there is not much competition in the country yet, and so if you have a good team on the ground, and a firm strategy, you will have an advantage over other companies.

Brazilians startups tend to focus more on B2B models, rather than B2C.



"...Companies are looking to differentiate and innovate, lot of B2B deals, startups are working with manufactural industry, working for logistics, etc. It used to be lethargic for technology acquirement, not anymore..."

— Felipe Matos, CEO Startup Farm

TRENDS AND UPDATES IN THE MARKET

As internet penetration in Brazil rises, tech companies ranging from education, bio & cleantech, to finance/fintech, health care, and agtech (technology for the agribusiness sector) are all increasing. Some of Brazil's competitive advantages include being one of the largest agricultural exporters in the world, as well as a global leader on sustainability and clean energy solutions, and offering sophisticated financial technology providers. Other interesting sectors include life sciences, education and the creative economy, reflecting the potential of Brazil's domestic market.



"There's no competition in investment, that's very positive, but Brazil is not for beginners"

— Regina Noppe, Co-Founder & CEO at Dream2B



CHALLENGES

Regulation is still an issue in the crowdfunding space, but also fund management and fundraising. There needs to be more cost-effective ways for funds to manage early-stage startups, due to costs and how regulations work currently. There are a lack of incentives for angel investors or venture capitalists, in terms of taxation, compared to other countries. Brazil has little incentives for these kinds of activities and investments. Yet, there are a lot of new regulations coming out for equity crowdfunding and small venture capital funds.



"The business culture in Brazil is a challenge. Have a business model and partner with a Brazilian company, the tax structure is a problem for companies expanding"

Youssef Youssef, President at Federation of Canadian Brazilian
Businesses FCBB

Other challenges startups in Brazil face include the sometimes poor infrastructure (including internet), access to capital, and cultural inhibitions against experimentation and failure.

Brazilian incubators and accelerators are working hard to develop a culture of innovation, but the startup ecosystem remains fragmented, although growing rapidly.

Success in Brazil requires a long game and a lot of up-front capital—but if there's a market fit, then your company will make that money back manifold.



"Running a business is tough anywhere. I never heard a real entrepreneur that say they give up because the environment is so difficult. People have a fear of failing. I think the challenge is that companies don't think big, it may be because of the already large market and size of the country"

— Antonio Amaral, Operations Manager B2W Digital



The success of the company depends on what kind of business it is offering as well. Are the products and services global? Is it the first time the company is going to international markets? The foreign company entering Brazil needs to take time to understand the local markets, build relationships, and identify strong local partners. It is not as easy as just translating a website into Portuguese, for example. In Brazil people like to know who they do business with. While the tech world may be a bit easier than in the offline market, but it's challenging nonetheless. So consider spending time in Brazil and to meet customers in the country as well.



"Find a local partner, operations will come ease if you get a local partner, softlanding programs and institutions that can provide strong network opportunities"

— Marcelo Roque, Founder at Finxi Technology S.A.

STARTUP ECOSYSTEM IN BRAZIL

Brazil has a dozen active VC firms, thousands of angel investors, over 50 Accelerators and Incubators, and huge co-working spaces for entrepreneurs. It is suggested for companies looking to enter Brazil, and to meet potential clients and partners, to seek out these communities (ecosystems) in the market you are targeting, and talk to leaders in the communities. Brazil has over 50-100 events a month, concerning Startup and entrepreneurship topics, so by attending these events, talking to participants, and getting connected to these ecosystems, would be a strong recommendation.



"Biggest challenge for startups is to be able to raise money. There are lot of reforms coming up to regulate crowdfunding platforms. Right now, Brazil presents a very good landscape for investment"

— Eduardo Sette, Founder & Managing Partner Exim Ventures



Other good starting points for investigating the Brazilian market include ABStartups (an organization that represents a good number of Brazilian startups. 4,000 startups and 38,000 entrepreneurs in their data base), and APEX-Brasil, the government agency tasked with attracting foreign investors. Partnering with Brazilian investors is often a wise choice—<u>ABVCAP</u>, a group of local VCs, can help you find a co-investor.

Networking is key in Brazil. It's about who you know, not what you know, or how good your product is. Connect with companies that can put you in touch with other people, and who can make a difference in introducing you to the ecosystem players.

Three options to consider when expanding into Brazil:

- 1. Foreign direct investment, or open a Brazilian subsidiary?
- 2. Partner with a Brazilian company?
- 3. Hire a distributor in Brazil?

Which option makes sense for you depends on your vertical, how much up-front cash you have at your disposal, and the current state of the market.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION TO DOING BUSINESS

According to <u>The Global Startup Ecosystem Ranking 2015</u>, São Paulo is the best ranked Latin American city in the list presented, coming in 12th place, moving one position up from its ranking in 2014.

Santa Catarina and Minas Gerais are hubs too. Including Campinas, right outside of São Paulo, are places to explore as well, other than Rio and São Paulo. But the general consensus is to go to São Paulo first, because it's where you can find most of the VCs and angel investors. And you are 45 mins away from Rio by plane. São Paulo is the largest income generator in Brazil, and can be a good bridge to reach other cities afterwards. Depending on what kind of Startup or business you want to introduce into the country, some cities or regions can also be more advantageous for your product or service, but this can be best decided upon by learning more about the markets and working closely with people on the ground.





Understanding the local culture is important, even in Brazil there are different cultures. You have to adapt your thinking to the Brazilian way"

— Felipe Collins Figueiredo, Marketing at ACE Aceleratech

SUCCEEDING IN BRAZIL

Having a clear product is crucial. It should be market ready, with a good value proposition. Finding a local partner and building your own network is important. Opening your own office is an option, but could also mean a lot of investment without being adequately prepared beforehand. Seek smart money, especially from investors who are known to have a track record in the area where your product will be presented in Brazil.

Keep it lean. Doing a road show to present your product or service to different potential partners or clients is also a good suggestion for companies looking to enter the Brazilian market.

Language

Brazilians speak Portuguese. If you want to do business in Brazil, you need to speak Portuguese too—or hire people who do. Unless your customers are primarily large, multi-national corporations, customer service must be offered in Portuguese.

Be aware that Brazilians like to chit-chat before they do business. This is normal. Getting straight to the point is considered rude. How are the kids? What did you do last weekend? And so forth. Be prepared to cement business ties with social bonds.



"To be successful in Brazil: 1. you must have a killer product; 2. find a local partner; 3. seek seed money; 4. Keep it lean; and the language is very important, because the customer service should be strong"

— Marcelo Roque, Founder at Finxi Technology S.A.



Social Media

Do not underestimate the size of the Brazilian market. Social media engagement is higher than in many other countries. Yet inbound marketing is still fresh in the country, and can see a lot of returns.

Studies show that 45% of the entire Brazilian population accesses Facebook every month.

Facebook advertisement is quite effective and can drive traffic to your page, but it also depends on what you are selling. Investing from Day 1, with US\$5-10 a day, for example, could be something worth doing as a trial. Regardless of your initial investment, you should be on Facebook in Brazil.

LinkedIn to network with professionals is not as effective in Brazil yet, but it is developing, and it is calculated that the 3rd largest community of users of LinkedIn in the world is Brazil.



"For marketing purposes in Brazil you must be in Facebook. You can advertise \$5 or \$10 dollars daily and it will drive traffic."

— Ilya Brotzky, Co-Founder and CEO at VanHack

If you're aiming for a niche vertical, consider reaching out to Brazil vloggers (on YouTube), photo bloggers (Instagram), and the regular old text-based bloggers as well. Many have substantial followings in Brazil, and they can connect you with their loyal fans—if they see a fit with their audience.



"If you think about the millions of Brazilians, they are on Facebook and Whatsapp, but in addition, we have to think about Instagram as well. Brazilians love to share pictures."

— Marcos Bortaloto, Executive Director at Bortaloto Business



Short videos speaking directly to your customer are also effective—just be sure to subtitle or hire a local pro. 30-45 second videos on Instagram, Youtube, or Facebook can reap large dividends. Facebook Live is also quite popular right now. Video, either pre-shot video, or live, people will enjoy that one-to-one, in person live conversation. Webinars are very good ways to market in Brazil and around the world. The competition through online video is growing in Brazil, targeting people from all income classes, who use their cell phones and social media on a continuous basis.

Be sure to vary your marketing strategy in the different states and regions of Brazil. Just as Americans are proud of their regional differences, so are Brazilians. Speak the local "language"—use the regional accent, appeal to local interests.

Spend some effort on Public Relations (PR) too. Brazilians traditionally trust the media. If your company does a PR strategy and it appears on a newspaper, blog or news journal, you will have more reference to do your meetings, or have more opportunities to be introduced to offline companies.

Building a personal relationship with journalists and bloggers who write about your vertical is the most effective strategy.



"Entrepreneurs in Brazil like to play soccer, but this soccer match is with a square ball, a field full of holes, we have a referee playing against the players, but we still see people scoring goals."

— Fabio Vieira, Partner at Grupo Mesa



ICT SECTOR



Despite the economic and political problems Brazil is facing, the IT sector remains strong. According to the HR consultancy Catho, the Brazilian IT sector added 10,105 jobs in June 2015 which is 3,600 more than the same month in 2014.

A report from <u>IT4CIO</u> says that IT companies are now being forced to reduce staff and cut costs, like lowering salaries. Growth is still happening but not at the same pace to account for the weak Brazilian Real versus the US dollar.

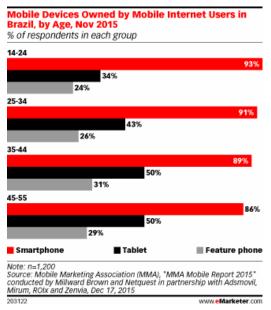
The report does however acknowledge that for the last few years, IT has avoided some of the harsh conditions of the declining economy, at least somewhat. Now companies are beginning to get squeezed with the exception of a couple of niches within the sector such as cloud, security, and business intelligence. São Paulo, a city with a population of 11 million, is the epicenter of Brazil's tech economy. The city is home to offices for major tech companies like Google Facebook, SAP, and Airbnb as well as local firms like Predicta, Kekanto, and Startup Mansion, a co-working space that houses several startups.

IT companies are fighting to maintain their salaries, namely in the big cities like São Paulo. Unions in the city recently scored a big win for workers by securing a 10.67% salary increase.

Other key centers with opportunities for technology professionals include Curitiba - where most technology workers of banking multinationals such as HSBC are located - with 4.78% of all IT jobs in Brazil.



According to data from Brazilian IT association Brasscom, the local market currently employs 1.3 million IT professionals and that number will see a 30 percent increase by 2016.



More than 90% of mobile internet users in Brazil ages 34 and younger now have a smartphone. Many of these users also had feature phones, however. The youngest respondents were the least likely to still have these "dumb" phones, but even among the 14- to 24-year-old mobile internet users, feature phones have a 24% reach.

Tablets were more common, and reached 50% penetration among those 35 and older.

Most mobile internet users say they pay attention to ads at least sometimes—but very few said they did so always. Older users are a bit more attentive to ads than their younger counterparts.

eMarketer estimated that Brazil will be home to 83.7 million people who use the internet via mobile phone at least once a month in 2016, up from 73.0 million in 2015. That amounts to 71.5% of all mobile phone users in the country.

In Brazil there are several programs supporting the creation of startups. The national program is <u>Startup Brasil</u>, a National Startup Acceleration Program, and is an initiative of the Brazilian Federal Government, created by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Ministério da Ciência, Tecnologia e Inovação – MCTI), is managesd by Softex, and partners with accelerators in order to support new technology-based-companys.

The program happens through year-long editions. In every edition there are two public calls for entries: one to evaluate and train accelerators and another to select startups with rounds every semester.

The program is composed of three phases.



Phase one: Accelerators are evaluated, according to a specific edict, to be partners in the program and be responsible for the process of accelerating startups. Startup acceleration is a quick process that seeks to develop a market oriented product/service with the support of mentors, investors and business and technology investors.

Phase two: After training the accelerators, national and international startups are selected to be supported by the program (as much as 25% are approved). This phase happens twice a year.

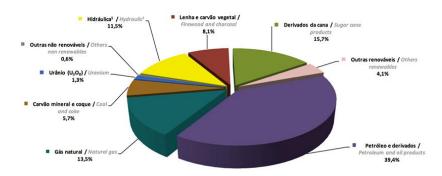
Phase three: The process of acceleration happens. Over a period of up to 2 months, the startups have access to as much as R\$200K (USD 60,000 approx.) in funding for research and development to be distributed among their professionals. They also participate in a series of events and activities promoted by the program to train entrepreneurs and introduce them to clients and investors from the International Hub in the Silicon Valley.

Furthermore, the startups receive financial investments and have access to such services as infrastructure, mentoring and training in exchange for equity. Alongside the accelerators, the companies are also accompanied by managers within the program.

From Fintech to e-Marketing and e-Commerce, Brazil has a wide number of startups developing solutions in the ICT sector.

If there's one thing Brazilians are used to, it's a crisis. As a result, there's huge potential in Brazil to grow the startup ecosystem regardless of political or economic conditions.

ENERGY



Today, the main energy sources in Brazil are generated by hydropower, oil, mineral coal and biofuels. Some others sources are used on a smaller scale, such as natural gas and nuclear power.

Source: Brazil Energy Balance 2015

According to TheBrazilBusiness.com, Brazil's energy sector is growing rapidly.

Non-renewable energy are those which may run out of sources in the future. Oil, for example, has estimated depletion in a few decades. Although many cars in Brazil use ethanol, many vehicles still use fossil fuels. Natural gas is also widely used in Brazil, mainly in homes and industries.

Oil is the main source of Brazilian energy, responsible for 39.3% of energy in the country. Transportation is responsible for 33% of energy use in Brazil. Oil is also responsible for supplying thermoelectric plants. A few years ago, Brazil used to import around 60% of its oil.

Nowadays, Brazil has discovered oil reserves in the Pré-sal layer at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, located on the Brazilian coast. In the first semester of 2015, the export of oil was higher than the import rate. The main petroliferous basins are: Bacia de Campos, the largest in Brazil, Bacia de Santos, Bacia do Espírito Santo and Bacia do Recôncavo Baiano.

Coal production is used for the generation of thermal energy and it is also used as a primary material for steel industries. The industry sector is responsible for 33.9% of energy use in Brazil. The production of coal in Brazil is concentrated in the states of Santa Catarina, at Vale do Tubarão and Rio Grande do Sul, at Vale do Rio Jacuí. Despite the existence of places where the production of coal is more intense, Brazilian mineral coal is not good quality. The steel and hydropower industries require high quality mineral coal to produce the lowest amount of pollution as possible. Because of this, Brazil imports about 60% of its coal consumption.



Nuclear energy has been implemented in Brazil with the creation of the Brazilian Nuclear Program, reasoning that hydropower itself would not be powerful enough to drive the energy grid of Brazil.

In 1981, the first nuclear power plant in Brazil was installed in Angra dos Reis, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, therefore called Angra I. Due to technical problems, the plant has been disabled and it is no longer in operation. Later, Angra II and III projects started. The Angra II plant began operating in 2000 and the Angra III is supposed to be completed by 2018 at the cost of BRL 14.9 billion. Until now, nuclear power represents only 2.4% of the national production of electricity. In addition to the high costs and low production levels, nuclear power plants are heavily criticized by environmental activists for bringing high risks in case of accidents or leaks and by not establishing a fixed location for the disposal of radioactive waste generated by the plant.

A large part of the electricity generated in Brazil come from renewable sources. Hydropower is a significant source of energy in the country due to Brazilian rivers that have high energy potential. Hydropower is the main source of electricity in Brazil. A report from the National Energy Balance estimates that around 70% of electricity consumed in Brazil comes from hydropower plants. Still, Brazil only uses 25% of its hydropower capability and also exports part of the energy that is generated. The main buyers are Paraguay and Argentina by the binational hydropower plant of Itaipú and the hydropower plants of Garabi and Yaciretá respectively.

Natural gas is usually produced together with oil and accounts for 11.3% of the energy consumption in Brazil. It is used for domestic gas production, industries and thermoelectric plants supply and in the production of motor fuels.



Wind power represents only 1.1% of the Brazilian production of energy. This source of energy is very expensive to be installed but provides renewable and inexhaustible energy.

In the year 2000, Brazil started to face a very dry period lowering the river levels and therefore the energy production from hydroelectric.



The first Brazilian wind energy turbine was installed in Fernando de Noronha in 1992. Ten years later, the government created the Incentive Program for Alternative Sources of Electric Energy, known as Proinfa. Which encouraged the use of renewable sources such as wind and biomass. Since the creation of Proinfa, wind energy production in Brazil has increased from 22 MW in 2003 to 2 207 MW in 2013, enough to supply a city with 400,000 homes. According to the research center of electric power, Eletrobrás, Brazil has the capacity to generate up to 140 GW with wind.

With a solid track record of renewables development, Brazil is currently one of the fastest growing solar markets in the world, attracting the interest of a number of foreign investors, multilateral development banks, energy companies, and equipment manufacturers. In addition, Brazil's market size positions the country.

The increased domestic and international interest in the Brazilian solar energy sector over the last two years was not a surprise to many industry experts.

Brazil has one of the highest insolation rates in the world; a population of 200 million people consuming almost 600,000 GWhs of electricity per year — and paying extremely high retail electricity rates; a necessity to hedge against periods of low rainfall and highly variable fuel costs; a well-rounded auction process providing additional levels of security to both offtakers (distribution companies) and power producers; as well as solar distributed generation regulations already in place.

However, for the market to sustain steady growth, in addition to overcoming the transmission infrastructure and cost of capital barriers mentioned above, Brazil must continue setting policies and encouraging supply chain frameworks with less stringent local content requirements and less reliance on BNDES lending, including statutorily allowing third-party financing and ownership of smaller-scale solar systems.

Biofuels are energy sources from natural products, such as sugarcane and castor beans. Most Biofuels used in Brazil are Ethanol, Biogas and Biodiesel. Its use is supported for being considered a cleaner energy, causing less damage to the environment. On the other hand, many fields are cleared out for the cultivation of these raw materials.



According to the Brazilian Institute of Geographical Statistics, known as IBGE, in 2013, the Brazilian energy supply reached 296.2 Mtoe, registering a growth rate of 4.5% compared to the evolution of the Brazilian GDP, of 2.3%. Natural gas, oil and oil products accounted for 80% of this increase.

In 2013, ethanol surpassed gasoline as the primary fuel in the transportation industry.

Technology innovation in Brazil's energy sector has been improving since the government made effort to improve on the country's energy mix which heavily depended on hydropower. The government has invested a lot into innovation (R&D, demonstration projects and commercialization) in order to create the capacity to absorb technology and create valuable partners for technology cooperation. The Brazilian innovation system has far exceeded that of China and India in many ways for more than half a century.

A recent initiative by ENGIE will support this innovation well into the future.

ENGIE has launched an ambitious program on innovation worldwide in order to boost entrepreneurial creativity. As part of this initiative, ENGIE Brazil is organizing the 2nd Edition of the ENGIE Brazil Innovation Award.

ENGIE is Brazil's largest private-sector electricity producer, it has 28 plants nationwide, equivalent to 5% of the country's capacity. 85% of the group's Brazilian installed capacity comes from clean, renewable sources with low greenhouse gas emissions, a position that is being reinforced with the construction of wind farms in the Brazilian Northeast. ENGIE has 3,000 employees in Brazil.



AGROTECH



Brazil is globally important for both food security and environmental sustainability. It is one of the three largest producers and exporters of sugar, coffee, orange juice, soybean, beef, tobacco, ethanol, and broiler chicken in the world. It has one of the largest biodiversity reserves in the globe, and a great number of farmers with strong entrepreneurial capability. Moreover, it

provides vital environmental services to the world and has a large availability of land and water, containing 13.5% of the world equivalent potential arable land and 15.2% of the world's renewable water resources.

The country is notable for the science-based development of successful tropical agriculture. Tropical agriculture occurs between latitudes 23N and 23S, generally in acid, weathered, tropical soils of low fertility.

The research and entrepreneurial efforts have been made in Brazil to develop and cultivate soybean varieties for lower latitudes, which are capable of producing yields as high (and maybe even higher) as those produced in temperate regions. In conjunction with this effort, it was necessary to adopt new technologies intensively, such as novel agricultural practices and modern innovations, including improved seeds, fertilizers, and agrochemicals, to change the farming environment into a productive one.

As an example of a growing sector in the country, just recently Microsoft Brazil partnered with Monsanto, a leading biotech company to invest in agricultural technology startups in Brazil.

Monsanto will join Microsoft's Brazilian investment fund evaluating ideas for new digital ideas to be applied to agricultural production in the country. The startups selected will receive initial funding of up to 1.5 million BRL (~USD \$459,000) for early development.

AgTech will continue the evolution in Brazil, along with countries as Argentina and Uruguay, probably will be leading the market in new solutions for this sector.

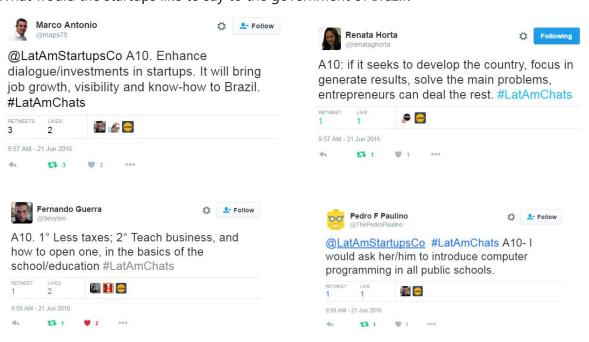


STARTUPS IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Startups in Brazil face political and economic instability, but the situation is not stopping them from growing technology companies.

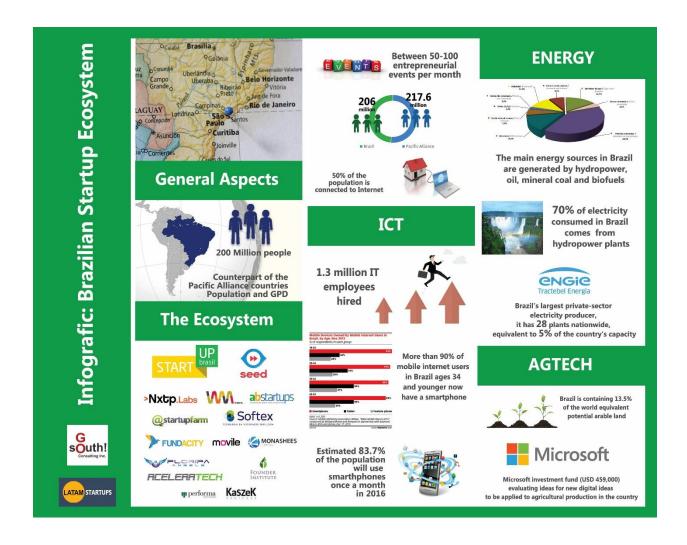


What would the startups like to say to the government of Brazil?





INFOGRAPHIC: Brazilian Startup Ecosystem





ABOUT GO SOUTH!

We are your guide to doing business in Latin America. We specialize in helping small to medium-sized hi-tech companies to develop business and marketing strategies.

ABOUT LATAM STARTUPS

LatAm Startups is a not-for-profit organization founded by Go South! Consulting Inc. dedicated to helping startups scale. Our mission is to connect the Latin American and Canadian startup ecosystems by supporting crosslanding and softlanding program that will benefit startups expanding globally.

ABOUT OCCASIO

Occasio International Advisory Services (Occasio) brings together professionals with experiences working in Brazil and internationally. Working closely with the contacts in its strong business ecosystem, Occasio offers business opportunities and support of new and ongoing innovative projects.



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