



Exclusive Interview



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Tayseer Ali

Chief Financial Officer, SadaPay

ICMA: As the CFO of SadaPay, what are some of the biggest financial challenges you have faced and how have you worked to overcome them?

Tayseer Ali: As the CFO of SadaPay, one of my top priorities is to ensure the financial sustainability of our company while scaling up. To achieve this, we have implemented robust financial models and forecasting to optimise our expenses and revenue streams. Additionally, we have raised significant funding from leading investors to accelerate our growth and expand our operations.

ICMA: What sets SadaPay apart from other in Fintechs in the market, and what do you see as your competitive advantages?

Tayseer Ali: SadaPay stands out from other fintech companies in the market by providing an unparalleled user experience. We put the user in the driving seat through an intuitive interface that allows for seamless transactions. Our onboarding process takes only seconds, providing users with quick and easy access to their digital wallet account. Moreover, our internationally accepted debit card makes it easy for users to use their SadaPay account online. Finally, our targeted marketing and social media campaigns have resonated with Gen Z, making us a top choice for younger customers.

ICMA: Please highlight a few milestones or accomplishments that SadaPay has achieved recently, and what impact these have had on the company's growth and development?

Tayseer Ali: Since our founding, SadaPay has experienced significant growth, outpacing several other startups in the sector. We are proud to have added thousands of users in a short period of time, which is evidence of the value of our services and our user-centred philosophy. Our freelancer service, BizAccount, has been particularly successful, receiving very positive feedback and becoming a user favourite. However, we are also facing the challenge of keeping up with demand, as users are signing up faster than we can onboard them. We are grateful for the ongoing support of our investors, which has enabled us to continue our rapid expansion.

ICMA: How does SadaPay approach innovation and staying ahead of the curve in terms of new technology and trends in the digital banking space?

Tayseer Ali: At SadaPay, technology is at the heart of everything we do. As a fintech company, we are dedicated to delivering cutting-edge products that meet the needs of our customers. To achieve this, we have adopted an agile approach to product development, which enables us to quickly iterate and refine our solutions based on user feedback.

Our tech team is always on the lookout for new trends and technologies that can help us stay ahead of the curve in the digital finance space. We have invested in a range of tools and platforms that facilitate remote collaboration and allow us to work seamlessly across teams.

ICMA: What do you see as the biggest opportunities and challenges for SadaPay in the coming years?

Tayseer Ali: SadaPay's biggest opportunities in the coming years include expanding our customer base and product offerings, as well as driving financial inclusion in Pakistan even further. However, we also face challenges, such as the general lack of financial literacy and Pakistan's economic conditions. Lack of local talent is also a challenge, but we are committed to helping address that by being a part of the solution.

ICMA: How does SadaPay as a fintech company, balances the need to innovate and move quickly with the need to maintain a secure and stable digital financial environment?

Tayseer Ali: SadaPay is an Electronic Money Institute (EMI), which acts as a modern-day doorway to banking services. We prioritise maintaining a secure and stable online environment through rigorous risk management processes and robust compliance frameworks. We balance this with an innovation and agility culture, implementing new technologies and processes that improve the customer experience while maintaining security.

ICMA: In your opinion, what qualities are most important for leaders and team members at a startup like SadaPay, and how do you cultivate these qualities within the company?

Tayseer Ali: At SadaPay, we believe that the most important qualities for leaders and team members include agility, resilience, and a customer-centric mind set. In addition, we strive to embody our company values of Empathy, Attention to Detail, Collaboration & Transparency, Initiative and Growth Mind-set. Our culture of learning and cross-functional collaboration allows us to leverage each other's strengths and collectively drive towards our mission of making financial services more accessible and affordable for everyone. We are like a family, and we work together to build a great business while upholding our core values.

ICMA: What advice would you give to other start-ups looking to disrupt traditional industries, such as banking, and make a meaningful impact in the market?

Tayseer Ali: My advice to start-ups looking to disrupt traditional industries is to focus on solving a genuine customer pain point, assembling a strong team with diverse skill sets, and remaining flexible and adaptable in the face of market changes. To begin, focus on one product and ensure it is the best on the market. Doing too much at once can result in the release of mediocre products or services that won't attract customers.

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ICMA: SadaPay has been working to promote financial inclusion in Pakistan. Can you talk about some of the strategies the company is using to reach underserved communities?

Tayseer Ali: At SadaPay, we believe in the power of technology to promote financial inclusion and reach underserved communities in Pakistan. We take advantage of the widespread adoption of mobile technologies, such as 3G and 4G, to provide easy access to our services to the majority of Pakistanis. Our marketing campaigns have been instrumental in raising awareness about our innovative products, emphasising the benefits of digital financial services and encouraging financial literacy. By utilising targeted digital and social media campaigns, we are reaching a diverse range of audiences across the country.

ICMA: What advice do you have for aspiring finance professionals who are interested in working in the fintech industry?

Tayseer Ali: For professionals interested in working in fintech, my advice is to keep up-to-date with industry trends and technologies, develop a strong network of mentors and peers, and be open to taking on new challenges and roles that may not fit the traditional mould of finance. Specialising in an area that excites you can help you grow as an expert. Finally, don't be afraid to fail and learn from your mistakes, as this is often the key to success in the rapidly evolving world of fintech.

The Editorial Board thanks Mr. Tayseer Ali, Chief Financial Officer, SadaPay for sparing from his precious time to give exclusive interview for Chartered Management Accountant Journal.