

Pitch Deck Template

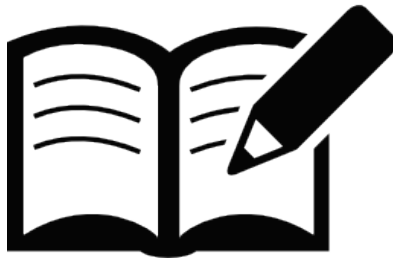
Definition: A series of words and images that illustrate a venture's story and business model.

Designed to do three things:

1. Get people to understand
2. Get people to care
3. Get people to take action

Can also be used to raise money, recruit employees, close partners, suppliers and wholesale customers.

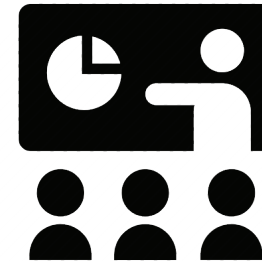
Represent everything that is valuable about the startup – the vision, the team behind that vision, the core elements of its business model, the insights into the customer that the venture plans to take advantage of and the industry that the venture hopes to disrupt.



Overview
Opportunity
Problem
Solution
Traction
Customer/Market
Competition
Business Model
Team
Use of Funds

Two versions of pitch decks:

1. Presentation deck



A visual to assist your oral presentation in an investor meeting or on stage at a demo day.

2. Reading deck



A more thorough and detailed deck that can be read and understood without you there.

For many pre-seed-stage startups, the pitch deck literally is the startup, the very first prototype. It articulates the critical assumptions of your venture, and almost more importantly, it gives you a chance to practice telling others why they should care about it.

Cover

What should I expect?

Captures the audience's attention, sets the tone for the pitch, serves as "white space" during a presentation so you can express gratitude for your audience's time, shows your passion for your venture and builds trust by mentioning mutual connections.



Should demonstrate:

- Clean logo
- Inviting picture
- Descriptive title

Questions to answer:

1. Does the cover make you want to open the pitch deck?
2. Does the cover visual communicate what the product is or who it serves?

Overview

What are we?

The company overview is your "elevator pitch" – the 15 second version of your deck. It describes a problem you see in the world and how you are going to solve it. Give your audience a small taste of what your company does, but leave them hungry for more.



Should demonstrate:

- Clarity
- Swagger
- Passion

Questions to answer:

1. What exactly does your company do?
2. What industry are you in?
3. Is this a novel idea?

Opportunity

What's happening in this market? Why now?

The opportunity slide is your chance to describe your industry and how your business will work within it. You will describe trends within that environment the size of your market, and the growth potential of your venture. You want the investors to see the trends and market conditions that will give you an entrance into the market and a competitive position. If your audience agrees with you on how things actually are right now they will be open to the particular problems and solution you describe.



Should demonstrate:

- Explosive market sectors
- Confusion and ambiguity in the market
- Thoroughness

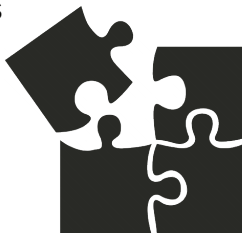
Questions to answer:

1. What trends is your company riding?
2. How big is the market?
3. How big can your company be?
4. What are the macro- and micro-trends that your company will be riding?

Problem

What are you trying to solve?

Describe the problem you are solving and why that problem is painful. Your audience should feel as if an injustice has been done. In a meeting, you'll know if your problem hits home when the investors begin nodding their heads in agreement. Describe the problem at a high level first and then quickly transition to a specific story of a customer to make the problem personal. People don't empathize with big, general problems; they empathize with the struggles of specific people with names and faces



Should demonstrate:

- A big problem in a big market
- Deep understanding
- A specific person

Questions to answer:

1. What is the problem?
2. How big is the problem?
3. Why does the problem exist?
4. How is the problem currently being addresses?

Not all companies solve new problems; some focus on solving age-old problems in a way that changes customer preferences. This is especially true in apparel, restaurants, and many consumer product goods. If you are one of these ventures, you should focus on the opportunity before you (the previous slide) rather than the problem you are trying to solve.

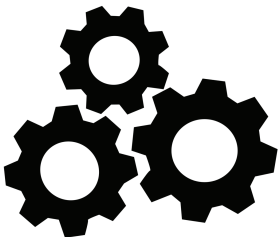
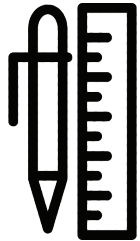
Solution

What are you doing about it?

By this point you and your audience agree on what is happening in the industry and you have introduced a huge problem. Now it is time to pull out all the stops. Show them your magic, your one-of-a-kind solution to the problem. You want the investor to marvel at it. You can also remind them how you can defend what you are doing through intellectual property claims. Develop use cases to demonstrate how your customer will be delighted with your solution.

Make your solution as realistic and interactive as possible. In meetings, bring the physical product or do an interactive demonstration. Short (1-3 minute) videos, illustrations, screenshots, pictures, prototypes, samples, sketches, or demos are all great ways to show rather than tell your solution.

If you learned nothing else, remember to never use bullets points for your solutions slide!



Should demonstrate:

- Beauty
- Surprise
- Repeatable and scalable
- Solving something painful
- Team excellence

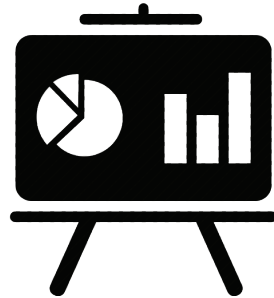
Questions to answer:

1. Does it solve the customer's problems like magic?
2. Is the customer going to crave this product?
3. What will the customer's life be like once the problem is solved?
4. How are you going to pull this off?
5. Is it awesome?

Traction

What evidence do you have that shows this will be successful?

Traction helps convince an investor that the idea is going to be a success no matter what. If you are pre-product and don't have any meaningful milestones or metrics to display, you can use this slide as an opportunity to illustrate your sales and marketing strategy.



Should demonstrate:

- A pattern a fast-growing momentum
- Clarity around what you are measuring and why it matters
- A clear sales process you use to: attract, educate, qualify, close, and provide after-sale service for your customers

Questions to answer:

1. Is there massive growth?
2. Where are the venture's assumptions proving true?
3. What is the strategy to reach and close more customers?

The goal of this slide is to demonstrate that each of your assumptions about the venture is proving true and you are making significant progress. The most common way to show traction is through growing sales or users – one with the “hockey-stick” graph-but you can also focus on other key metrics you have identified. Investors don't want to feel that a venture needs them.

Customer or Market

Who are your customers and how many of them are out there?

Demonstrate how well you know your customers and the market they represent. Describe where they live, what they like to do, and how much they'd be willing to spend. If you already have sales, you can use those as an example. Also describe the market, that is, how many potential customers are out there who will want to buy your product.



Should demonstrate:

- The customer
- A clearly defined market
- Revenue

Questions to answer:

1. Who is your customer(s)?
2. How will you reach the customer?
3. What is the acquisition cost per customer?
4. Is your customer willing to pay for your product or service?

Competition

Who or what will steal your customers?

List competitors and describe how each competes in the market. Then, show what differentiates you from competitors and what advantage you have over them. Partnerships, technology expertise, intellectual property, simplicity, business processes, and networks will all be significant advantages.



Should demonstrate:

- Industry knowledge
- Sober judgment
- Differentiation
- Unique advantage

Questions to answer:

1. Who are your primary and secondary competitors and in what ways do they compete for your customers?
2. Are there any unknown or potential competitors that would have a better advantage than you if they entered the market?
3. Do you displace commonly used companies?
4. How long will disrupt the current competitive landscape?
5. Are you faster, cheaper, better?
6. Why won't an incumbent rip your product off and roll it out faster than you can?

Business Model

How will you make money?

A solid financial model will answer the following questions:

1. How much does it cost to acquire a customer?
2. How much cash will you make from that customer, over the course of their lifetime with you?
3. How do your costs break down, per unit and on a monthly basis?

Prerevenue companies may have the good fortune of making up assumptions and financials, but that is not an excuse for having unrealistic projections. Since the pitch deck is designed to introduce the idea, it's not too important to show a full-blown financial model with every assumption, sensitivity, and margin analysis. However, it should include the important aspects such as revenue, gross profit, earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA), net income, burn rate, and cash flow. Equally as important is to contextualize your math (as in, "if we get x percent of the market, then we will have hit our revenue projection").



Should demonstrate:

- Consistency
- Financial literacy
- Level-headedness

Questions to answer:

1. Can you acquire customers for less than a third of their lifetime value?
2. What is your monthly burn rate – how much money are you spending a month?
3. Are the revenue projections reasonable?
4. Are costs legitimate?



Team

Who is going to pull this off?

In the team slide, you want to give the background for each of the key team members, including their current roles, prior experience, significant accomplishments, and education. If there are any major investors or advisors, you can name them here. Keep your bio less than a minute when presenting. Your goals are to build rapport, be known, and build confidence that the team can accomplish this mission.



Should demonstrate:

- Brevity
- Domain expertise
- Passion, intensity, and a good team culture

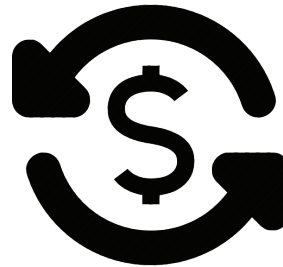
Questions to answer:

1. Why are you the right person for the job?
2. Is this team sufficient to accomplish the goal?
3. Are there others who need to be hired?

Use of Funds

What do you want and why?

In the team slide, you want to give the background for each of the key team members, including their current roles, prior experience, significant accomplishments, and education. If there are any major investors or advisors, you can name them here. Keep your bio less than a minute when presenting. Your goals are to build rapport, be known, and build confidence that the team can accomplish this mission.



Should demonstrate:

- Clarity
- Milestones

Questions to answer:

1. What size and type of investment are you looking for?
2. How will you spend it?
3. What will you accomplish with it?
4. Who else is likely to be participating in this investment round?