

impactseed building a pitch deck

There's many ways to do a pitch deck. The most important advice we can offer is that less is more, but that simplicity can only be found at the far end of complexity, i.e. you need to know your stuff before you fill a slide deck with images and assumptions. Knowing your input data is just as vital as presenting it with clear short sharp messages and visuals.

A simple, uncluttered pitch deck that innovates on the traditional "problem/solution" format to allow investors to easily review and compare, but injects 'personality and story' into the deck that it's unique and compelling.

No more than 12 slides, as below. And not filled with text, but *narrative*. Check out our Impact Canvas on the website for pointers. Focusing on visuals, but ensure it's informed by detailed analysis for Q&A.

1. **WHY?** What is your reason for being? What is your social purpose, and how have you 'apprenticed' to the problem? Then explain the problem, simply.
2. **Solution (Product):** Explain your product as a paying customer would see it..again, **simply**.
3. **Market Size:** Explain the market you're addressing in financial terms, whether it be local, regional, global (and all of these if your business is scalable)
4. **Defensibility:** A lot of startups say 'there's no competition' but this is an honest, even self-critical look at who might take your market away, i.e. How 'defensible' is the market you are going after from the incumbents you are planning on taking business away from. This is possibly the most critical slide in the deck because without defensibility any investment comes at a high risk to an investor.
5. **Market Validation** (tell a story about case studies, pilots or revenue you have)
6. **Business Model** (what you're selling X # customers assumption X margin \$)
7. **Social Impact Model** (based on commercial success you have assumed in slide 6, quantify what social/environmental impact this will have for your cause, and how you will measure it)
8. **Market Adoption:** (how will you take this product to market quickly, what channels, focus on low-hanging fruit > MVP)
9. **Cashflow:** Your cashflow projection should inform your 'ask' from an investor. Review our cashflow guidance document to build out your monthly cashflow projection over 2-3 years and ensure all revenue, cost and expense assumptions are built in. The maximum drawdown (ie negative cashflow before you break even) is the basis for your investment ask.
10. **Team:** Ensure in this slide you are putting forward (or at least considering) an experienced team of founders/directors, or advisors that plug all the necessary skills gaps to demonstrate to your investor that your team has the capability and experience to build this business, de-risking it from an investment point of view. Investors look at businesses but they do deals with people. Ensure Sales/BD, Operational/tech and corporate/finance skills are all considered in the team you are putting forward
11. **Investment/Equity:** Show what investment have you made to date (time and financial), and what investment you are asking for. Make sure the investment considers both financial and skills as angel investors typically invest in deals where they feel they can add value beyond money (you don't have to disclose what your offering in return for investment in the pitch deck but think this through methodically as this is a negotiation, not a 'sale')
12. **Risk Mitigation:** An investor has made his money by a combination of risk taking and de-risking. Here you need to demonstrate that you've thought of the milestones that will trigger staggered funds from the investor to accelerate your business (and how much money will be spent before revenue comes in) Vs what things will trigger a fallback/retreat or pivot in your business model.

Go for flexibility and show individuality, but make sure the general structure of your deck tells a story in such a way that enables potential investors to understand it and to engage with it, rather than being turned off that key elements have not been addressed, or worse, through slides full of text and complexity.