



THE PERFECT PITCH

Template for a competition slide deck

Blackstone

LaunchPad[®]
& Techstars

Syracuse
University



Title slide

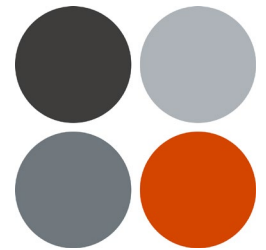
Company name

Company logo

One line tag (brand descriptor)

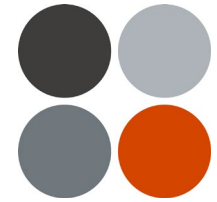


Your story



- Set the stage with something personal
- Use this to engage the judges in your “why”
- Judges and investors pick “founders” over “ideas”

Problem slide



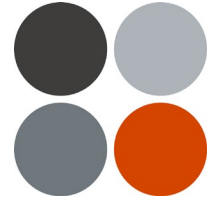
What problem are you solving and who else besides you cares about this problem?

- Be specific
- Use data
- Demonstrate research
- Cite sources
- Show authority

Tip: Your pitch is much more compelling if you are solving a problem and not just chasing what you perceive to be a personal interest or a potential market opportunity.



Solution slide



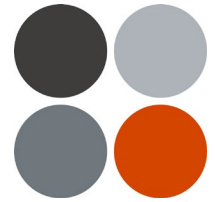
How do you solve the problem you just outlined?

- What you are building, what does it do and how it does it do it? Show and tell.
- What customer discovery have you done to validate your solution and the market fit?
- What is unique about your solution and why should an investor be excited about it?

Tip: If you have renderings of what you are building, include them here.

Craft a really strong one-sentence “value proposition” for the conclusion of this slide.

Market slide

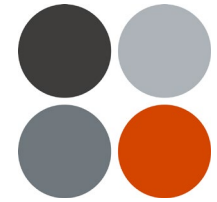


What is the market and what piece of it are you targeting?

- What is the overall market? How fast is it growing?
- Within that market, who is your specific customer?
Are you a one-sided or two-sided marketplace?
- What do you know about your targeted customer?
Lay out some personas or customer archetypes.
- How did you validate your market and their interest?

Tip: Your market is not generic. You are not selling to all of GenZ or all college students.

Path to market slide



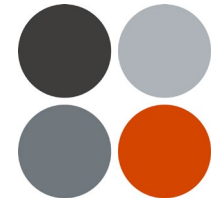
It's all about customer acquisition. What's your plan?

- How are you driving customer demand? How will you find and acquire customers?
- What are your sales and distribution channels? B2B? B2C? Other? Are you selling directly or working through a sales channel partner?
- What's your beta and roll-out launch plan?
- What is your marketing plan to drive sales to scale?

Tip: Social media is a communications tool, not a sales strategy. How does social media and SEO support your sales strategy? You can't do it all at once. Start small. Then build big.



IP & Regulatory slide

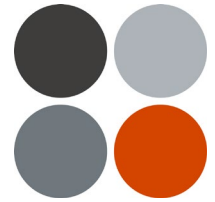


Only insert this slide if you are pursuing a patent or need to deal with regulatory entities.

- Are you pursuing a patent? Have you done a patent landscape? Can your invention be protected?
- Do you need to deal with a regulatory agency, or do you need to do independent third-party certification?
- If so, what are the entities and where are getting expertise on that complicated process?

Tip: Demonstrate competence and that you are working with advisors and experts.

Competition slide



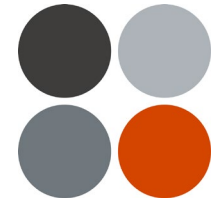
Lay out the competitive landscape

- Who are your competitors? Even if you do not have direct competitors how are people solving this now?
- Create a graphic that illustrates your product vs. the competition, based on attributes such as price, quality, ease of use, specific product features, etc.
- Be visual so it is obvious why you are 10 x better.

Tip: This slide works best in a graphic format, but show you've done a well-researched competitive analysis and truly understand the players and how to position against them.



Traction slide



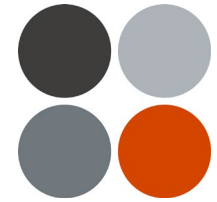
What you have you accomplished so far?

- What milestones have you achieved so far?
- How have you bootstrapped this?
- Have you completed your customer discovery? Built a customer wait list? Built the MVP? Tested it?
- Any key strategic partnerships to highlight?

Tip: Judges and investors love to see that you are scrappy and have hustle. Show you are building a community and market demand that can be mobilized to help you monetize. Brag about what you've accomplished to date and then transition to what's next.



Roadmap slide

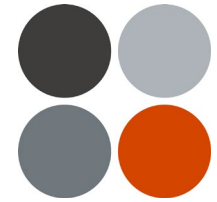


What are next steps from concept to commercialization?

- Lay out a timeline of milestones along two paths:
 - ✓ *Your product development roadmap.* What are the key milestones do you need achieve to build what you are proposing? What's your path to move this from idea to the MVP to alpha/beta to full launch stages? Estimate the timeline for those steps.
 - ✓ *Your business development roadmap.* What do you need to accomplish to turn this into a real business? What's the timeline for incorporation, raising funds, first sales, and growth hacking?

Tip: Keep this slide visually simple even though this is a lot to cover. Save details for Q&A.

Growth slide



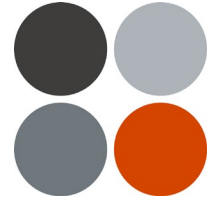
What's the big picture?

- How will you make money at this? What are the key revenue drivers? Cost drivers? How much do you need to raise to get to proof of concept?
- What does the high-level financial picture look like? When do you hit break even and profitability?
- How big can this get?

Tip: Judges and investors are becoming more interested in your customer acquisition and growth strategy than pro-forma financial forecasts. Keep this simple, but show you know your numbers. Save the financial details for the Q&A and a few pocket slides.



Team slide



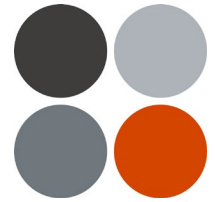
Why are you the right team to do this?

- Who are the founders and what are their skill sets?
- What other key team positions have been filled?
- What advisors and subject matter experts are you working with?
- What makes your team uniquely qualified to solve this?

Tip: It all comes down to team, team, team. A founder is just a lone wolf without a team.

If you haven't built a team, it is hard to convince a judge or investor that you can build an entire community or customer marketplace. This slide shows your power base.

The ask slide



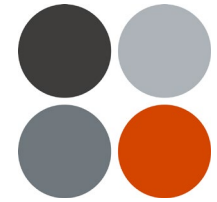
What do you need and why?

- What are you asking for?
- How will you use those funds?
- What key milestone/s will they help you achieve?
- Over what period of time?
- How does this investment fit into the big picture?

Tip: Judges and investors prefer to put funding into product and sales development over salaries and operating expenses. Be specific about use of funds and how the investment is not just “gasoline” to keep you running but will be “rocket fuel” to help you achieve lift off.



The closing slide



Hit it out of the park with the answer to “why?”

- Bring it back to your opening story and end the pitch with a full circle close. The best pitch is a great story.
- Emotionally engage the judge or investor in your closing pitch.
- Why invest in you and your team? This idea?

Tip: Pre-write the first 20 seconds and last 20 seconds of your pitch, memorize it and practice it. You have a brief window of time in the opening to capture a first impression and then at the end to close the pitch. Your ability to sell yourself and your idea in an engaging way is truly at the heart of your venture's value proposition. It's all about good storytelling.



YOUR LOGO

CONTACT INFORMATION



Email Address



Website



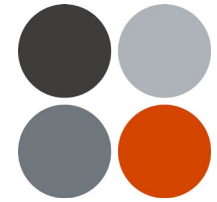
Twitter



Facebook

List social handles if you have them under the appropriate icons. Put your name/s and personal contact information here to make it easy to connect with you after the pitch. This slide will be up for Q&A.

Extra slides for Q&A



Have a few slides “in your pocket” with quick answers about questions you might get asked.

- Think in advance about the questions judges may have and be ready for them.
- Try to answer technical or financial questions succinctly with visual “pocket slides.” Have them prepared in advance and then pull them up to show you’ve thought about the issue and have done your homework. Having a few pocket slides will also help you answer questions more quickly and efficiently.



FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

REVENUE	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
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How will you make money? List all revenue sources here - and customize to your business model.

<i>Describe some assumptions that these numbers are based on, such as #customers/subscribers. Brief note about key revenue drivers.</i>	#	#	#
Sales	\$	\$	\$
Subscriptions	\$	\$	\$
Sponsorships	\$	\$	\$
Advertising Revenue	\$	\$	\$
Other (<i>specific other potential revenue drivers - grants for nonprofits, etc.</i>)	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL REVENUE	\$	\$	\$

EXPENSES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
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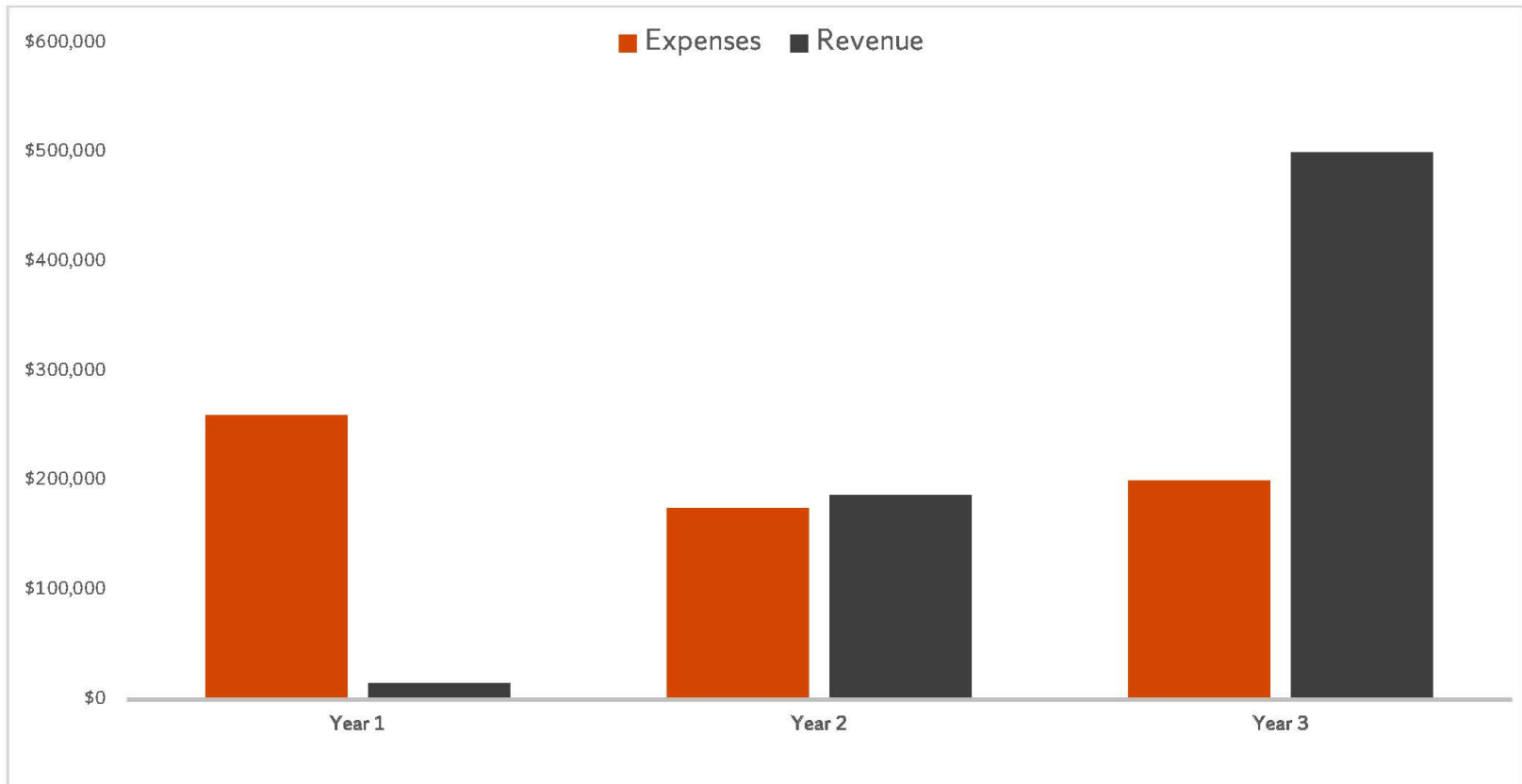
Be sure to reflect that first year startup costs will be highest to develop and launch your product or service. Product development expenses should come down slightly over time, as sales grow and outpace expenses. Salaries should rise to match growth. Marketing expenses are highest in year one to launch the product.

<i>Capital Expenses that needs to be purchased (building, machinery, equipment, vehicles... if relevant)</i>	\$	\$	\$
Operating Expenses (<i>legal, accounting, insurance, rent, etc.</i>)	\$	\$	\$
Salaries	\$	\$	\$
Product Development Costs	\$	\$	\$
Marketing and Sales	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$	\$	\$

NET PROFIT	\$	\$	\$
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**Don't be concerned if there is a loss the first year or two. For a startup, the first year is a negative number, reflecting up-front product development and marketing/sales costs. Breakeven is typically late year two, with profitability in year three. Identifying the gap between revenue and expenses helps identify what external funds you need to raise or borrow to develop your venture. These projections help identify how much capital needed to secure (through equity, debt or other seed funding) over the first three years.*

BREAKEVEN ANALYSIS



*Note: These numbers are basically the roll-up from the three year projections, presented in a way that makes it easier to visualize the breakeven point. Typically, for a startup, you would chart these by quarter for the first three years, but for this presentation, just graph them in an annual format. The \$000,000s are just for illustration. Use the appropriate \$000,000 scale based on your pro formas.