



# THE PERFECT PITCH

A simple structure for a successful slide deck

Blackstone LaunchPad

Syracuse University

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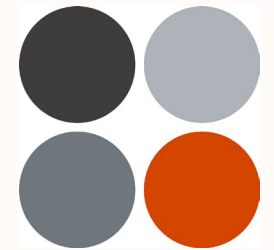


**[Title of your idea]**

[Owner/Presenter(s)]

# INTRODUCTION

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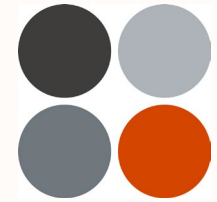
**Who are you?**

**What problem are you solving and what led you to it?**

This compelling opening is your “why” and one of the most important slides in your deck. Make it personal. “Why” does this matter to you? Why should it matter to others? This slide is selling you.

# TEAM/ADVISORS

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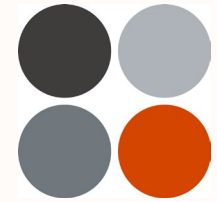
- **Who are your team members and what are their roles? Please avoid giving everyone C-Suite titles. Make titles relevant to function.**
- **What are their skills and experience?**
- **Who are your advisors and what subject matter expertise do they bring to your venture?**

This slide can go either here or closer to the end before the “ask.”



# PROBLEM/VALIDATION

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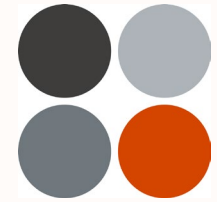
- **What problem does your product/service solve?**
- **How significant a problem is it?**
- **What customer discovery have you done around this? How did you do it? What did you learn from it? Be very specific. Use numbers.**
- **How do you KNOW that people NEED or WANT what you are building? Is it nice or necessary?**

Show that there is a market demand for what you are building and that you validated it. Talk to people you don't know who are potential users. Be wary of surveys which can produce false results. There is no substitute for taking the time to engage and listen. Back up your primary research with secondary market research.



# SOLUTION/VALUE PROP

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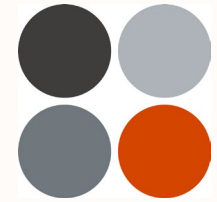


- **What is your solution? How does it work? Give enough detail without disclosing anything that could be your future IP. Explain or demonstrate the customer experience.**
- **What makes your solution unique? What is your value proposition?**
- **Why should I, *as a judge or investor*, be excited about it?**  
Show renderings. Work with an industrial or graphic designer. If it is a tech platform, make some simple no-code demos. A great free resource is <https://www.figma.com/>. You can find other free resources at: <https://launchpad.syr.edu/resources/free-startup-tools/> and check out all of the drop down tools and templates.



# COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE

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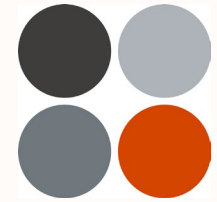
- **How are users solving this problem now? What other companies are providing the similar or comparable products/services?**
- **How do their offerings compare and how will you position yourself against similar products/services?**
- **How do you compete on pricing? What are your other competitive attributes and how will you promote them?**

This should be a visually clean graphic to demonstrate your competitive strengths. Most slide deck platforms (PPT., Google Slides, Canva, Beautiful AI) have great example templates to use.



# INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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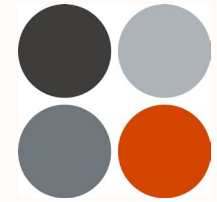
- **Have you done a trademark search? Trademarkia.com is a free source to find out if the name is already taken. Do this now to assure that you are in clear operating space.**
- **Have you done a domain name search? If it's available and you think you will use the name, buy it now.**
- **Establish your social media handles now.**
- **Is there a potential for intellectual property? If so, can it be protected? Do a basic search through the USPTO.**
- **What is your intellectual property protection strategy?**  
(Do this now or pay dearly later.)





# MARKETING

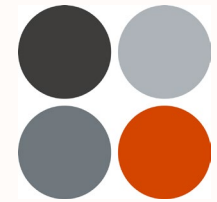
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- What is the target market? How big is the target market? How fast is it growing? Use TAM, SAM, SOM metrics. Be realistic about your assumptions on the actual SOM you can capture.
- Who is the customer/user? Is it a multi-sided marketplace?
- What do you know about the customer/user? Use personas or describe their demographic and psychographic profiles.
- How will you acquire customers? **SOCIAL MEDIA IS A TOOL NOT A STRATEGY.** Branding and content strategy are tools to build interest, but how will branding and content development lead to a customer acquisition, conversion and retention strategy? Use marketing to build demand. Use sales for conversion. **MARKETING IS NOT SALES.**



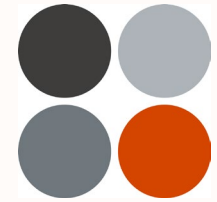
# SALES



- What are your sales channels? B2C, B2B, B2G, etc.
- What is your distribution strategy? (e-commerce, retail, through a dealer/distributor network, other?)
- What is your pricing strategy?
- How are you developing a CRM system? What data are you collecting and how are you using it? How are you protecting it? How are you building security and privacy into your sales model?
- What is your sales cycle? What are your sales KPIs?
- Who are your sales team? Where are your sales locations?
- If this is a product, how are you handling shipping, handling customer service, warranty, guarantee policies?

# OPERATIONS

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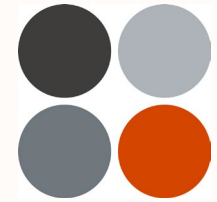


- **Where and how will you operate? Where will you start?**
- **What geographic locations and physical requirements will you need as you scale over three to five years?**
- **What facilities will you need to acquire? What will capital costs be for acquisition and renovation?**
- **What capacity levels can you grow into, and how will you manage and staff them? What's your projected organizational structure?**
- **How will you grow key management and personnel?**
- **What other partners will you need?**



# PROJECTED REVENUES AND EXPENSES

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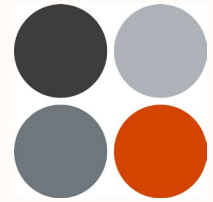


- 3-year P&L (based on what growth assumptions?)
- Revenue drivers (identify three sources of revenue)
- Cost drivers (be as specific as possible because this is the only part of the financial model that you can actually control)
- Gross and operating margins (how do these compare to standard financial ratios for the industry?)
- Fixed and variable costs
- Startup costs
- Break-even and profitability projections (be realistic)



# PRODUCT/FINANCIAL ROADMAP

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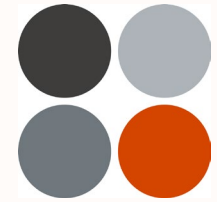


- **What is your product development roadmap? What milestones will you accomplish over what period of time?**
- **What is your financial roadmap? How much is needed to reach these product development milestones?**
- **What's the bigger picture? Lay out a three to five-year plan with projected sources and uses of funding.**
- **When is your projected breakeven point?**
- **What is your growth or exit strategy?**
- **How does that fit into the big picture? Be realistic.**



# THE ASK

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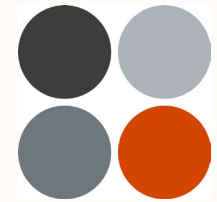


- How much do you need to raise?
- Have you considered debt or alternative financing? Can you finance this through sales? Why do you need to go the equity route? What is your own contribution to the venture?
- If you are pursuing investment, lay it out over angel, pre-seed, seed, Series A and B rounds. It's hard to plan beyond that.
- What is your proposed offering? What is investor's return?
- Does your offering protect your own stake? Does it leave room for future investors? Don't give away too much, too soon, to too many people. It makes you less investable.



# SUMMARY

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- **What are the three or four key points you want people to remember from your presentation?**
- **If this is a pitch competition, what is your ask? If it is funder, is it within the ability of the person you are asking? How does it advance your idea or achieve a tangible milestone?**
- **What's your closing grab? Remind us again why this matters. Why you? Why this? Why now? Make it impactful.**
- **The best pitches are good stories. Make sure yours is compelling. This is your “hit it out of the park” slide, so make it a good one. It is what the judges will remember!**



YOUR LOGO

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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Email Address



Website



Twitter



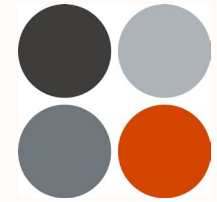
Facebook

Have a full “end slide” with all of your contact information, including your logo. If you’ve set up any socials for this, include all of them too!



# POCKET SLIDES

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- Have a series of slides in “your pocket” to answer any questions you might expect.
- If you hearing common themes from questions when you are pitching, be sure they are addressed in either the main deck or in your pocket slides.
- Pocket slides can be used to answer questions that might come up in an extended call with investors. Refer to the LaunchPad’s list of questions that any judges or investors might ask to help create some of your pocket slides.

