

note 1-428-832
July 1, 2009

Note on The Venture Presentation: How to Successfully Position Your Startup with Investors & Strategic Partners

As an entrepreneur or startup CEO, once you get your foot in the door with a prospective investor or investor group, the purpose of the investor presentation is to provide talking points for your first formal, face-to-face meeting. The role of your slide deck, simply put, is to help you *sell*.

And make no mistake, when you're presenting your startup company to prospective investors – whether they be high-net-worth individuals (often referred to as angels), professional venture capitalists (VCs), corporate strategic investors, bankers, or simply friends and family – *you're in a sales mode*. You're selling your target audience on the idea of parting with their money (investing their capital) in exchange for some kind of security interest in your company. That is, your presentation is part of a sales pitch to these prospective investors that will culminate, if successful, in them providing your business with capital in exchange for your company providing them with a security that is some combination of debt (a note or loan) and/or equity (an ownership interest in your business).

The purpose of your investor presentation is not to tell your audience everything; it's not to exhaustively cover every detail. Rather, the investor presentation is a strategic tool whose purpose is to help you get to the end of your investor meeting with your audience saying to your startup team, "Tell us more. We find your investment proposition interesting, and want to get to know you and your company better and understand the details."

An investor slide presentation should be direct and to-the-point. Even if you're allotted an hour or even two for a meeting, you should never plan to take more than 20 or 25 minutes for a presentation (assuming it's uninterrupted, which is rarely the case). Given these constraints, you should shoot for 15 to 25 slides. (It's also a good idea to prepare additional slides with more in-depth information on topics where you anticipate questions.)

Your slides should be long on compelling visuals and short on technical detail. They should support the presenter in *telling a powerful and compelling story*.



Published by GlobalLens, a division of the William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan.

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