

MARKETING MAGIC

A LESSON IN MAKING A PITCH



AVNU.CA

FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE EVERYTHING, AND GETTING SOMEONE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER IN A WAY THAT BENEFITS THEM AND YOUR PROJECT OR COMPANY IS KEY. THE OPPORTUNITY TO PITCH YOUR PROJECT, WHETHER IT BE TO INVESTORS, ORGANIZATIONS, OR THE PRESS IS YOUR CHANCE TO LET YOUR PROJECT SHINE. IF YOU HAVE BEEN PREPARING YOUR PROJECT MATERIALS CONCURRENTLY WITH THIS CURRICULUM, YOU SHOULD HAVE ALL THE PIECES NECESSARY TO BRING YOUR PITCH TOGETHER. THIS SECTION WILL LET YOU KNOW WHAT YOU NEED TO MAKE YOUR PITCH AN EFFECTIVE ONE.



TERMS YOU SHOULD KNOW

There are several terms you may run into during the pitch process that may confuse you. Below is a compiled list of the essential terms you may hear and what they mean. Roles like angel investors, venture capitalists, and producers will be defined here to give you a greater understanding of what they can do for you (depending on who you would like to target).

Angel Investor: Typically well-connected, wealthy individuals who use their own money. Unlike venture capitalists, they don't go on boards, they don't need to put in lots of capital, they prefer simple terms, they understand the experimental nature of the idea, and they can sometimes decide in a single meeting whether or not to invest.

Funders: In the non-profit world, the term Funder is loosely used for anyone investing in your project, ranging from the government agencies, to private organizations.

Pitch Deck: A brief presentation, often created in PowerPoint, Keynote or Prezi, used to give your audience an overview of your business plan.

Press Release: News about a business, such as a new product or receiving a major sponsorship for a charitable event. Press releases comes in many forms, including print, digital, or using multimedia outlets (e.g. video, radio). The most important information is at the top, plus quotes and facts. It should create an image and story, and grab journalists' attention.

Producer: In TV and radio, producers identify/find and research a story. They work with writers, hosts, reporters and other staff to put stories together.

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Return on Investment (ROI): This is how the investor determines why it's valuable to make any contribution to your project or work. The investment doesn't always mean money, it often includes access to resources, supports or their time for your guidance. However, it traditionally measures against such metrics as brand loyalty, brand awareness, traffic, sales leads, actual sales, employee morale, community awareness etc. It is based against the original objectives of the sponsor's reason for investing.

Target Market: Your target market is the specific group of people to whom you are trying to sell your products or services. Understanding your market helps determine your potential customer base. Unlike mass marketing, which offers one product to everyone, target marketing aims a few products at a specific type of person. The number of market segments is innumerable: split by gender, age, education level, region etc.

Value Proposition: A statement that explains what benefit your project provides, for who, and how you do it well, in a way that no one else can.

Venture Capitalist: An investor who either provides capital to start-up ventures or supports small companies that wish to expand but do not have access to public funding. Venture capitalists are willing to invest in these companies because they can earn a massive return on their investments if these companies are a success.

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Before putting together your pitch, you should research a considerable amount. Use this period of research to collect supporting information to your project's cause. Also use this time to research as much as you can about the person or organization you are pitching to. Doing your homework is essential to the pitching process as you will want to be able to answer any question that is brought your way. Collecting and compiling a central resource of information for a particular pitch should be your first step. Once this is completed, you can begin to structure, tailor, and practice it. Consider the following during the research phase.

Do Your Homework – Review their website, press releases, social media & more. Identify what others think about the person or organization that you are pitching.

Find The Right Person to Pitch Can Be More Influential in Their Support – Use your research and networks to connect. For example, if you want to pitch to a specific organization, some people within the organization may be more accessible to you and easier to get in touch with, while others who are a little out of reach often, can have more influential in their support.

Tailor To Your Audience – Base your pitch on their interests, level of knowledge about the subject matter you are bringing to them, and expertise of those you are speaking to.

Know What Investors Fear – Missing out on something big. Look for data that supports investing in your project based off industry and economical trends. These trends should be used to help identify a gap in service or product delivery within your specified sector, that you will be able to fill with their support.

THE FORMAT OF YOUR PITCH

The format of your pitch should cover everything you are about. The information you've put together for your press kit as well as your business plan will be pivotal to putting this together. Remember, each pitch is different so always tailor a pitch to the person or organization you are pitching to. Another point that may help in this process is to include evidence. Sean Wise (Canadian expert on start ups) states, "The No. 1 thing that separates a great pitch from a good pitch is a proof of concept. A proof of concept can include early sales, feedback from customers or clients, market testing, proof that somebody is willing to invest in your project." Finally, when crafting your pitch, put it together into a pitch deck so you have a tangible file to work with and edit moving forward. With these points in mind, review the following sections that will make up your pitch and craft your messaging accordingly.

Introduction – Right out of the gate you should introduce yourself and your project in a short and concise manner. Use this as your first chance to show why you and the people behind this project are the right people for the job (ex. list credentials and experience).

Hook – Identify what the problem or opportunity you are working to address. Use statistics (ex. Target audience) and trends that you may have found in the research process to emphasize your point. In short, identify a gap and use supporting evidence to measure how wide that gap is.

Solution – Your solution should demonstrate how you can close the gap you have outlined in the hook section effectively. Discuss all the ways your project is closing this gap already, and how you can continue to close it more efficiently if the listener can comply (ex. If the listener is part of the process, tailor your messaging towards the need for more awareness).

THE FORMAT OF YOUR PITCH

Value Proposition – After identifying the gap and how you can close it with the listener's participation, show them the value or benefits of complying. Illustrating three points of how this can benefit your listener is recommended. If you are pitching to an investor, this is where you can detail their return on investment.

Call To Action – Wrapping up your pitch, provide a call to action for the listener. This includes summarizing what you are doing, and how they can both help and benefit from supporting your project. Have your contact information ready, and if you have enough research and information memorized, be open to answering any questions a listener may have.

Once you have crafted your content, think about what you should be doing while you are presenting. Delivery is just as important as content, and your ability to convey this information confidently, can provide that added touch for the listener to comply with your call to action. Consider the following points when crafting your messaging.

10 Seconds to Impact – You have that amount of time to get someone's attention.

Grab listener's Attention – Tagline, question, analogy to a notable brand.

Show, Don't Tell – Illustrate your words with big images or anecdotes.

Passionate and Plain – Show enthusiasm! Use plain English.

Body Language – Let your posture, gestures & expression show your confidence.

THE PRESS PITCH

If you are going to pitch to a news outlet or anyone that can spread awareness for your project, consider tailoring your pitch to the press. Here are some helpful tips:

Pitch a Story – Not just your company. Audiences relate to stories about people.

Tailor Your Pitch – Craft it for specific media, don't blast a generic press release.

Is It News? – Ask yourself if this is a fresh idea, a fresh angle and a timely topic.

Understand The Medium – Might your pitch work best for radio, online, or in person?

Find the right contacts – Producers and editors are important decision makers.

THE TRADITIONAL PITCH

If you intend on pitching to investors, funders, or organizations - consider using the following tips to tailor your pitch:

Know Their Business Goals – From increased sales to more public visibility, try to align your pitch with a corporation's priorities. Show what you can do for them.

Know Your Demographic – Stats like spending power & purchasing habits are key.

Timing Counts – Know key deadlines & pitch early since follow-up may be needed

Beyond Logos – Find new ways to give corporate sponsors exposure & value. From product sampling to social media campaigns, to naming rights and more. Implementing their colours and branding into your presentation is a nice touch.

Sponsorship Package – Prepare a document that includes: Executive summary, audience/demographic, marketing objectives, marketing initiatives, benefits to sponsor, measuring success, terms and conditions, and call to action.

THE ELEVATOR PITCH

An elevator pitch is arguably the hardest pitch to prepare as you have to summarize your pitch into about the time it takes to have a conversation in an elevator. An elevator pitch is an icebreaker that outlines who you are, what your company offers. In practice it takes about 60 seconds to leave an impactful impression to whomever you are interacting with. Digital entrepreneur, Dwight Peters famously shared on Entrepreneur magazine, key steps for creating your own elevator pitch:

Make Them Care – Introduce yourself and the solutions your project offers right away to establish the foundation of your elevator pitch.

Make It Easy To Join – Mention any key clients or supporting organizations that the person may know to allow them to join in on the conversation.

Leave Them Wanting More – As these pitches are meant to be short, outline exactly what you are doing but do not get into the hard details. Leave that for a conversation they may want to have after your pitch concludes.

Be Natural – Be comfortable with your elevator pitch. Have passion but show restraint. If you are confident and relaxed when talking about your project, the person will notice.

With the points above, craft together an elevator pitch and practice! Once you have nailed it, you will inevitably be asked, ‘What do you do?’ at a conference or a networking event, so be ready and remember to be natural!

SECTION CHECKLIST



DO YOUR RESEARCH



COMPLETE YOUR TRADITIONAL PITCH



COMPLETE YOUR PRESS PITCH



COMPLETE YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH



FOLLOW UP AND REFINE AFTER EVERY PITCH

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- + [Perfect Your Elevator Pitch](#)
- + [Create Compelling Value Propositions](#)
- + [How To Pitch to Press](#)
- + [Common Mistakes in the Pitch Process](#)



AFTER EACH PITCH, YOU WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT AND IDENTIFY ON ANY POINTS THAT YOU CAN REFINE TO IMPROVE YOUR PITCH.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU DO THIS EVERY TIME, REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME. FEEL FREE TO EMAIL THE PEOPLE YOU PITCHED TO AND REQUEST FEEDBACK. MOVING FORWARD THIS WILL ALLOW YOUR TEAM TO HAVE THE BEST PITCH ON HAND FOR ANY UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITIES.

YOU WILL ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO FOLLOW UP WITH THE PARTY YOU PITCHED FOR. WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU ARE PROACTIVE AND CHECK IN VIA EMAIL, HOWEVER DO NOT SEND FREQUENT EMAILS AS PESTERING WILL HURT YOUR PROJECT IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS. CONNECT WITH THE PEOPLE YOU PITCHED FOR ON SOCIAL MEDIA AS WELL TO SEE IF THEY WILL HAVE ANY OPPORTUNITIES AT A LATER DATE.

SERIES CONCLUSION

From what was once an idea, you now have the tools to put your marketing strategy into practice. It is important at the end of the day to remember that the content that you create will represent you. The statistics that you track will help you gauge whether the actions you are taking are working. And that your ability to effectively communicate your message to the audience in front of you is key. The most successful marketing campaigns are those that adapt to the times, circumstances and even current events.

The nature of this industry is constantly growing and changing, requiring you to stay looped into conversations about where marketing as we know it is going. Although your full time job may not revolve around marketing, it is important to find some time to act as if it is. By surrounding yourself with peers who are working within the same field that can support you and give you the support of like minded professionals to bounce ideas off of. It is also valuable to make yourself present in environments where experts are present, whether this may be industry events, conferences, or even a small local meet-up of new practitioners in the field of marketing, like yourself.

Through this toolkit, you have learned about the core tools required in order to craft the marketing strategy you need to build. However it's up to you to continue to learn, experiment, and research so that you can craft a marketing strategy that your product or service deserves.

OUR SOURCES

- + Branded Conference 2014
- + Brand Channel
- + Business Insider
- + Forbes
- + HootSuite
- + Internet Live Stats
- + Investopedia
- + Pink City
- + Splash Effect
- + Search Engine Land
- + TastyTuts
- + US Small Businesses



This toolkit was created in partnership with Branded, and their Youth Marketing Conference. To find out more about Branded, visit their website at brandedto.com

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