

What investors expect in a pitch deck

The slide order most early-stage investors look for and the detail each slide needs to carry.

Overview

Most early-stage decks are read in under four minutes. The order below is the one investors are used to; deviating from it costs you attention you cannot afford to lose.

The standard sequence

- Title — company, one-line description, stage, contact.
- Problem — who has it, how often, what it costs them today.
- Solution — what you built, in plain language, with a product visual.
- Product — the actual screens or workflow, not an abstract diagram.
- Market — bottom-up sizing you can defend, not a top-down industry report figure.
- Traction — the strongest evidence you have, charted over time.
- Business model — pricing, unit economics, gross margin.
- Go-to-market — the channels working now and the cost per acquisition in each.
- Competition — honest positioning against real alternatives, including status quo.
- Team — why this team wins this specific market.
- Financials — 18-24 months, with the assumptions visible.
- The ask — amount, instrument, use of funds, milestones it funds.

Where decks lose investors

- A market slide built on a ₹X trillion top-down number with no path to capturing it.
- Traction shown as cumulative totals, which hide flat or declining monthly performance.
- A competition slide with a 2x2 that places the company alone in the top-right quadrant.
- Financial projections that hockey-stick without a stated driver behind the inflection.
- No clear ask, or an ask with no milestones attached to it.

Detail each slide must carry

Every claim needs a number, a source or a demo behind it. If a slide states that retention is strong, the slide should show the cohort curve. If it states the market is underserved, it should show what customers currently pay for a worse option.

Keep the deck to 12 slides and move supporting detail to an appendix. Investors who want depth will ask; those who do not should still be able to finish the main deck.

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