



30 Mistakes Startup Founders Make in Pitch Decks

Discover where founders
screw up their pitch decks
most often

Source: Confluence.VC Weekly
- Curated by Wen Zhang





Design and Visual Presentation Mistakes

- **Rectangular Logos:** Avoid using rectangular logos; opt for square or circular designs for better visual appeal.
- **Using ALL CAPS:** Refrain from using all caps to describe your business; rely on compelling content instead.
- **Excessive Colors:** Limit the color palette in your design to maintain simplicity and professionalism.
- **Complex Slide Designs:** Simplify slide designs to avoid clutter and ensure clear communication.
- **Formal Business Names in Branding:** Exclude formalities like “Co.”, “Inc.”, “LLC”, or “DBA” in pitches.



Content and Structure Mistakes

- **Overly Long Descriptions:** Keep business descriptions to one sentence for clarity and conciseness.
- **Text-Heavy Slides:** Minimize text in slides; use visuals and bullet points for impact.
- **Too Many Slides:** Aim for 15-20 slides to maintain engagement and coherence.
- **Delayed Problem Identification:** Introduce the problem early in the presentation for immediate context.
- **Faceless Team Slides:** Include team member photos to personalize and add credibility.
- **Overuse of Buzzwords:** Avoid jargon; use clear, straightforward language.



- **Unclear Traction:** Be transparent about your revenue status and growth.
- **Hidden Product:** Showcase your product prominently in the pitch.
- **Unaddressed Business Risks:** Acknowledge and discuss potential risks upfront.
- **Lack of Investor Research:** Research your investors to tailor the pitch and show preparedness.
- **Vague Use of Funds:** Clearly outline how the raised funds will be utilized.
- **No Follow-Up:** Always follow up post-meeting to maintain interest and momentum.
- **Long Pitch Decks:** Keep the pitch deck concise; focus on key points.
- **Ineffective Problem Slide:** Ensure the problem slide is data-backed and specific.



Differentiation and Value Proposition Mistakes

- **Ignoring Competitors:** Acknowledge competitors; show how your business is different.
- **Broad Target Market:** Focus on a niche market initially for effective customer acquisition.
- **Lack of Differentiation:** Clearly articulate your unique value proposition.



Market Analysis and Customer Strategy Mistakes

- **Overstating Market Size:** Avoid claiming a small percentage of a large market; be realistic in market sizing.
- **Unjustified Key Assumptions:** Back up all claims and assumptions with data and research.
- **Unrealistic Goals:** Set ambitious yet achievable goals; avoid overestimation.
- **No Customer Acquisition Strategy:** Include a clear customer acquisition plan with explored channels and results.
- **Poor Differentiation in Market Analysis:** Ensure your market analysis clearly differentiates your business from competitors.

Ready to take your startup pitch to the next level? Let INNW Institute guide you. We're all about empowering founders like you.



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