



NEWSPACE IGNITOR PITCH GUIDELINES

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A pitch deck is a visual set of slides that provides investors and other audiences with essential information about your business plan, product or services, fundraising needs, and key metrics like valuation, target market, and financial goals.¹ Presenting your pitch deck provides an opportunity to tell your story and convince different audiences to team with you. Below are guidelines for developing pitches for the following audience types: A. investors, B. government and C. prime customers. Each audience is different.

That said, as a general rule, 70-80% of the content topics below are the same across these audiences. In addition, some of the content topics are presented in a different order or fashion based on the input from NewSpace Ignitor Experts, and their experience with that audience. Hence, we recommend that after you develop your first deck, you build multiple versions to tailor it to each audience using the guidelines below. See the [chart](#) at the end of this document to view a summary of the differences by audience. In addition, after each section, there are “Level-Up” and “Must-Do Moves” by audience.

The general process for developing your pitch deck is to research your audience, then tailor your messages and presentation to them using the guidance below. Then practice your pitch until it is perfected.

There are links to additional resources at the end of this document to conduct research, learn the language used by different audiences and find pitch opportunities.

A. Pitching to Investors.

When pitching to investors, you are telling a story and selling your company for an investment. You need to win these individuals over initially and reinforce why they should invest in you and your company throughout your storytelling. Remember to make your story **compelling**, **convincing** and **concise**. Clearly communicate the severity of the market problem and how you will fix it. Include how you will make money doing so and communicate that you have the right team in place to deliver. The guidelines below assume a seven-minute pitch with three minutes for a question-and-answer session.

Narrative Guidelines:

Below are guidelines for what to include in your slide deck and narrative.

1. Company title page.

¹ [Guide to Pitch Decks: 10 Elements to Include in a Pitch Deck - 2022 - MasterClass](#)



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- Grab their attention. “Hook” them.
 - Tell a story.
 - State a few startling statistics.
 - Share personal anecdotes.
 - Consider imagine “if-then” scenarios.
 - Include the company name and logo with the name and title of your presenter and a one-line description/tagline about the company.
 - Note: keep your attention-grabbing opening high-level and shorten it as needed, given pitch time constraints.
- 2. Communicate the problem your company solves and the market demand for it (product/market fit).**
- Explain to investors the problem you are solving. The goal is to get everyone nodding and buying in.
 - Remember that this is not the place for an in-depth technical explanation. Provide just the gist of the problem.
 - Investors will be evaluating - just because you can do it, should you do it?
- 3. Solution.**
- Explain to investors how the solution you provide will fix the problem.
 - Share the top three benefits of your product and service, with clear and compelling messaging. Explain how you reduce or eliminate pain points.
- 4. Quantitatively communicate the market opportunity - e.g., how large or small a market will your company service?**
- Share the total addressable market (TAM)². Within TAM, share the serviceable available/attainable market (SAM)³ and what you can you get to with your solution.
 - Leverage the market analysis from Boston Analytics to help determine the number of customer accounts in your market. More on calculating these figures can be found at this link: <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/tam-sam-som>.
- 5. What is your time to market?**
- Describe the current status of your offering. Share details and evidence of your traction and positive momentum in the market. What will your business look like after your offering hits the market?
 - Share the key milestones that you will achieve along the way in bringing your offering to market. Address whether you are ahead of schedule or behind schedule. Investors want to know whether what you are doing today is what you

² [TAM: Reference](#)

³ [SAM: Reference](#)



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said you would do 12 months ago. They want to assess how well you are performing.

6. What is unique about your product and the technology behind it?

- Describe the technology, secret sauce or magic behind your product or service. Aim for less text and more diagrams, schematics and flowcharts on this slide. White papers and objective proofs of concepts are helpful to mention here.
- Provide a complete view of the competitive landscape. Too much is better than too little. Distinguish your company from your competition and how you stand out. Everyone (e.g., customers, investors and employees) wants to hear why you're good, not why the competition is bad.
- Is your product revolutionary or evolutionary? Why?
- Have you filed patents, and what is your IP (intellectual property) strategy?

7. How will you scale revenue, and how long will it take (sales/marketing)?

- Explain how you make money—who pays you (government, private customer, dual-use technology customers), your distribution channels and your gross margins. In general, a unique, untested business model will be a scary proposition to investors. If you truly have a revolutionary business model, explain it in terms of familiar ones. This is your opportunity to drop the names of organizations already using your product or service.
- Explain how you will reach your customer. Convince the investor that you have an effective go-to-market strategy that will not break the bank.
- Provide a three- to five-year forecast containing not only dollars but also key metrics, such as the number of customers and conversion rate. You can develop a bottom-up forecast by calculating the potential revenue for your company for a specific period by multiplying the number of likely sales for each product or product line, the average value of sales, and when they are likely to occur.
- Include if the forecast is affected by long sales cycles and seasonality. Making people understand the underlying assumptions of your forecast is as important as the numbers you are using.

8. How will you develop your product and how long will it take?

- Examples could include listing your partners, whether you are outsourcing development or licensing technology. Let the investor know if you are the technology inventor.

9. List your other service providers.

- Consider listing service providers will help in building your credibility (e.g., legal, accounting, bank, contract manufacturing, other accelerators, notable advisors, etc.

10. Who is on your leadership team?



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- Describe the key players on your management team, board of directors and board of advisors, as well as your major investors. Do not be afraid to show up with less than a perfect team. All young and emerging companies have holes in their team—what’s truly important is whether you understand that there are holes and you are willing to fix them.

11. Ask and use of proceeds.

- How much money are you asking for, and how will you use it? What’s the actual mechanism (loan, convertible note, equity, SAFE (a simple agreement for future equity)).

12. Close: recap/summary.

- Summarize and include how much you have raised to date and what you did with it. You want to be able to say, “*we raised a little and did a lot.*”
- Restate the ask in your close.
- Provide contact information.

Pitching to Private Investors

Level Up Moves That Apply Across Audiences:

- Hook your audience with a wow statement. Circle back to it in your closing slide.
- Be specific in what you offer and how you are different, don’t sound like your competitors.
- Invest time in developing your slides and consider a graphic designer with skills in PowerPoint to help if needed. Use the slides to help tell and sell the story. Visual, no small text. Haikudeck.com is a possible resource that can help (disclaimer – we haven’t tried it).
- Be compelling, convincing and concise when delivering your messages.
- Present your slides with charisma and confidence. Be enthusiastic, your high-energy will help win your audience over.
- Practice, practice, practice your pitch. Write out your speaker notes (but do not include them when sharing your deck). Record yourself. Ask for feedback and perfect.
- Be prepared if any technical issues come up. Have printouts of your slides when presenting in person.
- Find out ahead of time what the appropriate business attire for your meeting should be.

Level Up Moves When Presenting to Private Investors

- Try to keep the total number of slides to 12 or less.
- Avoid being overly technical.

B. Pitching to Government Customers

The guidelines below assume there is time for a 20-minute pitch to introduce your company and concept to government customers. Keep in mind that every government customer probably has different things they would like to see. For instance, some government customers



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will want to know where your financial capital is coming from and the strength of your supply chain. It is important that you do your research ahead of the meeting. Tailor the pitch based on what you know and learn about the customer organization, and also tailor it to the person from that organization who will receive your pitch. Higher-ranking government officials typically have a LinkedIn profile, and useful information can be found on their organization's website (e.g., vision statements, bios) when you do your research. In general, avoid getting overly technical in a first conversation unless you know this customer is interested in this level of detail. Have technical slides as a backup and only present them if asked. Make sure to avoid technical jargon. Be concise in your delivery and allow time to listen to what the customer has to say and for discussion.

Narrative Guidelines: Below are points to cover in your slide deck, and in your narrative.

1. Company title page.

- Grab their attention
 - Tell a story
 - State a few startling statistics
 - Share personal anecdotes
 - Imagine "if then" scenarios
- Include your company name and logo with the name and title of your presenter, and a one-line description/tagline about your company

2. Company overview.

- Share your elevator pitch in two to three sentences or bullet points.
- Include information on your company, your role and your unique selling proposition.
- Mention any commercial traction/sales and/or existing or pending use of your solution by the government or commercial companies.
- Include items such as core competency, number of employees, company value or sales, existing customers, years in existence, etc.
- Provide details on the type of business you fall under and what contract vehicles you are eligible to compete on (e.g., 8A, VOSB, Woman Owned, Disabled Veteran Owned, OASIC Pools, etc.).
- For DOD, do the people in your company have security clearances? Does your company have a facility clearance?

3. The ask/purpose of the meeting.

- The ask will vary by government customer/beneficiary.
- If the brief is informational only do not include the ask



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- Examples are: MOU signature and introductions, if they are really interested, ask them if they have contract vehicles that would enable the government to purchase your product or service, access to data or technical experts to further develop your solution.
 - Also share if any of your current efforts are funded by DoD/NASA
 - For instance, have you secured a [D2P2](#), [TACFI](#), or [STRATFI](#)
- 4. Summarize the problem.**
- Describe the problem in 1-4 bullet points (this could be generic to the industry or vary from customer to customer)
 - Is the problem real – do others have the same problem you do?
 - How is the problem being solved today (if it even is)?
 - Is the problem one that can be commercialized? Can you make money solving this problem?
 - The mission achievement (or fulfillment or impact) that makes the problem worth solving.
 - In cases where the problem is obvious, then focus on how the new capabilities you offer can improve mission accomplishment.
- 5. Solution overview.**
- Describe how you solve the problem or reduce their pain points and what exactly you do. This can be illustrated with a clear product screenshot or simple process diagram, but if we don't know what you do, we won't know why we should be interested in/fund you. But don't spend too much time on this.
 - Communicate the top three benefits of your product/service with clear and compelling messaging.
 - Show how your product/solution fits into existing mission area architectures
- 6. What is unique about your product/solution and the technology behind it?**
- Describe the technology, secret sauce or magic behind your product or service. Aim for less text and more diagrams, schematics and flowcharts on this slide. White papers and objective proofs of concepts are helpful to mention here.
 - Is your product revolutionary or evolutionary? If it is evolutionary, how will it save the government money or improve their mission effectiveness?
 - Have you filed patents, and what is your IP (intellectual property) strategy?
 - What is proprietary to your idea?
 - What is your unfair advantage compared to your competition?
 - What is your experience with the technology?
- 7. Risks and barriers to entry (as applicable).**
- Are there risks or barriers to entry, and how will you overcome them?
- 8. What is your schedule and timeline to develop your offering?**



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- Describe the current status of your offering and what the near future will look like. Share the details of your traction and positive momentum in the market.
 - What are the milestones in bringing your offering to market? Address whether you are ahead of schedule or behind schedule. Customers want to assess how well you are performing. Note: only include this bullet point if your ask includes funding.
- 9. What will the product cost?**
- Provide any preliminary price information for your solution, even if it is a broad range.
- 10. Who is on your team?**
- Describe the key players on your management team, board of directors and board of advisors, as well as your major investors. Include one line of background on each member. Each person on the team should have a unique and effective skill set.
- 11. Strategic partnerships.**
- If you have any, make sure to highlight existing or potential partnerships (it shows outside interest).
 - Tell the audience WHY you established these partnerships.
 - What is the benefit to you and them about this collaboration?
- 12. What is the mission impact of your solution?**
- Will your solution save them money or improve mission effectiveness?
 - Additionally, if your concept is novel, they may be interested in knowing about commercial applications or if it is being used commercially.
- 13. Close: recap/summary.**
- Provide a summary of what you said, narrowed to about four main points.
 - Also succinctly restate the ask.
 - Provide contact information.
 - Ask if any follow up is desired

Pitching to Government Customers

Level Up Moves That Apply Across Audiences:

- Hook your audience with a wow statement. Circle back to it in your closing slide.
- Be specific in what you offer and how you are different, don't sound like your competitors.
- Invest time in developing your slides and consider a graphic designer with skills in PowerPoint to help if needed. Use the slides to help tell and sell the story. Visual, no small text. Haikudeck.com is a possible resource that can help (disclaimer – we haven't tried it).
- Be compelling, convincing and concise when delivering your messages.
- Present your slides with charisma and confidence. Be enthusiastic, your high energy will help win your audience over.



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- Practice, practice, practice your pitch. Write out your speaker notes (but do not include them when sharing your deck). Record yourself. Ask for feedback and perfect.
- Be prepared if any technical issues come up. Have printouts of your slides when presenting in person.
- Find out ahead of time what the appropriate business attire for your meeting should be.

Must-Do Moves When Presenting to Government Customers

- Understand and use military/civilian rank. Meeting with lower ranks can help with generating excitement and they may be influencers. Higher ranks start with O-5 for a Lieutenant Colonel, O-6 is Colonel, O-7 through O-10 are General officers. The higher the number means the higher the responsibility. U.S. Department of Defense Officer Rankings are listed [here](#).
- Civilian rankings are complicated. In general, a GS-15 is equivalent to an O-6. SES is equivalent to a military general officer.
- Customs and courtesies. Do not address the customer by their first name. When speaking to military officials, use their rank (e.g., General Smith). Also, use sir or ma'am with more senior ranks. For civilians, use Mr. Smith, Miss Smith, etc.
- Know & Use the Lingo. The [State of the Space Industrial Base Report](#) that comes out of the workshop hosted by NewSpace New Mexico is a great resource to get up to date on the industry and there is a list of abbreviations at the end.
- Send Read Aheads. They should give the people you are meeting with a taste of your presentation, not a deep dive. Note that they often don't look at it before the meeting.
- Be clear with your ask.

Level Up Moves When Presenting to Government Customers

- Avoid being overly technical.
- Leave time for Q & A.

Pitching to Large Prime Customers.

The guidelines below assume there is time for a 20-minute pitch to introduce your company and concept to large primes. Keep in mind that every large prime probably has different things they would like to see. It is important that you do your research ahead of the meeting. Tailor the pitch based on what you know and learn about the customer organization and the person that will receive your pitch. For instance, some customers like tons of data, some want to hear the big picture, or bottom line up front, some geek out on the technology, and some are focused on mission application. If possible, research the backgrounds of the people receiving your pitch. Your meeting contacts probably have a LinkedIn profile, and useful information can be found on their organization's website (e.g., vision statements, bios) when you do your research. In general, avoid getting overly technical in a first conversation unless you know this customer is interested in this level of detail. Have technical slides as a backup and only present



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them if asked. Also, avoid technical jargon. Be concise in your delivery and allow time to listen to what the customer has to say and for discussion.

In general, areas of importance to primes include making sure your ideas are based on sound engineering and being assured that the product will perform as intended. Some primes will also consider where your financial capital is coming from and the strength of your supply chain.

Narrative Guidelines: Below are points to cover in your slide deck and in your narrative.

- 1. Company overview.**
 - Include items such as core competency, number of employees, company value or sales, existing customers, years in existence, etc.
- 2. Purpose of the pitch.**
 - For instance, are you looking for feedback on a new concept, want to be considered in an upcoming solicitation, or are you looking for teaming opportunities.
- 3. Top-level description of the capability being pitched (to include what problem it is solving. This is very important (product/market fit)).**
 - The goal is to get everyone nodding and buying in. It may take more than one chart.
 - Remember that this is not the place for an in-depth technical explanation unless you know your specific customer is looking for this detail.
- 4. What is unique about your product and the technology behind it?**
 - Describe the technology, secret sauce or magic behind your product or service. Aim for less text and more diagrams, schematics and flowcharts on this slide. White papers and objective proofs of concepts are helpful to mention here.
 - Is your product revolutionary?
 - Have you filed patents, and what is your IP (intellectual property) strategy?
 - What is your unfair advantage compared to your competition?
 - What is your experience with this technology
- 5. What is your schedule and timeline for developing your offering?**
 - Describe the current status of your offering and what the near future will look like. Share the details of your traction and positive momentum in the market.
 - What are the milestones in bringing your offering to market? Address whether you are ahead of schedule or behind schedule. Customers want to assess how well you are performing.
- 6. What is your company's experience with this technology or mission area?**
 - Describe where you have done business in the past with gov't or primes
- 7. What will the product cost?**



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- Provide any preliminary price information, even if it is a broad range.
- 8. Who is on your leadership team?**
 - Describe the key players on your management team, board of directors and board of advisors, as well as your major investors. Do not be afraid to show up with less than a perfect team. All young and emerging companies have holes in their team—what’s truly important is whether you understand that there are holes and you are willing to fix them.
- 9. Close: recap/summary.**

Pitching to Large Prime Customers

Level Up Moves That Apply Across Audiences:

- Hook your audience with a wow statement. Circle back to it in your closing slide.
- Be specific in what you offer and how you are different, don’t sound like your competitors.
- Invest time in developing your slides and consider a graphic designer with skills in PowerPoint to help if needed. Use the slides to help tell and sell the story. Visual, no small text. Haikudeck.com is a possible resource that can help (disclaimer – we haven’t tried it).
- Be compelling, convincing and concise when delivering your messages.
- Present your slides with charisma and confidence. Be enthusiastic, your high energy will help win your audience over.
- Practice, practice, practice your pitch. Write out your speaker notes (but do not include them when sharing your deck). Record yourself. Ask for feedback and perfect.
- Be prepared if any technical issues come up. Have printouts of your slides when presenting in person.
- Find out ahead of time what the appropriate business attire for your meeting should be.

Level Up Moves When Presenting to Large Prime Customers

- Meet primes at tradeshows and conferences that they attend. This will improve your odds of their responding to you compared to cold calls or emails.
- Leverage your network to get referred into a company. This strategy will also lower the company’s perception of the risk in working with you if they know someone who can vouch for you.
- Don’t say you have a list of projects. Share how you fit into their strategies, government proposals and work.
- Business development professionals generally have more time to field outreach to their company than supply chain management.
- Communicate how you can scale to their manufacturing needs. Some primes will help with scaling if they are sold on the business case to work with you.
- Avoid being overly technical.
- Leave time for Q & A.



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Summary of Pitch Content by Audience

Pitch Presentation	Investors	Government	Primes
Hook			
Wow Opening Statements	X	X	X
Story			
Company Overview		X	X
Problem	X	X	X
Solution	X	X	X
Market Opportunity	X	X	X
Time to Market	X	X	X
Unique Advantages	X	X	X
Barriers to Entry		X	
Experience Related to Solution Capability			X
Cost			X
Scaling	X	X	
Product Development	X	X	
Time to Market	X	X	X
Team	X	X	X
Extended Team	X	X	
Ask/Purpose of Pitch	X	X	X
Summary		X	X
Close			
Tie Back to Wow Statements and Ask	X	X	X

Additional Space Related Resources for Working with the Government

The government wants small business ideas. Below are links to some of the most popular space related resources.

- The [State of the Space Industrial Base Report](#) that comes out of the workshop hosted by NewSpace New Mexico is a great resource to get up to date on the state of the space industrial base. Plus, there is a list of abbreviations at the end to help with learning the language used in the industry, including acronyms.
- SBIR/STTR (AFWERX/SpaceWERX) <https://www.sbir.gov/>
- Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) <https://www.diu.mil/>
- NRO Director’s Initiative (DII) <https://www.nro.gov/innovate/>
- NASA Ignite <https://sbir.nasa.gov/ignite>
- SOFWERX (USSOCOM) <https://www.sofwerx.org/>
- National Science Foundation (NSF) <https://www.nsf.gov/>



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Additional available resources:

The resources below can help with learning about new pitch opportunities, working with the government or for performing research to tailor your pitch.

- Market Analysis from Boston Analytics from the NewSpace Ignitor Program
- Small Business Association <https://www.sba.gov/>
- SAM.GOV <https://sam.gov/content/home>. [Register your business at SAM.GOV](#)
- SBIR/STTR Program <https://www.sbir.gov/>
- Veteran's Administration <https://www.va.gov/>
- Procurement Technical Assistance Centers <https://www.aptac-us.org/>
- NRO Acquisition Research Center <https://acq.westfields.net/>
- Space Systems Command Front Door <https://www.ssc.spaceforce.mil/Connect-With-Us/Space-Systems-Command-Front-Door/Space-Systems-Command-Front-Door>
- USSOCOM Vulcan <https://vulcan-sof.com/>

Additional Space Related Resources for Working With Primes and Industry

- Help the primes find you. Get registered with [SBA](#) and [GSA](#)
- Become registered on [SBA SubNet](#)
- It is a more challenging path to work with a prime after they have been awarded a contract. Use the resources in this document to find opportunities where you can be a sub to a contract at the proposal stage. Ways to connect with primes before they receive a contract award includes meeting with primes during conferences, attending government sponsored industry days, asking government customers who within industry they recommend talking to, and reading Space News.
- The [State of the Space Industrial Base Report](#) that comes out of the workshop hosted by NewSpace New Mexico is a great resource to get up to date on the state of the space industrial base. Plus, there is a list of abbreviations at the end to help with learning the language used in the industry, including acronyms.
- Market Analysis from Boston Analytics from the NewSpace Ignitor Program.
- Join the [NewSpace Alliance](#) on the NewSpace New Mexico website. The NewSpace Alliance has hundreds of members across government, industry and academia.