

Mastering the Art of the Pitch

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Summary by



InhouseVentures

Overview

In the dynamic landscape of startup investments, mastering the art of the pitch is more nuanced than merely crafting a compelling slide deck. Alan Zhu from EVP shares his insights into what makes a startup stand out in the eyes of investors. He emphasizes the importance of building a holistic investment thesis through sustained interactions, strategic business horizon planning, and precise market contextualization. This approach not only enriches the pitch but also fosters a deeper, strategic partnership with potential investors, paving the way for a successful and sustained growth trajectory.

20-Point Summary:

1. **Introduction of Speaker:** Alan Zhu, who works at EVP, a B2B software fund that invests in companies across Australia and New Zealand.
2. **Background:** Zhu has a background in investment and technology, with prior roles at Freelancer.com and Citibank.
3. **Investment Focus:** EVP manages five funds totaling about 350 million in capital and has worked with over 45 portfolio companies.
4. **Investment Strategy:** EVP is hands-on with investments, helping companies grow by providing commercial partnership and hiring support.
5. **Pitch Deck Reliance:** Founders shouldn't rely solely on their pitch decks to impress investors but should engage early in conversations.
6. **Building Investment Thesis:** Successful pitches often result from multiple interactions, not just a single presentation.
7. **Importance of Storytelling:** Knowing the business story and market before needing to raise capital is crucial.
8. **Leveraging Pitch Decks:** Use pitch decks as a tool to enhance discussions rather than the sole method of communication.

9. **Highlighting Business Opportunities:** Effective pitch decks show short, medium, and long-term opportunities.
10. **Addressing Market Size:** Founders should clearly define the addressable market and growth potential beyond current products.
11. **Understanding Market Context:** Founders must articulate where their product fits within the market and its value chain.
12. **Clarity in Market Positioning:** It's important to show how the product integrates with customer systems and the competitive landscape.
13. **Avoiding Overgeneralization:** Be precise in market sizing instead of presenting unrealistically large figures.
14. **Demonstrating Thoughtful Targeting:** Identifying and sizing the initial customer profile shows a well-thought-out strategy.
15. **Maintaining Business Momentum:** During fundraising, continue to run your business actively and share updates with potential investors.
16. **Sharing Wins:** Regularly communicate business achievements with investors to demonstrate ongoing success.
17. **Engaging Investors:** Build relationships with potential investors through regular, meaningful communication.
18. **Use of Multiple Data Points:** Collect and utilize various data points on the business to build a comprehensive investment case.
19. **Strategic Pitching:** Frame the business strategy in terms of clear, actionable horizons to align with investor interests.
20. **Precision in Messaging:** Accurately depict the business context and operational specifics in communications with investors.