



Pitching Hacks

## **Premise**

- To get good terms, you need multiple offers
- To get multiple offers, you need to tell a good story to several investors at the same time
- Investors invest in stories, not businesses

## **What you don't need**

- Business plan (*nobody reads it*)
- Executive summary (*nobody reads it*)
- NDA (*no one will sign it*)

## **What you need (in order of importance)**

- Introduction (*Typically an entrepreneur or investor*)
- High-concept pitch (*3 words: "Flickr of video!"*)
- Elevator Pitch (*100 words: "The team is great, it's a huge market, we have traction, and so-and-so loves us."*)
- 10-slide deck (*20 minute pitch*)
- Getting past no (*Read [bit.ly/pmarca](http://bit.ly/pmarca)*)

## **Learn more**

- [venturehacks.com/pitching](http://venturehacks.com/pitching)

Subject: Introducing Ning to Blue  
Shirt Capital [**A useful subject  
line!**]

Hi Steve,

Thanks for offering to introduce  
us to Blue Shirt Capital.

[**Reiterating the social proof of  
the introducer.**] I've attached a  
short presentation about our  
company, Ning. [**I attached a  
deck.**]

Briefly, Ning lets you create your  
own social network for anything.  
For free. In 2 minutes. [**What's  
the high concept pitch? What does  
the product help the customer do?  
Who is the customer?**] It's as easy  
as starting a blog. [**What's the  
metaphor?**] Try it at: [http://  
ning.com](http://ning.com) [**Link to the product,  
screencast, or screenshots.**]

We built Ning to unlock the great  
ideas from people all over the  
world who want to use this amazing  
medium in their lives. [**What's the  
big problem or opportunity?**]

We have over 115,000 user-created  
networks, and our page views are  
growing 10% per week. [**Traction.**]  
We previously raised \$44M from  
Legg Mason and others, including  
myself. [**More traction and social  
proof.**]

Before Ning, I started Netscape  
(acquired by AOL for \$4.2B) and  
Opsware (acquired by HP for  
\$1.6B). [**Team's past successes.**]

Blue Shirt's investments in  
companies like Extensive  
Enterprises tell me that they  
could be a great partner for Ning.  
[**Why are you interested in this  
investor?**] We're starting meetings  
with investors next week, and I  
would love to show Blue Shirt what  
we're building at Ning. [**Call to  
action and subtle scarcity.**]

Best,

Marc Andreessen  
[xyz@ning.com](mailto:xyz@ning.com)  
415.555.1212 [**Contact information  
— how thoughtful.**]



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