

Finding and Securing a Sponsor for your corporate event

A good amount of time and effort will be required to secure appropriate sponsorship for your meeting or corporate event. This being the case, it is important to start your planning process early. Beginning this process as much as 18 months in advance of a planned meeting date is not unrealistic. You may want to consider aligning potential sponsorships with your corporate vision, values, strategy, brand promise and reputation.

Where to look for sponsorship -

Your strongest prospects are going to be the people you do business with. When you are ready to make contact do so by going through the person who manages your vendor account.

Once they have put you in touch with the person within their organization to approach, focus first on building a relationship. Become a friend before asking for funding. Have a plan in place for getting to know your prospective sponsor. In this plan you should clearly state what you have to offer, how the sponsorship will be implemented and what is in it for the sponsor.

Invite sponsorship through your marketing and promotion efforts and point out the benefits of being a sponsor. There are often companies out there that are eager to do business with either your organization or with your attendees and would like to establish a presence at your event.

There are three key areas to focus on when evaluating potential sponsorship. The first area is being in agreement on all aspects of the sponsorship. The second area is implementing the sponsorship and the third and final area is measuring satisfaction and performance.

Reaching Agreement

Get to know your potential sponsor.

Develop an understanding of your prospective sponsor's business goals and primary audience – what they are looking for.

All partners involved should be clear about objectives, roles and expectations.

A contract should be drawn up allowing ample time to deliver on all promises.

Focus your efforts on desired outcomes and event audience needs and benefits.

Implementation

Develop an audience-centric sponsorship policy with your sponsor's input.

Develop an action plan for fulfilling all obligations.

Follow a clearly defined risk management policy.

Encourage your sponsor to work closely with your event organizing committee.

Offer visibility in advertisements, printed material and press releases. Incorporate your sponsor's logo into promotional material to their satisfaction

Look for ways to leverage your sponsor's name and association with your organization.

Provide your sponsor with regular updates.
Spend quality time with your sponsor.

Measurement

Measure what matters most to your sponsor and their key stakeholders.

Ask your sponsor if they were pleased with the value they received.

Thank your sponsor both personally and publicly (at the event) for their contribution.

Produce a summary report, measuring and evaluating results against plan.

Share feedback from attendees, employees and customers.

Recognize important individual and team contributions.

When managed well a fully integrated corporate sponsorship can be beneficial to all parties involved. Including your attendees and can contribute to the success of your event.

©2009 Yvon Douran