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Sponsorship

What makes one effective?

1. The property must be good for both the curling club and the sponsor.
2. There must be consideration in the following areas:
 - Sponsor awareness
 - Hospitality opportunities for the sponsor
 - The opportunity for the sponsor to make money
3. We have researched the competition
4. Media opportunities are included
5. Audience demographics are attached
6. Normal and standard benefits to sponsor are part and parcel – title, tickets, signage
7. Specialized benefits – access to celebrities, etc.
8. We have researched the prospective sponsor
9. We have identified the corporate ‘hot buttons’
10. We are conscious of the sponsor’s fiscal year and budget (be flexible on payment)
11. We listen to and then tailor our proposal to meet their corporate goals and marketing objectives
12. Past successes and failures have been discussed

Developing a Proposal that Sells

The same principles apply whether you are selling a \$1,000 sponsorship of a \$200,000 one. The only difference is the higher up the mountain you climb, the better your preparation must be. Be professional in everything you do.

What are sponsors looking for in a proposal?

- Ability to address an audience or customers directly
 - Timing of the event
 - Sub-events (what goes on around the main event)
 - Sampling and coupons (i.e. tasting opportunities)
 - Cross promotions (involving other sponsors)
- Public Relations Opportunities
 - Is there a charitable aspect
 - Political possibilities
- Exposure
 - On site signage
 - Television
 - Radio
 - Print coverage (editorial and advertising)
- Hospitality
 - Opportunity to entertain clients
 - Exclusive area

- Sharing hospitality with others
- Creative Opportunities
 - Get their advertising agencies involved
 - Adapt to sponsors' needs (sponsor is looking for something unique/extraordinary)

At your meeting, be specific, brief, yet thorough

- Formal marketing brochure should not be mailed (leave it behind following a meeting)
- Major Points Of Interest
- Avoid too much clutter
- Be specific as to what is expected of sponsor
- Be specific as to what you want out of the sponsorship
- Acknowledge the needs of the sponsor
- Look for measurable results (goodwill just will not cut it anymore)
- Be realistic as to value of the property and the amount of the rights fee
- Do not overstate the value of the event/program
- Allow adequate lead-time
- Highlight your strengths (what you have to sell)
 - Is it TV?
 - Is it crowds (attendance)
 - Is it image?
 - Is it personnel?
 - Is it print media coverage (impressions)?

Credibility of the Proposal

- Be honest (use documented figures)
- Do not promise anything you can not deliver
- Use 3rd person approach to 'estimates' (i.e. the city estimated attendance at 10,000)
- Do not oversell
- Use 'testimonial' from happy sponsors
- Demographics from third party
- Recognize your own weaknesses

Be Able to Produce

- Sponsors look for operational capability
- Can you and your staff and volunteers deliver the event/program?
- What is your track record?
- Fulfill your end of the partnership

Successful Targeting and Closing

Purpose of the proposal is to get you through the door and the most effective proposals

- Are on letterhead
- Three pages or less
- Identifies how the project benefits the sponsor
- Includes all supporting documentation as addendum
- Allows lots of lead time (6-12 months)

Do Not Send Generic Proposals

- Be specific to the sponsor
- Spell out key benefits to the sponsor
- Do not use “bullet” format. Explain each benefit briefly - in order of priority. For example:
 - a) Promotional rights (logo’s, trademarks) only if your logo is marketable
 - b) Merchandising rights
 - c) Category exclusivity (keep it narrow)
 - d) Signage – primary or secondary
 - e) Advertising exposure and media extensions
 - f) Cross-promotions with co-sponsors (title sponsor brings credibility to secondary sponsors)
 - g) Include the fee (because it lets them know what ballpark they are in)
 - h) Include a deadline for the offer
 - i) The close: to get you in the door “Please consider this proposal a starting point for discussions”
 - j) Call for action – indicate you will be calling them to follow-up. Do not invite them to call you!
 - k) Addendum:
 - Who you are. What you do. Demographics.
 - The details, audience buying habits (if it fits the sponsor).
 - Sponsor testimonials (not a whole page, just a quote).
 - Photos, clippings which show sponsor identification.
 - l) Never include your budget (it encourages sponsor to delete items, quibble about costs)
 - m) Do not send a video. Save it for your meeting.

At the Meeting

- Research corporate marketing objectives (if you can)
- Review the benefits to the sponsor
- Retailer incentives
- Consumer sales
- Client entertainment opportunities
- Trade extensions/sales force motivators
- Exclusivity in product category
- Media leverage
- Cross promotions with other sponsors
- Sampling, tasting, coupon opportunities
- Ask them what they want from the sponsorship (you have to know)
- Provide added value
- Leave the meeting with sufficient information to allow you to come back with a more detailed proposal.

The Contract

- You negotiate the contract
- Provide for a renewal clause (30-60 days)
- Define product category as finely as possible (cameras not film)
- Fees: get at least 60% on signing
- Do not pay for sponsor expenses (banners)
- Co-sponsor approval – that is your decision. Do not let them have a say who you can associate with.

Convincing Sponsors to Return

There are three keys to getting sponsors to renew: **DELIVER – DELIVER – DELIVER!**

- Deliver what you promise and your ability to get sponsors to renew is greatly enhanced.
- Post Event Report:
 - 30-60 days if you have the numbers
 - How do we improve what was done?
 - What can we do differently?
 - Identify new initiatives
 - Photos of signage
 - Attendance figures
 - Media exposure (number of impressions, photos)
 - Letters of appreciation
 - Photos with celebrities
- Developing your new Proposal:
 - What new components should you offer?
 - More hospitality
 - More tickets for events
 - More cross-promotions with other sponsors
 - More employee involvement