

Developing Effective Sponsorship Programs

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There are two key parties when it comes to sponsorships: the non-profit organization seeking to sell them and the for-profit businesses considering which one(s) in which to place their funds. The better the non-profit understands the needs of the business it is selling to, the more likely will be the opportunities for a successful and effective sponsorship sale.

In this community alone, but also across the nation, the number of organizations looking for sponsorships has grown tremendously. This makes how your non-profit seeks out sponsorships critical; after all, if you are targeting a business for a donation, it's most definite that they have already been hit on for those dollars at least 10 times. How can you make your offering and opportunity different than the others?

- **Think of the for-profit business needs, not your organization's dollar needs.** Who is their audience and how can your sponsorship help reach them?
- **Determine value-added benefits for sponsorships.** Offering to place your sponsor's banner at an event is just not enough. Do you have a database you'd allow them to utilize, through a third-party mail house (so that confidentiality is not broken), or can you place company materials at the event or at place-settings at a luncheon or dinner?
- **Think of unique opportunities.** If you are developing radio or television public service announcements or purchasing ads in a newspaper, instead of just a logo, could you have your sponsor's CEO be the spokesperson?

Think like the business you are seeking dollars from and determine their potential needs – not yours – prior to pitching them a sponsorship. You can be much more effective for both your time and the interest by the business.