

## Sourcing Sponsorship

Potential partners may already be within your community. Reach out to current and past members and ask them if they know of anyone who may be interested in becoming a partner?

If you can't find anyone that way, do some research into your local community. What kind of businesses have sponsored you in the past, or what kind of businesses are sponsoring other sports? Have a look around at Clubs, pubs, physios, real estate agents, local franchises and businesses.

Once you have identified some potential businesses to target, again, reach back into your community. Does anyone know someone who works there? If not, literally knocking on the door and leaving a handwritten note and a proposal can work a treat. For cuteness factor, take in a couple of your youngest players and ask them to write the note. It is hard not to forget little kids walking in the door....

Once you have a hit list of businesses to contact, you need to create an initial sponsorship proposal that introduces your Club/Association. This should include:

### **Your Unique Selling Point (USP)**

- Why would a business choose your Club or Association over another, or another sport to partner with?
- What do you stand for? What are your values and purpose and can you articulate these?
- What is your Why?
- Why are you looking for support? What will the sponsorship assist you to achieve? (eg provide training shirts, or send a team to State Titles)

### **What is the community reach of your Club/ Association?**

- How many members do you have?
- How many emails on your database?
- How many followers on your social media accounts?
- Include screen shots of your website – do you know how many visits it has?
- Is there signage opportunities at your courts? If so, how many people would see the sign per week?
- Are you often featured in the local media?

Collate all of this data to show a potential sponsor how many members of the community they will be exposed to if they partner with you.

## How long is the partnership you are offering?

Hint – it is best to always try to ask partners to agree to a two or more year deal. It is expensive and takes a lot of time to start again every year, especially if you need to change logos on clothing and equipment. You could suggest a price for year 1, 2 and then again for year 3. These could be scaled up or down each year.

## What types of sponsorships can you offer or do you need?

- Are you after a naming rights partner? This is generally a partner who plays a significant amount of money and your Club/Association then incorporates their name into yours. (think the QBE Swifts Academy)
- Could you find partners for your training shirts?
- Could someone sponsor your team balls, bibs or kit bags? The Local Medical Centre logo on all of these?
- Could you have someone sponsor your umpires? Rockies Umpires brought to you by the Local Optometrist?
- You could have a Player of the Week brought to you by ????
- Can someone be the sponsor of your Junior or Senior rep programs or teams? The Local Car Dealer Junior Reps
- Could a business partner a particular competition? The Local Real Estate Spring Comp?

## How will you reward a sponsor? If they give you money, what will you give them in return?

- Where and when will you display their logo and acknowledge their support?
- How often will you do this? Eg logo in club newsletter which goes out to XXXX members 4 times per year
- How can you promote their services to your members and help them get a return for their investment into you?
- If you are offering them partnership of a particular team or competition, when and where is that team or competition promoted, advertised, celebrated and acknowledged?

## Factors that create sponsorship value

Some of the components that come into play when seeking to value sponsorship packages:

- What are sponsors willing to pay?
- How big is your Association/Club's audience? (Including participants in club activities, followers on social media, club databases, spectators, users of the club facilities, website visitors, email newsletter subscribers and the local/broader community.)
- What is your Association/club's ability to engage with its audience? (For example, game day announcements, newsletters, posters, brochures, flyers, signage, media releases, websites, email newsletters, social media, podcasts, YouTube and live streaming)

- What is its ability to influence the behaviour of the audience?
- How do sponsors value the sponsorship and its inclusions? (Inclusions as well as simple signage can also include additional opportunities such as hosting client entertainment/hospitality or staff parties/social events. This allows for the business to sponsor with money from additional budgets, not just the marketing budget)

### Ways to create value for sponsors online

As with your club's website and email newsletter, your club's social media is another fantastic way to promote your sponsors. Similarly, to your club's website and email newsletter you are able to use the analytics of popular applications such as Twitter and Facebook to measure the 'click through rates' from your social media to your sponsor's website or social media.

The same "call to action" rules apply in social media as they do for your website and email newsletter. Consider:

- Sponsors Logos on Website
- Sponsors advertisement with call to action on Website, for example "click here for a free trial".
- Weekly/Monthly Sponsor Spotlight on Facebook/Instagram (rotating through season)
- Sponsors Logos on Facebook Cover Image
- Sponsors Logos on any Email Communication to members
- Sponsors Player of the Week / Month
- Sponsors Volunteer Player of the Week/Month
- Sponsors Umpire Player of the Week/Month
- Tagging Sponsors in any of the above

### Other ways to create value for sponsors

- Sponsors Logos on Player / Supporter Merchandise
- Sponsors Logos on Association/Club Tents/Shelters
- Match Ball Sponsors
- Umbrella Sponsors
- Water Bottle Sponsors
- Thank you to our Sponsors Signage at Clubhouse
- Inviting Sponsors to Presentations / Special Events

### How do you set a price?

Ring around other Clubs, Associations or sports who have sponsors and ask them what they receive? Most would be happy to share this with you.

Hint – if this is the first time a business is receiving a proposal from you, don't put the price in but ask them to get in touch for more information. You can suggest this by letting them know that you want to create a partnership and you want to include benefits and pricing that suits their needs and budget.

### What should the proposal look like?

The initial proposal should be as professional as possible. Use powerpoint or canva if someone in the Club or community is skilled in either of these. Use lots of photos (a picture tells a thousand words) that demonstrate the type of Club/ Association you are and the experiences you offer for your members. Make it short and succinct. Most small businesses will only have a couple of minutes to read through, so you want to grab their attention from the beginning.

Always finish with your contact details, and asking for an opportunity to further discuss the opportunity in person so that you can ensure a true partnership is created. Proposals could also contain the following:

- Photos and Contact Details of the Association/Club
- Association/Club Background and History
- Membership, numbers and details
- Audience and the ability for the Association/club to communicate with these groups.
- Traditional and Social media details and audience numbers
- The Players
- Social and Fundraising events
- Future plans and goals
- President's Message
- Sponsorship options. (For example Gold, Silver, Bronze etc)

### Using Video to Enhance Your Sponsorship Proposal

With today's technology it is now very easy to create simple but high quality videos by using a smart phone. Video is an extremely engaging and emotive form of communication and a very effective way to invite new sponsors to your Association/club.

Why not put together a video that highlights your Association or club, its benefits, shows what the funds will be used for and most importantly includes a personal invitation to become part of the Association or club.

### The Importance of Documenting Your Sponsorship Agreement

It is important to document your sponsorship agreement clearly which is to the benefit of both your Association or club and the new sponsor. By documenting the agreement both parties are clear about their responsibilities and it makes it easier for Associations or clubs to fulfil their promises.