

INTRODUCTION: THE POWER OF SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship is a very big business in Canada. The 2013 Canadian Sponsorship Landscape Study estimates that sponsors invested \$1.57 billion in this form of marketing in 2012 with each sponsor that participated in the survey sponsoring, on average, 42 properties (recipients of sponsorships).

Every kind of business incorporates sponsorship in its marketing strategy. Huge corporations and small neighborhood businesses offer every product and service you can think of and they invest in everything – professional and amateur sports, fairs and festivals, charities and causes, municipal programs and facilities, the arts, education and environmental care.

With so much money and effort in the game, you might think that sponsorship is a successful, clear-cut endeavour. But it is not. Every year, many sponsors are disappointed in relationships, implementation and investment outcomes. And every year, properties overlook what they have to offer, what their audience, members or supporters are worth, and what their sponsors and potential sponsors really need.

The “secret” to a successful sponsorship isn’t really a secret at all. It is something that would be evident if we took a moment to think about it – yet for some reason, most do not pause for that moment of thought when we approach our sponsorship strategy. Here it is in four simple sentences:

- > Find out where your prospective sponsors hurt (i.e., what holds them back from greater success).
- > Offer a customized solution at a fair market price.
- > Go above and beyond to deliver.
- > Repeat.

If that sounds a lot like the sales process – it is! Is sponsorship an important part of your revenue mix? Could it become important if you gave it more effort? You will achieve far better, longer-lasting results by selling solutions rather than begging for support. And the sponsorships you create when you take this approach will bring you not only more revenue, but more media coverage, more public awareness and more people – all to fuel your mission and achieve your own goals.

So –

- > If you are ready to stop asking humbly for “support” and calling it “sponsorship”
- > If you are willing to sell your sponsors specific benefits rather than giving them “the satisfaction of helping our good work”
- > If you are willing to throw away your standardized gold, silver and bronze packages
- > And above all, if you are ready to listen deeply and consistently to your sponsors,

then you are ready for the **Reality Check** that will set you on the path to a transformed sponsorship program.

Let’s get started!





INVENTORY AND VALUATION



REALITY CHECK

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WHEN THE PEOPLE ON YOUR TEAM talk about sponsorship, what do the conversations sound like?

“We have nothing to name – no buildings, no interesting equipment, no performances. Poor us! What could we ever offer a sponsor?”

Or –

“Once we find a company that wants its name on our building, our sponsorship job is done.”

Wrong both times! Every property, no matter how small, has assets. Even a showy, new building is just one asset among many that might be of interest to a sponsor. In this section, you will learn how to set aside your notions about what your property can or cannot offer, and instead identify dozens of opportunities with sales potential. Then you'll learn how to set an objective value on every asset, using formulas and valuations based on the experience of hundreds of corporate sponsors and sponsorship selling properties.

With that information in hand, you will be ready to sell – not ask for – the partnership your property deserves from the sponsors you can help most effectively. Doesn't that sound better than begging for a little help with the great work you do?

REALITY CHECK – EVERY PROPERTY HAS SOMETHING TO SELL.



Consider this –

“Assets we’ve identified are our Christmas gift catalog, the annual 30-hour famine, and our youth ambassadors program. The last two Christmases, VISA has sponsored the goats in our online Christmas gift catalog.” – Neil Parekh, World Vision

REALITY CHECK

Sponsoring goats? Yes! **Every** property has something to sell!

“We are on a busy intersection in downtown Calgary. Our marquee has value. One of our sponsors was an engineering firm with a low profile. They were growing rapidly, yet they couldn’t get known. They wanted their name “on something” to strengthen their brand recognition. Now, they’ve been a series sponsor for six years with their name on our marquee, and it’s really built their profile. It made people ask, “Who’s that?” – Suzanne Mott, Vertigo Theatre

Vertigo Theatre could have limited its sponsorship vision to naming its building and its performance season. Instead, Suzanne worked with professional sponsorship counsel to identify additional high-value assets.

Are you convinced now? Good. Let’s get down to work on your inventory.