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**Sponsorship**

**Proposal**

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# About

Sponsorship is a key component to the financial success and viability of sports clubs in Australia-- those that do it well usually become the envy of many.

Far too often we see the demise of Sponsorship Programs in sporting organizations because their focus is on how many sponsors and how much money they can get, but, there is no plan to offer the sponsor “real benefits” and no plan to develop a genuine relationship with the sponsor.

How often do we hear a sponsor say “we see them once a year when they either want our money or our product”?

Sponsorship is a business arrangement between two parties, bringing value to both parties based on a win-win philosophy, however, too many clubs still see sponsorship as a donation.

Clubs serious about sponsorship need to form a Sponsorship Committee and develop a Sponsorship Plan which covers all sponsors your club currently has and a list of “targeted sponsors” for the future.

Key elements to a Sponsorship Plan are:

1. Benefits to the sponsorship partner.
2. List of sponsorship properties around and within your club.
3. Sponsorship strategies for each sponsor, plus, an action plan with time frames.
4. Appoint a liaison officer from your club for each sponsor.
5. Create “social program” for each sponsor.
6. Create “feedback format” for your sponsor to assess your club’s commitment to your “promises”.
7. Written sponsorship proposal which should be both professionally produced and printed.
8. A “conflict register” to ensure you don’t have 2 or more of the same sponsors, e.g. real estate, car dealership, brewery, supermarket etc.

To assist your club in creating a Sponsorship Plan we will expand the 8 key elements above with some concepts and ideas your club can use, plus provide some templates or resources you can refer to.

# BENEFITS TO THE SPONSORSHIP PARTNER

These benefits must be discussed in full by the Sponsorship Committee with the focus on “real benefits” to the sponsor clearly set out in your Sponsorship Proposal, these must be things your club can deliver on -- don’t make promises you cannot keep or meet.

There are a range of items you may be able to offer such as:

* signage in your club rooms
* signage in your club grounds
* advertisement in your club handbook
* signage on your membership cards
* signage or advertisement in your newsletter
* signage or advertisement on your website
* fliers on tables in your club rooms
* signage on drink coasters
* advertisement on scoreboards
* sponsor flags around greens
* signage on table clothes in your club rooms
* signage on plastic display cards on tables
* opportunity to display product on tournament days
* sponsor logos on uniforms

No doubt your club can think of many more relevant to your area/club.

# LIST OF SPONSORSHIP PROPERTIES:

Firstly, identify a list of possible sponsorship areas within and around your club so that you can maximize not only your sponsorship opportunities for your club, but also sponsorship exposure for your sponsors.

Many of these opportunities are listed above, such as signage, advertisements, flags, fliers, product display, uniforms, however there will be many others that may be relevant to your club and/or your area.

Once you have compiled your list you need to review it and categories the value of the sponsorship in dollar terms, starting from the top and working downwards e.g., naming rights of your club would be worth more than advertisement on your scoreboard.

There are 3 major types of sponsorship currently in the market, they are “cash, product and commission ” so you need to identify what your club wishes from each sponsor and where the sponsorship should fit in your overall plan e.g. product could be so many kegs of beer a year, cash to give out as prize money for tournaments, commission from sponsors based on the amount of product your members purchase from them.

# SPONSORSHIP STRATEGIES.

When creating strategies for your Sponsorship Plan ensure you have specific “actions” so that this can be used as a checklist for each sponsor on an individual basis.

Do not include fundraising, grants and raffles as part of your “sponsorship strategic plan”, these are separate items which contribute to your club’s financial viability; however, many clubs lump them all together and therefore lose focus to build relationships with their sponsors. An example of a Strategic Plan is included in this manual.

# 5. LIAISON OFFICER:

Once you have secured a sponsor ensure you appoint a member of your club to look after that particular sponsor, and each sponsor should have a different member, or Liaison Officer as some clubs call them.

The importance of one sponsor one person should not be underestimated and his or her role should be to contact the sponsor in person on a regular basis, ideally at least once a month, more frequently is even better.

Regular contact with sponsors will allow your club to build a relationship, provide feedback for both parties and enhance the chance of your club having them renew their sponsorship.

# 6. SOCIAL PROGRAM:

Many sponsors look for the opportunity to get involved socially in your club, this allows them a chance to promote their company or product on a face-to-face basis with your members.

There are many ways your club can do this for your sponsor, not just invite them to a tournament prize giving to say a few words and give them a beer.

Many clubs have a major social night, maybe Thursday or Friday so have your Liaison Officer invite your sponsor into your club for a drink, on a regular basis, on one of these nights.

Many sponsors would like the opportunity for their staff to either play in a Business House competition, or a twilight evening for non-bowlers, corporate evening or” have a go night”.

Many sponsors have occasions for their company/staff to hire a venue for a product launch or social event -- offer your club premises for free and make a profit from food and beverage consumed during the event.

# 7. FEEDBACK FORMAT:

In your Sponsorship Plan include a cluster of opportunities for “feedback” for both parties such as:

* members using their Membership Card to identify them when purchasing
* sponsor to keep register of large purchases e.g., car, real estate, whiteware
* create a “receipts box” in your club, have monthly or annual draw for prize
* get members permission (Privacy Act) to forward names addresses to sponsor
* survey your members “buying power” then approach sponsors with opportunities

# 8. SPONSORSHIP PROPOSAL:

This is a critical factor to the success of securing sponsorship deals, as the quality of presentation and content must be very professional for your club’s presentation to stand out from other organizations presenting to the same sponsor.

Key elements of a good proposal are:

* Professionally printed, color, photo’s
* Maximum of 10 pages as to long, not read
* Short, factual, and punchy
* Section one, about your club
* Section two, type of Sponsorship being offered
* Section three, benefits to sponsor
* Section four tournament program, opportunities for exposure
* Section five, club commitment based on “buying power” of club members
* Section six, sponsorship opportunity
* Section seven, actual cost/product/ commission club is seeking

PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL SHOULD BE DONE IN PERSON, NOT BY POST AND MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO PRESENT -- DON’T JUST WALK IN OFF THE STREET.

# 9. CONFLICT REGISTER:

The thing that sponsors hate the most is to sign an agreement with a club on the understanding they are the only product sponsor e.g. real estate, only to find out later your club has 2 or more real estate sponsors.

When creating your Sponsorship Plan give due diligence to drawing up a register of all your sponsors to avoid “conflict of sponsors”. The list should be based on your dollar value list showing sponsors as perhaps, gold, silver, bronze as sometimes it is difficult not to have 2 services or products on things such as scoreboards.