Checklist for attracting sponsors

DIALOGPLUS

Development of a coherent concept

Start looking for sponsors well in advance! Large companies usually decide on their sponsorship budget once a year. You should therefore allow a year or more for project planning and sponsor enquiries.

Draw up a financial plan: What contribution will you make yourself? What percentage should a sponsor cover?

What exactly should be sponsored? Is it a specific project or the organisation itself?

Do you need money, material resources or support in the form of a service?

What makes your project special?

What marketing opportunities does your project offer?

What special offer can you make to the sponsor? What can they only get from you?

How many sponsors are you looking for? Is there a hierarchy (main sponsor, co-sponsor, media partner, etc.)?

Is there a well-known personality you can recruit as a patron?

What is the reach of your idea (local, regional, national)?

What is the scope of the sponsorship (days, months, years)?

Is the desired sponsorship realistic?

Can you provide sponsors with appropriate support (contact persons, flexibility, smooth implementation of the project)?

2. Who is the right sponsor?

- Which company is right for your project?
- Which companies are already involved in similar projects?
- Which companies have an affinity with the theme of the event?
- Does the sponsor's mission statement fit with your own philosophy?
- Does the company fit the scope (local, regional, national)?
- Research potential companies: Why is your project particularly suitable for this sponsor?
- Do the various sponsors fit together? Avoid acquiring competing companies!

3. Presentation to potential sponsors

- Bear in mind that this is a business contact between equals: you want support and offer publicity in return!
- Utilise existing contacts (door openers, patrons, colleagues).
- Seek personal contact. Especially in larger companies, it is worthwhile to know the relevant contact persons.
- Use the language of the company as a guide. Explain technical terms.
- A sponsorship request is like a job application! Use a short cover letter tailored to the company. Create a professional application:
- Description of the idea (Who? What? Where? How? Why?).
- Presentation of the project.
- History of the event (audience, media coverage, etc.).
- Introduction to the organisation/event organiser.
- Press / Media activities of the organisation.
- Future projects.
- Target groups (realistic expected audience size and structure).
- List of required sponsorship contributions (cash, goods, services) and desired financial framework.
- Contact persons in your organisation.
- Announce in your letter that you will follow up, and then do so.

3. Presentation to potential sponsors

Make the consideration you provide recognisable to the sponsor. Name (possible) considerations:

- Emphasis on an experience-oriented advertising strategy: the sponsor stands out.
- Emphasise the publicity generated by your project.
- Offer of ‘side events’.
- Exclusive sponsor events (for customers, guests and employees).
- Logo placements.
- Mention of your organisation in the sponsor's corporate communications.
- Can stakeholders in your organisation use it for promotional activities?
- Can the sponsor run a promotion with you?
- What marketing opportunities are available to the sponsor?
- Guarantee the sponsor industry exclusivity.

4. During the sponsorship

- Comply with sponsorship agreements.
- Designate a direct and permanently available contact person.
- Maintain regular contact with the sponsor. Keep them informed about the current status and any changes.
- Invite them to a sponsors' evening – this will help the sponsors get to know each other and show your appreciation for them.
- Sign a written sponsorship agreement!

5. During the event

- Ensure ongoing sponsor support.
- Emphasise the special nature of the event.
- Preferential treatment for sponsors: personal invitations, places of honour, special events, parking spaces, etc.
- Mention the sponsors by name in your opening speech or during announcements and thank them.

6. After sponsorship

- Use a debriefing to maintain contact and review the event with the sponsor.
- Inform the sponsor about the next project.
- Document the measures implemented.
- Particularly for longer-term projects, a documentation folder (audience figures, press mentions, etc.) serves as a strong argument for further or future sponsorship.
- Put together a press overview for the sponsor (this can also be used for future projects).
- Hold a debriefing with your employees – what can be improved?