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What to Include in Your Event Sponsorship Package?

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Contacting and confirming sponsorships for your event can be one of the most nerve-racking steps in the event planning process, but being well prepared, will alleviate a lot of the stress.

The **Sponsorship Package** (or Sponsor & Exhibitor Package) is your “pitch” to potential supporters. Don't send this out in a hurry – review and update this document as needed every year. It is important to create an attractive, well-branded, and straight to the point document. Your potential sponsors do not have time to be reading lengthy documents.

Key elements that should be included in your sponsorship package:

1. Introduction: Who you are and what you want.

Why are you organizing this event?

Who will be in attendance?

Who has attended in the past (update with data from other years)?

Who is your target audience?

How big is the event?

Which sponsors have supported in previous years?

Why do you need sponsors? What will their contributions help you to achieve at the event?

2. What is in it for them?

Be very clear on why you think this event is worth their time and money. Here is where you should personalize your email message to sponsors. Do your research about the company and their marketing objectives. Find out which other events they support and customize your message to meet their needs. Make it easy for them to invest in you by taking the time to understand what they are looking for and how they can benefit.

Include a section about the value for sponsors (e.g. access to potential new customers, stronger relationships with membership, additional sales, etc.)

3. What can you offer?

Be specific. For larger events, you can choose to work with a potential sponsor to create a Custom Sponsorship Proposal based on their specific needs. For smaller events, create sponsorship levels and opportunities that can accommodate various budgets and needs. These sponsorship levels should not be taken lightly and make it known that you are flexible and willing to discuss and modify the benefits. Sponsors need to know that you are willing to make this work for them.

Be creative. What can you offer that they can't get elsewhere?

Sponsorship is seen as a marketing tool and the return must be worth the investment. Having their logo on your signage and on the website should not be the focus. How can you provide ROI?

Do some research and find out what similar associations, groups, and events are offering to their supporters and use this info to benchmark your offering against other options a potential sponsor has in the marketplace.

4. Include a call to action

You can choose to include the registration form in the sponsorship package to encourage them to confirm their support 'on the spot' or you can ask them to contact your office to discuss the final details.

Always include your contact information. Who should they contact if they have questions? This information needs to be front and center.

Once the package is ready for distribution, send it out by email before you call. Cold calling is not the best approach. Give them time to review the package, share it with their colleagues, and reflect on the opportunity before you call them. Once the information has been provided, call and/or email to follow up. Even though they may be interested in your event, your information could get lost in the shuffle, so follow up more than once.

Give your potential sponsors enough time to include support for your event in their annual budget. The longer you wait, the less funds they will have available to support your cause.

One thing is for sure, getting sponsorship for conferences and events has become more difficult as sponsors have many more options than they did even just a few years ago. It is important to find a way to stand out from the others.

If you've done a good job, your sponsors will confirm and your event will be a success – but don't stop there.

Offer preferred treatment throughout the whole event and invite them back with a multi-year agreement if possible.

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