

FUNDRAISING SMARTS

FOR YOUR GOOD SPORTS CLUB

PART 3

PARTNERSHIPS AND SPONSORSHIP



INSPIRING A HEALTHIER SPORTING NATION

PART 3

PARTNERSHIPS AND SPONSORSHIP

Australian corporations are generous with their charitable giving. They are always looking for organisations that reflect their corporate values, help them reach new audiences, or show they are supporting the community.

If your community sports club or project is a good match, you can unlock significant amounts of funding.



COVID-19 and Corporate Giving in Australia

Corporate philanthropy in Australia has been growing steadily over the last five years.

But, total giving is estimated to fall by 7.1% in 2020, and fall a further 11.9% in 2021.

The positive news is that the proportion of profits given tends to rise during tough times.

Source: Where to from here? The outlook for philanthropy during COVID-19, John McLeod, April 2020

WHAT DOES 'CORPORATE' MEAN, EXACTLY?

When we say 'corporate' with regards to developing corporate partnerships we mean any commercial enterprise that could be a:

- publicly listed corporation (such as Unilever)
- private company (such as PWC)
- small to medium enterprise or SME (such as Fitness First)
- brands (such as Apple iTunes)
- company foundation (such as the Vodafone Foundation).



WHY DO CORPORATES GIVE?

For 'profit' – some corporate giving is market-focused. It helps build the corporation's brand through sponsorship, promotions and marketing.

For 'purpose' – other corporates choose to donate money – or employee time – to organisations that match their values.

Depending on what you're fundraising for, your club can approach corporates who give for either reason, or both.

Consumers are 30% more likely to try a product or service from a purpose-driven company and 50% more likely to switch brands from one they typically buy.

Source: 2018 Porter Novelli / Cone Purpose Premium Index



WHY DO CORPORATES PARTNER WITH CLUBS?

A partnership with a community sports club can help a corporate:

- Build trust in their company (drive word of mouth)
- Display corporate social responsibility (to show they are an active member of the local community)
- Emotionally connect with customers (especially by partnering with clubs that have a strong cause)
- Provide emotive content and communications (including social media) for fan engagement
- Motivate and inspire their staff (and improve productivity and reduce turnover)
- Reach or provide access to new customer segments or markets.

Corporates partner with larger groups (such as a whole network of clubs) in order to:

- Leverage the clubs' expertise
- Increase sales (when the partnership is advertised) or share price
- Build their brand (awareness, perceptions, differentiation, values).

Corporate partners will all have individual motivations, so you can't use a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, you will need to find out what each corporate's key partnership focus is, then think about how your club could help deliver it.



PARTNER VALUE CLUB



64% of people agree that companies have a trust-building mandate that extends beyond the business and includes localised strategies.

Source: 2018 Edelman Trust Barometer

HOW TO CHOOSE WHICH COMPANIES TO APPROACH

Start by making a list of all the companies you could (or should) approach. Make the list as long as possible by thinking about:

- relationships your club already has
- previous major cash supporters
- other clubs' sponsors (or their competitors)
- corporates who are a good fit with your club's brand, values or cause, or have a similar target market
- industries in your local area
- anything else you can think of.

Once you have your long list, filter it down to create a short list of the most relevant companies.

Do this whole process regularly, and often, to make sure you keep approaching new companies.

GET STARTED BY

Getting the right people around the table to discuss and decide on:

1. Your club's main objectives for developing corporate partnerships
2. Your goals, needs and aspirations for corporate partnerships for your club
3. What assets your club has to develop partnerships and sponsorships
4. What your pipeline process is going to be and how you will record this.

Then, recruit a working group to develop a list of prospects and decide who will be responsible for conversion.

HOW TO GET YOUR FOOT IN THE DOOR

Almost every partnership or a sponsorship starts with a meeting. Here's how to get in the door:

- **Find out the right person to talk to at the company.** Ask people in your network, or search on LinkedIn. They could be the CEO (for a strategic partnership), the marketing manager (for brand engagement), the CSR (corporate social responsibility) manager (for a philanthropic partnership) or the HR manager (for employee engagement).

- **Make contact.** If possible, get a mutual contact to introduce you (either by email or in person). If you're approaching them 'cold', you'll have to work harder to get noticed. Send an email directly to them or post something they'll remember – like a small club-branded item (a beanie, for example).
- **Make the call.** Get in touch to set up a meeting – so you can take them through your proposal personally.



WRITING TIPS AND TACTICS FOR A WINNING PROPOSAL

The focus of your meeting will be your proposal. It forms the basis of your relationship with a corporate partner – so being thorough and careful with it shows you're committed to doing a good job. When writing it, remember:

Persuasion, not description – make sure you talk about your project in a way that will convince your prospect to get involved.

Research and plan, before you write – be clear about why you're asking for support, your audience, the need and the impact your project will have.

One size doesn't fit all – tailoring your proposal for each prospect is best. But a standard proposal is fine for smaller opportunities.

Proposals come in four main types

Abstract: A one-page summary of what you hope to achieve and how.

Template: A standard format. Sometimes this is provided by corporates – and you have to fill in the gaps.

Visual: A PowerPoint style submission, for marketing or sponsorship opportunities.

Formal: A document style submission, for corporate social responsibility or funded opportunities.

Example structure for a proposal template.

1. Title
2. Introduction (to your club)
3. Purpose (your club's vision, mission, values)
4. History (of your club)
5. Programs (what you offer or do and what is unique about it)
6. Reach (multiple slides sharing your biggest assets, community engagement, number of players, volunteers, events, etc.)
7. Urgent need (why your club needs urgent support, with supporting stats or evidence to increase legitimacy)
8. Why your club is a strong partner!
9. Partnership synergies
10. Supporting information (e.g. if there is a target market overlap, or relevant trends)
11. Corporate partnership approach (e.g. your approach to partnerships)
12. Proposal (detail what you are proposing to the partner)
13. Benefits (what your club can do for prospective partners through this partnership)
14. Impact (how the partnership will impact your club)
15. Thank you



HOW TO KEEP PARTNERSHIPS AND SPONSORSHIPS GOING:

Having strong sustained partnerships is easier than acquiring new ones. But it takes work.

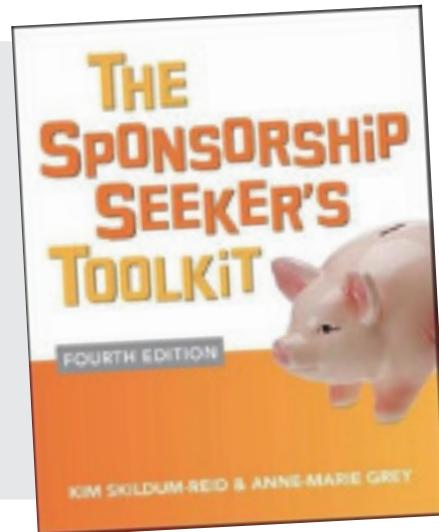
1. Develop a plan for how you'll look after the relationships you create
2. Schedule regular contact and reporting back opportunities
3. Stay alert for opportunities to build on a partnership. How else can your club and a corporate make connections that benefit you both?
4. Be alert for problems and issues – and respond to them quickly. Trust is hard earned and easily lost.
5. Thank your partner/s publicly and privately.

Sponsorship? Partnership? What's the difference?

In a partnership, the company will often want to be closely involved with your club or event – and their motivation may be philanthropic rather than commercial.

A philanthropic sponsorship is where the company will simply provide cash (or goods and services) for your club or event. A marketing-led sponsorship is where the company is trying to reach a specific target audience.

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To set up a successful partnership or sponsorship, prepare your ground well.

Spend time working out what your club stands for, what you can offer a corporate, and how you'll both benefit. Then, instead of just making connections, plan to build relationships.

Genuine partnerships are a powerful way to give your club the ongoing support you need to thrive.