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# Three Tips for Getting the Most from Sponsorship Dollars

By: *Josie Johnson*

There is no shortage of sponsorship programs designed to part marketers from their money. With so many options, how do you choose? Then once you choose, how do you maximize the benefits of your sponsorships?

Sponsorships can be one of the most effective tools for a marketing team prepared to adequately handle them. And yet, they sometimes get a bad rap. This is because sales and marketing teams often sign a contract, pay the fee, provide a logo and never think about it again. They have the best intentions, but something is always more pressing than making sure that local association sponsorship is being maximized. So, what to do?

## #1 – Mix It Up

Your mix of sponsorships should facilitate at least three marketing goals – brand awareness, thought leadership and lead generation. Use a combination of association and media sponsorships that provide you with:

- Opportunities to shake hands with clients and prospects
- Online exposure like webinars and white paper downloads to get net new leads
- Advertising/email blasts to get exposure to people outside your own database

## #2 – Manage It

When mapping out your sponsorship plan, don't just think about your budget. You have to also consider your bandwidth to manage all the programs to which you commit. Don't underestimate the effort it takes to organize and manage your sponsorship portfolio. Untold benefits are left on the table by teams who don't realize how much work goes into claiming those benefits. If you can't handle it internally, allocate some of your sponsorship budget to outsourcing the management of the programs. Many Edge clients choose to do this.

## #3 – Evaluate It

With all the options available, why do most companies continue to sign up for the same programs year after year? One answer is definitely that many sponsorships provide great benefits for their sales and marketing efforts! Another is that they have no idea if the sponsorships provided great benefits for their sales and marketing efforts. To know the difference, keep an evaluation record for every sponsorship, and list out the benefits and gather data on each one. The data you need depends on the type of benefit. This list shows common benefits and how to track them.

- Send two representatives to an event – Get feedback from the attendees and add it to the evaluation record. Also, get the names of prospects they met at the event!
- Place an ad in our newsletter – Create a special landing page for the visitors from that organization and track traffic. Be sure to include an easy URL in the ad to drive people there.
- Send an email blast to our subscriber list – Use this to promote a webinar, event or piece of content for download and then track how many people register.

Sponsorships are a central element to any good marketing strategy, so don't shy away from them. Just be sure you are prepared to squeeze every ounce of value out of sponsorship dollars!

### *About the author*

*Josie Johnson is a senior account manager with Edge Marketing, Inc. She has over a decade of experience in marketing technology and services to the corporate legal and law firm communities. In her spare time, she attends little league games, listens to "Let it Go" and tries to squeeze in travel, wine and workouts!*



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