



## Event Sponsors Want What You Have

As a representative of a nonprofit organization seeking corporate event sponsors, you are in the unique position to serve as a matchmaker. You have something corporations want — a loyal, engaged community with a passion for what you do. Corporations seek to engender goodwill by supporting organizations with relevant social missions. In doing so, they care about being seen by as many of the right people as possible. Your job is to entice these corporations your way.

This means you should only approach corporations that are truly a good fit for your event. You need to do your homework! Sending email blasts like shotgun pellets to large lists of companies not only doesn't work, but it dilutes the sanctity of the trust that you need to foster with your supporters and constituents. In safeguarding that sanctity, you make selecting your organization for sponsorship all-the-more attractive.

As a result of your research, it is important to approach decision makers with a unique idea that was developed *just for them*. You should be familiar with the corporation's goals and initiatives and be able to demonstrate how your concept will benefit them. Arm yourself with information (including past attendance and donor demographics) that draw a clear picture of your supporters. Remember, you are the gatekeeper to a community that is the ideal target market for this well-aligned corporate partner. Be ready, willing and able to clearly demonstrate that this is a win-win scenario.

It is said that "people give to people," meaning the influence of board members and honorees is critical in securing sponsors. Your job is follow their "ask" with a compelling story and a proposed sponsorship package tweaked to the needs of each prospect. The right match will create a charge, and that positive energy that will shine through when you speak to corporate decision-makers.

In order to make the right "match," you must always make sure the trust you have developed with supporters and constituents remains paramount throughout this process. For example, you have a responsibility to align only with those corporations that share your ideals. By becoming a sponsor, a corporation is admitted into your organization's "inner-circle" and you are the conduit of extending that trust to them.

At the end of the day, corporations are seeking to connect and to differentiate themselves from competitors. As a matchmaker, you hold the key to this golden opportunity that will lead to your ultimate goal: advancing your organization's mission.