



## THE CARE AND FEEDING OF

# SPONSORS

### Dear Sponsor Doc:

The upside...we've sold more sponsors this year than last! The downside...it feels like there are endless amounts of moving parts and benefits to have to manage. Do you have any tips for managing my sponsor fulfillment needs?

**R.A.M. State College, PA**

#### Dear R.A.M.

I'm glad you are tuned into the importance of effectively meeting and managing the fulfillment of sponsors' rights and benefits. I see far too many event producers drop the ball, and go on autopilot with their sponsors once they have a signed agreement.

I always try to keep top of mind that the better we meet and exceed our sponsors' expectations, the more likely they are to renew following our event. Any sales person will tell you that it is far easier to keep a current customer happy than to lose them and have to start all over again to find a replacement.

Here are a few of the key steps CSG takes to assure "the proper care and feeding of sponsors."

- 1. Assign a Point Person:** You need someone to focus on sponsor benefits fulfillment and service. Often it may not be the person who "sold" the sponsorship. They need to be a "people person" who will be customer service oriented. Someone who is an organized and detailed person, a good communicator, and a problem solver.
- 2. Create an Internal Fulfillment Program:** The key questions you need to answer is "How will you keep track of sponsor benefits fulfillment?" We create a Benefits Fulfillment checklist that provides a detailed review of each sponsor's promised benefits from logo/trademark placement to advertising and promotional benefits & deadlines to onsite displays and recognition, to hospitality benefits. It is essential to check the details and check again.
- 3. Communicate, Communicate, Communicate:** You need to be in touch with your sponsors on a consistent and ongoing basis from the time the agreement is set until well after the event is over. Your communications need to be clear and timely. Set clear and reasonable deadlines and send reminders but don't badger.
- 4. On Site Management:** When it comes to taking good care of your sponsors, this is where the rubber meets the road. Make

sure you are there for sponsor onsite set-up. We are always ready to help lend a hand. Trouble shoot and help resolve problems. Our goal is to over deliver on service!

- 5. Immediate Follow-Up:** This is often the hardest part to remember. In the hours and days following your event, you are dog tired and still working hard to wrap-up your event. But, you really should have a thank you ready to email within 48 hours. Further, we make a call within five days to get our sponsor's immediate thoughts, comments and concerns. Finally, we strive to respond to any issues in a timely manner.

Certainly, there are more things you can do including special receptions, sponsor gifts and other amenities. But, if you can successfully accomplish the above tasks, you are significantly improving sponsor satisfaction and renewal.

### The Sponsor Doc

With more than three decades in sponsorship sales and consultation, *Bruce L. Erley* is the President and CEO of the Creative Strategies Group, a full-service sponsorship and event marketing agency based in Denver, Colorado he founded in 1995. Accredited in Public Relations (APR) by the Public Relations Society of America and a Certified Festival & Events Executive (CFEE) by the International Festivals and Events Association, Erley is a highly-regarded speaker on event marketing and sponsorship having spoken on the topic around the world in such places as Dubai, Vienna, Beijing, Toronto and New York.

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