

Sponsorships: Which Ones Are Right for Your Firm?

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Your answer to this question will be as unique as your firm. We all see the budget-busting requests that come in to sponsor everything from a high school dance marathon to a target professional association's annual awards banquet. The sponsorship fees and what they include vary widely.

Our firm takes the approach of sponsoring many organizations and events at small-to-medium-size levels. Overall, however, it is a significant amount of our marketing budget. We tend to sponsor the organizations with which our associates are most active. If we have an associate that is committed at the board level of an organization, then we most likely will sponsor that organization in some way. We also sponsor the professional trade organizations of which a majority of our clients are members—i.e., industry associations for construction, health care, etc.

We've found that many professional trade associations now offer annual sponsorships that include varying participation in all of their events throughout the year at a variety of levels—platinum, gold, silver, etc. It may be a large amount upfront, but for the organizations that you do typically sponsor their golf outing and banquet, have a booth at their annual trade show, advertise in their member directory, etc., it makes budgeting very easy and provides as savings over buying each sponsorship a la carte.

Many firms choose to do a few large sponsorships with prominent organizations. They can include professional sports arena naming sponsorships, major awards that draw national attention, etc. As I said before, the way your firm approaches sponsorships is as unique as your firm.

Whatever your approach is, having a policy in place and keeping organized is important. We ask that a simple form (see below) be used to make sponsorship requests. It helps us weigh the cost/benefit of the sponsorships.

Also, since many sponsorships include ad space and attendance at meetings, you need to have all the details and make sure you take advantage of all the benefits—you don't want to pay \$5,000 for an annual sponsorship that includes a quarterly ad but miss the opportunity by not knowing the due dates. It's always a good idea for you to get to know association executive directors and maintain a good relationship with them.

Be sure to evaluate your sponsorships before continuing to do them year after year. Make sure you are getting the most bang for your buck and the goals of the organization still align with your firm's mission.

If you have a sponsorship policy or tools you use to keep your sponsorships organized, please send them to the [AAM toolbox](#).

Your Firm Name
Sponsorship Request Form

Firm associates are active in many professional and charitable organizations. To support and encourage our associates, we will consider sponsoring and contributing to these organizations. Please keep in mind that we spread our support among many organizations and do not typically sponsor at the high-dollar, platinum-type levels.

Please complete this form, attach all supporting documents/information and forward to Marketing. Requests will be reviewed once a month.

Organization Name: _____

Client: Yes No If Yes, Client #: _____ Approx. annual fees \$ _____

Firm's Connection to Organization: _____

Event Name: _____ Date of Event: _____

Sponsorship Level Requested: _____ Amount: _____

Description of Sponsorship: _____

Audience: _____

Firm Attendees: _____

Please Check the Request Meets Basic Sponsorship Requirements:

- Firm associate is actively involved in organization at board or committee level
- Firm associate is a volunteer with this organization and commits significant time and effort
- Request is being made by a substantial client
- Increases the visibility of the firm
- Develops relationships with clients, prospects or friends of the firm

Additional Comments on How This Will Benefit the Firm: _____

Completed By: _____ Date: _____

Approval: _____ Date: _____