

DOS & DON'TS Of Sponsorship Proposal Assessment

DO make it clear what you expect in a proposal

Create a comprehensive set of sponsorship guidelines and make them widely available. You'll find a template on PowerSponsorship.com.

With these guidelines, you are telling potential sponsees exactly how to sell to you. Use sponsorship guidelines and you'll get fewer, better proposals.

ONLINE

Put an obvious link on your sponsorship page.

VOICEMAIL/EMAIL

"We only consider sponsorship that complies with our guidelines"

SENIOR EXECUTIVES

Provide to anyone who gets approached

DON'T keep reviewing if it's not in line

You've told rightsholders everything they need to know to sell to you. If they've ignored it, they aren't bought-in enough to warrant your investment.

Stop wherever you realise they've not used the guidelines and send them a rejection with a link to your guidelines.

DO focus on leverageability

Look for opportunities that you can use in a hundred different ways, across many, if not most, of your existing marketing activities, time, and geographic regions.

You are looking for the sponsorship equivalent of a multi-tool. BIG bonus points to proposals that include bespoke leverage ideas for you.

That's a sponsee that gets it.

DON'T look at the back page first

Assessing isn't about finding something cheap, it's about finding something amazing.

If you find the right opportunity, it may be genuinely worth a substantial price tag.

Looking at the back page first may predispose you not giving a great opportunity a fair go.

DO keep a lookout for red flags

There are a handful of big red flags that will clue you in to an unsophisticated rightsholder:

- ▶ Proposal is all about them, not about your brand or the fans
- ▶ Offers arranged in levels (gold-silver-bronze, or similar)
- ▶ Only vague references to target markets (eg, "general public" or "art lovers")
- ▶ No overview of their marketing plan

DON'T overvalue commodity benefits

Commodity (or hygiene) benefits are not your best, most leverageable options. Emphasise interesting, creative benefits that you can leverage in lots of ways.

That kind of benefit will get you the biggest bang for your buck against objectives.

DO think broadly about market relevance

ATTENDEES These are the people who actually turn up at an event, game, conference, museum, etc. Your brand has access to them in person.

MEMBERS/FOLLOWERS

These people may not attend, but are interested enough in the property that they are connected via membership, social media, or other database.

YOUR MARKETS

Your customers, staff, intermediary markets, and an array of followers may all be interested in elements of the sponsorship.

FANS OF THE LARGER THEMES

Think of the larger themes of what you're sponsoring. A sponsorship can be relevant (and leverageable) for anyone who is interested in those larger themes.

DON'T say "yes" before you get internal buyin

If you want to get the biggest return on objectives, for the lowest amount of incremental spend, you need to get stakeholders throughout your organisation to see the value and commit to leveraging it through their channels.

Creating a vision for what they can all accomplish and getting that buy in should happen before you commit, so you can be assured it will be thoroughly leveraged and you will know what benefits they all need you to negotiate for them.

Stakeholders include (but are not limited to):

Brand management

Customer insights

Human resources

Sales

Social media

Promotions & events

Public relations

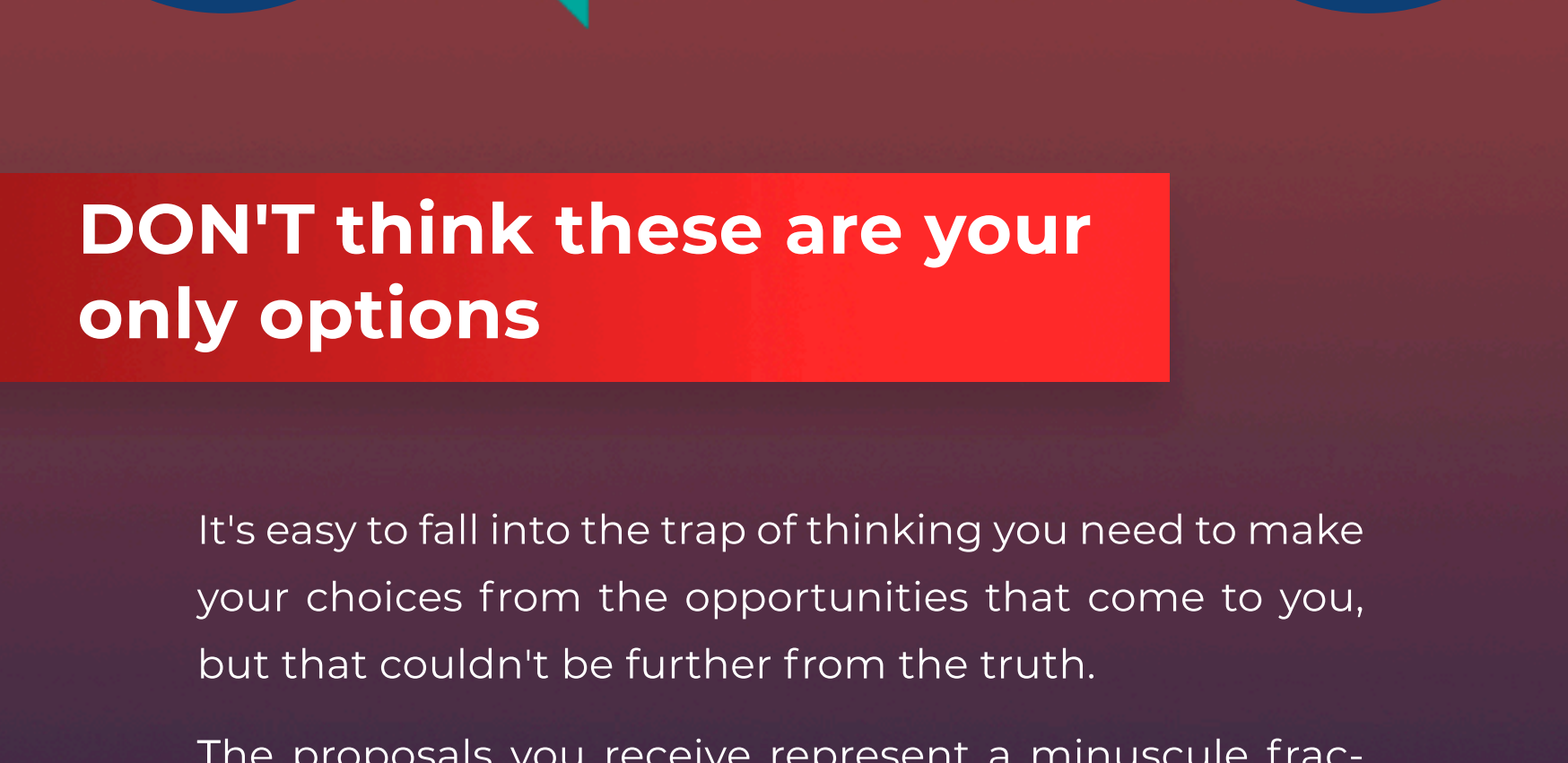
New product development

Senior executives

DO counter-offer

Consider the proposal to be a starting point. You're looking for fit, relevance, and some semblance of understanding of your brand and objectives. If you've got that, but the benefits aren't great, it's time for a counteroffer.

You can tell them which benefits you really want (and which you're happy to forego), or even better, you can invite the rightsholder to your leverage session, so you can collaborate on offer development.



DON'T think these are your only options

It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking you need to make your choices from the opportunities that come to you, but that couldn't be further from the truth.

The proposals you receive represent a minuscule fraction of the sponsorship opportunities out there in the marketplace. Between what's on offer, how you could leverage those opportunities, and even opportunities you could create and own for your brand, the options are almost infinite.

So, be pro-active. Make a wish list. Introduce yourself and send your sponsorship guidelines to potential partners.

Request proposals. If there's nothing perfect, who could you work with to create something for your brand?

For more information on corporate sponsorship, including 250+ how-to blogs, white papers, books, consulting, training, and coaching, visit PowerSponsorship.com.