Packaging Sponsorship Opportunities 3

Once you have researched potential sponsors, you need to package your projects so that they are uniquely attractive and relevant before you make any contact. Sponsorships are no longer about just financial support. **Sponsorships are partnerships whereby people attending, participating in, reading about, listening to, and watching on television the sporting event should understand the sponsorship**. Following this train of thought allows you to put together a sponsorship package that encourages active participation from both cricket and commercial partners.

Some of the most important projects or initiatives for your club may not be the most glamourous, and that is where the packaging comes in. Think about offering a high-profile and a low-profile opportunity together, by finding a connection between the two. For example, maybe the Under 13 team needs new kit and a team administrator to handle the organisation. Both of these projects will benefit young cricketers and the future of the game, and the price of the sponsorship can be off set with PR by including a logo on the team shirts and letterhead.

Determining the value of a sponsorship remains one of the most challenging aspects of this step. Unfortunately, sponsorship valuation is not an exact science, and therefore, you must be somewhat flexible in your forecasted cost. Two points to decide are what the package is worth to the potential sponsor and how much it costs to successfully run the event or initiative. In order to reach an estimate, examine similar current sponsorship arrangements or contact a local media company. Media companies can help put a price on the media coverage you will offer. Having done research in this area provides you with a strong negotiating position.

A point to remember throughout this process is that your club or team is part of the ECB family of cricket. Knowing how your club fits into the national structure enables you to better market your projects. Use the National Strategy document, ECB publications and videos, and county material to highlight how your organisation is part of an established structure. The support given by the ECB, plus the ECB name recognition throughout the country, assures sponsors that they are not only investing into local initiatives, but also into the future of the national game. And, that can make a big impact.

Points to Remember

1. Package your sponsorship opportunities so that they are uniquely attractive
2. Offer high-profile and low-profile projects together
3. Determine the value of your sponsorship to the best of your ability
4. Utilise your connections to the ECB and County cricket through the National Strategy document and other materials

Case Study Mossley Hill Cricket Club, Lancashire

Four years ago, Mossley Hill Cricket Club started a junior section which now includes 55 junior members. In need of new cricket balls, the club identified a local Indian restaurant who would sponsor the Under 11, 13, and 15 teams. The money given through the sponsorship not only bought specialised kit (low-profile opportunity), but also enabled the Gulshan Indian Restaurant name and colours to be put on the club's letterhead and junior section match day caps (high-profile opportunity). The junior section is now called the Gulshan Tigers, and to foster a stronger working relationship, the Gulshan Tigers ran their annual charity day in the name of the restaurant, and the restaurant offers discounts to club members. This partnership has been very successful, and both parties are looking to renew the sponsorship in the future.