

Guide to Recruiting Sponsors and Partners

There are many local businesses that want to help -- all you need to do is ask! The following outline shows the steps an organization should follow in recruiting a partner or sponsor.

Step 1

Define your goals and make them measurable - what is it you want to accomplish? Have a start and end date as well as a way to measure your effectiveness.

Example - One hundred parents signing "I Won't Idle" pledge forms.

Step 2

Know your numbers! Know how many people your program will potentially influence.

Example - If you are a school, know how many students, how many teachers, how many classes, and how many volunteers can be reached. Do not inflate the numbers; keep them realistic.

Step 3

Check with the school and find out who is already involved. Examples could include a local pizza company or grocery store. Then look around the local community at who is already a "good community" partner-sponsoring Little League teams, neighborhood events, etc. Give them the courtesy of being able to participate. Look to businesses that are new in town and want to make an impression. Evaluate local branches of major national companies, as the store managers have some authority on local programs. Based on your numbers, think about which businesses can handle that type of volume. Consider companies who try to attract the same "customers" you will be targeting.

Step 4

Be sure to look for companies/industries that are used to working with coupons or vouchers and can handle the numbers you are looking for. Also, look for companies with products that will be considered valuable to your audience.

Step 5

When developing your "offer," keep in mind what's in it for the partner besides being a good corporate citizen. Ask them what they want out of the relationship.

Step 6

Contact the businesses, lead with the facts, show them the difference they can make in their own backyard and give them a deadline for making a decision. A deadline will get them to say "Yes" or "No."

Step 7

Before, during and after the event or campaign, be sure to recognize, thank and include the partners in all correspondence and materials and with regular phone calls or in-person visits. Let them know the progress and the results. The more equity the partners have in the program, the better the chance for success.

Examples of Potential Sponsors and Partners

Quick Serve Restaurants; Grocery Stores; Drug Stores/Pharmacy; Quick Oil Change locations; Pizza Restaurants; Family Restaurants; Auto Dealers; Ice Cream Stores; General Merchandise Stores including Home Improvement Stores; Pet Stores; Coffee Stores; Gasoline Service Stations; Convenience Stores; any Business with a Drive-Thru Window; Book Stores; Novelty, Party & Toy Stores; Health & Fitness Clubs; Gymnastics and Dance Studios; Video/Music Stores; Computer Stores; Cellular Phone/Telecommunications Stores; Kids Clothing Stores; Family & Kids Furniture Stores; Photo Stores; Household Appliance Stores