

Event Sponsor Benefit Ideas

We often get asked what benefits a club might provide to an Event Sponsor. US SAILING's U.S. Championships are prestigious – they have great history, a place of importance in the sport and serve a sought-after demographic.

There are guidelines for soliciting and fulfilling sponsorship for US SAILING's Championships. Beyond specific obligations to National Sponsors, which are outlined in a separate document for each individual Championship, **it's the golden rule.** Treat the sponsors well and they will continue to invest in the event and the sport.

If you ever have any question about those guidelines, please don't hesitate to contact US SAILING's Championship Director, Liz Walker, or Marketing Director, Dan Cooney at 401-683-0800. Within those guidelines, your ability to generate benefits to companies that support your events is only limited by your imagination. Here are some of the more traditional ideas on benefits that you might offer to a potential sponsor.

In nearly all circumstances, anywhere you are giving visibility or appreciation for Event Sponsors you should give preferential placement to National Sponsors. National Sponsors have typically invested in multiple events over multiple years. We have worked very hard to interest them in our sport and we want to show them value and good customer service in return.

Finally, before offering any of the following benefits to Event Sponsors think through any conflicts that might be possible among sponsors, especially National Sponsors. For example, if Poland Springs is your water supplier and is making a decent investment in your event, and you have gotten the local Subway to sponsor lunches, you wouldn't want Subway to show up with cases and cases of any kind of soft drink without consulting Poland Spring first. Again, common sense and the golden rule should prevail.

Banners:

- While National Sponsors should take center stage and have preferred visibility, typically with individual banners and flags, you can create a “family banner” which would include all the logos of your Event Sponsors. Pirate's Lair is one of the companies that US SAILING uses to produce banners,. They charge about \$10/sq ft. The most common size is a full color 2' x 8' banner for \$160 with a \$40 art/set-up fee. They can also do different sizes if upon your request. Their phone number is 1-888-724-5286 ask for Ken, and their web site is www.pirateslair.com.

Public Relations:

- Make sure to mention the sponsors of the Championship in any news releases related to the event. Make sure to mention the National Sponsors first.
- US SAILING will manage national press but don't forget your local media outlets.

- US SAILING hosts a conference call specifically to help you promote your event with PR. Make sure to ask about how to promote sponsors through your media plan. Basically, you've seen people do it well and do it clumsily – try to make it an organic part of your conversation with the press. “It was incredibly hot out there for the competitors and we were going through the Poland Spring supply fast” is better than – “Thanks to our sponsors, a, b, c and Poland Spring” but some mention is better than no mention at all.

Thank You's:

- Immediately after event, sponsors should receive a personal thank you from the local chair or sponsor chair.
- Provide sponsors with photos from the event that they can use for their future marketing purposes.

Official Event Program:

- Thank your sponsors in your Official Program.
- Thank your sponsors on the host club website.
- Offer an ad in the Official Program, some pages are already reserved for National Sponsors, please consult US SAILING about which pages you may offer. US SAILING will provide you with a template to follow.

Website:

- Post sponsors on your club website.

Club Newsletter:

- If you are doing a direct mail piece to local or regional members/sailors include sponsors logos on that piece.
- When promoting event ahead of time in the newsletter, include special thanks to all sponsors.
- You may include all of the sponsors logos and participation in the club newsletter.

During Event:

- Thank sponsors.
- Mention sponsors at Skippers Meeting, Opening/Closing Ceremonies, and social activities.

Event Presence:

- Invite Event Sponsors to provide sample products at the event. If Event Sponsors are giving away samples, mention at skippers meeting and thank sponsor.
- Invite Event Sponsors to provide literature about services that they provide at off the water event activities or in skipper bags.
- Allow sponsor to sell their products at the event.
- Allow a sponsor to host a breakfast or lunch or other social activity if not already sponsored by a National Sponsor.

Daily Prizes/Raffles:

- Sponsors may provide gifts or awards for daily prizes
- Sponsors may provide products or services to be raffled off during the event.

Hospitality:

- Invite sponsors to a cocktail/dinner party prior to, during or after the event.
- Invite sponsors to come out on the water on a spectator boat.
- Invite sponsors to bring VIP guests to closing ceremonies/awards presentations.

Yacht Club:

- Introduce sponsor to club manager if they offer a product or service that would benefit the club.
- Allow sponsor to give a presentation to club manager or commodore about services they could provide to yacht club.
- Placement of sponsor's ad in club newsletter ..

Photography:

- If you have an official event photographer, make sure that the photographer knows who the sponsors are and takes pictures of any sponsor visibility at the event.

Remember, please do not promise any benefit that US SAILING will have to fulfill or approve without talking to us first. Good Luck!

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