**Review Prior Event(s):** Start by gathering information about past events. Focus on those items that will help you develop your pitch and targets for this year. Consider things like **cause**. Look for any **notable trends**, such as year-over-year increases in attendance or average dollars raised per participant.

Additionally, review the **response to your Sponsor Program** from last year. If you did a post-mortem, make sure to review those notes and pull out any nuggets specific to Sponsors and Sponsorship Packages.

1. How many levels/tiersdid you have?
2. How many sponsorships did you sell at each level?
3. Who were they?
4. Were they first-time sponsors or recurring?
5. Have any previous sponsors already committed to sponsoring again?
6. What levels sold out the quickest, and which ones didn’t sell out?
7. How many were local business sponsors vs. larger, national companies?

**Collect Key Information About Your Event:** Familiarize yourself with the details of the event, including its purpose, target audience, date, location, and expected attendance.

Use your [**donor CRM**](https://www.frontstream.com/ebook/7-key-features-to-look-for-when-choosing-your-crm-platform?utm_source=worddoc&utm_campaign=sposorshipchecklist-pitchsheet&utm_content=sposorshipchecklist-pitchsheet) to help you identify common attributes of previous participants. This will help you articulate who your audience is when talking to potential sponsors.

This doesn’t need to be complicated:

* + Are they mostly from one town or greater-city area?
	+ Age range?
	+ Gender?
	+ Household income?
	+ Single/Married/Families?

Any other key information that may be relevant for your cause or
outreach approach.



**Set a Goal:** Before you start coming up with sponsor packages or developing a target list, it’s good to understand what your goals are.

* How much money do you need to raise through sponsorships?
* Does your model require you to cover all event costs through sponsorships?
	+ Or do you price tickets/registration such that participants cover the “hard costs,” and all sponsorships go directly to the cause?

This information will help you determine the mix of sponsors and pricing tiers you need.

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**Identify Sponsorship Levels:** Determine different sponsorship tiers with corresponding benefits for sponsors (e.g., Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze). As you define your levels, consider if you want to limit the number of sponsors for each tier. For example, you may only want to have 1 Platinum Sponsor and 3 Gold Sponsors but have no limit on the Bronze level.

Don’t feel limited by more traditional sponsorship-level names (ex: Platinum, Gold, Silver…). Little things stack up to become big things when it comes to the overall event experience and tying your Sponsor Levels to your event theme gives it that little extra flare.

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**Create Sponsorship Packages:** Develop detailed sponsorship packages outlining the benefits and exposure sponsors will receive at each level. The type of event you are running will determine what you can include in your packages. Basics include:

* **Logo placement** – event website, email communications, signage onsite at the event, printed programs, etc.
* **Verbal acknowledgment** – during the event and/or opportunity to speak at the event (whether presenting an award or introducing a speaker)
* **Number of tickets** included (at a gala, consider including a table for some tiers; at a golf tournament, consider including a 4-some)
* **Food and beverage** – sponsor for a meal, signature drink, etc.
* **Technology** and/or Wi-Fi sponsor

Although you’re developing specific packages, have the mindset that you’re willing to customize. **You never know what great ideas a potential sponsor may come up with, and you don’t want to miss out.**

When you set prices for your packages, make sure you’re considering your costs as well.

**Research Potential Sponsors:** Now it’s time to create your “Target List.” Start with those you’ve worked with in the past. Identify companies, businesses, or individuals that align with your nonprofit's mission and values. Also, consider businesses that have previously sponsored similar events or have a history of supporting charitable causes.

[**Your CRM is a gold mine.**](https://www.frontstream.com/donor-management?itc=7-key-features-to-look-for-when-choosing-your-crm-platform?utm_source=worddoc&utm_campaign=sposorshipchecklist-pitchsheet&utm_content=sposorshipchecklist-pitchsheet) You can use it to track previous sponsors and the contact information for your main contacts. Depending on the relationships you track in your CRM, you may also find past donors who have a relationship with one of your Target Sponsors that you can reach out to.

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**Develop a Pitch:** Craft a compelling pitch that highlights the benefits of sponsoring your event, such as brand exposure, community engagement, and alignment with their corporate social responsibility goals. Make sure to include the impact they will have. (“It’s hard to say “No” when you start by asking someone if they want to help kids fight cancer – but if you don’t share your story in a compelling way, you’ll miss out.” – Dan McGuane, [**Top Sponsorship Tips Webinar**](https://www.frontstream.com/webinar/top-sponsorship-tips?utm_source=worddoc&utm_campaign=sposorshipchecklist-pitchsheet&utm_content=sposorshipchecklist-pitchsheet))

**Check out the ‘Pitch Cheat Sheet’** below this checklist. It gives you a worksheet to fill in key information you’ll want to have in front of you
while calling potential sponsors, crafting emails, developing sponsorship materials, etc.

**Create Sponsorship Proposal Materials:** Prepare professional sponsorship proposal materials (often referred to as “a prospectus”), including a **cover letter, event overview, sponsor package details, sponsorship form**, and any other relevant information. It’s great to create a few email templates and call scripts at this stage as well.

**Attract more sponsors and boost your fundraising efforts** with our exclusive [**Sponsorship Package Design Toolkit**](https://www.frontstream.com/toolkit/sponsorship-package-canva-templates?utm_source=worddoc&utm_campaign=sposorshipchecklist-pitchsheet&utm_content=sposorshipchecklist-pitchsheet). These usable templates provide you with everything you need to create professional, impactful sponsorship packages in minutes, even if you have no design experience!

**Reach Out to Potential Sponsors:** Contact potential sponsors via email, phone calls, or in-person meetings. Personalize your outreach by addressing specific individuals within the company or organization and how sponsoring your event with their goals.

**Finding the right person to reach out to about sponsorship:** You may already know the right person or have connections through your network. If you don’t already have a relationship (even if you’ve only met once), some titles you may want to look for include: **Business Owner, GM, President, Founder; Community engagement; Social or Community impact; Marketing; Event manager; Sponsorships; CSR (or Corporate Social Responsibility)**.

If you need help finding the right person and their contact information, try these resources:

* Company website
* LinkedIn
* Business Contact Database Tools with free-tiers or monthly options such as Apollo.io, LeadIQ and Hunter.io. While they all vary in terms of how they work and how many contacts you can look up a month, they may help you find email and phone numbers for the right people.

**Follow Up:** Not everyonewill respond to you on first outreach. People are busy and often miss emails – especially when it comes from someone they don’t know. Don’t take a non-response as a No.

When you do get a response, you want to reply quickly. If you need a few days to get the right info, that’s ok. Respond to let them know. Don’t let questions linger for too long or they may move on to other opportunities and projects, and you’ll lose momentum.

As you have conversations with potential sponsors, you’ll hear new objections. You can proactively address those objections in your follow-up to others on your target list.

**Negotiate and Customize Packages:** Be flexible and willing to negotiate sponsorship terms and benefits based on the sponsor's needs and budget.

Offer customization options to accommodate specific requests or preferences.

Don’t forget bundling! If you have multiple events that you think the sponsor would be a fit for, don’t be afraid to ask them if they’d be interested in sponsoring them too. You may end up creating new sponsorship packages to work across the events.

Additionally, consider other ways you may work together outside of the event. For example, can you support volunteering as an employee team-building event?

**Secure Commitments:** Once a sponsor agrees to support the event, send them a sponsorship agreement outlining the terms and benefits.

Collect signed agreements and any required payments or in-kind donations.

Offer flexibility of payment types: Credit Card, Check, and ACH are the
most popular options.

**Provide Recognition and Fulfill Benefits:** Once yoursponsor signs on the dotted line, give them a list of deadlines and specs for when you need things from them – logo, company descriptions, creative for any ads or signage, in-kind item pickup/delivery, etc. You want to make sure you’re fulfilling the promised benefits to sponsors before, during, and after the event.

**Express Gratitude:** Sponsors are key to hosting great events and hitting fundraising goals. Just like it’s imperative to thank donors after a donation, you want to thank Sponsors as well. Look for opportunities to do something extra, especially for some of your larger and/or long-time sponsors. A handwritten note or an extra social media post specifically thanking them can go a long way.

Provide them with post-event reports detailing the impact of their sponsorship and any metrics related to exposure or engagement.

**The Golden Rule applies:** How would you want to be thanked? People remember how they felt at the event, and they remember how you make them feel. When they have great memories of you, your nonprofit, and the event, they are more likely to continue their support for future events.

Right after the event – when those good feelings are fresh – is an ideal time to get them to recommit for next year’s event. Don’t be afraid to ask them to commit to a sponsorship for next year as well.

**Evaluate and Improve:** Conduct a post-event evaluation to assess the success of your sponsorship efforts. Identify areas for improvement and incorporate feedback into future sponsorship strategies.

**By following this checklist, you'll be well-equipped to secure sponsors for your nonprofit event and make it a success. Good luck!**

# Pitch ‘Cheat Sheet’

## **About your organization**

**Cause:**

**Why is this cause important:**

**What do you do to affect positive change:**

* (include a few key stats or stories that you can mention in conversation)

**Why someone should sponsor your organization:**

* Increase brand exposure to your audience
	+ Overlap between your event and their business and/or mission
* Move the needle on the “Doing Good” goals (community impact, social change, diversity and belonging initiatives, environmental or sustainable targets)

## **About this year’s event**

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Location:**

**Fundraising goal:**

## **About your audience**

**Target participation (registration and/or attendance goal):**

**Key attributes of your attendees:**

* May include some combination of location, age, gender, household income.
* Consider other relevant attributes. For example, if your cause is related to animal rescue and you know you want to target a local pet shop, it may be helpful to include the % of participants that are pet owners.

## **About past event**

**Last year’s participation:**

**Last year’s fundraising results:**

* Actual: [ACTUAL]
* Goal: [GOAL]
* [% ACHIEVED]

**Notes for yourself / Questions to consider:**

* Was last year’s participation up compared to prior years?
**Example:** 10% increase in participants
* How did last year’s results inform your targets for this year?
**Example:** 3-year trend: We are raising 5% more per participant. So, we think we can increase participation by 5% this year.
* What are you doing differently this year?
	+ **If you saw a downtrend in results:** What are you doing to reverse the trend?
	+ **If you saw big gains:** How are you capitalizing for similar results this year?

## **Sponsors from prior years**

### **[ Level Name ] – [ PRICE ]**

* **[Company 1]**, Contact Name, Contact Information
	+ Add relevant notes – including feedback from prior participating, relationship details (how do they know you / your organization)
* **[Company 2]**, Contact Name, Contact Information
	+ Notes & Reminders
* **[Company 3]**, Contact Name, Contact Information
	+ Notes & Reminders

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	+ Notes & Reminders
* **[Company 3]**, Contact Name, Contact Information
	+ Notes & Reminders

## **Target Sponsors for this year**

*You may find it easier to create a spreadsheet with this information or to track outreach efforts in your nonprofit CRM so it’s easily accessible anywhere.*

* **[Company 1]**, Contact Name, Contact Information
	+ Add relevant notes – including if they have ever participated in the past, relationship details (how do they know you / your organization), why they are on your list (overlap in audience and/or mission)
* **[Company 2]**, Contact Name, Contact Information
	+ Notes & Reminders
* **[Company 3]**, Contact Name, Contact Information
	+ Notes & Reminders