

WHITE PAPER

Presented by
Partnership Group – Sponsorship Specialists™

Selling For Success Brent Barootes

Sponsorship marketing and sports marketing are all about selling. The properties sell a program to the brands. Then the brands sell their product to the audience. That is how it works. So, where is the success in selling? How does it happen? Why are some people successful and others not? I think it comes down to three key elements.

First, in order to deliver results, you need to know what product you have to sell and believe in it. Second, you need to be able to build a relationship and understand your prospects' needs. Finally, you need to be able to negotiate in the best interests of both you and the prospect, and deliver results through exceptional customer service. In this industry, the sale is not about today-it is about tomorrow.

Everyday my team at Partnership Group - Sponsorship Specialists™ works with clients helping them to determine what they have to sell and the value of those assets. That is what we do. The biggest paradigm shift for clients (those properties that sell sponsorships) is to truly understand that they have something that others (read *sponsors*) want. If they don't, they have nothing to sell. They need to believe in that product. They need to know its value and worth and stand by it. I often use the example that, during the recession, if you walked into a Cadillac dealership (when GM was bankrupt) and said, "Hey, I like that \$80,000 Seville. I'll give you \$35,000 for it," what do you think they would have done? You would not be driving away in that Seville for \$35,000. Cadillac maintained the integrity of its brand and the value of its assets. If you wanted the car, you paid the dealer what it was worth. Sponsorship selling properties need to remember this and not discount or give the farm away to get the buy. If they do, they have devalued their product and will never reach budget. If the brands want the product and the assessed value is true, they will pay for it. (If you have inflated the value, you will never sell it.)

Second, build a relationship. It is all about the relationship. Tyler Mazereeuw of the CFL and I recently had discussions on sponsorship sales. Last week, my commentary spoke about sponsorship being experiential and engaging emotion. This is where the process begins. You need to build a relationship with the buyers. They need to feel the experience before they buy. They need to understand that it is more than eyeballs and impressions-that is advertising). It is about the experience. And thus, as Tyler says, "You need to be a storyteller." Tyler's "Sponsorship Top 20% Matrix" clearly shows that, to be in the top 20%, you need to be a storyteller. You need to engage the buyer. You need to sell the intangibles. The bottom 50% of our industry sells assets and inventory. The top 50% sells experience, intangibles, and assets from the inventory. But to make the top 20%, you need to be a storyteller. You need to deliver the experience in stories. You need to illustrate how others have been successful with your property and gained amazing ROI. You need to tell the stories of engagement and audience interaction. That is where the relationship blossoms. You know what they need. You engage them and bring them into the experience through stories.

Once you have reached the point of storytelling and have the prospects engaged, it is all about building the programs they need to achieve their goals. The negotiation is about fair market value and ROI, not best price or "grinding." You close, deliver results, and continue to provide customer service. Then you tell this client's success story to the next prospect. Better yet, have your client tell the story!