

Municipalities and Corporate Partnerships:

The Good, The Bad and the Ugly in Increasing Revenues Without Raising Taxes

Sunday August 17, 2025 – 3:30 to 5 pm



SESSION OVERVIEW

1. What is corporate sponsorship?
2. Industry trending – sponsorship overall as well as specific to municipalities
3. What You Need to Know: Steps, Process and Timelines
4. Questions and Discussion



WHO ARE WE?

1. National Sponsorship Consulting Agency
2. Staff in BC, AB, ON (50% of Team) and NFLD
3. 24 years in operation next month
4. Support municipalities and other properties
5. Support brands and sponsors
6. Not a sales agency

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SUMMIT

WANT TO INCREASE YOUR MUNICIPALITIES REVENUE?



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NETWORK AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH MUNICIPAL PEERS

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www.sponsorshipcongress.ca

February
24th & 25th

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PARTNERSHIPGROUP
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www.partnershipgroup.ca

WHAT IS SPONSORSHIP?

def·i·ni·tion n. 1.
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of the new words.
of an image (pictu

WHAT IS NOT SPONSORSHIP?

- 
- **Philanthropy**
 - **Funding – Underwriting**
 - **Advertising**

WHAT IS NOT SPONSORSHIP?

donate

A close-up photograph of two hands, palms up, holding several small, light-colored wooden letters that spell out the word 'donate'. The hands are positioned to frame the letters, with fingers slightly curled. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

WHAT IS NOT SPONSORSHIP?

- 
- ~~Philanthropy~~
 - Funding – Underwriting
 - Advertising



Defining Advertising vs Sponsorship



Definition of Sponsorship



A cash and/or in-kind fee paid to the to a municipality (or other property) in return for the commercial potential associated with that municipality or organization.



WHAT IS SPONSORSHIP?

“Sponsorship reaches people in an environment that matches their lifestyle rather than intrudes upon it. Sponsorships speaks to the public, not at them.”



CSLS



CANADIAN SPONSORSHIP LANDSCAPE STUDY

Canadian Sponsorship Landscape Study

- ✓ \$2.8B industry
- ✓ 85% of decision makers from M&C
- ✓ 15% from PR / GR / IR
- ✓ Only 5% from Community relations / investment

*there was duplication numbers hence the 105%!!!



Canadian Sponsorship Landscape Study

- ✓ On average brands had 55 deals!
- ✓ On average properties had 39 deals!
- ✓ 78% of dollars were in cash versus VIK
- ✓ **10% were local deals** / 30% National / 20% provincial 12% regional / 28% international



What has changed in the marketplace?



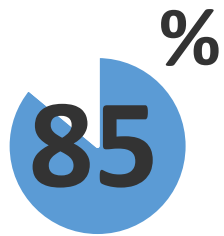
IMAGINE Canada study:

- 56% of Canadian corporations are engaging in sponsorship that used to be philanthropy

CONSUMER SPONSORSHIP RANKING – MUNICIPALITIES

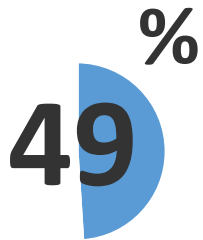
(Partnership Group – Sponsorship Specialists / Neilson)

OPINIONS ON MUNICIPAL SPONSORSHIP



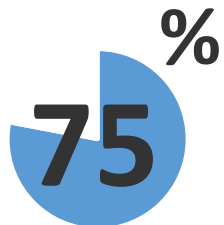
%

Companies should be able to **sponsor public spaces** such as hockey rinks, ball parks and recreational facilities



%

Companies should be able to **retitle existing buildings** named after prominent citizens or community benefactors



%

No preferential treatment for corporate sponsors of cities – sponsorship and awarding of contracts should be separate

What are Canadian Municipalities Doing?



What are Canadian Municipalities Doing?

- 66% of municipalities are involved in some form of corporate engagement
- Almost 50% more municipalities in the naming rights game for over a decade
- 47% have actively marketed their opportunities for over 5 years

Source: *Canadian Municipal Benchmarking Survey on Sponsorship and Naming Rights*

Centre of Excellence For Public Sector Marketing

The most common naming of Municipal facilities are:

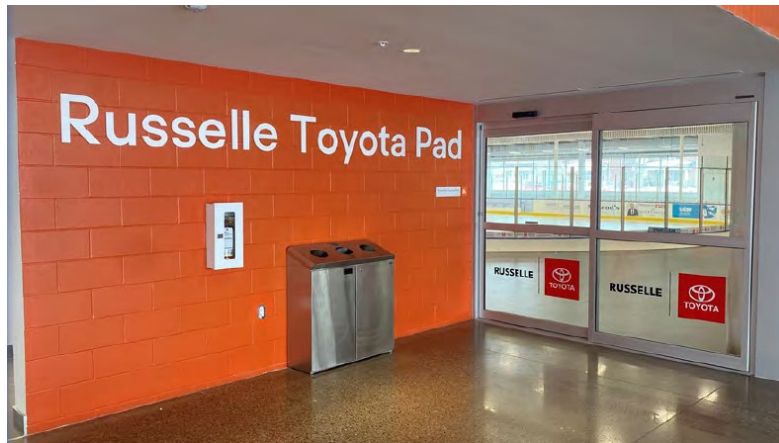
- Arenas
- Recreation complexes
- Pools
- Sports fields



Source: Canadian Municipal Benchmarking Survey on Sponsorship and Naming Rights
Centre of Excellence For Public Sector Marketing

What are Canadian Municipalities Doing?

- Most common length or term for naming rights is 5-10 years
- “Perpetuity agreements” are now scarce, and frowned upon



Source: *Canadian Municipal Benchmarking Survey on Sponsorship and Naming Rights*

Centre of Excellence For Public Sector Marketing

What are Canadian Municipalities Doing?

- 94% of these identified municipalities in the game are actively seeking naming rights of which almost 2/3 have agreements in place
- Arenas, recreation complexes, pools and sports fields are the most common naming
- 55% of the municipalities have sponsorship centrally managed for the municipality and 45% allocate by department

Source: *Canadian Municipal Benchmarking Survey on Sponsorship and Naming Rights*

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What are Canadian Municipalities Doing?

- 82% have sponsorship policy in place
- 62% have naming rights policy only in place
- 43% have just advertising policy in place
- Many communities between 15,000 and 150,000 people have between \$250,000 and \$1M in revenue potential annually

Source: *Canadian Municipal Benchmarking Survey on Sponsorship and Naming Rights*

Centre of Excellence For Public Sector Marketing

KEY DISCUSSIONS IN COMMUNITIES

- a) Our buildings are owned and paid for by municipalities - why should a corporation get to put their name on it?
- b) Is this potential capital revenue for new projects or operational revenues?
- c) How will this affect different departments?
- d) How will this affect user groups?

NAMING RIGHT DEAL COMPARISONS

- Milton – First Ontario Performing Arts Centre - \$50,000 per year
- Burlington - Haber Recreation Centre – \$60,000 per year
- Kitchner – Activia Sportplex – \$50,000 per year
- Barrie – Meridian Place – Outdoor Amphitheatre - \$30,000 per year



NAMING RIGHT DEAL COMPARISONS

- Melville SK – CN Recreation Centre - \$38,000 per year
- Schomberg - Trisan Centre (Arena) - \$12,000 per year
- Sarnia – Progressive Auto Sales Arena - \$42,500 per year
- Leamington – Nature Fresh Farms Recreation Centre - \$65,000 per year



HOW THIS AFFECTS YOUR MUNICIPALITY



SHOULD YOU BE *IN THE GAME* OR NOT?

- ✓ Do you need additional revenues beyond user fees and taxes?
- ✓ Are users / citizens concerned about increasing tax rates and increasing user fees at facilities?
- ✓ Do you own rinks, parks, leisure centers, performing arts centers, programming, etc.?



SHOULD YOU BE *IN THE GAME* OR NOT?

- ✓ Do you presently have sponsorship policy in place?
- ✓ Do you know what you have to sell?
- ✓ Do you know what your assets are worth?
- ✓ Are you committed to doing sponsorship or is it ad hoc?



REALITY CHECK

- ✓ You are already doing sponsorship and advertising to an extent
- ✓ It is simply being done in an ad hoc way right now
- ✓ The question really is not about “do you want to be in the sponsorship game?”
- ✓ The question really is “**How do you want to be involved in sponsorship?**”

SPONSORSHIP TODAY IN MUNICIPALITIES



- ✓ We need to understand that for municipalities and others it is no longer just naming rights, but rather holistic sponsorship programs including and / or excluding naming rights

NEXT STEPS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Four key steps

1. Feasibility Study / IAV
2. Strategy
3. Policy
4. Implementing

Dorsay
Community
& Heritage
Centre



FOUR KEY STEPS TO SUCCESS

1. Undertake a sponsorship Inventory Asset Valuation (IAV)

- a) Determine sponsorship assets & naming rights
- b) Value the assets in real market terms and determine potential revenue



KEY PROPERTIES AND ASSETS

- a) Aquatic Centre
- b) Community / Leisure Centre
- c) Spray Parks – Outdoor Pools
- d) Hockey Rinks
- e) Community Centres
- f) Ball Diamonds / Fields
- g) Dog Parks
- h) Trails



KEY PROPERTIES AND ASSETS



It is not all about
“Naming Rights” – Some
Municipalities do not put
corporate names on the
outside of buildings but
sell everything inside

KEY PROPERTIES AND ASSETS

Look at **programming and events** as major assets that would be identified in an IAV (Inventory Asset Valuation) – this is where sponsors can “touch and engage with citizens” and activate and provide value add!



KEY PROPERTIES AND ASSETS

Events

- Canada Day
- Summer Concert Series
- Winter Lights Display
- Music Festival
- Ethnic Celebration



KEY PROPERTIES AND ASSETS

Programming

- Seniors Week
- Music Festival
- Pride Week
- Fall Fair
- After school programming



FOUR KEY STEPS TO SUCCESS



2. Develop monetization strategy

- a) Identify outline of revenue potential
- b) Provide date timelines and tracking measurement for accountability
- c) Determine needs from a human capital perspective (staffing / volunteers / outsourcing sales)
- d) Determine realistic nature of prospects against goals and objectives
- e) Identify fulfilment needs

FOUR KEY STEPS TO SUCCESS



3. *Develop Policy*

- a) This may be done sooner in conjunction with monetization strategy
- b) Reviews commercial and non-commercial naming rights, alignment with by-laws, gifts

FOUR KEY STEPS TO SUCCESS



4. *Implement Program*

- a) Monitoring of Monetization Strategy
- b) Typically, your consultant stays on to support this with advisory hours and one on one time



OUTCOMES?

- ✓ Ongoing operational dollars
- ✓ Enhanced partnerships
- ✓ Will be more work, but rewards are greater



PROJECTED TIMELINES

- 1. IAV (Inventory Asset Valuation) – 6 months**
- 2. Policy– 4 weeks**
- 3. Strategy – 6 weeks**
- 4. Mentoring and consulting – ongoing**



EXPECTATIONS OF ALL DEPARTMENTS

1. The departments own the assets - collaboration with your sales folks
2. Everyone in the organization are part of the process to ensure that the programs work
3. Open-mindedness
4. Collaboration



SALES APPROACHES



1. Build internal capacity
2. Outsource sales and keep service / fulfilment in-house
3. Outsource Sales and Service
4. Hybrid

EXPECTATIONS OF COUNCIL

1. Provide feedback on IAV
2. Review, provide insight and approve the policy
3. Open Doors for staff
4. Step back and allow the staff to move the process forward
5. Be part of the success when the deal is done!

WHAT ELSE YOU NEED TO KNOW

- ✓ You need to look at sponsorship as a partnership and not a handout – sponsor needs to win as well!
- ✓ The average timeline is 18-22 months
- ✓ You need to follow the strategy once developed
- ✓ Understand that package selling is taboo – customized proposal development is key
- ✓ It is **NOT** transactional

QUESTIONS



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THANK YOU

The background features a man in a dark suit and tie, pointing his right index finger upwards. Overlaid on this are various business-themed graphics: a world map in the top left, a bar chart with a line graph in the top right, a line graph with an upward arrow in the middle right, a candlestick chart in the bottom right, and several smaller charts and data visualizations in the bottom left and center. The entire image has a blue tint and a digital, network-like pattern.