



Building Sponsorships

Step-By-Step for Beginners



MENTORSHIP.



SPONSORSHIP. ♥

Mentorship is a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person.

Sponsorship is the act of supporting an event, activity, person, or organization financially or through the provision of products or services.

What Is Sponsorship?

There are a lot of blogs that discuss different 'Tricks' to going after sponsorships, mainly based around the idea that somehow your entire proposal process should be focused around somehow manipulating sponsors in clever ways to donate to your cause. Don't believe everything you read !!

The reality in the sports world is athletes seeking corporations to invest in them is along and difficult process that is more about establishing a relationship with an individual than just 'pitching' a concept. You will ultimately need to establish a value trade with your sponsors that gives them more value than you receive. In other words, you need to be prepared to 'over deliver.'

Instead of 'pitching' brand sponsorships, we will show you a 10 step process to 'Building Sponsorships.'

In the following Step-by-Step outline we will target sponsorship in a very practical way that any 10 year old flipper can utilize to gain sponsors for events, a brand new trampoline and even camera accessories. We will not mince words because that just wastes time. We will simply discuss some of the 'need-to-know' points about sponsorships and provide the necessary information to begin the journey of a sponsored athlete or social media influencer.

As mentioned, sponsorship is not a "money grab" to sucker a company into paying for your trip to the GTGames or a local Meetup. A sponsorship is a trade of values that the athlete gives to the brand they wish to partner with. Later we will provide a list of potential ways anyone can give value to sponsors.

If you have read 'Coaching Creatures' from the GRT Network App and the FTA you will recognize the term "value trade". Sponsorship is not a handout! It is a corporation or brand that you can give value to **FIRST AND FOREMOST**. Once you have provided some tangible value for the brand then you can discuss what you get in return **AFTERWARDS**. Yes, the order matters.

If you're new to the world of corporate brand partnerships you might go in looking for a pay-day and hope the corporation 'believes' your pitch. The FTA has never really pitched a company but we have worked with a few hundred brands in the last few years around the world who have helped provide a platform for the new generation of flippers.

The FTA has received cash sponsorships over a coffee, over an email and have had companies call us out of the blue offering money and resources due to one simple thing. We make it our mission to create value **FIRST** and then ask for brands to chip in **AFTER** we have already shown the product, service or concept.

Never go to a brand looking for any form of sponsorship if you can't show what you have is in high demand in that industry. When you have done that, then you simply need to ask the sponsor how they want to 'join in'. We don't pitch sponsors, we include them in what we have made only after we have shown it is successful. It's really that simple.

Step 1: Put Yourself In The Sponsors Shoes

A bit of personal advice, create something you actually care about deep down. Many are quick to try and predict market movements and create or identify the 'next big thing' but this is backwards thinking in the real world. Markets are not predictable and countless research has shown even the best stock market professionals have very little success consistently guessing trends.

Instead of a constant investigation and gambling with your limited resources and time on this planet, just dig deep in your mind and try to build something that you genuinely care about. Even if the sponsors do not get on board in the first few years, will you still be there building and selling your product? Or, will you give up once you realize it is not as easy as wishing success into existence?

Utilizing social circles will help keep things interesting as you undoubtedly struggle for the first little while. It is almost guaranteed that you will struggle longer than you predict so try to get involved with a personal vision you have no problem devoting your life to or you may end up dropping out of the race before the brands are even in the stands paying attention.

Just because you can't predict markets does not mean you can't use some simple common sense, logic and some helpful inspiration from those around you. All ideas are built from previous ideas so do not think you have to go re-invent the wheel. Most of the time you just need to tweak products or services that already exist to make them available to different brands.

Get started by looking up some information on Youtube. No joke. Life can be simple and by being efficient you can really allocate more time to areas that you may not have the capabilities to be efficient in based on your strengths and weaknesses.

For all you serious Freestyle Athletes who are looking for brands to help get you to your next event simply look up a few basic economics lectures and videos that will at least get your head wrapped around what business think about. Shows like Dragon's Den and Shark Tank are great to get your mindset into business. We suggest before you approach any sponsors you watch at least one month's worth of lectures and videos (*at least one a day*).

You will begin to start using the business lingo and will start seeing how brands approach partnerships and how they handle good ones and bad ones. Most countries and cities will have business based networks that will worth watching as well to help get into the right mindset.

Once you have put in some solid research and believe you have a firm footing in the business world at some level then you need to start thinking about what people want. What are the trends of the year? If all you have heard on the local news for the last year is how terrible your government is then maybe you do not want to create a government based marketing campaign for Go Pro or Red Bull. If you see sports involvement is on a rise then maybe you focus on creating a sports campaign or approaching new sports brands that can use your product.

As of 2016 Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality is a huge market that is getting a lot of online and investment recognition. Maybe as an athlete you team up with a VR company that wants to get into the sports market. Currently due to health and safety boards, natural organic foods are very popular to healthy conscious brands. Sports is about health so maybe you can find a creative way to highlight the health aspect of Freestyle Trampoline and a brand can join your message to the community in the form of a sponsorship.

In this way before you worry about getting a sponsor you need to put yourself in their shoes and see the world from their view by digging through the free resources all available to us such as Wikipedia, Youtube and Google that will blatantly tell you what companies are looking for each year.

Use that information to create an idea that is close to your heart and then start researching how to say it to the sponsors based on the current trends of the day. Many jump into creating social media accounts and watermarks and all the fancy camera equipment but know very little about the mind stand of potential sponsors. That is always your first step. Get educated, at least a bit so you don't sound like a brat with your hand out looking for money.

Step 2: Build It And Keep Building It

Many people have cool ideas of fame and riches in their mind and think that *"If we can just get one big sponsor we can make my dreams come true"*. Everyone loves to day dream but fundamentally many put the cart before the horse.

Once you have your mind wrapped around business then start building. There are many things you can pick to build but generally they fall into one of 5 categories. These categories can be mixed and matched and there is a lot of cross over so you are not only limited to 5 things but for the purposes of this beginner guide, it will help you get started.

"Built it and they will come!"

5 Things To Build:

1) Large Social Media Presence

This one is the most popular with the youth and you will require roughly 50,000 Followers on a single platform before even small or local brands take notice. You will need 100,000+ to get constant offers by brands in your industry. You will need 250,000 to be considered a Micro Influencer who could sustain a low income career traveling and working with different brands. 500,000 to start getting the bigger deals and over 1,000,000 to start really pulling in the big bucks. Many look at a few top ranked influencers and assume they can do it but they have a lot of help. More on that later.

2) A Useful Product

Brands will often team up with universities and utilize the expertise of the professors and faculty to help with new technology or product development. Mandatory volunteer hours for university students creates a great low cost way for brands to get some Research and Development. If you can create a product with your school, group of friends or family members then you can sell the product to brands in many ways. If the product is not useful to the brands you are approaching then it still won't matter so know who you are approaching even if you have the "sickest" product.

3) A Charity or Special Cause

Brands love to get behind new social movements that they believe have followers who can utilize their product. The Rude Foundation sponsors the World Acrobatic Society every year as a way for the Rude Foundation to show the community they are actively giving back to the community in which they reside. Sometimes the corporation is simply trying to look philanthropic to get more sales and other times they actually care about the cause because it may have a long history with that brand or a few of the brands owners or shareholders.

4) A New Community Brands Can Be Part Of

The Freestyle Trampoline and Flipping trend is a brand new community and the FTA is always getting approached by brands who want to see how they can sell their products to the community. During the development of a new community sponsors tend to be hesitant as the concept has not been proven yet but they are eagerly waiting on the sidelines looking for a way to get selling their products in the community when it matures enough.

5) An Event or Product For A Sponsor

The line between an employee and employer is becoming blurred as in this constantly evolving capitalistic landscape new opportunities are always opening up and some times individuals with unique skillsets but not a quite complete product or service can still be utilized by brands to help them enter a new market. If the person (*acting as more of a consultant*) can do a great job and the brand can see the value they will keep building the project and assign the consultant a head roll in its development.

How Do You Know They Will Want It? You Don't. But if you have done the research you should at least be pointed into a direct that 'could' work. If you are blatantly copying another service or product do not expect much but if your product or service is unique that is usually a great start.

If you see everyone has their own merchandise line, maybe you need to get creative and try a different type of clothing line or maybe not even do clothing. Every industry has openings where people are not doing anything. Try to find those 'gaps' in the market first before you go all in on your product or service. We will say from personal experience, many are not as unique or creative as they could be which prevents them from even getting out of the starting gate in terms of sponsorship. Simply come up with something unique and then overtime adapt it based on the constant feedback you get.

Every step of the way of building your product you should be asking for honest feedback from your social circles. Sometimes the social circles will be nervous to give you the honest hard-to-hear feedback you really need to hear so expand to your local school or do anonymous surveys to get an idea of how your product or service will do in the industry before going all in and building it or approaching sponsors.

Keep refining the product or service based on the feedback and the constantly changing trends of the industry. Trampoline has changed a lot so the FTA and all our partners are constantly making corrections to our products and services to meet the demand of the community and sponsors. It will take a while to get the right product or service so do not worry so much about hiding it until it is perfect because then you will never even start the journey. Have something you know several will enjoy and then build it in the direction of the constant feedback you are getting.

If you just began a merchandise line and have sold 100 shirts in the first month, simply ask those who bought a shirt, "what would you like to wear next?"

If you have a Tramp wall shoe for grip, get a bunch out to your friends and get them using it and if they like it then get some to wear them at a big event or video. Constantly watch the feedback you are getting from all your original customers and make adjustments as you build.

The best brands are constantly adapting and quick on their feet so you need to be as well and not stuck in a certain path with no flexibility. Do not just give up and only do what the feedback says or you will be pulled in 100 different directions but make adjustments where you can and as long as the positive feedback is increasing or you are getting more customers all the time then you are on the right track.

The big brands we all see have roots from back in the 1800's and 1900's. They are impressive NOW but they started like you with simply an idea and they modified the idea and adapted it to the customers over time. It won't happen over night so be ready for a long road of constant development.

Step 3: Create an Image

Every brand is looking for partners that have a certain image. For small 'pop-up' brands who are just a small team pushing a product online like phone cases or some fun gadget they may not be so concerned as they just want people to see the product. However, for big brands that eventually you will want, you need a strong image.

The image is your choice. If you are a shy person, you do not want to make the image about being loud and obnoxious because to mentally have to pretend to be something you are not will drain you and beat you down. Play to your strengths and think about your few key characteristics and try to encapsulate those characteristics to your brand image.

The image will not be able to be 100% who you are because sad to say not many people want to hear another person's unfiltered thoughts. It should be close though. If you are rebellious then embrace it and spin it in a positive way that highlights the strengths of your product or service that really are the selling point.

If you have a trampoline park near you who you want to sponsor your trip to a Meet Up overseas, you can go to the park and volunteer your time and establish a connection with the park and a branding image with the park that fits their demands and your personality as best as possible.

A bit of reality won't hurt so here it is: We have seen many influencers reach high levels of exposure by blatantly lying about who they are just for views and it broke them down and they ended up not staying on top. Seriously, create an image you think you can maintain for 20-30 years. The image will be what you have to display every time you are out in public.

One of the FTA co-founders, Trish McGeer, discussed with our marketing team the process of how she created and managed the first Subaru sponsored Rally Team in Canada. She would instruct all of the drivers to never wear branded clothing when out partying or to never drive recklessly in a branded rally car. *"You are a moving billboard"* she would say, *"so you must live and breath the image of your sponsor every time you have any visible branding on you, or with you."*

Living and breathing something every day, if you don't fundamentally believe in it, will get tiring real fast! You will either quit or be fired (lose your sponsorship) eventually. Build an image that truly resonates with you so you do not have to 'act' all day, every day. Some of the influencers who you see on social media put up a fake image and can't sustain it for the long term. Your image should be consistent across all the platforms you launch. We would launch with one platform you can focus on all your attention on and then once you have a following you can get them to join you on other platforms as well.

This sponsorship beginner guide is more of a handbook than an in-depth book discussing all the intricacies of brand development so we will not get into all the social media do's and don't's but the message we want to make clear is this: whatever image you choose you need to actually believe the image and you need to be consistent with it on whatever social media accounts you create.

Step 4: Create an Email and Website

Social media will be how most of your fans and supporters reach you on a day to day basis. Sponsors will require that you have a website that you can plug in at the bottom of your email signature. It's simply about looking professional. Every person messages through instagram looking for brands to give them free stuff. You need to look professional so create an email signature and a website that you can direct sponsors to that has at least a minimum amount of information about who you are, what the product is and why they should care.

Wix is a very user friendly automated website designer that cost only a few hundred bucks a year to maintain. If you are looking to actually keep your money do not go to a website designer. Some will charge you \$5,000 - \$20,000 and will put the website on their servers meaning you cant make changes unless you message them first. Then they take a long time to get back to you.

Go with a small DIY company and maybe use [fiver.com](https://www.fiver.com) to find a few cheap helps to create some graphics for you or even create the website for you. These third party sites are a hit and miss so be careful but do not go to a major company with your Freestyle Trampoline clothing brand. It's a waste of money and time.

Make sure the website is clean and simple with headings such as:

- 1) Our Mission
- 2) Upcoming Events
- 3) Previous Events
- 4) Our Products *(or Services)*
- 5) Contact Us *(Get Involved, Join the Mission, etc.)*

Do not make the website too complicated. Make it easy to navigate first and foremost. Put up a bit about who you are and why you are doing what you are doing. Show what you have already accomplished with your mission or product and tell them what you have planned. *(Do not give away all your secrets)*

Any brand or marketing manager at a brand will want to know that you were already doing your thing before they came along. They also want to see you have lots of upcoming events or promotions etc that show your active. This will get their creativity juices flowing and give them an idea of how they can get involved with your product, service or mission.

Your website should simply say that you have a mission, you have already been growing and that you have many that want to continue doing business with you in the future. It is that simple.

Step 5: Volunteer Your Time and Product/Service

Do Not Approach Any Sponsors Yet! Find local brands you think you can get a potential sponsorship from and simply go to them or call them and offer your services FOR FREE.

If it is a trampoline park then go help the staff or do a team building day with them. Sit down with the manager and discuss who you are and what you can offer them before you ask for anything. People buy when they are emotional and then they rationalize it after. It's actually how the majority of human behaviour is internalized but the important part for an athlete looking for sponsorship is that you need to create a connection before you ask fro anything.

Show them you are a nice person and tell them a bit about your goals and why you want to help them. The answer is not "... because you will help me later". Keep that part to yourself for the initial meetings and just build up a connection with the brand.

If you are trying to make a merchandise line, maybe you find someone with a small/medium sized clothing company and simply volunteer your time to learn. Many people instantly warm up towards you if they think you simply want some help learning about something they are experts in.

People feel good when they can impart knowledge on others because it makes them feel superior at least for a moment. Show you potential future sponsors that you are humble and simply looking for education and will volunteer time to get started.

If they see you are genuine about your mission then you will see they will happily provide you value in return and probably sooner then you think. Not money at first but at least they will point you in the direction that will lead you to the next step of your career.

They will know someone or something they will teach you that you will use to adapt your product or service. Remember Step 2? They will almost pass you along to someone or impart knowledge to you that will help you *'level up'* your product or service.

Step 6: Repeat Step 5 Several Times

You will go in head-strong thinking your product or service is obviously going to be successful but once you volunteer your first few locations you will be diverted on to a new path. The brands you were volunteering with will show you something you did not think about or connect you directly with someone who can help you even more and the process repeats.

At first you will be approaching many different organizations who are interested in your mission and you should be building your resume as you do these steps. Keep updating your website and doing research every day reorganizing your ideas and thoughts.

For example, if you are warming up to a local park offering free classes or something then you may end up meeting an owner of the business or close partner and the owners may even introduce you and tell the owner what your mission is. Then you chat them up a bit and warm up to this new person and see if you can find any openings where you can say *“Wow that is really cool, Webet Wecould help you with that”*

You can see how this process will continue indefinitely as you build your product or service. You are always on the hunt for people who may be interested in your story and at the start you will need to simply volunteer your time to as many different people as possible to get the right information in your industry and to start your network that you will lean on or sponsorships later.

When Wefirst got into the trampoline business, separate from the athlete side, Wewould spend hours on the phone calling the experienced traditional coaches simply asking questions and hearing their wisdom. They eventually started getting me connected with other professionals because they liked my mission and saw Wewas willing to put the work in and then each person taught me a bit more. So on and so on...

Wecould then go back to my service and product and refine it with new information and ideas which made it more sellable and Wehad also increased my network of people who would potentially help open doors to sponsors in the future.

It is important to note that at first your ‘sponsors’ may be close family friends who own a business, or local brands that are not able to provide a cash sponsorship but can provide you with opportunities like free training, products you may use or endorsements. Eventually, if you do it right, it will grow into a great partnership with a nice small network of people in your community who want you to succeed.

Before you worry about sponsor networks, create a smaller network of people who genuinely want you to succeed at your mission.

Step 7: Put Your Irons In The Fire

At this point you have probably been building your personal network and refining your product locally for a few months after your initial education month. You probably thought it would build faster but in reality you are on track and simply need to keep going.

At this point you can start looking to sponsors the next town over and you may even be getting people approaching you to hear about your mission statement that they saw on your amazing clean and efficient website that you constantly maintain.

The initial partnerships you get will be small and will not be very attractive but take them anyway. Even if you feel you are giving more in terms of labour and resources than the other person do it anyway just to keep the ball rolling in the forward direction.

Partner even with competitors on a common event or “give-away” that you can increase your reach with. Do not worry about “winning” yet because you are too early in the game and simply make friends with anyone who wants to learn about you and even if they only want to talk about themselves, let them do that and simply look for something you can give them and they will return the favour later.

Yes, it is a bunch of freebies at the start even several months after your mission began. Give it time and simply say “Yes” to everything you can afford and put some *‘irons in the fire.’*

You may not realize that sponsorships are much more likely to come from those who have been following your journey. People love a success story and they want to feel they were a part of it. So start networking more and widening your reach by looking towards other countries, states and areas that you probably can’t influence yet but you can start making friends.

You will be predicting that within a few years you will be at a certain 'level', hence you will predict the future and begin getting friendly with people who you may not be able to help at the moment but will be interested once you grow your brand over time.

It is called "Dripping". You basically begin by calling up a large number of companies to find someone who might believe in your journey or seem to care about your brand. and simply tell them you are not asking for anything but wanted to keep them updated as you grow. You can even get their emails and put them in your website and send them a monthly update on how much you have built your brand since the previous month.

Keep dripping new contacts even if some don't maintain contact. The few who do will be your first prospects for sponsorships after you have dripped them for a few months, or up to a year. The higher you reach up the ladder the less likely they will get back to you, so simply look up one step at a time. By Step 7 you are still too new to approach ESPN or Nike but you can already be planting some seeds for later use. The bigger the brand, the longer they will want to watch your growth. The brands that are just a few steps above you will be watching eagerly waiting for you to be useful to them.

Step 5,6 & 7 are really about positioning yourself to get sponsorship in the future. You are volunteering your time and effort to learn from those in your industry and constantly reaching out to new prospects getting them to at least watch you on your journey but you are probably not getting any return yet. That is ok and perfectly normal.

Building a product and refining it over these first few months is crucial and can't be missed simply because you want a sponsorship tomorrow. Think of it like this: If you take the time to build a big strong net, you will ultimately catch more fish in the long run. Sponsorship is a long run game, not just a few fancy tricks with a quick payout. Build your network and plant your seeds. Do not forget to keep your new network updated with all your new events, media or small partnerships you are making.

It will be forced at first and you will use up profits from any sales of products or services for the first while. Talk to Mom and Dad to maybe help out a bit with this. Maybe instead of Birthday presents or Christmas presents, you ask for a new website! At this stage of the sponsorship search you are still building yourself and your network with value trade labour primarily and showing your original followers you are serious. From that platform you can simply grow to eventually ask for money as your projects become slowly bigger over time.

Step 8: Connect Other Brands Together

A great way to increase your network for potential sponsorship is to connect current members of your network with other members of your network over a simple phone call or email. Your network should be several hundred strong by this time and you should have lots of irons in the fire so start talking about the irons in your fire to certain select individuals and see how they respond.

Get their gears turning in their head and start connecting people together whether you get anything out of it or not. They will remember you did that and it helped them so when you need a bit of help in the future they are much more likely to help you in return.

Matching together different brands is a very good way of helping brands out for free and usually you can sneak in a mention or a product in conjunction with whatever the other brands are doing.

We can't stress it enough that you need to simply start your sponsorship career by helping others in any way you can. These ways will be apparent as you learn to look for them. Sometimes brands will even simply offer you help or resources for giving them information about the industry trends they are looking to get into.

We have had brands partner with the FTA just to keep them in the loop as the Freestyle Trampoline industry grows. They are in a sense, paying for a front row seat and to be able to cut the line when something really big happens. Brands will pay to be first to the punch so do not be so narrow minded to think that it's all about views. Views are really just one aspect of what brands are looking for. There are lots of ways to increase their sales and great sponsorship partnerships are more about creativity, not just the numbers. Find unique ways that you can provide a service or product that can help them reach their audience or increase their audience or sales.

The FTA and its origins have been around for several years and we are still utilizing this strategy all the time to increase our network. We simply fit them in to our yearly plans or our partners plans. We do not ask for anything specific in return but simply include them in the network in anyway they ask. Simply ask the brand what they want. Don't go in assuming they know; ask them what value they are looking for, then go find someone in your network that can help them and make the connection. Indirectly this is a very powerful networking technique.

Step 9: Value Your Product or Service

When you have grown a great network and you are helping brands connect and work with each other you need to take the time to now evaluate your proposition so you know which *Big Fish* to can go after. Once you start getting calls from brands outside of your immediate network that have heard of you through social media or your awesome website you will need to send them information about who you are and what you have done.

Simply put when you make a contact with a brand they will have several levels of people to go through and you will have to prove yourself every step of the way and each person that gets your information will be one more step removed from the *'emotional'* connection you were originally building your platform on.

By the time it gets to the CEO for approval and the accountant you are just simple numbers and they are not concerned about your greater personal mission statement. To be clear, this is not because they personally are heartless capitalists but because they have to justify their decisions to the shareholders and people who see that brand as an investment.

The bottom line is that unless the cooperation with your brand makes them money or saves them money you won't get a call back. Think about it, you would do the same thing. You do not buy products at a superstore without a price. You do not accept a job as an employee if the owner does not tell you exactly what you are going to make. How can you judge your finances if you don't know the exact numbers?

Just know that you need to have some solid numbers when passing your information to bigger brands. Here are the statistics you should have. The pitch decks for influencers with millions of followers will have literally 30-50 pages of statistics from religious beliefs of the followers to the political views of certain sectors. You do not need to worry about that at this stage.

Start with these 5 :

1) Total Your Following Across All Platforms:

- Facebook:
- Instagram:
- Youtube:
- Website Subscribers:

TOTAL: _____

2) Engagement:

Engagement tells the brand how many people actually really like you and want to talk to you and engage with your posts compared to just random people seeing it and not caring for more then a 10 second video clip.

First add up a post's total likes, comments, and shares. Then divide by your total number of followers and multiply by 100 to get your average engagement rate percentage. You do not technically count views because they did not take the time to engage with your post so it means they would not necessarily care to engage when a brand wants to partner with you. Views do matter though but separately.

Example:

Instagram Post with 49,000 views / 142 comments and 13,000 likes - IG Page has 190,000 Followers

Total Engagement is $13,142 / 190,000 = 0.069\% \times 100$

= 6.9% Engagement For That Post.

For facebook the average engagement rate is about 1% and for instagram it is 3% so if you are above 3% then that is good and means you are an influencer and can hold your head up proudly.

3) Average Views/Post:

This one is a bit easier. You simply go through your posts and add up the total views of views on average. Since the views are public you can just round off to the nearest 100th or 1,000th depending on your reach.

4) Average Views Per Event:

If a brand will sponsor you or partner with you for an event or small campaign you need to provide them a previous campaign that you believe was successful so they can know what to expect from the partnership.

The bigger the brands you are approaching the more you will need to tighten up the numbers but for the small to medium brands you will have access to this early on in your journey you just need to show them they will reach new customers.

We will tell the brands how many tickets were sold per event and what the total number of views per Event Related Post was. So if we made 20 posts about an event in Sweden we will simply add up all those views and give them the total so they can see their brand will reach let's say 1,000,000 views.

5) Media Attention:

Make sure you document any local or international media outlets the cover your brand. Save them and connect with the writer who wrote the article or aired the news segment. They are always looking for a story and a follow up for human-interest pieces about people's lives. For a brand it always looks nice to see a pitch that has a nice article from the LA Times or a segment from America's Got Talent on the first page or two. Simply use the media to show them you are in the community and getting out there. They will see what you have done on your own and want to help out as long as they get a piece of the attention.

If you can put that information together you have a simple pitch deck for small to medium sized businesses. Now go on your computer and make a pitch deck. Below is an outline:

Page 1: Your Title (Put a few media pictures up as your title page)

Page 2: What your Mission Is

Page 3: How you see that brand being included in your mission (This will need constant updating per brand pitch, each should be customized using your creativity)

Page 4: Your above 5 statistics and references/media links etc.

Page 5: Contact and Overall Conclusion

Make the pitch deck more about pictures and statistical graphs of the above information, not a 5,000 word document about how awesome you are. Keep it simple and to the point with nice colours and nice art work. You may want a friend who is good with photoshop to help you.

There are lots of tricks and tips on how to write pitch decks and all that but in reality your previous success and growth will be the biggest determining factor to your sponsorship pitch. Keep it clean and to the point and try to get the brand on the phone.

Step 10: Get Brands On The Phone

In this day and age everyone loves to simply spam out a bunch of pitches with a copy and pasted email. Try it and you will get some responses. Keep it simple and try to end the email with a "Call To Action" meaning you are encouraging them to respond to your email.

You will notice that email responses are much more limited however than getting brands on the phone. With every app in your phone sending you notifications through email it can easily clutter the new emails and yours can get missed since it is not an email they are use to seeing.

We do many email reach outs and the ones who get back to us we put in our network and subscription list. The others Wekeep in a folder and drip them once every time there is an exciting news piece or update about what we are doing.

If you are going to do email just keep it short and ask a question at the end to try and emotionally make them feel obligated to return your email. From there it is no different then the other brands you have in your network. You simply show them your mission and how they can benefit from joining your mission and usually they will start with something small.

Usually brands will start with a free product or just asking to put up a banner at your event so they can see how it goes. Even if it is just a banner SAY YES! You need all the recognition you can get. It is not uncommon to mention brands during events or in smaller campaigns that are not really providing any value but as a way to show them what they can expect when they do start upping the anti. Let everyone come in on the terms they feel comfortable with and build them up the way you do with an athlete.

It would not be a good idea to start turning brands away because they are "Not Giving Enough" because if they are not willing to give enough it means they don't see the value so you have not done your job in creating something they really want...yet.

So keep them on the line and show them you are interested in a future collaboration by simply involving them some how even if it means just putting their logo on a small pamphlet that you hand out at the event.

Value is not just money. Usually it's about exchanging strengths and weaknesses at the beginning. One brand may have a great clothing brand that everyone wants to wear but may not have distribution in a certain country that you are always in.

So a fair exchange would be a few free shirts with their branding of course and you help them open up a new country to their network. They will cover the shipping and tariffs of the clothing transport and you simply make sure that the people who wear the shirts love them and take pictures.

You send those pictures to the sponsor and show them they were valued. They will see that excitement and think they can increase sales so they may give more shirts next time. After you showed that it works then maybe the 3rd event you tell them you have a special DJ who will attend the event (from another brand in your network). You tell the clothing brand that they can now reach this new demographic of the DJ who has let's say 50,000 followers but you need a few extra shirts. You tell the brand that because you have to take care of the DJ set up now, you need to stay around an extra day and that if you were allowed to sell their shirts and keep the money you could cover your costs.

Now you have planted the seed of actually getting money. This is where the creativity comes in. If you were to tell the brand that they just need to cover your expenses instead of leveraging your sales ability, you are potentially locking yourself in to ONLY getting expenses covered. They won't just offer more money for you for fun. You need to think long term development.

By planting the seed of selling their merchandise for them you can always sell more and make more than the expenses. It does not cost the clothing brand as much money to simply ship over shirts (*compared to paying you a fee*). There are lots of examples but we hope this demonstrates one simple concept. Like an athlete, you must BUILD your sponsorships, NOT pitch them.

Step 11: **Repeat Steps 5-10...Forever**

We hope you see how we systematically built a network of sponsors and how you can easily do this going from Step 1—> Step 10. Many think of sponsorship as something like a roll of the dice or aiming a gun at a target. NO!

Sponsorship is about building a following of people who see your mission and value your belief system that the product or service you have represents. They will start by imparting wisdom to you which you will take happily and then you will show them you took their information and built your product or service because of it.

Then you will go back to your network of business followers and keep them posted on how well you are building your craft. They will start to jump in when they see they can increase their sales by publicly joining you on your mission.

They will start by simply providing support and some resources and you will build up your product or service to the point the brands realize you are able to go even higher and simply need their help with it. That is when you start seeing cash sponsorships coming in.

Step 5—> Step 10 is the day to day sponsorship duty. You are always putting irons in the fire and Dripping your network and refining your service or product. The only difference is that each round of these steps will hopefully take you a 'step' higher to bigger and bigger brands.

You will begin by volunteering your time and resources and spending your own money to get it started. Start talking to the family and close social circles. Leverage your labour and your Grand Plan to your initial followers to get them to give you a 'loan' in a sense.

Build your Mission the way we have described here and by the first year you should have a clothing brand, a trampoline park brand and some kind of food brand.

By the end of the first year a reasonable goal would be to have these three types of brands work together to help you get to an event overseas or something in that range.

By year two you should be starting to tighten up your product and service and by this time you should know if the product or service is going to be well received or simply not needed in the market.

Be creative at first and don't spend money unless you have to. Many spend so much money with promo videos and things like this but the reality is that no one cares. Unless you are going after Nike you don't need a fancy \$25,000 pitch deck.

Your biggest selling point is your passion and your hard work. Brands who see hard workers who are passionate have this idea that somehow one way or another it will work out for you because you are persistent so they will want to be involved. If you jump to the numbers and statistics too quickly it may come across as a quick sponsorship scam looking for money. Build the rapport with your close network first and let them help you and direct you forward.

The second phase of mid level sponsorship is usually a exchange or resources where brands can partner together to put on a campaign or event and play to each others strengths and reduce the weaknesses but with very little cash transfer.

For the first several years you will be in these two phases. Once you have shown you have that big thing they all want then you can start increasing the budgets and asking the sponsors to help with that. If they increase the budget then they reach more people so it is in their best interest to do it anyway.

During phase 1/2 of the sponsorship journey you will simply be selling your product or service and the brands will get on board to cover your costs of doing business. So if in a year it cost you \$5,000 for shirts and a few events bring the sponsors together to help chip away at your travel fund or expenses.

You keep all the profits and they cover your expenses in return for branding. Then once you have done that for a few years then you can start approaching the big boys and ask for straight up budgets. For a beginner though this 10 Step program should suffice and get you building your network.

FTA Sponsorship Assistance

If you have any questions about sponsorships or brands please contact the FTA. There is a lot of information out there but we believe that this guide will help all new Freestyle Athletes leverage their social media and products/services to start rallying brands to help their career.

For more information about events and industry info please subscribe to the FTA. Please also download the GRT Network App that will have many free videos for coaches, athletes and gym owners:

www.freestyletrampolineassociation.com