



The Ultimate Brand Guide to **Sponsoring **Youth Sports** **Teams****

Learn how your brand can
become a community MVP by
sponsoring youth sports



Why youth sports sponsorships matter

Traditional forms of advertising aren't generating the same return as they once did, and brands are shifting their marketing and advertising spending towards a new space—youth sports sponsorships.

Youth sports are the heartbeat of local communities. Over 60 million kids participate in youth sports (that's 65% of U.S. families), making youth sports a \$19 billion dollar industry (Wintergreen 2020), rivaling the \$14b NFL.

So, why choose youth sports sponsorships over other media?



Positive Impact

Youth sports sponsorships are an effective marketing channel that is able to reach consumers in a more meaningful way than traditional media. Brands that sponsor youth sports provide the funding that local leagues need to survive. They'll remember your brand long after the final whistle blows.

Engagement with the Community

When you decide to sponsor a youth sports team, your company is directly engaging with the community. Engagement can look different depending on your goals. You might have a table at a game to talk with people and hand out swag or product samples, or offer a team discount for your product or service. Sending brand ambassadors out to games allows you to engage with your customers face-to-face and gain valuable feedback.

Generate Prolonged Exposure

From physical branded assets like signage, jerseys, and in-venue advertising to on-site activations and integrated digital and social media campaigns, a youth sports sponsorship campaign can earn your brand sizable exposure. The variety of digital, physical, and activation options will give you an opportunity to reach customers across multiple touchpoints throughout the entire season.

Build Long-Term Relationships

When a company or brand decides to sponsor a youth sports team, it demonstrates that they support youth sports, understand its benefits, and genuinely care about the community. This can help build long-term loyalty with youth sports parents. If your company sponsors a Little League or Pop Warner team, the participating parents will be more willing to choose your products and services over a competitor long after the season ends.



How can you get started?

We'll show you the right way to tackle your next sponsorship campaign in three steps:

- 1. How to Plan Your Sponsorship Campaign**
- 2. Best Practices for Executing Your Sponsorships**
- 3. How to Measure Results and Amplify Your Campaign**





How to **Plan** Your Sponsorship Campaign



The first step in planning a youth sports sponsorship strategy is to define a clear goal for your community marketing, and what audience you are trying to reach.

Your goals might include

Increase aided or unaided brand recall

Build brand affinity

Drive store traffic

Increase product awareness

Distribute X number of samples

From there, determine how you would like to target your campaign. Youth sports is a fantastic marketing channel for reaching parents across the country. But depending on your business location, markets you serve, and goals, you might have specific DMAs in mind. If you are planning a pilot as your first campaign, consider what markets will be best for testing a new channel for your business. We recommend keeping location targeting at a national or DMA-level when possible, to be able to work with the most engaged youth sports leagues across various markets.



The only time we recommend targeting specific sports is if there is an obvious business reason. For example, a hockey gear retailer that wants to target only hockey teams. Otherwise, we don't recommend cherry-picking particular sports. Even within one sport type, every league is different!

Another essential aspect in planning is determining which assets you will utilize to execute your sponsorship. Here are some ideas of components to your sponsorship to get you started:

Physical Assets

Logos on Jerseys

Field Banners

Sponsored Hand-Sanitizer Stations

Physical assets like logos on jerseys and field banners are important forms of advertising in a youth sports sponsorship campaign because they provide a high level of visibility and exposure for the brand. When a company's logo is displayed on a jersey or banner at a youth sports event, it is seen by a large number of people, including players, parents, and fans. This can help to generate awareness and recognition for the brand among a wide audience.

Additionally, physical assets like jerseys and banners create a more immersive and engaging experience for those attending the event. Seeing the brand's logo on a jersey or banner can help to create a sense of connection and involvement with the brand, which can be beneficial in building long-term relationships with customers.



Physical assets like jerseys and banners can serve as tangible reminders of the brand's sponsorship, and can be seen and shared on social media platforms, further increasing exposure for the brand.



CASE STUDY

Opendoor

Opendoor finds that youth sports sponsorship campaigns that include **branded apparel achieve top of mind awareness metrics that are 93% higher than leagues without branded apparel.**

[Read more](#)

Digital Media

In-App Digital Media

Branded Emails

Sponsored Social Media Posts

1. In-app digital media on youth sports coordination apps like **TeamSnap**:

Including banners, homepage takeovers, and native placements to reach parents in a planning mindset

2. Branded emails from the league commissioner, with messaging promoting enter to win contests, discounts, or other special offers

3. Sponsored social media posts from sponsored leagues



Digital advertising can be beneficial in combination with a physical youth sports sponsorship campaign because it enables a brand to maximize the reach and impact of a campaign. Studies show that companies that use multichannel marketing experience 3x higher effectiveness rates than those that use non-integrated campaigns ([Heinz Marketing](#)).

Digital advertising allows your brand to reach a wider audience, as it can be seen by people who may not be physically present at sponsored events but still fit the audience profile that you're trying to reach. This can help to increase exposure and generate more awareness among potential customers.

Experiential Assets

Tabling Events

Giveaways

Sample Distribution

Seminars/Webinars

Fundraisers

Coupon Distribution





Experiential sponsorship tactics like fundraisers, tabling at events, and sample distribution are effective ways to reach parents because they provide opportunities for brands to engage directly with their audience. This can create a positive and memorable experience for youth sports parents, which can be more effective in generating brand awareness and recognition than traditional forms of advertising.



CASE STUDY

meiji

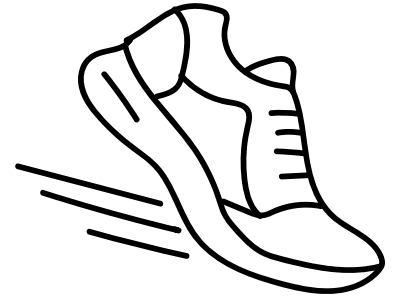
Meiji Hello Panda sees a **16.3% increase in average daily units sold** after distributing product samples at youth sporting events.

[Read more](#)

Once you have an idea of what types of assets you'd like to request from your league partners, and the targeting you want to employ, you can move forward with outreach and execution.



How to Execute Your Sponsorships



The first step in executing your sponsorship is finding sports organizations in your target markets and sourcing the correct contact to negotiate and coordinate your sponsorship with. We recommend reaching out to 3x the amount of leagues you are ideally looking to sponsor to start the sponsorship conversation, in order to reach your goals. Google is your friend! Start with basic search queries to find the website of sports organizations.



(Town/City Name and State) youth (sport name)



The best time to reach league contacts is after common business hours, since many of them work at the league in a volunteer-role.

Once you've identified the proper contact, it's time to negotiate a deal.

1. Evaluate what assets you want included in your sponsorship and format this together as a sponsorship package.
2. Propose pricing for your ideal sponsorship package. Note that some sports organizations will already have sponsorship packages and pricing on their website. Typical sponsorship package pricing can range from \$500 - \$5,000+ depending on the assets you're asking the league to execute



on, and the number of families represented in the league. You can come up with your ideal pricing by estimating the amount of impressions your brand will get over the course of a season, and calculate using a standard CPM of \$15.

3. After coming to an agreement with your league contact, draft a contract to submit to the league.

Once the league's board approves the contract and the signed agreement is completed, you can begin implementing your sponsorship.

Production of sponsorship assets is a key step in the sponsorship process. Your brand will want to control production where possible. This includes developing the creative for signage and digital assets to ensure your executing your sponsorship inline with your goals.

After assets are produced, implementing them across the league is the true launch of the sponsorship. Your brand should request photo verification of assets in use within two weeks of the season start date. This ensures that assets are executed on and potential consumers are gaining awareness of your brand. While your team is there to guide the execution of the sponsorship, it's ultimately the league's role to manage it.

BEST PRACTICES

Standardize sponsorship assets and pricing when possible

There is a lot of variability in the types of sponsorships, sponsorship packages, and pricing. We recommend considering standardization when you are negotiating with each program so you can simplify your execution and tracking.

Stay organized

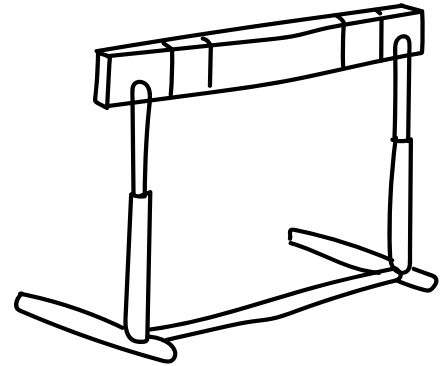
Establish a centralized location for tracking sponsorship requirements, price, progress, and measurements. This will help ensure you have a good understanding of who is executing what, what has been verified, and what's still outstanding for your partnerships.

Be flexible

Remember, working with volunteers is more volatile than working with full time employees.

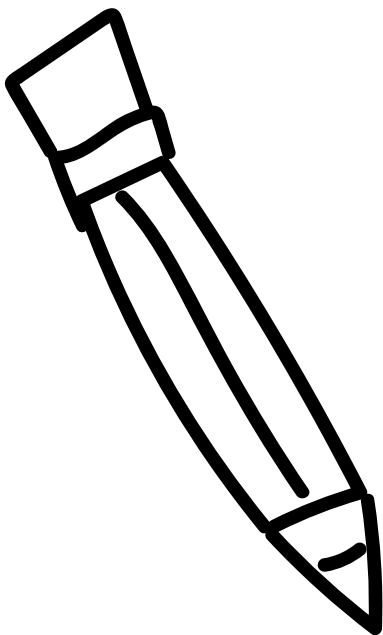


Measuring the **outcome** of your sponsorship



Measuring the results of your sponsorship is a vital part of the process. Without proper measurement, it's impossible to know if you had a good return on investment. Setting up the tracking system will ensure results are captured.

Some common ways to measure your sponsorship results include:



ONE

Measuring Reach

As a baseline measurement tool for any campaign, you will want to understand how many people or households you are reaching. This is often communicated as 'impressions', and allows you to understand how many times your advertisement is viewed or heard.

TWO

Surveys

To measure increases in brand awareness, loyalty, favorability, or other custom goals of your organization, survey your audience pre and post-campaign. You can use out of the box tools like SurveyMonkey or Pollfish to build and send your surveys to your desired audience by



geography or demographic.

It's best to send your surveys directly from a trusted member of the group you are working with. For example, to survey families in a sports league, working with the league commissioner to request participation will increase responses.

In addition to measuring lifts in brand metrics, surveys are a great way to learn about your customer base. Asking multiple choice or free response questions can lead to valuable insights directly from families in the communities that you serve. For example, if your brand is a restaurant, try asking "When you think of a local restaurant, which, if any, comes to mind?", or "How likely are you or a family member to eat at restaurant XYZ?"

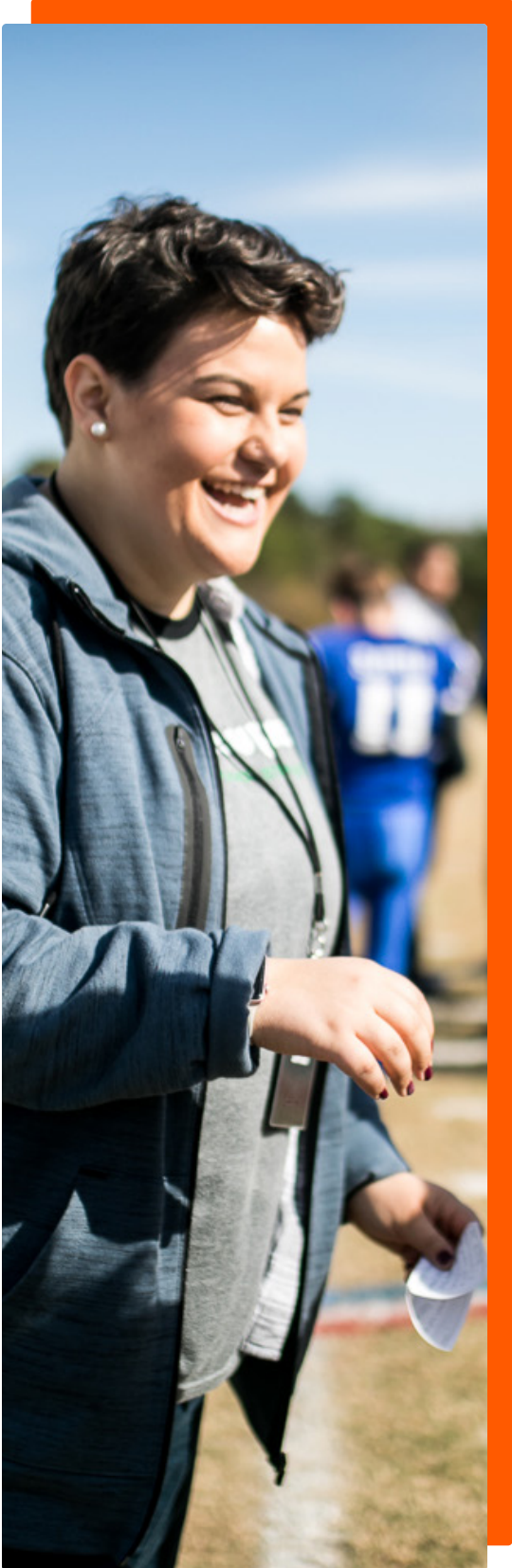
THREE

Testimonials

By tracking testimonials and feedback over time, you can discover qualitative trends in your brand recognition and favorability in the community.

Youth sports events like tournaments and games can have hundreds or thousands of families in the same space for a long period of time. Regularly tabling at events can be a great way for your staff to build relationships in the community or distribute informational packets and takeaways to extend the brand into the home.





FOUR

Coupons

If your brand has the capability to offer coupons, try distributing them in partnership with the league you are sponsoring. You can also consider sending coupons digitally, similar to how you would distribute a survey, but we recommend distributing them in person if possible.

To encourage redemptions, consider making your coupons time-bound, by tying them to an event like a local school spirit week. Another way to encourage redemption is to strategically distribute at an impactful event where people will want to celebrate at the end of the day.

FIVE

Local Store Revenue

If you have physical locations, one of the most straightforward ways of measuring the impact of your youth sports sponsorship efforts is by tracking nearby retail store revenue. As you activate within a certain community, you will want to measure any increase in sales that result from your brand's activation.

A good way to measure this is to run a test between two similar markets, one as a control group where your brand isn't sponsoring youth sports and another where it is. This will provide tangible revenue data that highlights how important and effective your community



marketing was. Note that your results may not be measurable with smaller campaigns where you are sponsoring less than five leagues, or reaching under 2,500 households.

SIX

Digital Traffic

Digital traffic is another important data point to monitor throughout your youth sports marketing campaigns.

When your brand runs a campaign within a specific area, digital traffic can be one of the most helpful indicators of success. Monitoring organic search traffic for your brand can be a helpful way to see how a community activation increased brand interest. Social media followers and CPC efficiency of your digital paid campaigns are other helpful digital KPIs to monitor.



Amplifying the **results** of your sponsorship



Now that you're up and running, your sponsorship doesn't need to start and end on the field. Amplify your youth sports sponsorships to maximize its impact and reach.

In-store, businesses can use point-of-sale materials to promote initiatives that their brand supports, and can also decorate their stores to show consumers what initiatives they are involved in. Businesses can also leverage content collected through their community support efforts to create radio, TV, and out-of-home ad content that's specific to the market it's running in.

Public relations efforts can also be used to generate press coverage of the impact of your local sponsorships in the community.

Finally, your brand can leverage digital channels like social media and web banners to share imagery and content from your local sponsorships to reach a wider audience.





Evaluating your youth sports sponsorship

Evaluating the results of your sponsorship is the final step in your campaign. This is when you should review the results of your sponsorship alongside its original goals and total investment. Did the outcome align with your planned KPIs? Did you achieve growth in the metric you wanted to focus on? Is there anything that you will do differently next time?

If you didn't receive the results you had planned for with your first sponsorship campaign, don't give up! At TeamSnap, we have found that multi-season campaigns out-perform those that only last for one season.



CASE STUDY



Nemours Children's Health finds that long-term youth sports sponsorship campaigns lead to higher impact in the market, with a **400% increase in top of mind awareness.**

[Read more](#)

Youth sports sponsorships can be an extremely rewarding marketing channel for your brand. Planning, executing, and measuring youth sports sponsorships can be challenging, but with the right tools and techniques your team can build a strategy that consistently achieves your business goals while making an impact in communities.

**Interested in how
TeamSnap can
help your brand
sponsor youth
sports leagues with
turnkey, scalable,
and measurable
campaigns?**

Get In Touch

brandpartners@teamsnap.com

Check Us Out

teamsnap.com

