gift of kit

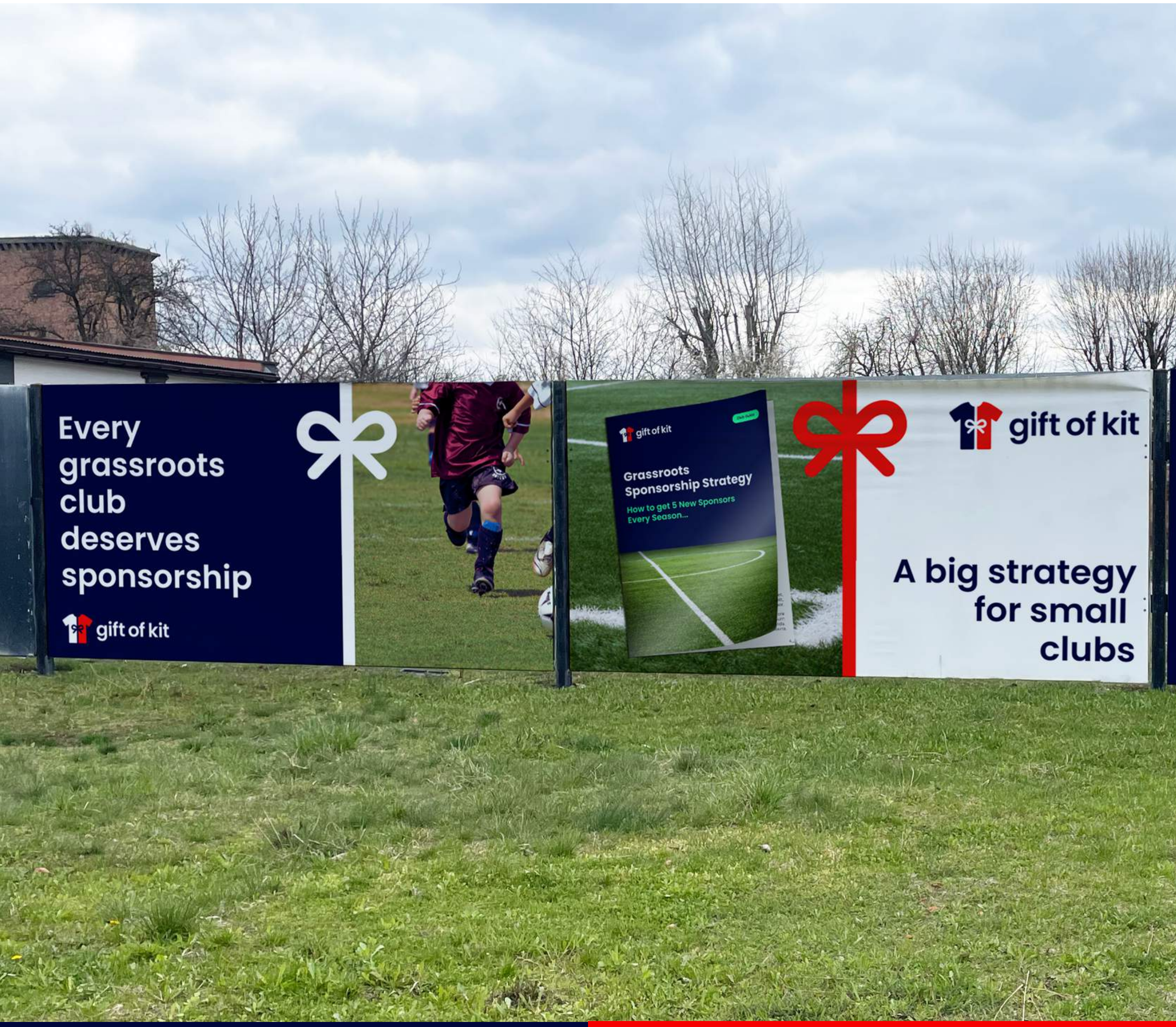
Club Guide

Grassroots Sponsorship Strategy

How to Get 5 New Sponsors Every Season...

Securing sponsorships can be a daunting task, especially for grassroots sports clubs that often rely on volunteers for their operations.

Recognising this challenge, we've developed a comprehensive sponsorship strategy and ready-made templates to give your sponsorship mission a head start.



Step 1: Identify and list potential sponsors

Start by scanning your local business landscape. Which businesses are already engaged in local activities or sponsorships? Their existing commitment to local causes means they understand the value of community involvement and are more likely to see the benefits of partnering with your team.

Consider the local estate agent sponsoring other teams, or the neighbourhood gym that would benefit from reaching your active members. These businesses are already **aligned with your community,** making them top candidates for your sponsorship list.

Don't just limit yourself to sports-related businesses. Think broadly - local eateries, tech companies, or health and wellness centres can be excellent sponsors. They might be looking for unique ways to engage with the community that your team can provide.

Example

A local estate agent might be interested in sponsoring your team as a way to showcase their community involvement and to reach families - an important demographic for their services. Presenting them with a tailored sponsorship package that highlights community engagement and digital exposure can be highly appealing.

Step 2: Tailor your pitch

Research is Key. Understanding what a business values is key to a successful pitch. Invest time in understanding each potential sponsor's business model, target audience, and marketing strategies. This will enable you to align your pitch with their business objectives, thereby increasing the likelihood of securing their sponsorship.

Dive into their website and social platforms to grasp their ethos and customer base.

Personalisation makes a difference. Customise your approach for each business. A generic pitch is less effective than one that speaks directly to a company’s goals, values, and interests.

Example

A local gym might be interested in aligning with a sports team to promote healthy living and active lifestyles. Suggest a joint health and fitness event where they can showcase their facilities, along with branding on your team’s training kit, to provide them with added visibility.

Step 3: Think beyond tradition

The modern sponsorship landscape is not limited to kit and pitchside boarding. Digital platforms offer a range of opportunities for exposure. Social media shoutouts, branded content, and event collaborations are just a few avenues to explore

Digital sponsorships can often offer more value than traditional methods. They provide sponsors with direct access to your audience and can be crafted to fit various budgets and objectives. Think of it that you're competing with the local paper or village newsletters that will be charging local businesses hundreds of pounds to advertise, often with little way to target a specific audience and measure results. You can offer a better alternative!

Example

Swap a carpet cleaner's costly local ad with a more impactful, cost-effective social media campaign through your club's channels. This modern approach offers greater exposure and connects them directly with your engaged audience.

Consider offering a package where sponsors can feature in a series of Instagram live sessions, showcasing their products or services. This approach can generate immediate engagement and is an attractive alternative to traditional advertising methods.

Step 4: Make it personal

While digital communication is convenient, **nothing beats the personal touch.** A face-to-face meeting or a personalised letter can set your proposal apart and show potential sponsors your genuine enthusiasm.

Direct interaction, whether through a face-to-face meeting or a personalised letter, can significantly impact a potential sponsor's decision.

Example

Consider creating a short, engaging video showcasing your team and its community impact, to give potential sponsors a vivid picture of what their sponsorship can achieve.

Use a club letterhead for your correspondence. This professional touch can elevate your proposal, making it stand out. You can find customisable templates on our website to get started.

Step 5: Persistence pays off

Regular Engagement is Crucial. Follow up on your proposals regularly. Showing that you are genuinely interested in forming a partnership can make a significant difference.

Demonstrating that you value their business by being a customer can help build a relationship. This approach shows potential sponsors that you are interested in a mutually beneficial partnership.

Example

If you’re seeking sponsorship from a local bar or restaurant, organise team socials there occasionally. Use these visits to casually bring up your proposal and discuss potential partnerships. This consistent engagement can build rapport and familiarity, leading to a successful sponsorship relationship.

If you’ve approached a local coffee shop for sponsorship for example, make it a point to drop by for a coffee and casually discuss your proposal. Familiarity breeds trust, paving the way for a successful partnership.

Gift of Kit's strategy and templates made it so much easier to find and talk to sponsors. We connected with local businesses and got some great support thanks to their clear and practical advice.

Daniel Ward, U9 Coach, Chippenham Town Youth

The Ingredients of an effective sponsorship proposal

A sponsorship proposal is more than just a document; it's a reflection of your club's values, aspirations, and potential. It's the first impression you'll make on a potential sponsor, and as we all know, first impressions count.

Our **free sponsorship proposal template** is a carefully structured tool designed to highlight your club's strengths and align them with potential sponsors' goals. Our template covers:

- **Introduction to Your Club:** Showcase who you are, your achievements, and your community impact.
- **Audience Demographics:** Provide data on your club's reach, from members to social media followers.
- **Sponsorship Benefits:** Outline the tangible benefits for sponsors, like brand visibility and community goodwill.
- **Customisation Options:** Every club is unique, and our template allows room for you to personalise and emphasise your specific needs and strengths.

Letter template

Alongside the proposal, the introductory letter is crucial. It's your chance to establish a connection with a potential sponsor. Our letter template guides you in crafting a compelling narrative that resonates with businesses, highlighting mutual benefits and opening doors for further conversation.