

## EAA Air Tours/Suggestions for Sponsorship

We know that the idea of obtaining sponsors for your tour stop can be a bit intimidating. Everyone is different when it comes to being able to “sell” an event or organization. It can sometimes be difficult to approach individuals or organizations and ask for support. It may also be difficult even knowing where to start. We have compiled the following information (based on suggestions from chapters across the country who have hosted successfully in the past) in order to assist you in this process. I hope you find this helpful, keeping in mind that every tour stop and location is different and all practices may not apply to your area. You know your area so go with your best judgment and happy planning!



### Getting Started

Make the focus on sponsorship NOT donation. It should be presented as a mutually beneficial relationship for your chapter and the business involved. Emphasize that you will be working together to make the event a success for both parties. Go in with a plan. This doesn't have to be anything fancy, just a simple printout of what the event is/who is involved/a list of everything you expect from them as a sponsor/and a list of all of the things they get in return (in terms of exposure). Definitely have a monetary amount in mind to request, but also think of other reasonable inclusions (specific examples are listed below). This plan is an agreement, not a signed contract. We have found that in the past “contracts” tend to scare away potential donors. Past hosts have found that the most successful sponsorships have come from building a relationship with the participating organizations, enhanced by open and often communication about the progression of the event.

### Who to Approach for Support

.Aviation-Related Organizations, Committees, or Businesses (local FBO, Airport Commission, AOPA, ALPA, Flying Clubs, etc.)-these individuals can often give discounts on fuel, hangar space, and other aviation services (tug, ramp space)

.Businesses that have pilots or aviation enthusiasts in management or on the Board (LinkedIn is a good research tool for this)-this personal interest connection can create a great deal of excitement within an organization

. Car Dealerships (this works for the Ford in particular)-ask them to put flyers on all of their cars in the lot for this specific week (they cover printing of these)/have them organize a mailing (on their budget) –

“start the car with this key”---this will draw people out to the event!!/or buy a car on a specific date and we include a free ride on the Ford (have the dealership foot this bill).

.Grocery Stores-we want you to put flyers in all your bags for a set period of time----offer them to distribute their bags with whatever they want in them at the event (other types of companies might also be interested in providing “swag bags” as well – they can be filled with sponsor items- pens/notepads/keychains- as well as chapter information on meeting times, locations, and other events)

.Banks or Credit Unions---financial institutions historically have larger budgets for community involvement- you can print off, on a home computer (the size of a deposit slip-3 to a page) – an insert advertising the event with the banks logo as well for the week or two prior to the date

.Hotels-secure monetary amounts or crew rooms and in exchange allow them to use your event to build a “package” (it is important that they know they will have to cover the cost of the flights that they sell under these terms)

. Organizations with an interest in community enhancement: Historical Societies, VFW’s, Community Colleges and Universities, Military Bases, YMCA’s, Big Brothers Big Sisters, elementary schools, etc.

### **Miscellaneous Ideas to Secure Sponsorships**

.Larger business often have items to give away that have their brand on it, whether it be pens, key chains, magnets, or t-shirts. People love freebies-if you agree to distribute these to your passengers this will enhance your event and provide free advertising in exchange for a sponsorship!

.Take Photos at event and post to Flickr for purchase (promise that the sponsors logo will be on every photo (can also have sponsors logo painted on the grass in front of the plane for photo ops

.Offer that the company logo gets posted on all rack cards/posters/banners (get them to cover printing adhesives for this)

.Include their company logo on all emails that your chapter sends out regarding the event

.Companies love to do something for their employees---offer to set up an “employee appreciation hour” before the event---they can come meet and talk to the crew/get their picture taken with the plane/raffle off a couple of free tickets

.Free advertising---have volunteer staff wear t-shirts that your chapter on front and sponsors logo on back at the event (include the printing and materials in your sponsorship agreement)

### Wrap-Up

-If you do secure a sponsorship with a company, inquire if they have a database of customer email addresses. Just as EAA does an Eblast using our database, many companies would love to send out a notice promoting themselves as a sponsor for your event, highlighting their involvement in the community. This is a free way to get the word out to an even larger audience!

-Make sure that there are not any competing events in the area at the time of your tour stop (ex: other touring aircraft, sporting events, etc.). However, not all events pull people away from your mission. Some things, like festivals and states fairs in the area can actually draw additional crowds that would not have otherwise been in the vicinity. Find out what is going on and what connections you can make that will benefit your chapter most!

-Remember that securing sponsors is not a cookie-cutter operation. Each business, organization, or individual may need a different approach to cater to what their image is (some may be focused on getting their name or brand out while others may be intrigued by the history or simply supporting their local airport). And remember it never hurts to ask. They may say no, but this is not a reflection of your efforts or ideas, it may be as simple as it really is not in their budget at the time....keep on trying and you will be successful!

-Reach out to other EAA Chapters in your area. They may not be able to provide funds, but they may be interested in providing volunteers or connections to businesses and media that they have in the area!

-Get creative-this is your event so make the most of it! The above are just a few ideas to get you inspired! It is your home town so you have the connections and you know what will make your stop successful!