

Athlete and Sports Sponsorship Coordinator

Spotlight

Look around at any sporting event and you'll see brand names and logos everywhere. It's no accident; in fact, it was someone's job to talk to all those big companies and coordinate deals that would give brands a new advertising outlet and sports teams and associations the money to put on more events.

Personal Connection

It takes a skilled negotiator to put together mutually beneficial deals for athletes, teams, and sports leagues. It also takes someone who is familiar not only with the world of sports, but marketing as well.

- Have you ever been told that you're good at negotiating?
- Do you want to work in the sports industry?
- Are you a skilled salesman/woman?
- Do you want to learn about sponsorships and how to negotiate a good deal?

Other Connections

Athlete and sports sponsorship coordinating falls under the category of sports marketing. Marketing itself is a vast industry that offers many job opportunities, including:

- Leveraging social media channels to increase brand awareness as a social media manager
- Serving as a direct link between a company and the public to ensure the brand message draws in potential customers and keeps up with current marketing trends as a brand manager
- Studying data and using it to advise brands and companies on how to move forward with their marketing plans to reach the highest number of customers as a marketing analyst
- Creating the aesthetic side of any brand and creating images that resonate with consumers as a graphic designer
- Putting together events to create brand awareness and get a product or service in front of the public as an event marketer

Fun Facts/ "Did You Know?..."

Some fun trivia about sport sponsorships:

Not all deals are created equal: Certain athletes have become synonymous with certain brands. Michael Jordan's famous partnership with Nike is just one example. [Read more here.](#)

Have you wondered where stadiums got their names? Some sponsorship deals are so big that entire sports stadiums are named after brands. This all started with Fenway Park in Boston. [Read more here.](#)

Soccer teams are flying high: Did you know that Red Bull purchased a Major League soccer team? [Read more here.](#)



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STEM Connection

Here are some ways technology is influencing athlete and sports sponsorships:

- Data analytics is used to determine the best potential sponsors and how effective sponsorship has been: Audience alignment refers to how well a potential sponsor's customers match up with an athlete or sport's target audience. Data analytics can break down this relationship and offer a by the numbers view of how well a sport and a sponsor can cross over as far as their audience goes. [Read more.](#)
- Digital media advertising is the name of the game: Signs and posters at sporting events are the last decade's way of advertising. These days, digital platforms are the key locations for sponsorships to take off. Athletes promote certain brands they're partnered with, and brands themselves promote sporting events or teams they have a relationship with. It's all about give and take on the platforms their target audience interacts with. [Read more.](#)
- Projection mapping is used for sponsor logos and messages: Projection mapping turns any surface into advertising space by projecting an image or video using digital mapping. [Read more.](#)
- Virtual reality allows brands to connect with sports fans in an entirely new way: Virtual reality is the wave of the future, and some brands are already using it to give fans unique experiences while throwing in a little advertising plug. [Read more.](#)

Articles, Videos, Podcasts of Interest

Social media has changed how influential athletes can be with the right sponsorship. [Learn more.](#)

Sponsorships in today's world are all about leveraging the digital world, which offers a lot of benefits. [Learn more.](#)

Sports Career Finder offers a good overview of sports marketing and how to get into the field, including what to study. [Learn more.](#)

To really know what the job is like from day to day, it's important to know the ins and outs of sponsorship. [Learn more.](#)

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Journeys to Becoming an Athlete and Sports Sponsorship Coordinator

No matter where you are in your academic career, whether you're just starting high school or ready to look at colleges, you can start working on the skills you need to make it as an athlete and sports sponsorship coordinator. The job is marketing-heavy, so you'll definitely want to familiarize yourself with business, psychology, and of course the principles of marketing. You'll also want to take computer science courses, since the rising use of software and technology in marketing make computer literacy a highly desired skill.

Read about one student's journey into her future in sports sponsorship coordination:

Whitney Wagoner was an account manager for the NFL for seven years, and along the way she learned exactly what it takes to not only break into the field of sports sponsorship, but succeed as well.

Whitney graduated from the University of Oregon's Sports Marketing Center. Her first opportunity to join the NFL's corporate sponsorship department came in the form of an unpaid internship. Whitney worked her way up from intern, to contract employee, and finally full-time employee. Along the way she also received promotions, going from assistant to account executive and then account manager.

Whitney was surprised to discover that in the world of sports sponsorship, you don't actually have to be an expert in sports. Instead, you have to get to know your sponsors and be familiar with their markets, whether they're credit card companies or auto makers. Some of the biggest names Whitney worked with were Motorola, IBM, and Sony. Her advice to students starting out in the field is to always focus on your options and "be open to working for a property, sponsor or an agency of any size. Know that sponsorship experience is equally valuable whether it be in sports, the arts or community-based events."

Read more about Whitney's career [here](#).

Read about one man's path in sports advertising:

Sam Cole is a sports sponsorship expert. These days he serves as the Director of Corporate Partnerships with the New Orleans Pelicans, but in the past he has worked with MLB, NHL, NFL, and NASCAR teams. Because of his experience in corporate partnerships across all different major sports industries, Sam is well-suited to give advice to the next generation of sponsorship coordinators.

Sam says that one of the biggest struggles new professionals face is the realization that "our jobs aren't as easy as people think that they are." People have trouble understanding the purpose of sponsorship sales, and it takes a special kind of professional to be able to convince different companies of the value of a sponsorship. He says that even large and well-known teams have difficulty recruiting sponsors, so sponsorship coordinators must be patient and persistent.

Learn more about Sam's journey and his expertise on sports sponsorships [here](#).

