Aretas

Finding sponsors for a fitness event

A sponsor is not buying a logo. They are buying a few hours in front of people who train, buy kit, take supplements and book physios, and the right to say they were part of a good day. This guide covers who to approach, what to sell them, when to ask, and the report that brings them back next year.

It uses the example every Team Aretas resource uses: **120 athletes, 8 lanes, one day**, with three workouts and 45 heats.

By Steven Batchelor · Last updated 27 October 2026 · 9 min read

The short answer

- **Sell named things, not logo space.** The event, each workout and the awards are things a sponsor can put their name to; a banner on the wall is not.
- **Ask businesses your athletes already buy from**, 16 weeks out, when entries open, and have every workout sponsor signed before workout 1 is released at 8 weeks.
- **Send every sponsor a report within 5 days.** It is the cheapest way to keep them, and the one most often skipped.

What a sponsor is buying

Every sponsor wants some mix of five things. Ask which ones matter to them before you offer a package:

What they want	What it looks like at your event
Reach	Their name in front of 120 athletes, and the friends and family who come to watch
The right audience	People who train several times a week and spend money on it
Product in hands	Samples, a stand, or their product as prizes
Photos and content	Their name in shot in the photos athletes share afterwards
Leads they can count	A discount code for your athletes, so they can see what the day sold

A local physio wants athletes to remember them when they next get injured. A supplement brand wants samples tried and a code used. A kit shop wants the shop visited. The same package does not suit all three, which is why it helps to ask first.

Who to approach

Start with the businesses your athletes already spend money with. They understand the audience without being told, and a sponsorship is easy for them to justify:

- **Physios and sports massage.** A treatment table on the day is useful to athletes and to them.
- **Supplement and nutrition brands.** They usually give product, for prizes or sampling, whichever the sponsor prefers.
- **Kit and apparel shops.** Prizes, a stand, and sometimes the event T-shirt.
- **Equipment makers and suppliers.** Your own gym's supplier already knows you.
- **Local businesses near the venue.** Cafés, food, and employers who want to be seen in the community.

Do not approach another gym that competes with yours or with the host, and never sign two sponsors in the same trade without asking the first one.

The packages

Three kinds of package cover most events, and each one is built around something you can name:

Package	How many	What they get	What it pays for
Headline	1	The event is "presented by" them: every email, every post, the floor banner and the awards	Your biggest cost, such as the venue
Workout sponsor	Up to 3, one per workout	A workout named after them, its release post and its 15 heats	One named cost, such as the photographer
Supplier	Any number	A stand, sampling, or a service on the day	Paid in product or service: prizes, physio, food

Setting the price

Price each cash package against the cost it pays for, and say so in the pack: "the workout 2 sponsor pays for the photographer" is easier to agree to than a number on its own. Start with your budget, decide which costs sponsorship should cover, and only then put a price on each package. A supplier pays in what they give, so write down its value too, because the report should say what they put in. Fitness brands at this size usually give product rather than cash. A local business, such as an accountant or a plumber, will often pay a few hundred pounds to sponsor a workout.

What a workout sponsor gets

A workout sponsor sounds small, but their name keeps coming back over the countdown. Here is what the workout 2 sponsor gets, from listing to report:

When	Where their name appears
From the day the workout is listed	On workout 2, before the workout itself is revealed
4 weeks out	The release post and email for workout 2
The day, 12:20 to 16:20	Read out by the MC at the start of each of workout 2's 15 heats
The day, on screen	On the leaderboard for workout 2
Day 5	Their own sponsor report

When to ask

Sponsors plan their budgets well ahead, and their name has to be in place before the things that carry it go out. On the planning countdown:

When	What
16 weeks out	Send the sponsor pack, as entries open
14 weeks out	Follow up once, by phone if you can
10 weeks out	Packages agreed, logos and links in hand
8 weeks out	Workout 1 released, with its sponsor named
4 weeks out	Workouts 2 and 3 released, with their sponsors
The day	Banners up when the kit goes out at 07:00
Day 5	Sponsor reports sent

A workout sponsor signed after their workout is released has missed the release post, which is one of the best things the package offers.

The sponsor pack

Two pages at most. A pack that takes ten minutes to read does not get read:

Section	What to include
The event	Date, venue, 120 athletes, the workouts and the categories
The athletes	Who enters, where they come from, and how many came last time
The packages	Each package, what it includes and its price
Last year	Photos with sponsors in shot, and the numbers from last year's reports
Next steps	Who to contact, and the date you need an answer by

Only put in numbers you can show. A sponsor who checks one figure and finds it inflated does not read the rest.

On the day

Everything in the package has to happen, and somebody has to be responsible for it:

- **Write every sponsor into the MC's script**, with the exact words: "Workout 2, presented by …" at the start of each heat.
- **Put stands and sampling on the floor plan**, where athletes pass between heats rather than in a corner.
- **Hang the banners where the cameras point**, behind the lanes and the podium.
- **Put sponsors on the screens.** If the leaderboard is on a screen at the venue, put a sponsor slide between the category boards so it comes round all day.
- **Brief the photographer** to get each sponsor's name in shot at least three or four times.
- **Have the prizes on the podium**, and thank each sponsor by name at the awards.

The report that brings them back

Send each sponsor one page by day 5, while the event is still fresh. Say where their name appeared, how many people saw it, which photos it is in, and what you would offer them next year. The gallery is often the strongest number: in the example, 1,240 people looked at the photos in the week after. The guide to the week after the event has the report to copy.

End the report with an offer: the same package next year, theirs to accept before anyone else is asked.

Common mistakes

- **Selling logo space.** A logo on a banner is easy to ignore; "Workout 2, presented by" is read out 15 times.
- **Promising numbers you cannot show.** Say 120 athletes, not "thousands of impressions".
- **Two sponsors in the same trade.** The first one finds out on the day, and neither comes back.
- **Signing a workout sponsor after its release.** The release post has gone out without them.
- **No report.** The sponsor never hears what they got, and books someone else next year.

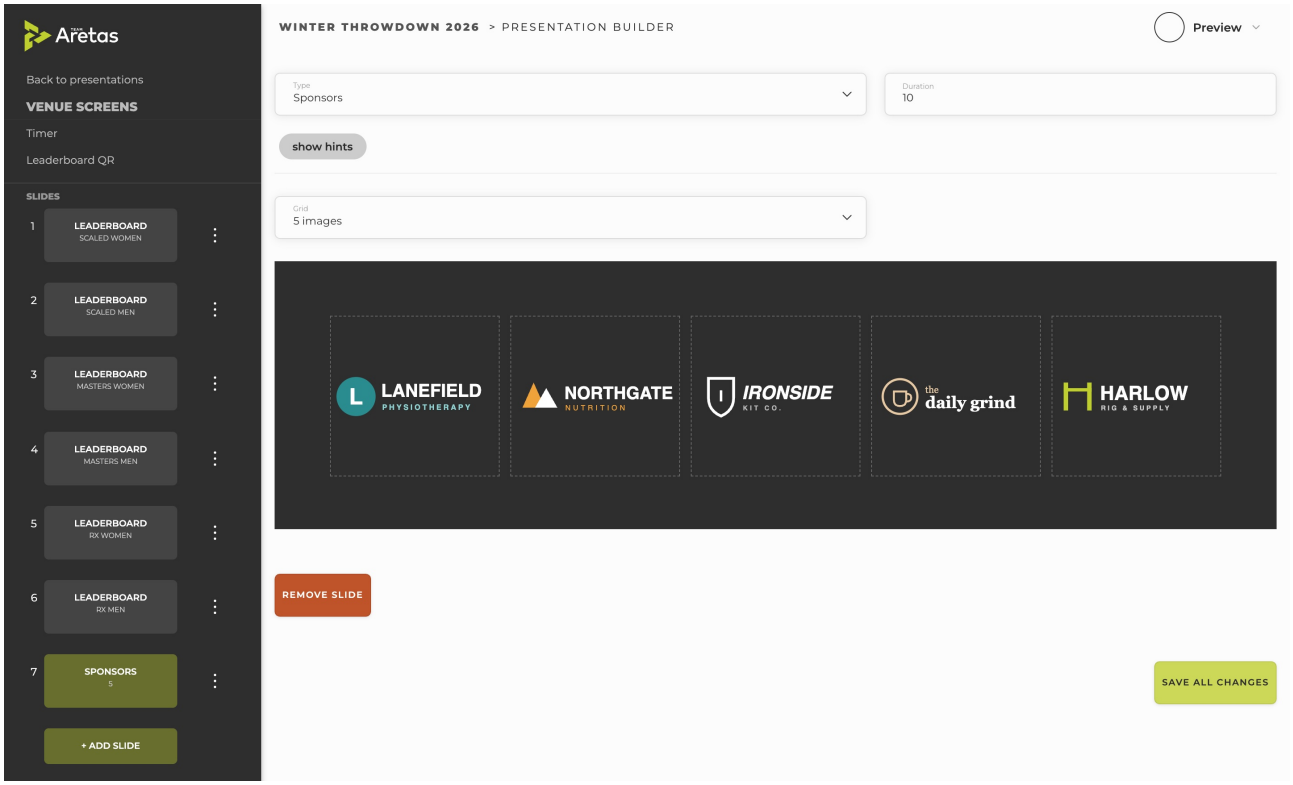
Run it on Team Aretas

On Team Aretas a sponsor can appear in two places: on a workout, and on the screens at the venue.

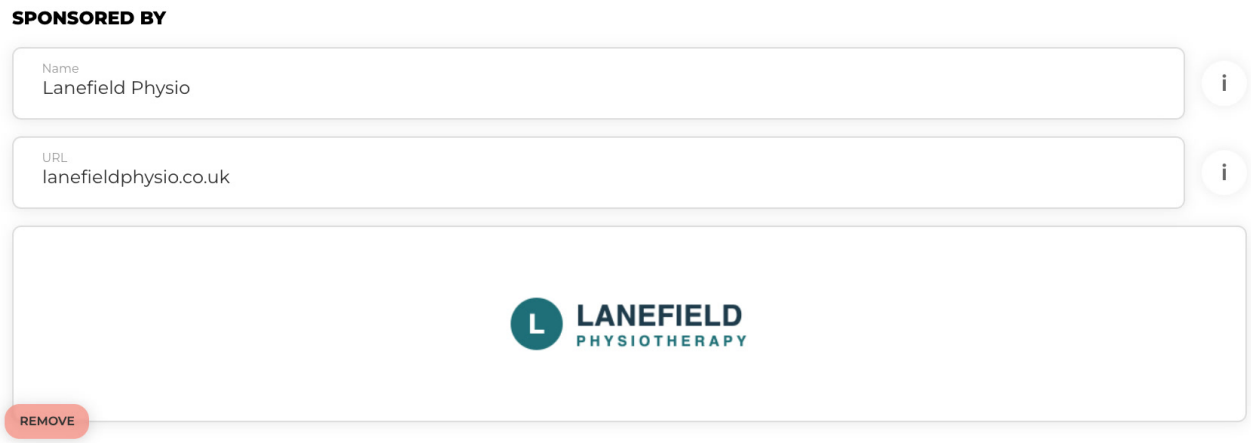
- **Workout sponsors.** Each workout carries a sponsor's name, logo and link. They show with the workout on the workouts page, on the leaderboard and in each athlete's schedule, and the sponsor is shown even while the workout itself is still hidden.
- **Sponsor slides on the leaderboard screens.** The leaderboard you show on the venue screens runs as a loop of slides, and sponsor slides sit between the category leaderboards: one logo, one full-screen image, or 3, 5 or 10 logos at once. You set how long each slide stays up, and a video slide can play a sponsor's advert. That gives you something to sell at every level: a full-screen slide for the headline sponsor, and a shared 5 or 10 logo slide for suppliers.

In the example, six category leaderboards and one sponsor slide at 10 seconds each come round every 70 seconds, so the sponsor slide is on screen 574 times between 08:30 and 19:40. That is a number you can put in the pack and show in the report. The photo gallery carries a sponsor credit too, and counts its visits for the report.

This is the sponsor slide in the venue-screen builder, sitting after the six category leaderboards:



This is where a workout sponsor goes in:



- How Team Aretas shows the leaderboard on venue screens
- How Team Aretas keeps athletes informed
- See it working on your own competition in a demo