How to Get Sponsored:

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Introduction:

Today in the world of snowboarding things are very different than only five years ago. Every new kid coming up the ranks in the snowboard world can do the exact same trick as the next. So what will distinguish you from everyone else? What is your unique selling point? Why should a snowboard company invest their money in you?
These are the kind of question you will need to find an answer to if you're looking for sponsorship.

There are basically 4 ways to get sponsored:

1) Be an amazing contest rider.
   Or:
2) Be an outstanding video part rider.
   Or:
3) Be the best at publicizing yourself.
   Or:
4) Have a unique selling point that grabs attention.
   Or:
5) (and this is the most desirable) – a combination of options 1, 2, 3, and 4.

1) Amazing contest rider:
The best example of this is obviously Shaun White. "The Flying Tomato," is the best rider in the world in terms of contests. He is also the most highly paid snowboarder in the world and has become a multi-millionaire solely from snowboarding. He has won every major halfpipe and slopestyle contest in the world from the X Games, to the US Open and the Olympics.
If you begin to win major snowboard contests, you will easily pick up sponsors although you won't pick up the big sponsorship deals until your winning the big name events.

2) Outstanding video part rider:
The best example of this is Jeremy Jones. JJ consistently year after year puts out one of the world's best video parts in an international snowboard video. Video part riders are the most common form of pro snowboarders today. To secure the big contracts you need to be able to produce bangers year after year and companies will take notice. If you have a rad video part every year, then you never need to ride another contest. The reason getting a video park works

for getting sponsored is that people who watch that video are seeing what gear you're riding. If you're nailing out tricks on Burton gear then people are subconsciously going to want that Burton gear so they can ride like you.
Getting in touch with a film crew is relatively easy if you're an awesome rider. There are tons of smaller snowboard films being produced every year all across the globe. Lots of these smaller film production companies who are gagging for good footage so the basic requirement to get your first video part is around 15 banger tricks on street rails, or backcountry jumps or unique urban features. They don't want your park shots.
Once you get your first few clips in video, even if it's just a small production, you have some leveraging power to talk with companies and they have a reason to hook you up.

3) Be the best at publicizing yourself:
The best example of this is Mark Frank Montoya. MFM is hands down the best in the industry at getting the most media attention. He has done this by becoming the XXXL gangsta image of snowboarding. If there's a snowboard tradeshow, MFM is there. If there's a major snowboard event MFM is there. He always makes his image present. He has multiple image's in all the major snowboard mags. He also now owns a chain of Snowboard Hotels.

4) A unique selling point that grabs attention:
A great example of this is myself with Snowboard Addiction. I am not even close to the best riders in the world, however I'm sponsored because I have created a unique selling point that grabs attention. I can help people learn freestyle riding skills better than almost anyone out there and I've created a website to maximize the amount of people I can share this info with. Tons of people all over the world are paying attention to the gear that I ride. This is just one example of a unique selling point that completely separates me from the crowd.
The best example of a unique selling point is probably Renee Renee from DC. If you've seen any of the DC mountain lab videos, you'll know who he is. He is an average snowboarder but has his own pro model DC boots and clothing line. His unique advantage is being the all round funny guy/artist/singer/crazy dude!

So what can you do:

So all the above example are pro snowboarders who have already made it. We were all in your position at some point. Here's what you can do:

Ride contests:
Enter as many competitions as possible. Competitions are becoming more and more frequent all around the world. The more competitions you enter the better you'll get and the more well known you'll be. Especially if you're winning them. Find out what competitions are going to happen near you during the season and make a point to enter as many as you possibly can. Don't worry about placing first or last, just go out there and have fun, your skills will develop as you continue your progression. Always have a positive mindset when riding. It's just another chance to get on the board so go out there give it your best while having a good time.

Get Video Footage: (and photos)
Get out there with your mates and film your best tricks. That's how JP Walker started and then one day they realized that other people wanted to watch the footage they had recorded. Put together you own little video part. Try to keep your video's as professional looking as possible. Think about the angle that will make it look the best and use a tripod to stabilize the image. Make sure the lighting is good. If you know anyone making a local little video ask them if they are looking for some extra shots. If any of your friends have a production quality camera or even better, an HD camera try to get them up riding with you.

Publicize yourself:

Get involved in your snowboard community as much as possible. Join snowboard organizations, make a profile on Snowboard.com. Contact any type of snowboard related media and offer to write some articles for example on a website or for a low key magazine or a snowboard shop newsletter. You could even make your own blogging website and try to create a fan base of people who read your articles. See if you can judge a small contest or MC it, or just work the BBQ. Get a job at a snowboard shop, this way you'll be able to meet and make friends with the reps/distributors. Make friends with professional snowboard photographers. They can make you look real good in photos. If you get any bangers they will also submit them to magazines and then there's a chance you'll get a shot published. The ways to publicize yourself are limitless and the more you can get yourself in front of any form of snowboard media, the more likely it is that you'll be hooked up.

Create unique selling point that grabs attention:
This is where you have to put your brain to work and think about what you can offer your snowboard community. You can start by putting together a portfolio with videos and pictures of you riding. Try and make it a unique and fun. A good idea is to make a website to host your profile. There are plenty of companies on the net that will host a site for you for free with step by step instructions to set it up. Here's an example of my current online profile site:

www.NevLapwood.com

Once you've got a portfolio you need to market yourself. The most likely places for initial sponsorship are your local shops. Drop off your folio and talk with the owner or manager. Be confident in yourself. The chances are you'll at least get a discount on your next purchase. The shop owners know all the reps and distributors and they will always talk you up if they believe you have potential. Don't send your portfolio to every single snowboard company. Just try to get hooked up with the gear that you like and would like to represent. If they aren't interested then try someone else. Always follow up with contacts and ask for a response or you'll just get left hanging.

Is your riding good enough?

If you want to get sponsored and turn pro you need to be pretty damn good. Not only do you have to be able to throw down all the tricks you see in the vids, you also need to have amazing style. Be realistic with your riding skill level. If you want to become a professional snowboarder, you have to ride almost every day. If you're not good enough at the moment, don't sweat it because purchasing this program shows that you're willing to work hard to improve.
It's up to you to start dry-land training, mentally training, and doing the focused exercises outlined. The more you practice, the better you'll get and fast. It comes down to how bad you want it and how much you're willing to practice. Snowboarding is just like any other sport, it takes practice to get good and complete dedication to be the best. The best tip I can give is to heavily utilize mental training in your riding. Snowboarding is all in your head. The key to stomping every trick lies between your two ears and mental rehearsal is the key to unlocking your ability. The more you practice the better you'll get. Remember to take it slow, snowboarding is a way of life, chances are you'll be doing it when your 40 so look after those body parts. Keep practicing and you'll see incredible results.

The Snowboard Lifestyle:

If your Addicted to snowboarding you probably want to do two things:

1) Be able to snowboard pretty much year round or as much as possible.

2) Be in a continual state of progression where you're always striving for that next trick.

The good news is that whether you aspire to be pro or not you can create what I call the snowboard lifestyle. You will have so much fun that getting sponsored will be the last thing on your mind. Ironically if you do create this lifestyle, the likely hood is much higher that you'll get good enough to become professional.

A "snowboard lifestyle" is where you design your situation to allow for maximum time on your board. If you are still in high school or younger, the best thing for you to do is to buy a pass at your local hill and ride as much as possible. It's also a lot of fun to set up a little jib park on a local hill in the city using rails, tubes, tables, whatever you can find to make a nice little jib park, be creative.
If you've finished school the best way I know to maximize your riding time is to move to a city where there is amazing riding nearby. For example: Salt Lake City in Utah, or Vancouver in British Columbia, Canada. These are just 2 examples of large metropolitan areas with multiple resorts within an extremely close range. There are hundreds of world class resorts around the world. Browse the internet, choose a place where you want to ride, get up and move there, even if it's just for a season. The other thing you can do is work right on the resort. Resorts have tons of jobs although the only problem is you'll be working days and will have less time to ride but hey it's riding for free. You can become a snowboard instructor and work right on the hill. You'll have to start out teaching beginners but at least you'll be riding every day.
There are many other ways to create a snowboard lifestyle, the key is to do what works for you. Working at or near a resort is a heck of a lot of fun and your riding will explode because of the terrain and the other talented riders who will push you.

Enjoy the Ride:

Stay positive and ride for yourself. There are tons of talented riders just waiting to move up the ranks in the snowboard world. If you maintain a positive attitude and genuinely appreciate everyday you have on the hill, then you will gain much more respect from other riders and industry reps. Companies these days have hundreds of kids to choose from so what makes you so different? Your positive attitude and personality can very well be the turning point in their decision to sponsor you or not.

To get sponsored, you need to have some serious skill. Not just boarding skills but people skills and the ability to get media attention and publicity. It's not everyone's ambition to go pro so if you're just dam addicted to snowboarding make sure to design your own snowboard lifestyle so you can board all the time.
Strapping in and shredding the next line, jump, or rail gives us a rush every single time. Snowboarding is the most fun thing to do in the world. Don't let your pursuit of sponsorship eat away at the pure joy of the sport. You never know when you'll be strapping up for the last time. Every day on the snowboard is an amazing experience, remember to always enjoy it!

Let Snowboarding be your addiction.
Rip it up!
www.SnowboardAddiction.com

Questions or comments?
Please send any feedback to: info@SnowboardAddiction.com