



## Transformational Partnerships with Bruce Rosenthal

### Leading Learning Podcast Transcript for Episode 399

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:00:00] Most sponsorships in the past have been very focused on conferences. And most of those sponsorships have been focused on logos, visibility, and recognition. And, for a lot of companies now, they can get a lot of that logo, visibility, recognition, as well as thought leadership, through things like Google Ads.

Celisa Steele: [00:00:22] I'm Celisa Steele.

Jeff Cobb: [00:00:24] I'm Jeff Cobb, and this is the Leading Learning Podcast.

Celisa Steele: [00:00:32] To realize their fundamental mission of developing and delivering learning products and services, learning businesses need revenue. Along with direct-to-learner fees for enrollments and registrations, sponsorship dollars are often a key part of that revenue equation. This episode, number 399, features a conversation with Bruce Rosenthal. Bruce helps organizations create sponsorships and partnerships with the goals of increasing revenue and value for their members, customers, or stakeholders. Jeff and Bruce talk about sponsorship versus partnership; the importance of thinking of "partner" as both noun and verb; why logos, visibility, and recognition are no longer a compelling value proposition; the growing emphasis on ROI and other trends in sponsorship; and COVID's longtail impact on how sponsors engage. Jeff and Bruce spoke in January 2024.

Jeff Cobb: [00:01:39] Tell us a little bit more about what that work involves. So, if you're going to go in and work with an organization, are you helping them to identify partnership and sponsorship opportunities, figure out who those partners are, how to manage it? What aspects, any or all of those, or things I'm not thinking about? What do you actually do in your work?

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:01:59] Especially if we're a nonprofit organization, so often we're not thinking like businesses. It really is going in and looking at partnerships or sponsorships as a business relationship with companies. Most sponsorships in the past have been very focused on

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conferences. And most of those sponsorships have been focused on logos, visibility, and recognition. And, for a lot of companies now, they can get a lot of that logo, visibility, recognition, as well as thought leadership, through things like Google Ads. So it really puts associations and other organizations at a disadvantage in selling the old model of conference sponsorships. I think the two big things we're looking to change are to expand beyond conferences. As one sponsor said, "It's a fantastic conference. It's three days a year. What about the other 360+ days a year? I need to be out there talking about my company, our product, our service, our success stories yearlong."

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:02:55] And then the other thing is looking at—as one CEO told me years ago, he wanted to move their sponsorship program from the transactional to the transformational, to get away from just the logo placements, to really look at ways—what are the goals of the association and all sponsorship programs? Rule number one is focused on the mission, and rule number two is focused on the needs of the members—or for universities and others, the needs of their students. And, for the companies, what are their business goals? That could vary company to company. It could vary year to year. If it's a company with a new name or a new geographic area, it's very much around branding. If it's a company that's been out there for decades, or they've been a sponsor of the organization for decades, everybody knows who they are. If they were in there as a yearlong corporate partner, how would they be differentiated from the 5, 10, 20 other companies who are in the exhibit hall or on the roster of business supporters of the association?

Jeff Cobb: [00:03:52] I definitely want to dive deeper into what high-value partnerships and sponsorships look like, how those are managed. Before we get there, though, it just occurs to me partnerships, sponsorships, it's a pretty niche area of business to be in. I don't think anybody in kindergarten is being taught, "Hey, you can go into the partnership and sponsorship business." How did you wind up with that as a focus? What's your background coming into thinking about this and then helping others think about it?

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:04:23] Yes, it's a good point, Jeff. I remember back in junior high, I think, the teacher said, "Two-thirds of you are going to be in jobs that have not been invented today, or they're not even on your radar screen." I had worked for associations for many decades and had been involved, and I had worked for a nonprofit research institute a number of years ago, and they had Fortune 500 companies that sponsored their research. So I got a little bit of a flavor of sponsorships and partnerships at that time. And then, about 12 or so years ago, I was working with an association, national association that did a complete revamp of its sponsorship program, brought in a consulting firm, and they did all the research and did the new packaging,

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new pricing, new prospect lists, and all that. And the last recommendation of the consulting agency was a senior-level person to run the program. So the CEO asked me to be that person, that VP of corporate partnerships, which I was glad to do based on my background with sponsorships.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:05:15] What was interesting then it was 2009. Just as the economy tanked, we had the priciest sponsorship program among the similar associations in that space, and I knew we had a number of sponsors—developers, banks—they were going to get no new business from our members in the next couple of years. That really set me on this path to figure out what is a true value proposition? One of the changes that we made in the next couple of years, we're really moving away from the standard gold/silver/bronze sponsorship prospectus to having conversations with companies, almost like a marketing agency. And there's a reason that marketing agencies don't have gold/silver/bronze customer levels because it's customized for each client, each company, or each organization that goes to the marketing agency. We really looked at what we could do with each company based on those conversations and based on definitely moving from the conference sponsorship to the yearlong.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:06:12] Also, around that time, I co-founded a group called the Partnership Professionals Network, which was, pre-pandemic, a discussion group and resource center for folks who were interested in sponsorships and partnerships. Because I think the other aspect of it, as you said, it's a niche area for a lot of folks. Even if they had sponsorships or partnerships in their title, in their organization they were the only ones that did that, and they didn't have anybody to go down the hall and bounce some ideas off of. So we created Partnership Professionals Network. So then, when I left the association, about seven years ago, I said, well, let me take the information that I've learned in revamping this program at the association and what I've learned from all these folks that I've worked with through the Partnership Professionals Network and help organizations identify ways to create those value propositions and work with companies to come up with those transformational partnership relationships.

Jeff Cobb: [00:07:03] Let's pause for just a moment here, because we've been using two terms that probably need to be clarified a little bit: "partnership" and "sponsorship." I think a lot of times organizations will use those interchangeably. But, I suspect, from your perspective, there are some distinctions between them that are important. Assuming that's the case, what are those distinctions, and why do they matter?

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:07:28] Sure, you're right. I think associations as well as companies use the term "partnership" and "sponsorship" interchangeably. I prefer the term "partnership." I find it

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hard to change the lexicon of what people are used to using. There are also some associations where their attorneys have said the term “partner” implies some sort of legal entanglement that they don’t think is good. So I think the word “partner” is more of what we are aiming for. But I think it also, even with that term, depends on how we use the word. In some of my presentations, I have a slide that said, “Partner is both a noun and a verb.” A lot of associations say, “Oh, that company is our partner. We’re good to go.” But they don’t truly, in the sense of the verb, partner with companies. I think we want to look for ways—whether we call it a partnership or a sponsorship—to align with companies in a way that serves the needs of the organizations, members, customers, stakeholders, or students; meets the needs of the companies that are involved, as sponsors or partners; and serves the association, the organization, or the institution well.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:08:33] I also think that, especially as we’ve created these more engaging relationships with companies, they care a lot less what they’re called, and they care a lot more about how they’re treated. Going back to the old conference model, where we had the big display board with all the gold partners here and all the silver partners there, I don’t think companies really care what they’re called. I think they are much more interested in how can we achieve our company’s goals? Whether that’s brand recognition, whether that’s knowledge leadership around an area of expertise, whether that’s telling success stories of the good work we’re doing on behalf of the organization’s members or stakeholders. I think that’s what they’re most concerned about. So the word “partner” or “sponsor” might appear in the letter of agreement, but, in many cases, it’s really not used that much one way or the other.

Jeff Cobb: [00:09:16] Interesting. I think, as is the case with most things, some examples could probably help with really illustrating what a good partnership or sponsorship looks like. Are there examples you can share of ones that you’ve felt really created high value for everyone involved? Because that seems to be the key to it—everybody needs to be getting value out of it. It shouldn’t be a one-way thing.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:09:40] Sure. Yes, it definitely needs to be the value for all three groups again—for the members, students, or stakeholders, as well as the companies and the organization. I think it starts with what do the members need? What do the stakeholders need? I think for membership associations, trade associations, it’s starting with what does the latest member survey indicate that members need? I talked to somebody a number of years ago who ran a sponsorship program with an association, and his strategy was he went around and met with staff the week after the association’s budget was approved and said to each department head, “What did you request in your budget that didn’t get into the budget?” Maybe that’s

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something where we could find a sponsor. We've already vetted the idea. We've already determined members need that, but it's not in the budget. Maybe we can find a company to help with that.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:10:26] So a few examples. I was working with an association 10, 11 years ago when healthcare reform passed, and we were sitting at the senior staff table, and we were getting calls from members and state affiliates: "What does healthcare reform mean to me? What does it mean to my organization?" And nobody knew on staff. Public policy staff said, "Well, it's a 1,200-page regulation. We haven't read that. We don't know what that means." And so I sat down with the CEO, and we said, "Well, we have a corporate partner that's a consulting firm." We were in the healthcare, long-term care space. And then one of our corporate partners was a consulting firm, so we called them and said, "You guys have read all 1,200 pages, right?" And they said, "Oh, yeah, we're talking to clients about it." And we said, "So what if we worked collaboratively, partnered with your firm to do a Webinar for members? What are the implications of healthcare reform? What are the deadlines? What do members need to do now? What do they need to do next year? What do they need to report?"

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:11:23] So the consulting firm did 95 percent of the work on the PowerPoint. We looked it over. We developed a slide deck. We co-branded each slide with the name of the company and the name of the association. And then we launched that PowerPoint with a Webinar that was co-presented by the CEO of the association and the CEO of the consulting firm. Again, hitting all those marks—it was great brand visibility for the company; it met the needs of members; it positioned the company as a knowledge leader and positioned the association as bringing all these folks together. One other example. A number of years ago, when social media was just starting, I was working with an association where members were like, "Well, how do I use LinkedIn? How do I use Facebook? How do I do a LinkedIn profile?" We had a corporate partner that was a marketing agency. And we said, "Well, what if, at our annual conference, we put together a social media lab in the middle of the expo, and we co-branded with the name of your marketing agency, and your marketing agency can staff it?"

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:12:20] Again, it's not a lot of work on the part of the association other than building the social media lab and renting some computers and some Internet lines. Company came in, did the trainings for three days during the conference, and I'm sure they got some business out of it because I'm sure there were some members that said, "Well, thanks for those tips on how to do a LinkedIn profile. Can I get your card? I think there's some other staff that you can help in my organization." So, again, a win for members—helped them with social media. The company was positioned as a knowledge leader and got some business out of it.

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And the association puts them all together. One other example, one of the more dynamic. I was working with an association client, an association of nurses in 2019 to build their new sponsorship program. We did all the research, developed new categories, new benefits, new pricing, the new take-it-to-market strategy, and delivered those findings to the association in their office in February of 2020, just as the pandemic started.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:13:16] And we thought, “Is this the end of the program? Have we just wasted six months of their time and money in building this program?” But we reached out again in the association of nurses, we reached out to one of their companies that had product and expertise around respiratory. Obviously, COVID, respiratory issues, how to take care of large numbers of patients in hospital and healthcare settings. So the company said, “We would be glad to put together a package of training programs and white papers for nurses on how to better care for patients with respiratory issues.” The company had been a \$5,000 conference sponsor. Under the new program, they were a \$40,000 yearlong corporate partner. So, again, members got information they needed, fulfilled the mission of the association—helping nurse members provide quality care for people in the hospitals and healthcare settings—and the company came out a rock star as a knowledge leader and really doing the right thing during a healthcare crisis.

Celisa Steele: [00:14:14] At Tagoras, we’re experts in the global business of lifelong learning, and we use our expertise to help clients better understand their markets, connect with new customers, make the right investment decisions, and grow their learning businesses. We achieve these goals through expert market assessment, strategy formulation, and platform selection services. If you are looking for a partner to help your learning business achieve greater reach, revenue, and impact, learn more at [tagoras.com/services](https://tagoras.com/services).

Jeff Cobb: [00:14:50] A lot of our listeners are probably in a similar position where they’ve got sponsors right now, they’ve got partners right now, they’ve been doing stuff for a while, but they may be thinking, “We’re not really getting the value out of this. The partners probably aren’t getting the value out of this.” What steps could they take to evaluate where they are and figure out how to potentially uncover some of those opportunities that you were just talking about—places where they can improve, places where they can make some changes? How would you advise an organization to get started with doing that?

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:15:22] Sure. And I think for the other category of organizations, Jeff, if they don’t have corporate sponsors, I almost think they have an advantage because they don’t have any bad habits to break. But I think, in either case, whether it’s creating a new program or

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revamping an existing program, in addition to talking to staff, talking to board members, looking at some posts, LinkedIn, from other organizations that have created sponsorship programs, one of the first steps is ask your current corporate partners and sponsors and, if you don't have a real robust program, the largest exhibitors. If you sell a lot of different things during the year, if there's a company, well, they sponsored two Webinars, and they bought a bunch of ads, and they have the biggest booth at the convention, call them and ask them what do they see as a value proposition? Are they getting more value with other organizations? Try to talk to them about their goals and objectives more than tactics because we often gravitate back to tactics. "Oh, if I could rent a mailing list, if I could get a bigger booth." All those are good things, but asking the company what their goals are with your organization.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:16:24] Do they want to reach all of your members? I think a huge opportunity now with a lot of associations, regardless of size, is the segment of members. With the old model, we used to price sponsorship based on the size of the audience. You sponsor the general session, it's a lot of money. You sponsor some breakout session, it's a smaller amount of money. You sponsor a focus group, a few dollars. For a lot of companies, the value proposition is the reverse of that. And there are companies that are telling me, "We would pay more to reach a small segment of the membership or the student body if it's the right segment." Because it's very much an ROI model. That gets back to that value proposition around new business. If a company recognizes that they can get more, if their goal is two contracts a year, if they can get that from doing three focus groups of 30 people each versus introducing a speaker at a general session with 10,000 people, those three focus groups are where they want to be.

Jeff Cobb: [00:17:20] That's interesting. Maybe we could touch on what you are seeing as general trends in partnerships, sponsorships because that more focused but potentially higher-value engagement with an organization's audience, I know I've seen things trending in that direction, that sponsors/partners really want that. You've already mentioned the other 360+ days of the year besides the conference. Are you seeing that more potential partners/sponsors want that longer-term, multiple touchpoint-type engagement? And what else are you seeing in terms of trends with partners or sponsors?

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:18:00] I think even more companies are definitely interested, many of them are more interested in the yearlong as compared to the event-based or the pieces during the year. I'm afraid, even more so, that companies are looking for places other than the traditional association sponsorship model. And COVID was the real game changer there because I think that, even back when I worked with an association 10 years ago, there were sponsors, there were exhibitors who were not all that enamored with the sponsorship of the conference and the

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big exhibit booths, but they didn't want to pull out. They had a board member who was one of their customers, and they didn't think it would look good. Then COVID came, and associations, through no fault of their own, had to cancel conferences for two or three years. I think some of those companies looked at that as their ticket out. It was like, "Okay, stepping out the door, call me when you're..." And so those companies could not stop marketing for two years.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:18:56] Some of them had to pivot their marketing. Some of them that had sales forces on the road much of the year, like the rest of us, went to virtual, went to Zoom meetings, went to other ways to sell, went to things like Google Ads, social media and LinkedIn posts, and all that. And then, when the lockdown ended, associations called those companies and said, "Come on back. We're having our big show again." The companies are like, "Hmm, I'm not quite sure." Or, if they did come back, it's like, "Well, we don't really need that 20x20 booth because, actually, we found other ways to ramp up our sales." Or "We're doing Google Ads. We can get more traction out of \$3,000 of Google Ads. Why would we pay \$3,000 for a booth plus all the travel?" So some of those companies didn't come back as large, and some of them didn't come back at all. I think a lot of companies, because of all the shifts and the dollar and marketing pressures of COVID, really had to do an ROI calculation.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:19:54] And I found, just in my years of doing a lot of interviews with corporate partners, five, seven years ago, I would ask companies, "Well, how do you measure ROI of that sponsorship?" And they'll be like, "Well, kind of finger to the wind. And, you know, it feels good." Or "We've been a sponsor for years." And now, the last couple of years, a few years since COVID, I ask companies about ROI. Very specific measurement: "We can measure every customer from exhibit booth to meeting to proposal to contract. We can calculate everything along the way." It's not as much the old model of "Well, we scanned 300 badges at the convention, so I guess it's good." They're now actually doing the ROI models. So that's, when I was talking to a company exec, a smaller company that does Web platforms for companies, and she said, actually, she gets the least number of good business leads at large conventions. She gets some business leads at niche conferences for 100, 200 people. She gets the most number of leads from her own Webinars. And those are not necessarily small Webinars.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:21:01] I was on a call a couple of years ago with an association client and one of their corporate partners, and the company wanted to be positioned for a certain area of expertise. We said, "Well, the association, the organization has these Webinars, and they attract 200, 250 people." And the company's senior VP of marketing said, "Well, that's interesting. Our company does Webinars. We get 2,000 people in our Webinars." However, we turned it into a win because the company said, "Well, what we actually lack on our Webinars is independent

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thought leadership. To be a more effective learning organization and to make sure it doesn't look like we're selling, even though we're not selling on these Webinars, it would be great if we could have somebody with subject matter expertise from the association be on our corporate Webinar. If you have somebody who's a committee chair, a staff person, or a board member who'd be a subject matter expert, it would be great for our company." I hear that as increased sponsor value, and it's an opportunity to expand the audience. I would think that some of those 2,000 people at that corporate Webinar are not currently members of the association. So it also could be an advantage to the association to expand its message and fulfill its mission.

Jeff Cobb: [00:22:10] Definitely. Often that goes overlooked, that it's not just about having the sponsors participate in your Webinars. You might be participating in the sponsor's, the partner's Webinars—a lot of value to be gotten out of that.

Jeff Cobb: [00:22:23] Now, of course, in fact, you've referenced it some throughout the conversation that our listeners are focused on learning and education. They're typically in a revenue-center role in an association or other types of membership organizations or university continuing education, training firm. Do you see anything different or special about how learning and education folks need to be thinking about sponsorships and partnerships?

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:22:55] I think that, since one of the key value propositions for sponsors is being positioned as a knowledge leader, that puts the education folks front and center in adding value, whether it's an association, an educational institution, or even a private education training firm. I think those folks that have the education expertise—so back to the earlier model of the example that I mentioned with the company that does the Webinar for 2,000 people—it's the education folks at the association that should be involved in that discussion. Who do we have? Who's presented at the conference? Who's on a committee? Who has expertise? I know, when I managed the sponsorship program at an association, the first team that I would usually go to when we talked about adding value for a corporate partner were the educational leadership development team because they were doing the Webinars, the podcasts, the conferences. Even when companies wanted to know what are the latest trends, what's going on with the association? Who has that data? The education team. What sessions at the conference were most well-attended? Which Webinars are most well-attended?

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:24:02] Or to bring in the companies onto those association platforms, especially—and this is where I think virtual sometimes got a bad rap. But, for some companies, they had better visibility and better opportunity to be a thought leader in virtual events because they could participate in the chat, and, again, educational content, not selling anything, and also

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use those virtual events like a large focus group. When I worked with that association, I was asking the director of education, “How can we truly add value for these companies and help better position them as thought leaders and to make sure they don’t sell?” And she said, “What we really need to do, Bruce, is work with these companies and help them educate to sell, not sell to educate.” So this idea of actually bringing in the education folks. While there are a lot of companies out there doing a lot of Webinars and podcasts, I think there are a lot of those companies that, if they came in as partners, part of the partnership could be the education and learning folks with the organization helping train those corporate folks on how to be better educators and trainers for the association’s members.

Jeff Cobb: [00:25:15] I think that’s exactly right. We’ve seen that work well in so many circumstances. It’s definitely an area that anybody in the learning business should be focused on—how can we leverage that further than we already are? Or, if that’s not something we’re leveraging right now, how do we get started in doing that?

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:25:34] Right. Well, I think it’s also for a competitive advantage because the other big change with COVID, now that everything is out there, easily accessible all the time—it’s not like people have to travel to go to a college, an association conference, or to a training site—people can access anything they want from their computers. And, if they can’t find what they’re looking for, they go to Google. All of a sudden, that has positioned associations, as well as educational institutions, training centers, as no longer the sole source. Just because you have a membership roster, a client list, or a student roster doesn’t mean they’re always going to come back to you. I think that’s where the opportunity is for the associations, educational institutions, learning organizations that are more creative, to go out there and find those companies that are looking for the opportunities. Because, while those companies could find opportunities on their own or do those Webinars for 2,000 people on their own, they truly value the brand affinity with organizations, especially nonprofit organizations. So that’s why that company said, “Wow, could you have somebody from your association’s board, committee chair be on our company’s learning platform?” Because the power of affinity is significant and, frankly, can be monetized by organizations.

Jeff Cobb: [00:27:03] Let’s assume you have been doing partnerships/sponsorships for a while, but you have this sense your program just needs a refresh. It needs a revamp. What are your tips for how an organization goes about that?

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:27:14] Sure. Organizations definitely don’t want to leave money on the table. I don’t know too many companies that have cut their marketing budgets in recent years.

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So there is money to be spent. It's really a question of whether that money will be coming to associations and other organizations. So, 10 quick ways to know if your sponsorship program needs a revamp or refresh. If the program has not been evaluated recently. If board and staff are not supportive of the program. If you're with an association, and the staff is saying, "Well, we don't think it's appropriate to sell sponsorships," that would be an indicator. If you have a very traditional platinum/gold/silver/bronze/all the other heavy metals, if that's the cornerstone of your sponsorship program, probably needs to refresh.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:27:57] If the sponsorships are primarily conference-focused because many companies are looking for ways to get outreach throughout the year. If the sponsorship prospectus is a takeout menu of benefits, of just 50, 60 different things, most of which you don't sell most years. Another sign of a program in need of a revamp, most of the benefits are logo, visibility, recognition, and a shout-out from the podium. Those are pretty much across the board of lowest value to companies. If the basic sales pitch is "Our organization needs money." We often see, when organizations think about sponsorship money, it's like, "Oh, we're launching a new program. We need \$50,000. Let's make some calls and get some money." Companies don't like to be treated like checkbooks or ATMs.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:28:40] If the sponsorship prospectus is just distributed en masse. I worked with an association years ago; I said, "Who's your list of hot prospects for sponsorships?" And they gave me a list of 500 companies. So we just throw it at the wall and see what sticks. Another indication of needing a revamp, if the association's competing with itself. If it's selling a lot of different things from different departments, if somebody's selling ads, somebody else is selling exhibits, somebody else is selling Webinar sponsorships, somebody else is selling something from an outside agency. Those are the companies I talk to, and they say, "Wow, didn't I just hear from somebody else in the organization?" "Oh, they're down the hall. They're selling something else." We don't want to compete with ourselves. And, lastly, if the association doesn't understand the business goals of its top corporate partners, if you really don't know why they're sponsoring, what they're trying to accomplish, and if you haven't had that conversation with them, it's a program in need of a revamp.

Jeff Cobb: [00:29:33] Ten great tips. I'm going to go out on a limb and say that probably most of our listeners can recognize themselves in at least one, if not many, maybe even all, of those tips. Thanks for sharing those, Bruce.

Jeff Cobb: [00:29:45] I want to switch gears a little bit here as we're wrapping up because you strike me as the type of person who probably is an avid lifelong learner yourself. That's

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probably why you're able to keep up with this so well and be so knowledgeable in what you're doing. I'm going to make that bold assumption. Can you tell us a little bit about your approach to lifelong learning? What kinds of learning experiences, habits, practices do you engage in to be as good as you are at what you do?

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:30:15] Thanks, Jeff. Yes, it is, again, partly because of the impacts of COVID lockdown and the availability of so much information online. I think especially, whether it's me as a solopreneur or students or anybody who doesn't have a lot of money to travel, all of a sudden you can access this information anytime, anywhere. So a lot of what I rely on is that availability of online learning. Also, the rapid expansion of the number of places from which I can access information, which I've seen lists now that are.... In fact, when I do competitive analyses for associations and nonprofit organizations, I'm coming up with 40, 60 competitors, other entities that provide not only value to sponsors but often value to members. That can be other organizations, companies, colleges and universities, training centers, publications, LinkedIn, for-profit conferences. There's this new niche called for-profit associations.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:31:16] I think the what for me is the number of places to access information, and the how is I try to be an active participant. When I'm watching a Webinar, my goal is to, when appropriate, participate in the chat and to answer questions, inject ideas, and follow up after Webinars with panelists or with other people who are on the Webinar to get more information or go to one of the panelists' Web sites and find more information that he or she has to share. I think the other category is the who. I definitely look for anything I can find on sponsorships and partnerships in my searches for learning but also to broaden that into association management in general, since I work so much with associations, but also to broaden at one other level because there's so much information on marketing, communications, sales, and corporate social responsibility, which has an aspect of partnership to it. I think it's great.

Bruce Rosenthal: [00:32:10] I learned this from somebody at a conference years ago. I was looking at the conference program. I said, "Here's something that relates exactly to what I do." And she said, "Why didn't you look for a session that's not related to exactly what you do and go to that session and see what you can learn there?" I think as we expand...and I'm running into folks now that they're involved in sales but have nothing to do with sponsorship sales; they have some great tips on sales techniques. I think that's true in many areas now—that doing those sorts of searches and going to those sorts of Webinars can be very valuable for lifelong learning.

*This transcript accompanies the episode of the Leading Learning Podcast  
available at [www.leadinglearning.com/episode399](http://www.leadinglearning.com/episode399).*

Celisa Steele: [00:32:51] Bruce Rosenthal helps organizations create sponsorships and partnerships that increase revenue and value for stakeholders. In the show notes for this episode at [leadinglearning.com/episode399](http://leadinglearning.com/episode399), you'll find links to Bruce Rosenthal Associates and Partnership Professionals Network as well as Bruce's profile on LinkedIn.

Jeff Cobb: [00:33:12] At [leadinglearning.com/episode399](http://leadinglearning.com/episode399), you'll also find options for subscribing to the podcast. We'd be grateful if you would subscribe, if you haven't yet, as subscriptions give us some insight into the impact of the podcast.

Celisa Steele: [00:33:24] We'd also be grateful if you would rate us on Apple Podcasts or wherever you listen, especially if you find the Leading Learning Podcast valuable. Those ratings and reviews help us show up when people search for content on leading a learning business.

Jeff Cobb: [00:33:38] Lastly, please help us grow the Leading Learning community. At [leadinglearning.com/episode399](http://leadinglearning.com/episode399), there are links to find us on X, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

Celisa Steele: [00:33:48] Thanks again, and see you next time on the Leading Learning Podcast.

*[music for this episode by DanoSongs, [www.danosongs.com](http://www.danosongs.com)]*