

## With ABL VP of Sponsorships, Marty Rolnick

**Q. As a new member of the ABL staff, what interested you most about accepting the position as Vice President of Sponsorships with the league?**

**A.** The opportunity to work with some great people. Intelligent, accomplished and all focused on a singular goal—to create opportunities for young women and young girls.

**Q. You've been a business marketer for several years now; what are some of the most important lessons you've learned about marketing during your career?**

**A.** A favorite quote of mine suggests that "when trying to understand the nature of people, you can offer people a gold brick and some will always choose the shiny copper ones instead." From this, I resolved that establishing a positive emotional bond with the customer is most critical towards being successful.

**Q. What are some of the biggest challenges you face as the ABL's VP of Sponsorships?**

**A.** Creating the right tools for all the different voices of the ABL so that we can educate and effectively tell our story. This will be essential in trying to establish true marketing partners.

**Q. The ABL is in its second season; do you believe the league has established an attractive niche in the sports marketplace?**

**A.** Absolutely! And it will grow.

**Q. The ABL has developed strong relationships with several national sponsors including founding league sponsor Reebok. What must the ABL do to attract sponsors and what type of sponsor does the ABL want to attract?**

**A.** Education of the league's purpose and our goal is critical. There are corporations that want to associate themselves with similar concerns—concerns that are making a positive difference in our society.

**Q. Pro basketball in the U.S. has given women athletes an opportunity to make sponsorship deals with shoe, hair product and sportswear companies among others. Do you believe this is a movement by sponsors that will likely continue?**

**A.** Yes! In addition to being great people, the players in the ABL are amazing athletes. They're the best in the world at what they do and deserve the support and recognition of the public. These terrific athletes provide sponsors a unique avenue to reach an untapped and ever-increasing demographic.

**Q. On a localized team-by-team basis, what do each of the teams need to do to build and maintain relationships with local sponsors?**

**A.** Keep the sponsors involved with the team as much as possible. There are endless opportunities for corporations and the teams alike to do a tremendous amount of good for the community. And when working together in synergy, the process can be dynamic.

**Q. How has the WNBA affected the ABL (i.e. sponsorships and attendance)?**

**A.** Half the battle when marketing any product is exposure or making sure people know your product exists. Both leagues simply have enhanced the awareness and the popularity of women's professional basketball.



**Marty Rolnick**

ABL Vice President of Sponsorships

**Q. What are some of the league's long-range sponsorship goals?**

**A.** To have a solid base of a dozen national marketing partnerships which similarly support each of the teams in the ABL.

**Q. What is the most important message the ABL wishes to send out to current and potential marketing partners?**

**A.** First of all, that the ABL concept really isn't sports and sports marketing. It's a cause. It's a movement to enhance opportunities for women and young girls. Opportunities that until the ABL was formed, they haven't had and the vehicle just so happens to be basketball.

*Before joining the ABL, Marty Rolnick worked for Rainbow Sports of New York. He also served as the National Sales Manager at WTSP in Tampa Bay and spent a combined 10 years in sales at ABC in Chicago, Detroit, and Charlotte. Rolnick graduated from Bowling Green with a bachelor of arts degree in communications.*

  
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