Run Signup / Give Signup

ANNUAL INDUSTRY REPORT
2020

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Intro and Methodology

Tens of millions of people participate in endurance events in the United States each year, and across the country people dedicate their lives and earn their livelihoods from the creation of those events. Despite the size of the industry, there is no singular aggregator of data for the events, and insight into the state of the market has remained elusive.

We mine RunSignup's data annually to generate a transparent look at our slice of the endurance market. While our technology or business model may impact the results, our sample size is estimated to be around 20-30% of the US market, making it a robust source for information. Anywhere we believe the specifics of our platform may make our results different from the broader market, that is indicated in the description. With our comprehensive data source, we are able to identify trends in the industry and provide recommendations to keep endurance events competitive in a crowded market. In this report, we quantify and explore:

• The impact of COVID-19 on the endurance industry
• The rise of virtual races
• Patterns in registration
• The success of various promotion strategies
• Trends in peer-to-peer fundraising through events
• The impact of RaceDay technology

Throughout this report, our statistics come from RunSignup's registration and results data. The sample includes races with more than 2 people registered, including both imported and paid registrations. In order to aggregate the data for publication in early 2020, the dates shown are not a direct calendar year; rather, they cover December 1 (of the prior year) through November 30 of the stated year. Additionally survey data from January 2021 is included. For more information about the survey day see section 6.

RunSignup | GiveSignup

a year like no other

It goes without saying that this report is unlike any other. For the five previous iterations, we focused on gradual shifts (a 0.1% participation decline or a 1% growth) and incremental movements (yearly increases in mobile adoption). In contrast, the 2020 report shows wild swings and unprecedented volatility.

We view the remarkable nature of this year's data as a valuable resource, documenting the reaction of the industry to crisis. The survival of endurance events in the midst of event shutdowns is credited entirely to the extraordinary innovation of the thousands of event professionals who re-imagined the world of racing.

The evolution of the industry came in four overlapping but distinct phases. First came **chaos and cancellations,** as race organizations scrambled to find official guidance while fielding a barrage of participant questions about refunds. Races that could not postpone chose to **go virtual,** creating lightweight replicas of their traditional events with medals and results, but no race course or after-party. Over time, we saw **innovation** in those replacement events, with whimsically themed virtual races and extended virtual challenges designed *for* pandemic restrictions instead of despite them. By summer, timers had started to **re-think race day**, creating modified in-person experiences with start line waves, socially distant packet-pickups, and self-sufficient race courses.

The shifting landscape of 2020 is visible in every piece of data and informed every interpretation that we made. And while we look forward to more gradual recovery this year, we recognize that 2021 (and even 2022) will not simply return to a 2019 world. Timing businesses have closed, established races have canceled for good, and participant's training routines have changed. The ripples created will last well into the future.
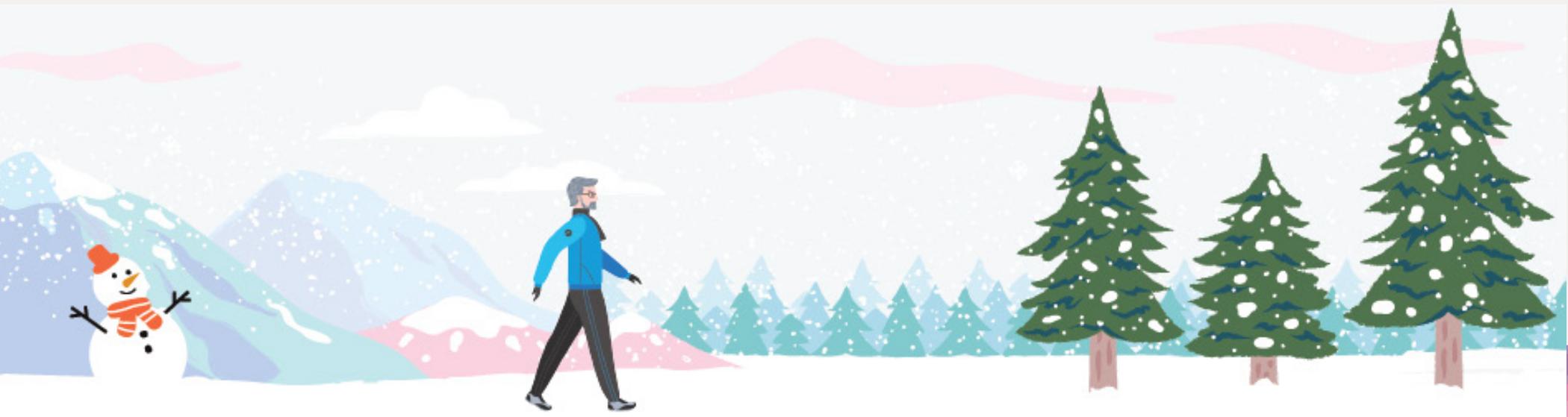
a new year

2020 also brought new ways of thinking about events. Virtual races were introduced years ago but they were a mystery to most race participants. Today, the virtual race is as ubiquitous as your local Turkey Trot. While many athletes are eager to get back to traditional races, a subset of participants are never giving up the flexibility of sleeping in and racing at their leisure.

It is likely that there is some virtual fatigue, as seen in the Running USA 2020 Global Running Survey's[1] finding that 66% of runners are somewhat or very unlikely to participate virtually in 2021. However, virtual racing and virtual challenges have also brought a new cohort of athletes into the fold. The demographic profiles we found for virtual runners differ from those of traditional in-person race attendees. Virtual participants tend to be older and more likely to be women, and the low repeat participation seen in 2020 indicates that many of this year's virtual race participants were brand new to the event (and possibly to the sport). In-person events will resume their dominant position in the market, but virtual challenges, specialty virtual races, and virtual components to traditional races will stick around for years to come.

Ready or not, it's 2021. Restrictions remain and uncertainty is constant, but the industry is far more prepared today than it was in March of 2020. We anticipate a year with starts and stops, but also groundbreaking events and increasing stability.

For the best chance at success, races should take their virtual race expertise into 2021 along with their new protocols for safe in-person events. Hybrid events with both virtual and in-person elements have the greatest chance at prosperity. With the fall race schedule guaranteed to be crowded once again with postponed events, the spring and summer races that move quickly to get pandemic-proof hybrid events on their local schedule will have an advantage in capturing participants.

We look forward to growth and opportunity in next year's report.

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1   Running USA 2020 Global Running Survey

Data Set

Races on Runsignup

These numbers represent all races and registrations on RunSignup between 2016 and 2020, with a year defined as 12/1 of the previous year through 11/30 of the stated year. Because the platform has seen growth in the form of increased market share on our site, these cannot be taken as a representation of growth across the industry. For a breakdown of year-over-year participation growth or decline between the same cohort of races, see section 1.1 (page 10). This chart should be used simply to gain a better understanding of the extent of the data that we analyzed.

We welcome questions and further feedback. Please direct comments to johanna@runsignup.com (Johanna Goode)

RACE TYPE	# RACES 2016	# RACES 2017	# RACES 2018	# RACES 2019	# RACES 2020
Overall	28,194	35,376	42,738	49,671	46,893
5K and less	15,802	19,588	23,731	27,716	24,407
10K and less	2,645	3,295	4,022	4,671	5,046
Half Marathon and less	1,515	2,033	2,571	2,974	3,572
Marathon and less	626	796	1,036	1,233	1,640
Ultra	546	677	853	1,073	2,256
Triathlon	663	913	1,205	1,343	956
Unknown	6,397	8,074	9,320	10,661	9,016

Registrations on Runsignup

RACE TYPE	# PARTICIPANTS 2016	# PARTICIPANTS 2017	# PARTICIPANTS 2018	# PARTICIPANTS 2019	# PARTICIPANTS 2020
Overall	4,941,400	5,249,820	6,177,666	7,312,022	4,713,380
5K and less	2,637,683	3,063,399	3,715,467	4,580,738	2,677,195
10K and less	584,040	719,224	826,018	912,394	498,424
Half Marathon and less	595,663	707,912	798,872	873,443	564,017
Marathon and less	137,248	141,807	182,903	192,854	151,629
Ultra	46,739	64,990	78,893	109,810	290,792
Triathlon	63,762	78,615	94,842	106,087	36,554
Unknown	876,265	473,873	480,671	536,696	494,769

We estimate that RunSignup data represents at least 20-30% of the US race registration market

Because there is no single aggregator of race data in the US, there is not a precise determination of the size of the market. However, from our best analysis of data from Running USA (reported 18.1 million registrations in 2018), October race calendars, RunningInTheUSA, and worldwide endurance industry estimates from Eventbrite, we estimate that the pre-COVID US market was in the range of 22-30 million registrations.

> We have been positively surprised by the post-COVID turnout, [of] 80% of a normal year. It's encouraging as we look ahead to 2021 and beyond that we can bounce back rapidly.
>
> - Healthy Kids Running Series

The Endurance Industry and COVID-19: Trends

1

KEY FINDINGS AND TRENDS

» Participation in races that were on RunSignup in both 2019 and 2020 fell sharply, **with an overall 48.1% decrease** in registrations.

» Participation declines across RunSignup were not quite as acute, with **a drop of 35.5% registrations on the platform**.

» Repeat participation in events **fell from 18.4% in 2019 to just 10.1%** in 2020.

» While the industry was almost entirely halted in mid-March, the **remaining months of 2020 brought a steady recovery** for both overall registration numbers and in-person events.

» **38.4% of 2019 races with more than 500 participants did not recur in 2020**, compared to a churn rate of just 5.9% amongst races last year.

2

CONCLUSIONS

» There is no denying that COVID-19 severely impacted the endurance events industry in 2020. However, signs of recovery throughout the year and impending vaccinations are encouraging signs moving forward.

» With disruptions expected well into 2021, the industry needs to take proactive steps to prevent more event cancellations and ensure that they can offer value to loyal participants.

» While many traditional events were unable operate this year, the decline in participation would have been far worse were it not for the creativity and innovation of race organizers who pivoted to virtual, created new safety protocols, and build new virtual challenge concepts.

3

RECOMMENDATIONS

» Competition will be fierce in the first "normal" months. Don't wait and get lost in the crowd - create hybrid events that can be hosted regardless of gathering restrictions and get your event on the calendar now.

» The industry has work to do to build back runner confidence after a year of cancellations. Offer flexible participant management options and clearly communicate your contingency plans to encourage runners to register.

» Not sure your event can proceed in 2021, either? Rather than sitting out another whole year, think outside the box and introduce new virtual, hybrid, or modified events that are better suited to pandemic conditions.

1.1 Participation Rates

Year-over-year participant drop of 48.1%

The headline here is that races that *did* take place in both 2019 and 2020 had an average drop in participation of 48.%. For some, that decline was the result of a change from an in-person event to a virtual one; for others participant caps were adjusted to comply with local restrictions on gatherings.

Shorter distances where runners were typically register later and were less likely to have committed to training programs took the biggest hit on participation. However, no distance was spared - across the industry, races that did recur saw massive declines in participation.

It is important to note that the industry a whole did not necessarily see a decline of 48.1%. As the overall numbers from RunSignup indicate (next page), total participation in events on the platform fell 35.5%. Most of that discrepancy can be attributed to new events on the platform that were built specifically for the pandemic - such as virtual challenges and themed virtual races.

Additionally, some of that gap is due to events that changed platform to take advantage of Run-Signup's purpose-built tools for virtual events.

RACE TYPE	# RACES 2019	# RACES 2020	# PARTICIPANTS 2019	# PARTICIPANTS 2020	GROWTH
Overall	28,950	25,023	4,813,812	2,498,274	-48.1%
5K and less	15,332	13,114	2,902,235	1,433,766	-50.6%
10K and less	2,817	2,704	623,496	324,201	-48.0%
Half Marathon and less	1,967	2,084	652,785	400,095	-38.71%
Marathon and less	735	827	140,707	82,056	-41.68%
Ultra	698	777	76,572	49,337	-35.57%
Triathlon	785	606	64,156	22,360	-65.15%
Unknown	6,616	4,911	353,861	186,459	-47.31

The number of races listed in 2019 vs. 2020 varies due to races adding (or removing) events to existing races.

2019 and 2020 Participant Totals for Renewed Events Only

Legend: ■ 2019 # of Registrations ■ 2020 # of Registrations

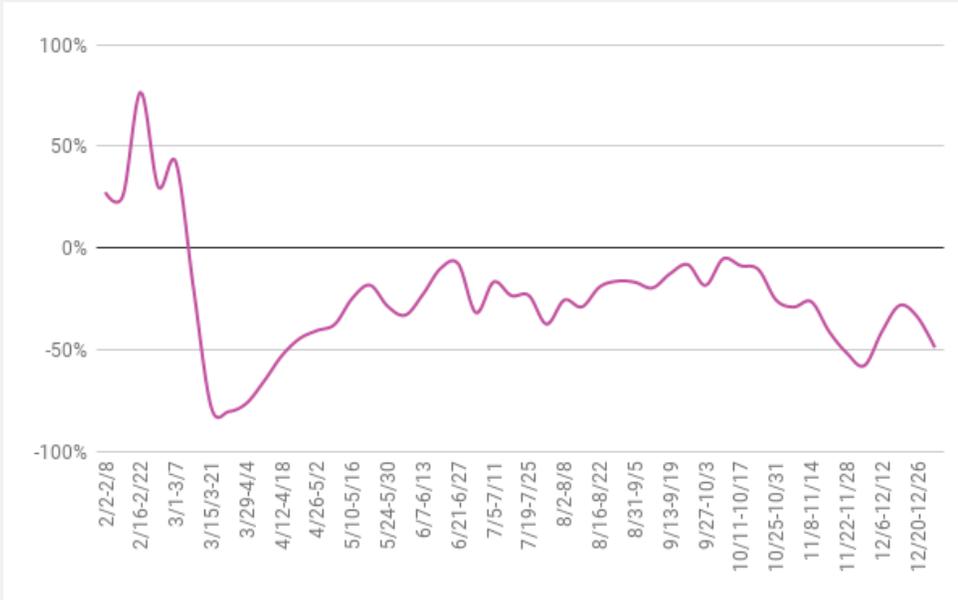## Overall Participation on RunSignup Declines 35.5%

In contrast to the data on the previous page showing the participation decline within races that hosted races on RunSignup in 2019 *and* 2020, this data represents the registration totals across all of RunSignup (it's the same as page 4-5). Here, you also see significant decline - but you also see the impact of innovative new events that bridged the gap while traditional events struggled.

An important point is that the seemingly huge increase in participation in Ultramarathons is deceptive - many of those "races" were actually virtual challenges that covered ultra distances over long periods of time.

RACE TYPE	2019 TOTAL RUNSIGNUP REGISTRATIONS	2020 TOTAL RUNSIGNUP REGISTRATIONS	% CHANGE
Overall	7,312,022	4,713,380	-35.5%
5K and less	4,580,738	2,677,195	-41.7%
10K and less	912,395	498,424	-45.4%
Half Marathon and less	873,443	564,017	-35.4%
Marathon and less	192,854	151,629	-21.4%
Ultra	109,810	209,792	164.8%
Triathlon	106,087	36,554	-65.5%
Unknown	536,696	494,769	-7.8%

Pandemic Economic Impact

% of Change from 2019 to 2020

To some extent, every number in this report reflects the global pandemic and associated restrictions. But to get an overhead view of the rhythm of the year, we drew a comparison between our weekly transactions in 2019 and those in 2020, starting in February.

With the RunSignup platform in growth mode and gaining market share, our transactions were up early in the year and the expectation was for that trend to continue. As you can see, the impact of COVID-19 in March was immediate and steep, as races canceled en masse. From there, races began to get more creative and pivot to virtual, leading to a gradual climb back to 50% transactions by mid-May and a more stable summer and fall.
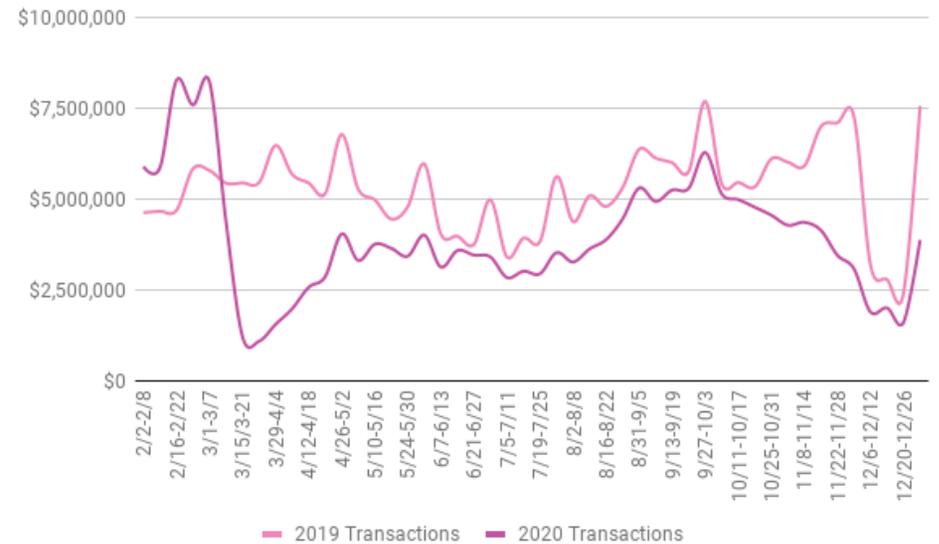
While the general theme of the year was a slow recovery from the March crash, the exception to that was November - AKA, Turkey Trot Month. With so many large turkey trots taking the year off and more race cancellations due to national virus spikes, the November numbers fell far short of normal.

Weekly Transactions 2019 vs 2020

Shifting Event Types

The shift to virtual will be covered in depth in later sections, but it's important to understand the role it played in recovery. In late May, when we first began to isolate event types, a full 57% of race registrations were for virtual races, with 23% for in-person events and 20% for virtual challenges. Over time, those percentages have shifted. In-person participation crept up as races found new ways to host their events safely, peaking at just shy of 50% of participants by late November.

Percent of Registrations for Virtual, Challenge, and In-Person
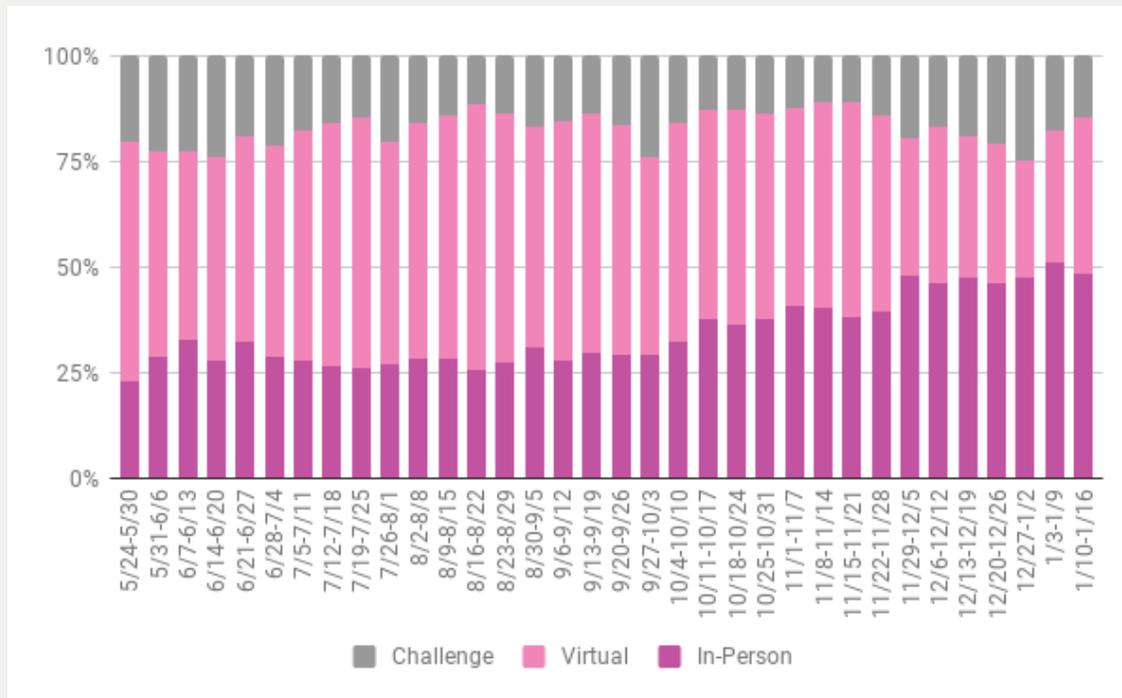
Takeaways

1 The 48.1% decline in year-over-year registrations is an anomaly and participation will bounce back. When events do open back up, competition will be fierce between legacy events and new events. Be ambitious and get your event on the calendar ASAP.

2 Creativity is key. Overall participation on the platform did not fall by as much, dropping to 33% of 2019 levels. That difference is credited to the many race directors who thought outside the box and created new concepts to compensate for lost participation in traditional events.

**3** Longer distances that typically have fewer, but more dedicated participants had stronger retention than those shorter than a 10K. Use training programs, social media, and longer virtual challenges to engage your participants more deeply and keep them invested in your event.

1.2 Repeat Participation

On average, just 10.1% of participants were repeats from the previous year, a significant drop from steady 17-18% repeat participation in previous years. The trend is seen across distances, and is likely the result of so many races converting to virtual, a format that doesn't always appeal to the same competitors you see on a traditional race day. Looking ahead to 2021, it will be important to re-engage lost participants from 2020.

2020 Repeat Registrations
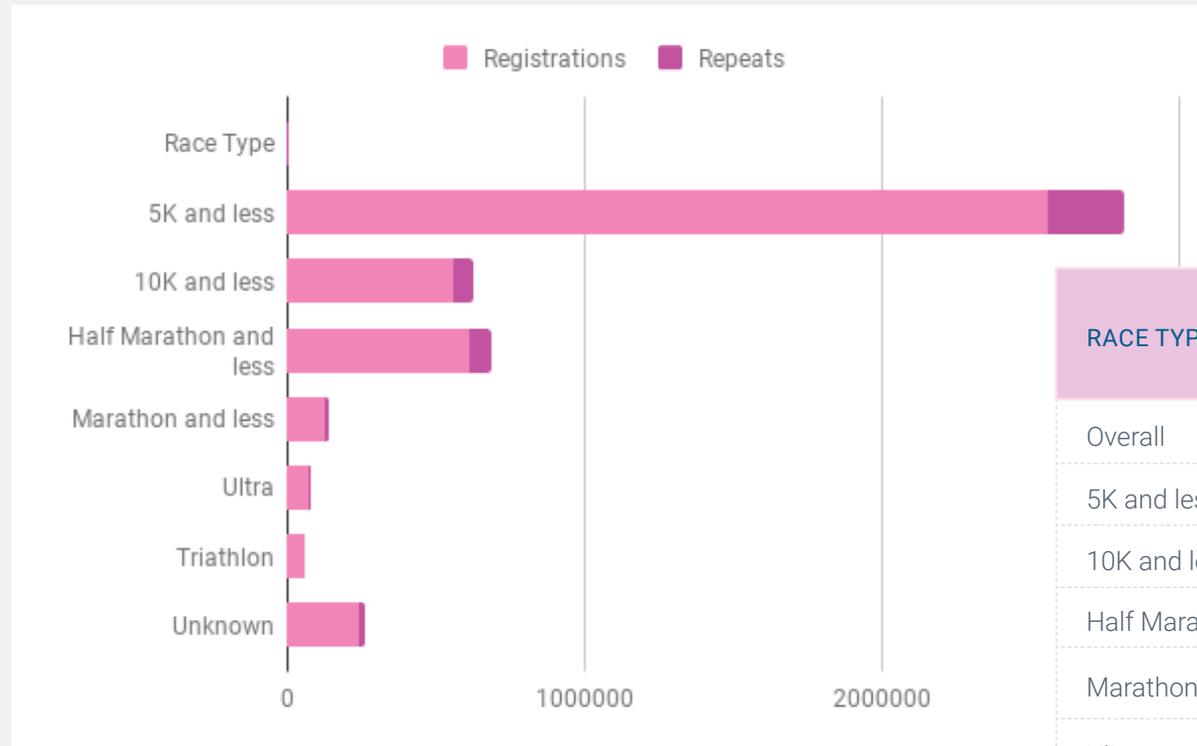
10.1%

OF 2019 PARTICIPANTS RETURNED TO THE EVENT IN 2020

RACE TYPE	# 2019 REGISTRATIONS	#2020 REPEATS	% REPEATS
Overall	4,241,596	426,537	10.1%
5K and less	2,560,497	252,405	9.9%
10K and less	558,322	66,618	11.9%
Half Marathon and less	615,551	70,532	11.5%
Marathon and less	129,956	9,316	7.2%
Ultra	73,793	5963	8.1%
Triathlon	58,052	2,529	4.4%
Unknown	245,425	19,174	7.8%

11.9% REPEAT 10K RUNNERS IN 2020

VS

21.7% REPEAT 10K RUNNERS IN 2019

RACE TYPE	REPEAT % 2016	REPEAT % 2017	REPEAT % 2018	REPEAT % 2019	REPEAT % 2020
Overall	15.4%	17.3%	18.5%	18.4%	10.1%
5K and less	16.2%	16.7%	17.9%	18.4%	9.9%
10K and less	23.2%	24.6%	24.0%	21.7%	11.9%
Half Marathon and less	19.9%	18.5%	20.3%	19.7%	11.5%
Marathon and less	10.1%	11.5%	14.3%	14.4%	7.2%
Ultra	8.3%	13.6%	13.5%	14.0%	8.1%
Triathlon	3.9%	10.2%	12.4%	13.1%	4.4%
Unknown	3%	10%	12%	13%	7.8%

*As with the overall participation data, the repeat participation in Ultramarathons here is misleading because many new Challenge Events were classified as more than 26 miles.

Takeaways

1 Make an extra effort to reach 2019 participants who missed your 2020 event. Loyalty programs and reserved entries can help bring traditional participants back into the fold.

2 If your event caps are strict in 2021, reward your most loyal supporters with first dibs on in-person slots.

3 Don't neglect your new participants, though. Many of them came specifically for the virtual experience - make sure you offer it in 2021 (and beyond) to expand your pool of participants.

1.3 Distribution of Races

While September and October remained the strongest racing months of the year, the pandemic flattened the distribution of races throughout the spring and summer and created an noticeable spike in September and October.

These changes are more the result of spring and summer races that either postponed to fall or simply canceled than a long-term shift away from races in the first half of the year.

MONTH	2016 % OF TOTAL	2017 % OF TOTAL	2018 % OF TOTAL	2019 % OF TOTAL	2020 % OF TOTAL
January	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%	2.8%	3.8%
February	4.2%	3.7%	3.7%	3.6%	5.3%
March	5.7%	6.2%	7.2%	7.7%	6.9%
April	11.9%	11.9%	11.4%	9.9%	8.3%
May	11.0%	10.6%	10.2%	10.6%	8.4%
June	9.8%	9.8%	10.4%	10.7%	7.9%
July	7.9%	7.9%	7.6%	7.2%	7.7%
August	8.1%	7.9%	7.7%	8.3%	9.0%
September	12.9%	13.5%	14.5%	13.9%	13.8%
October	14.1%	13.5%	12.0%	12.0%	15.0%
November	8.5%	8.7%	8.9%	9.9%	9.6%
December	2.7%	3.1%	3.2%	3.3%	4.2%

Races by Month
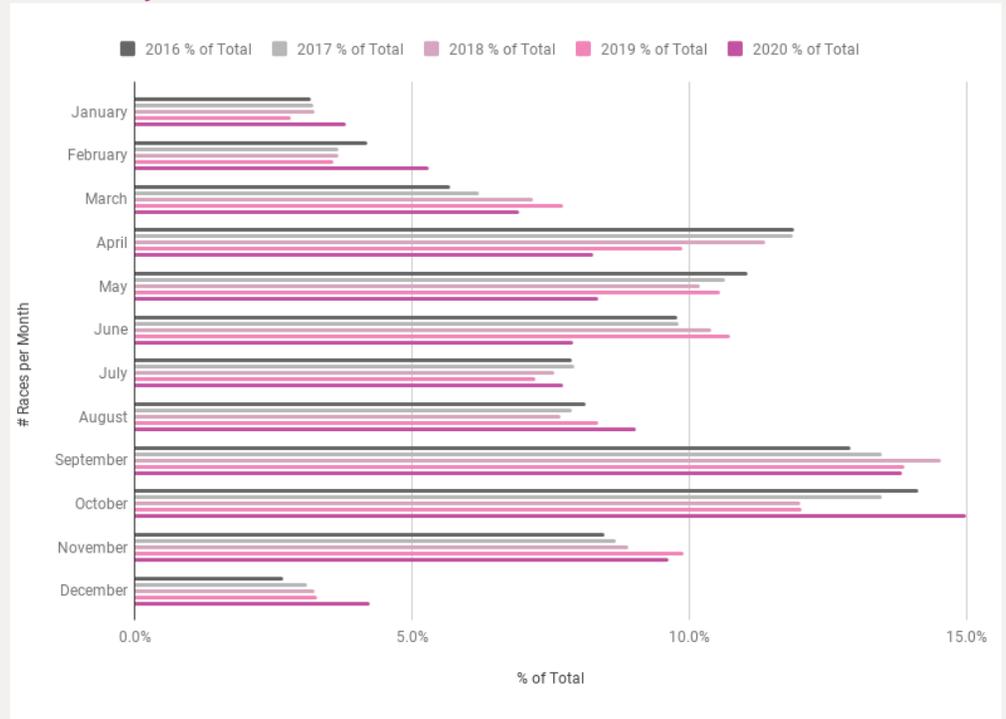
15%
OF 2020 RACES TOOK PLACE IN OCTOBER

Races by Day of the Week
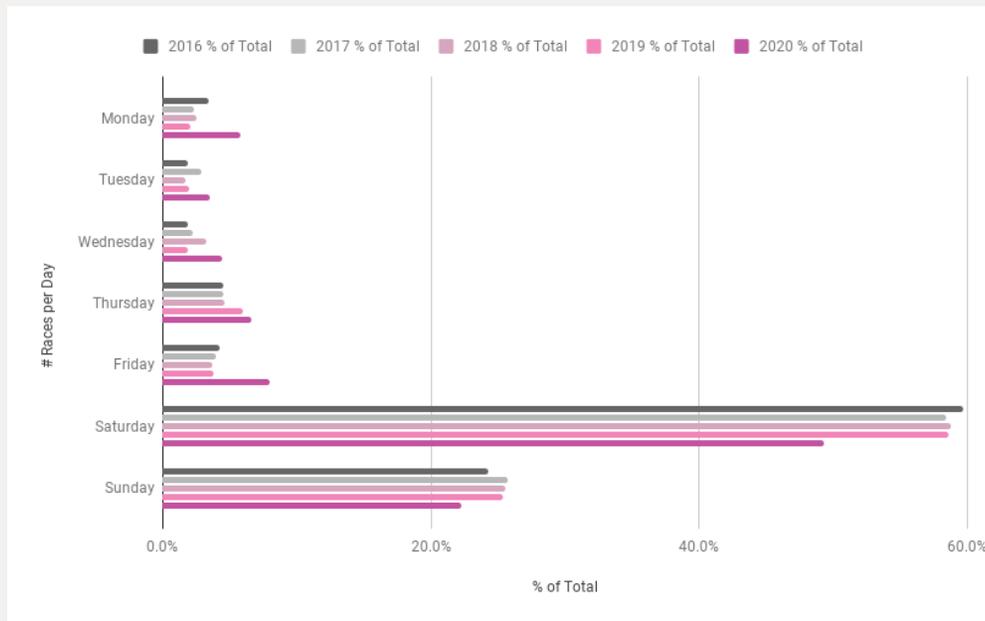
If an event was multiple days, day reported is the first day.

DAY	2016 % OF TOTAL	2017 % OF TOTAL	2018 % OF TOTAL	2019 % OF TOTAL	2020 % OF TOTAL
Monday	3.4%	2.3%	2.5%	2.1%	5.8%
Tuesday	1.9%	2.9%	1.7%	2.0%	3.5%
Wednesday	1.9%	2.2%	3.2%	1.9%	4.4%
Thursday	4.5%	4.5%	4.6%	6.0%	6.6%
Friday	4.2%	4.0%	3.7%	3.8%	8.0%
Saturday	59.7%	58.4%	58.8%	58.6%	49.3%
Sunday	24.3%	25.7%	25.5%	25.4%	22.3%

While weekends, especially Saturday, remain the most popular racing days, the proliferation of virtual events also reduced the importance of weekend for events.

Many virtual events or challenges begin on the first day of the week or a set point in a month (like the 1st or 15th). This trend shifted running competition to something that can happen *any* day, not just on a Saturday morning.

Takeaways

1 Even as traditional events take back weekends, don't neglect weekdays. Offering virtual challenges or small local 5K's can meet the demand of runners looking for unconventional options to keep them training and in-shape.

2 Fall 2020 was jam-packed with options, and with more Q1 events delaying again in 2021, there may be over-saturation this fall. If you have a spring or summer event, consider a hybrid option (with a virtual backup) that will allow you to proceed regardless of virus conditions, avoiding overcrowded fall weekends.

1.4 Race Churn

At RunSignup we internally track both races that do not recur and those that recur but change platforms. This allows us evaluate the health of the industry and determine if there are emerging competitors with strengths we need to match. Competitor churn has remained low throughout the last three years with the exception of a race series that acquired a company with their own registration platform.

This data only represents only races over 500 participants that use our platform from year to year. Due to the manual nature of tabulating this report, it does not evaluate races under 500 participants.

Churn Status	2018 Churn	2018 %	2019 Churn	2019 %	2020 Churn	2020 %	2018-2020 Total
New Races	710		834		1027		3,859
Renewed	1,321	88.5%	1,731	91.1%	807	56.0%	2,571
No Race	114	7.6%	113	5.9%	553	38.4%	780
EnMotive	6	0.4%	3	0.2%	38	2.6%	47
Race Roster	4	0.3%	16	0.8%	8	0.6%	28
ItsYourRace	5	0.3%	3	0.2%	1	0.4%	9
Active	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	6	0.4%	8
CT/Athlinks	6	0.4%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%	8
Events.com	2	0.1%	3	0.2%	2	0.1%	7
onecause	0	0.0%	6	0.3%	0	0.0%	6
RaceWire	5	0.3%	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	6
Custom	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	0.4%	5
EventBrite	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	3	0.2%	4

Churn Status	2018 Churn	2018 %	2019 Churn	2019 %	2020 Churn	2020 %	2018-2020 Total
elitefeats	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	4
Red Podium	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	4
BlackBaud	4	0.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4
GetMeRegistered	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	3
Classy	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	3
RaceEntry	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	3
Vertical Runner	1	0.1%	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	3
RacesOnline	2	0.1%	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	3
Shopify	3	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.1%	3
ImAthlete	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%	2
Lightbox	1	0.1%	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	2
Haku	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2
Other	9	0.6%	7	0.4%	8	0.6%	24

Takeaways

38.4%
OF 2019 RACES OVER 500 DID NOT HOLD A RACE IN 2020

A YEAR AGO, JUST
5.9%
OF RACES DID NOT RECUR

The meaningful number here is that 38.4% of 2019 races over 500 participants did not take place in 2020, up from just 5.9% a year ago. Because this is a yearly average and races happened as-normal for the first three months (12/19-2/20), the "real" churn throughout the pandemic was slightly worse than the 38%. For example, in April, a full 47% of races did not take place.

The bright(ish) side? Smaller races that are not included in this report were less likely to be impacted by Coronavirus restrictions.

1 The high rate of cancellation this year has created a sense of mistrust amongst endurance participants. To build back trust, offer flexible participant management options, and clearly communicate your contingency plan in the event that your permit is pulled.

2 Races succeed when they build tradition, and a year (or two) off can be hard to come back from. Especially if you were forced to cancel in 2020, it's important to have a presence in 2021. Get yourself back on the calendar by setting up your events to be flexible, with virtual and in-person options.
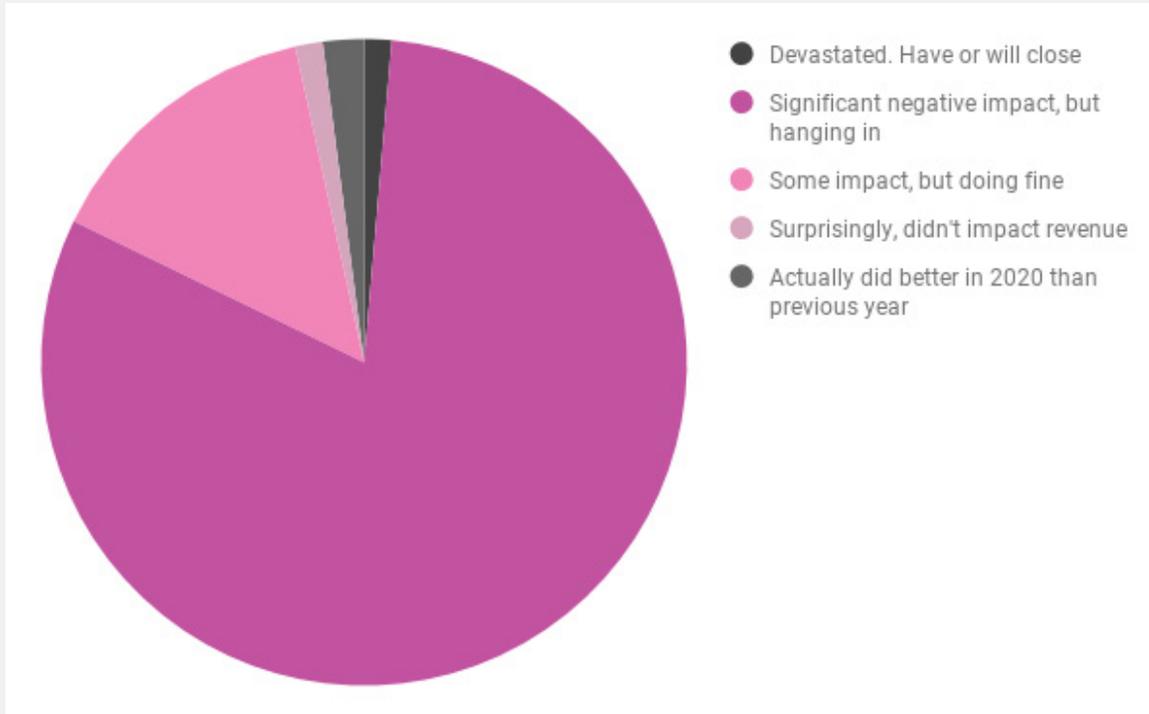
3 If you continue to be hamstrung by gathering restrictions, consider a smaller race or a hybrid race with a small in-person component. This rewards your most loyal participants while demonstrating your safety plan to local officials.

1.5 COVID-19 and Timers

The data for this section is pulled from our 2020 Timer Survey. For more information about the purpose and methodology of that survey, see section 6.

We asked US timing companies to share their experience dealing with COVID-19 in 2020, including their immediate response, assistance they received to bridge the gap, and their current status. While most businesses indicate that they have been severely impacted but are surviving, it is worth noting that timing businesses that have closed their doors are less likely to have responded to this survey.

## How Has COVID-19 Impact Your Timing Business?

- Devastated. Have or will close
- Significant negative impact, but hanging in
- Some impact, but doing fine
- Surprisingly, didn't impact revenue
- Actually did better in 2020 than previous year

RESPONSE	%
Devastated - Have or Will Close	1.4%
Significant negative impact, but hanging on	80.8%
Some impact, but doing fine	14.4%
Surprisingly, didn't impact revenue	1.4%
Actually did better in 2020	2.1%

80.8%

OF TIMERS INDICATED A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT TO THEIR BUSINESS, BUT ARE HANGING ON

How did your timing business respond to COVID-19?
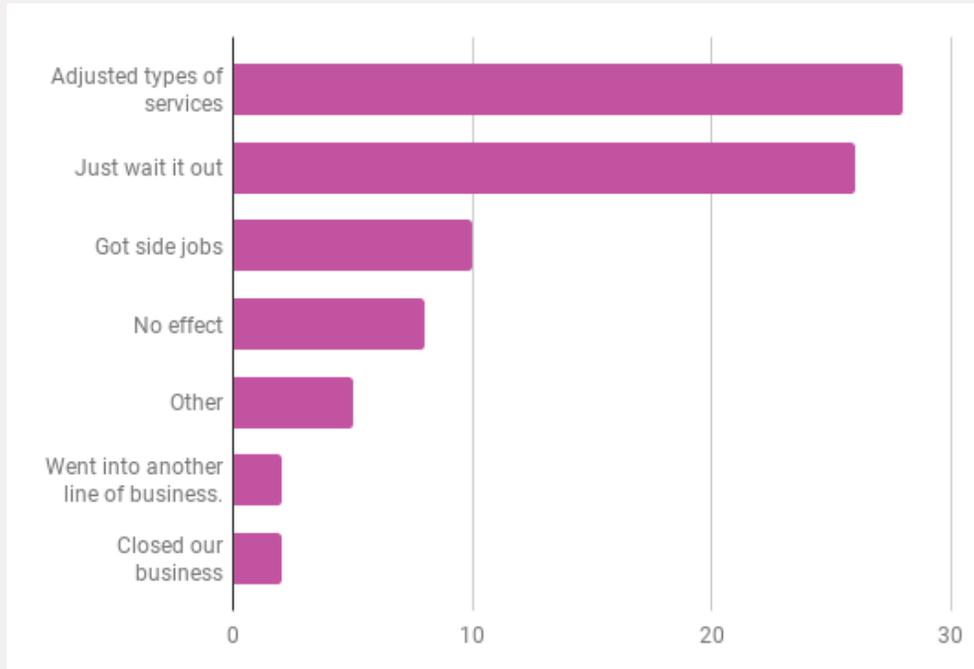
Did your company receive COVID-19 related financial assistance (PPP, EIDL, Bridge Loan, etc.)?
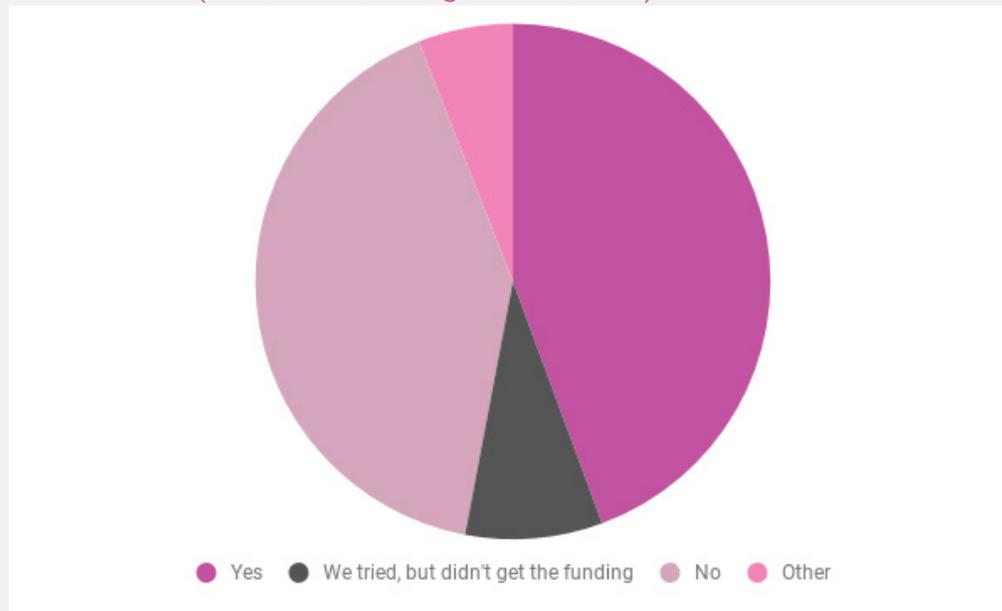
How did timing companies survive 2020? The most common solutions included adjusting types of services (such as adding virtual results or swag fulfillment) and taking a break while events were paused.

Additionally, 44.4% responded that they were able to get some sort of financial assistance (PPP, EIDL, bridge loan, etc.) to deal with some of the shortfalls of 2020.

Takeaways

1 COVID-19 hit the timing industry hard. If you need a partner to help you navigate the challenges of a COVID-19 race, consider reaching out to your timer for assistance with services beyond timing. They have the expertise to help, and keeping them in business is a win-win for the industry.

2 Like the industry as a whole, timers survived by pivoting their approach to racing. They learned to produce virtual races, offered RaceJoy, delivered virtual results, and helped guide virtual and hybrid events. To succeed in 2021, timers will need to continue expanding their capabilities.

> We've actually seen some new runners or members of the community get into running as a result of virtual events. These might be individuals that never got into running or racing because they didn't feel like they could compete.
>
> - RaceRise

Virtual Trends

1

KEY FINDINGS AND TRENDS

» Virtual events exploded in 2020, but they weren't brand new. There were **1,355 virtual races on RunSignup in 2019**, 2.8% of all races on the platform

» The demographics of virtual racers differ from those of traditional race attendees. **56% of virtual challenge partici-pants and 53% of virtual racers over the age of 40,** compared to just 46% for in-person event attendees.

» Women are ubiquitous in virtual events, making up 64% of participants in 2020 virtual evens and **a whopping 72% of participants in 2019.**

» **78% of virtual races and challenges are smaller than 100 participants**, mirroring the size of typical in-person events.

» Virtual races and challenges have longer windows for participation, with 50% of virtual races lasting between 8 and 30 days, and **68% of virtual challenges extending to more than 30 days.**

2

CONCLUSIONS

» Virtual runners are not from the same pool of participants who show up on race day. While there is overlap, many of your virtual participants *prefer* the virtual experience to an in-person one.

» Virtual races require the same professional production and marketing efforts as "real" races.

» Keeping virtual races and challenges running for weeks or months creates long-term overhead, but flexibility and length of participation are also important defining features of virtual events.

3

RECOMMENDATIONS

» Offer a virtual race in conjunction with your traditional race forever. While some of your virtual participants in 2020 likely joined because it was their only option, some runners prefer virtual. Don't leave them out in the cold.

» Understand your reach and marketing options when determining your expectations for a virtual event. You're working with the same contact list and the same skills for digital marketing.

» Do your prep work for virtual events by setting up email reminders, challenge milestones and notifications, and social media prompts in advance.

2.1 Virtual Is Real

The pandemic amplified the virtual race but it did not create it. Virtual races were on the rise pre-pandemic, with the 479 virtual races in 2016 growing to 1,355 in 2019.

Necessity may have made inflated participation in virtual races, but in turn, virtual races also improved in 2020. Over the course of the year, the virtual concept evolved into increasingly engaging social events with premium swag and robust Facebook communities.

Innovations that helped transform virtual races included:

» Easier self-reporting of virtual results
» Digital rewards like pre-race bibs and finisher certificates
» GPS Tracking with RaceJoy Anywhere to bring "spectators" to the course.
» Interactive social media livestreams
» Streamlined shipping tools
» Photo contests and hashtags

Number and Percent of Races by Event Type

DAY	2016 # RACES	2016%	2017 # RACES	2017%	2018 # RACES	2018%	2019 # RACES	2019 %	2020 # RACES	2020 %
In-Person	27,483	98.3%	34,428	98.0%	41,482	97.9%	47,855	97.3%	26,579	59.8%
Virtual Race	479	1.71%5%	683	2.0%	817	2.1%	1,355	2.8%	15,080	33.9%
Challenge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,820	6.3%

33.9%
OF 2020 RACES WERE VIRTUAL RACES

6.3%
OF 2020 RACES WERE VIRTUAL CHALLENGES

DAY	2016%	2017%	2018%	2019 %	2020 %
In-Person	99.5%	99.2%	99.2%	99.0%	59.8%
Virtual Race	0.5%	0.8%	0.8%	1.0%	33.4%
Challenge	-	-	-	-	6.7%

Percent of Registrations by Event Type
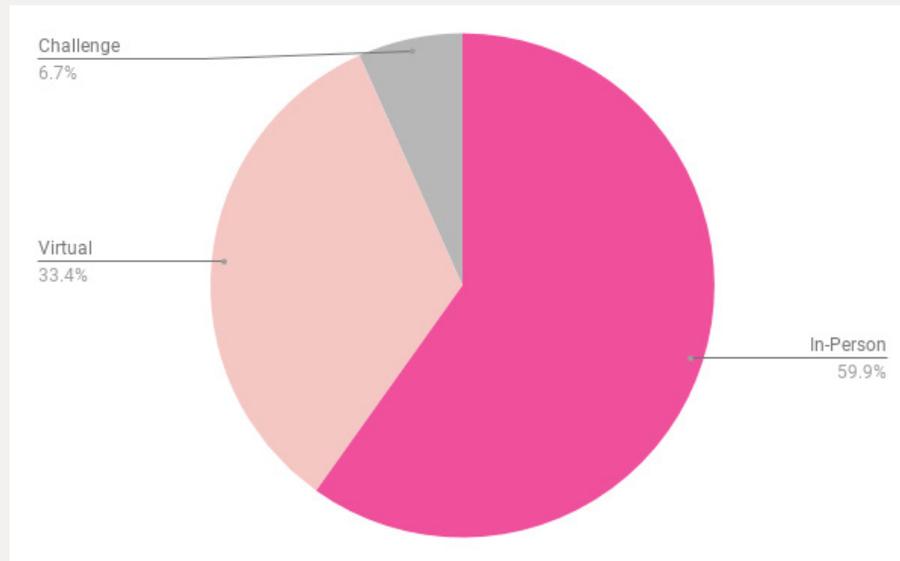
Virtual challenges made up the final 6.4% of races and 6.7% of partici-pants in 2020. While it's the smallest category, it's also the newest, and potentially one with long-term applications.

A virtual challenge is a flexible event that gives participants a goal to reach over time (like running the distance of their state or cycling the elevation equivalent of Mount Kilimanjaro). Participants can log each activity they complete (like daily miles or number of push-ups). The challenge winner is typically the first participant to reach the goal - even if there running time is slower.

Examples of virtual challenges

» Team competition to run the length of the country
» Fitness challenge to complete 30 minutes of exercise every day for a month
» Triathlon challenge to run 100 miles, bike 300 miles, and swim 10 miles

Benefits of virtual challenges

» Engaging supporters over an extended period of time builds loyalty
» Challenges compliment tradi-tional race events rather than competing with them
» Limitless possibilities

Takeaways

1 Virtual races improved and grew in 2020. Moving forward, it won't be enough to offer a virtual race that is merely a medal in the mail - put the same thought and attention into your virtual event that you do for a live one.

2 The pandemic greatly accelerated a trend that already existed. While the share of event participation that is virtual will fall again, some portion of the new virtual runners who were captured this year will stick around. Make sure you have options to keep them involved.

3 Virtual challenges are built to last. Even when events return to nor-mal, challenges are perfect vehi-cles for more engagement, aid in training and provide a sense of accomplishment in daily life. Get creative and get people moving.

2.2 Demographics of Virtual

Virtual participation is dominated by females, with 64% of virtual race participants and 65% of virtual challenge partici-pants identifying as female. In pre-pandemic times, that gap was even wider - in 2019, a full 72% of virtual race partici-pants were female. While the sample is significantly larger in 2020, the circumstances are also exceptional and it remains to be seen if the virtual world can hold onto some of the male participants they reached this year.

GENDER	2019 In-Person	2019 Virtual	2020 In-Person	2020 Virtual	2020 Challenge
M	43.0%	25.1%	44.1%	33.8%	32.6%
F	55.6%	72.2%	54.5%	63.58%	65.3%
N/A	1.4%	2.7%	1.4%	2.7%	2.1%

Virtual Race Participation by Gender
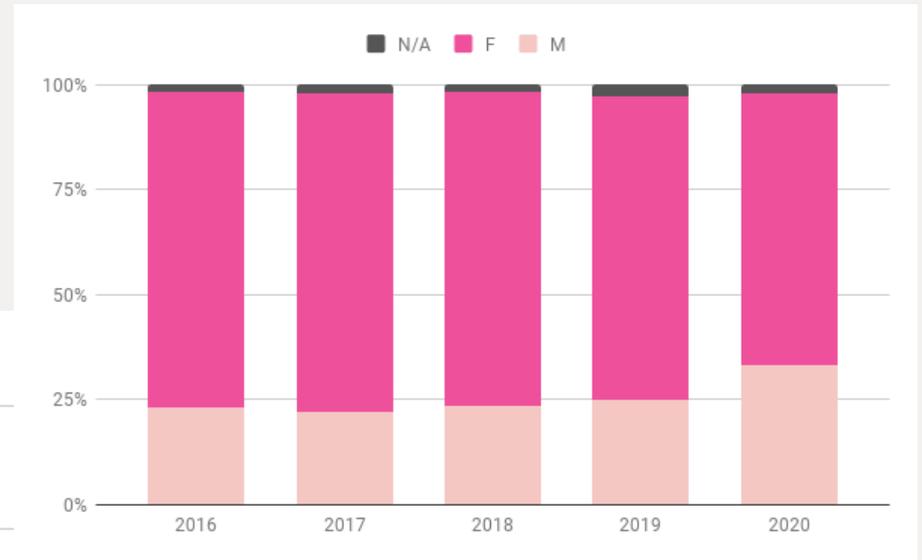

2020 Participation by Event Type
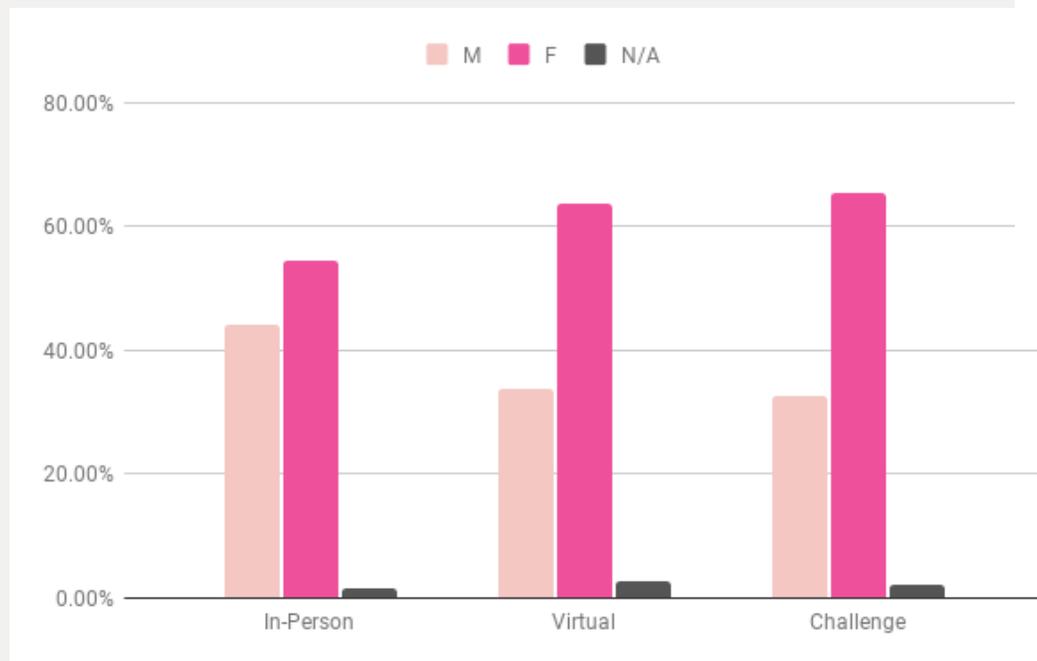
Virtual Participants are also more likely to not select a gender. In addition to more events seeking to accommodate transgender and nonbinary participants, virtual events often forego traditional awards, making them ideal for genderless participation.

2020 Participation by Event Type

AGE	2019 In-Person	2019 Virtual	2020 In-Person	2020 Virtual	2020 Challenge
Under 18	17.9%	7.7%	18.3%	11.5%	8.0%
18-29	16.4%	11.9%	13.6%	13.2%	12.0%
30-39	22.4%	24.5%	21.9%	22.3%	23.8%
40-49	19.9%	25.5%	21.1%	22.7%	25.6%
50-59	13.9%	18.2%	15.0%	16.8%	18.0%
60-69	6.2%	7.6%	6.7%	8.3%	8.2%
70+	1.7%	2.4%	1.7%	2.9%	2.5%
N/A	1.7%	2.4%	1.7%	2.9%	2.5%

Virtual events also attract older participants - especially virtual challenges. Those under 30 are much less likely to join a virtual event than an in-person one.

Virtual Race Participation by Age

56%
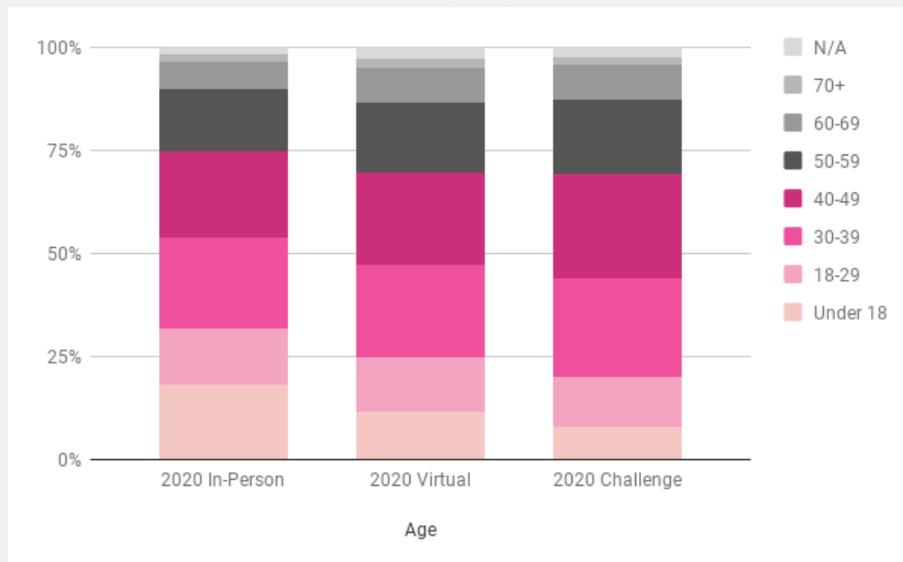
OF VIRTUAL CHALLENGE PARTICIPANTS ARE OVER 40, COMPARED TO 53% OF VIRTUAL RACE PARTICIPANTS AND JUST 46% OF IN-PERSON EVENTS

Takeaways

1 Women are much more likely than men to join your virtual event or challenge. Make sure your race themes and swag styles are inclusive (and will fit women!).

2 Virtual events and challenges can be less intimidating for older participants and less experienced runners. Offer a wide range of distance and difficulty options to ensure that you have an event to appeal to everyone.

2.3 Size of Virtual Events

The number of participants in virtual events reflects the number of participants seen in most traditional events, as well.

While there are outliers (the largest virtual events in 2020 exceeded 20,000 participants), the vast majority attract fewer than 500 participants.

% of Virtual Events by Size

# OF PARTICIPANTS	2016 % EVENTS	2017 % EVENTS	2018 % EVENTS	2019 % EVENTS	2020 % EVENTS
1-100	88.3%	88.1%	92.2%	92.4%	78.3%
101-500	10.2%	9.8%	6.8%	6.4%	18.3%
501-1,000	1.0%	1.3%	0.7%	0.7%	2.2%
1,001-5,000	0.4%	0.7%	0.2%	0.4%	1.1%
5,001-10,000	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
10,000+	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%

# OF PARTICIPANTS	% 2020 CHALLENGES
1-100	77.7%
101-500	17.9%
501-1,000	2.8%
1,001-5,000	1.4%
5,001-10,000	0.2%
10,000+	0.1%

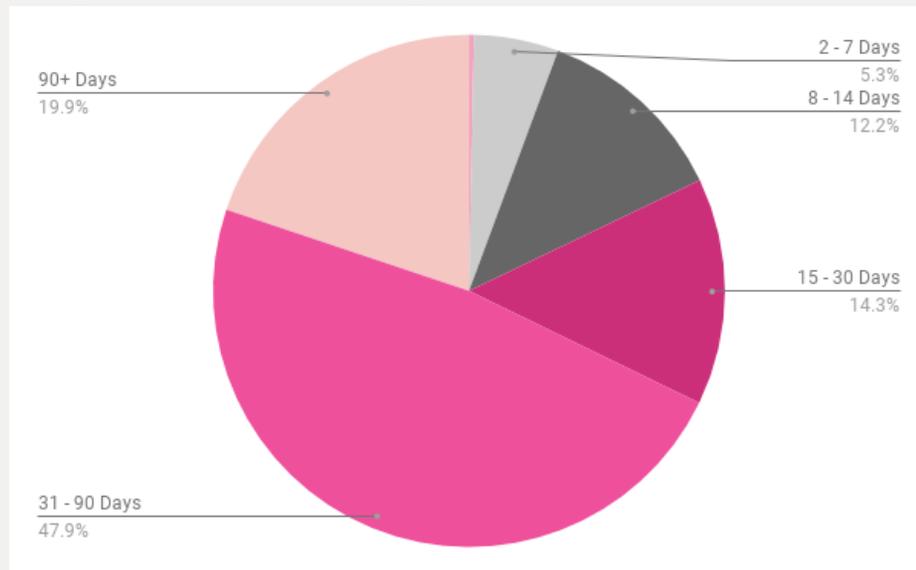## 2020 Size of Event by Event Type
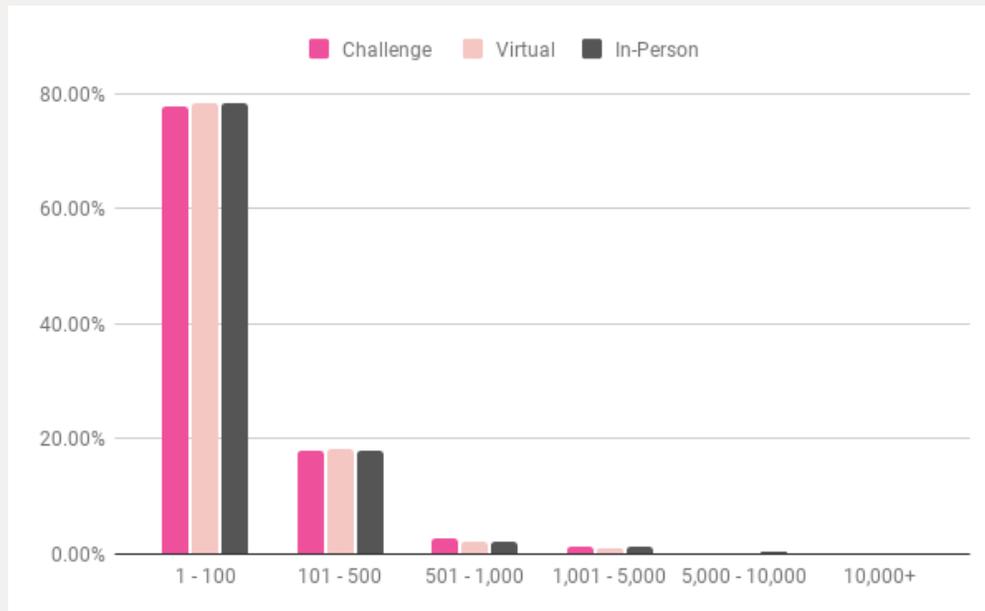
Takeaway

1

Most in-person endurance events are small events - and so are most virtual races. While there are exceptions in both realms, a good rule of thumb is to remember that your virtual races rely on the same participant email lists and marketing tools as your traditional events. If you want to expand your pool of participants, you have to increase your investment in marketing.

2.4 Length of Virtual Events

Length of Virtual Challenge

90+ Days
19.9%

2 - 7 Days
5.3%

8 - 14 Days
12.2%

15 - 30 Days
14.3%

31 - 90 Days
47.9%

Length of Virtual Race

90+ Days
4.6%

31 - 90 Days
26.6%

15 - 30 Days
23.0%

One Day
0.6%

2 - 7 Days
18.5%

8 - 14 Days
26.6%

Flexibility of participation is a key feature of virtual racing, whereas extended engagement is the defining element of a virtual challenge.

67.8%

OF VIRTUAL CHALLENGES ARE MORE THAN 30 DAYS
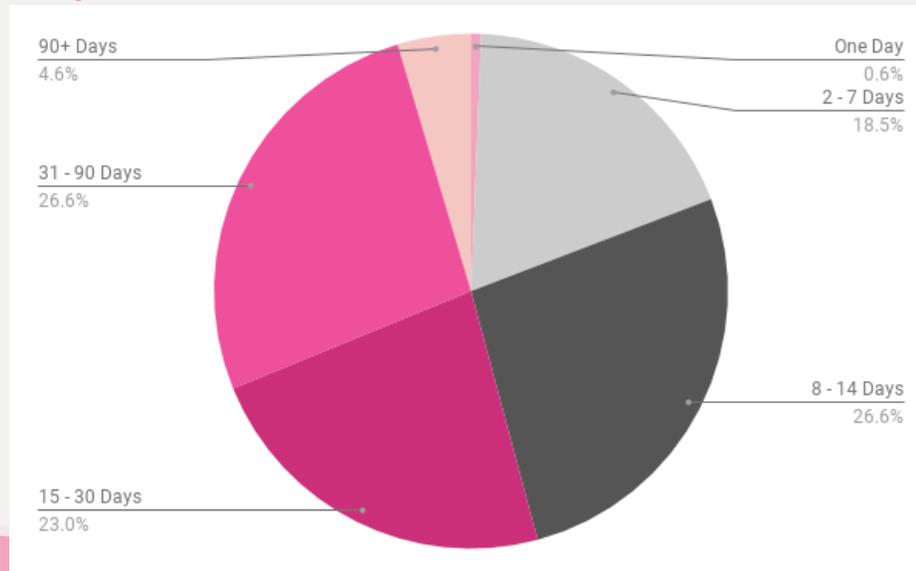
Takeaways

1 Flexibility is a major draw for participating in a virtual race instead of a traditional one. Even if it's parallel to an in-person event, offer virtual participants at least 1-2 weeks to allow them to work within their schedules.

2 Virtual challenges can engage your supporters for an entire season and build loyalty - but make sure you're committed to staying engaged for the entire duration, too.
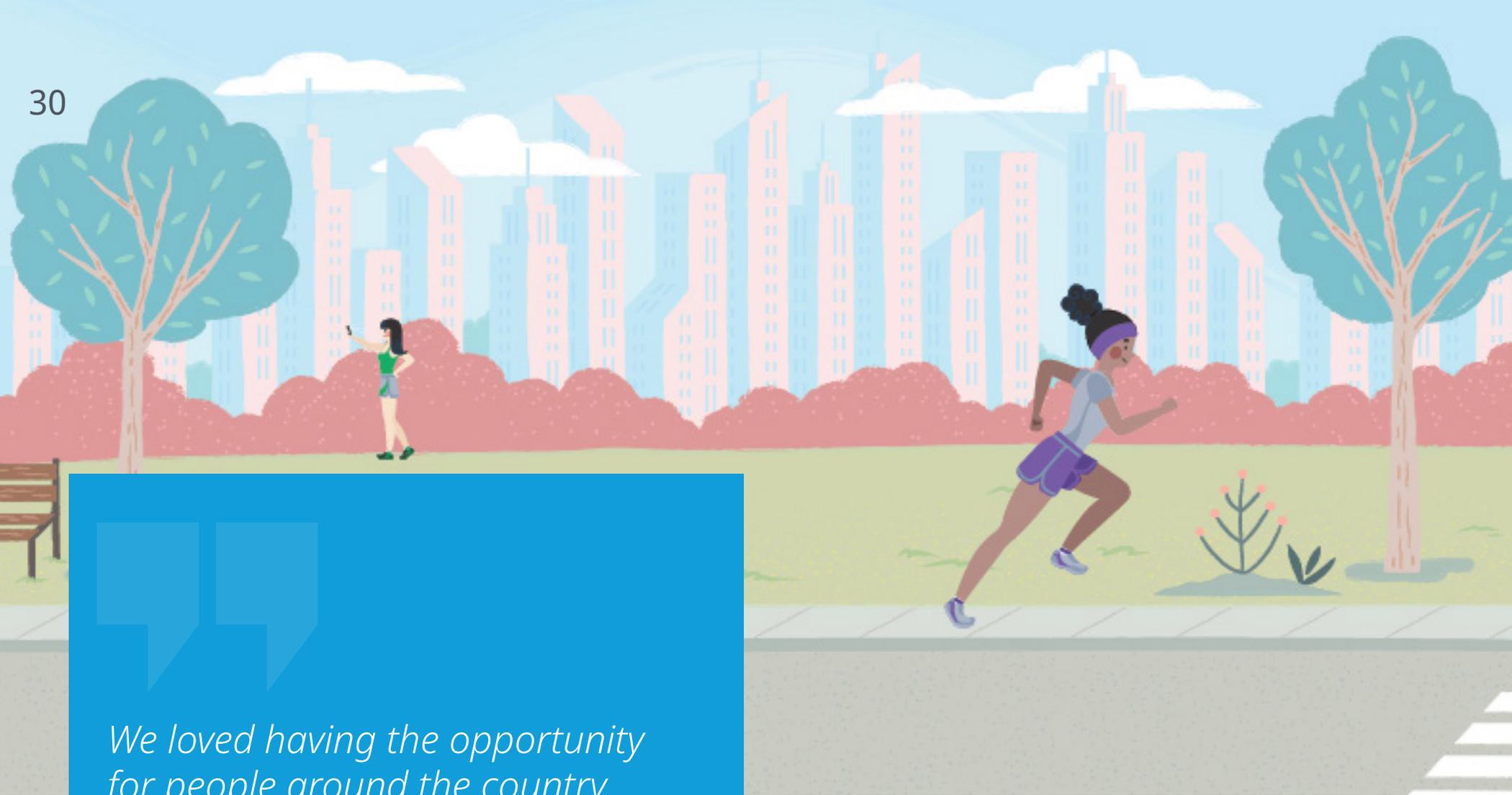
We loved having the opportunity for people around the country to participate. We hope to do a hybrid version in 2021 - allowing a virtual race option in addition to in-person.

- Joshua's Great Things Virtual Race

Registration Trends

1

KEY FINDINGS AND TRENDS

» **26.1% of registrations took place on Race Week**, and an increase from 24.2% in 2019.
» Prices fell across all distances in 2010, including an **18.2% decline in price for half marathons.**
» On average, races incorporated fewer price increases - leading to just **14.6% of registrations occuring within the 3 days before a price increase or registration closing.** In 2019 the same period accounted for 27% of registrations.
» The impact of virtual events can be seen in the demographic data, with **participants trending older and more female**.
» **Mobile is first, with 72.9% of website views** and 55.1% of transactions taking place on a mobile device or tablet.

2

CONCLUSIONS

» The trend towards last minute registrations was exacerbated by the uncertainty of 2020, and is likely to continue well into 2021.
» Virtual and in-person participants are often different, and races struggled to get their annual participants to join re-formatted events in 2020.
» While there may be increased pricing pressure in 2021, much of the shift in price can be attributed to the lower over-head, and thus lower pricing, for virtual races.
» The impact of virtual events on overall demographics indicates that there are older participants (particularly women), who are interested in endurance events, but weren't finding what they needed in a traditional event.

3

RECOMMENDATIONS

» Prepare for continued uncertainty with flexible participant management options and hybrid race options.
» Re-engage your traditional participants by prioritizing them for any in-person race slots and incentives to register.
» To expand your pool of participants, maintain both in-person and virtual elements for your races for years to come.
» If your pricing returns to normal (or increases in 2021 due to the overhead costs of pandemic protocols) be transparent and communicate with your participants about the value of your event and what you're doing to keep them safe.
» Make your registration process as simple as possible and limit superfluous registration questions to accommodate participants attempting to register on their phones.
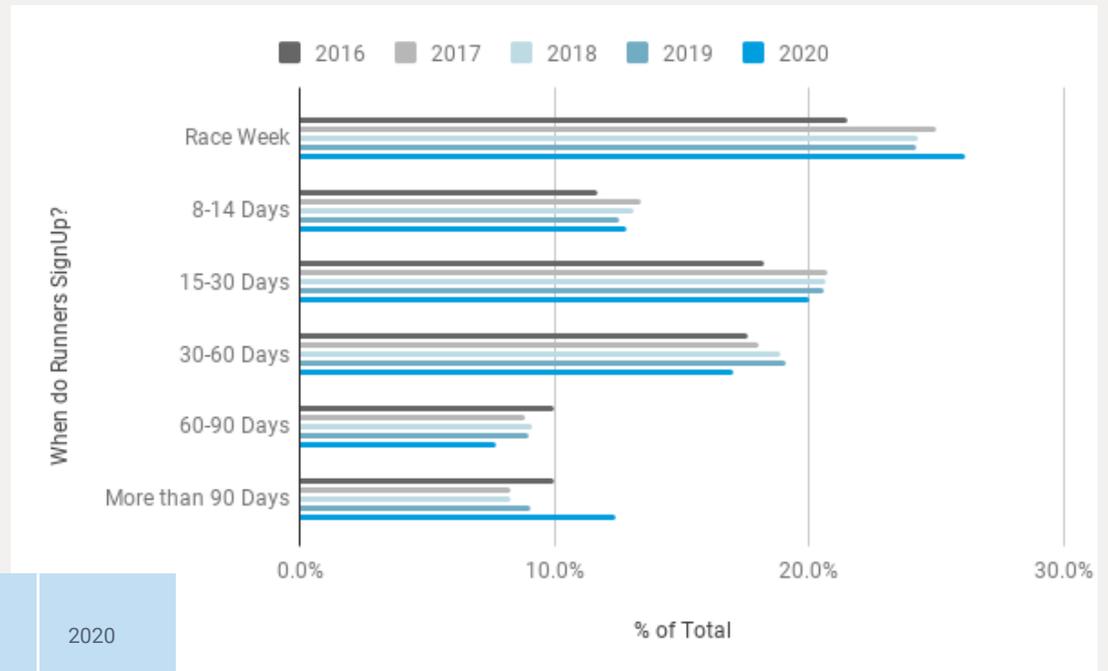
3.1 When Runners Register

When Do Runners Register

26%

OF 2020 REGISTRATIONS
WERE ON RACE WEEK

| WHEN DO RUNNERS SIGNUP?	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Race Week	21.5%	25.0%	24.3%	24.2%	26.1%
8-14 Days	11.7%	13.4%	13.1%	12.5%	12.9%
15-30 Days	18.2%	20.7%	20.7%	20.6%	20.0%
30-60 Days	17.6%	18.1%	18.9%	19.1%	17.0%
60-90 Days	10.0%	8.8%	9.1%	9.0%	7.7%
More than 90 Days	10.0%	8.3%	8.3%	9.0%	12.4%

The dreaded runner procrastination did worsen in 2020, although perhaps not as dramatically expected considering the loss of industry confidence from race cancellations. A full 26% of registrations came during race week, up 24% in 2019. On the flip side, there was also an increase in registrations *more than 90 days* before race day, likely the result of optimism that events that far away would be operating under improved conditions.

2020 REGISTRATIONS	5K	10K	HALF	MARATHON
Race Week	26%%	22%	12%	22%
8-14 Days	14%	12%	7%	10%
15-30 Days	22%	20%	13%	16%
31-60 Days	18%	20%	16%	15%
61-90 Days	8%	9$	11%	9%
91-120 Days	4%	4%	6%	5%
More than 120	9%	14%	34%	22%

Despite the upheaval in 2020, the registration curve remains recognizable. While events with long training cycles, such as half and full marathons still saw significant registrations more than 120 before the race, 5K's and 10k's struggled to get attention more than 2 months in advance.

When Runners Register by Event Distance
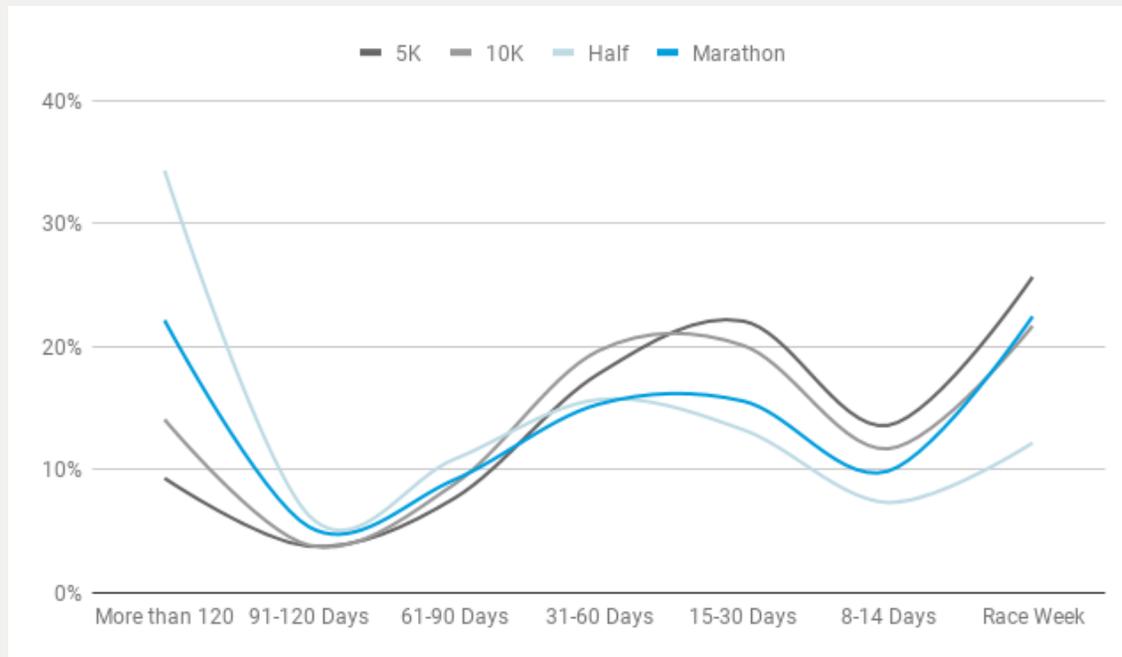
Takeaways

1 Want runners to register earlier? Give them the confidence to do so by providing a plan for refunds, deferrals, transfers, or other options in case pandemic restrictions change.

2 Participants respond well to incentives and time-sensitive deals. To get back on track in 2021, consider a coupon code or special swag for early registrants.

3 Prepare for uncertainty. Late registrations and unconventional registration patterns are still likely. Work with vendors for later order dates or consider offering a discount for a swag-less event if you run out of stock.

3.2 Registration Times

What Time Do Runners Register?
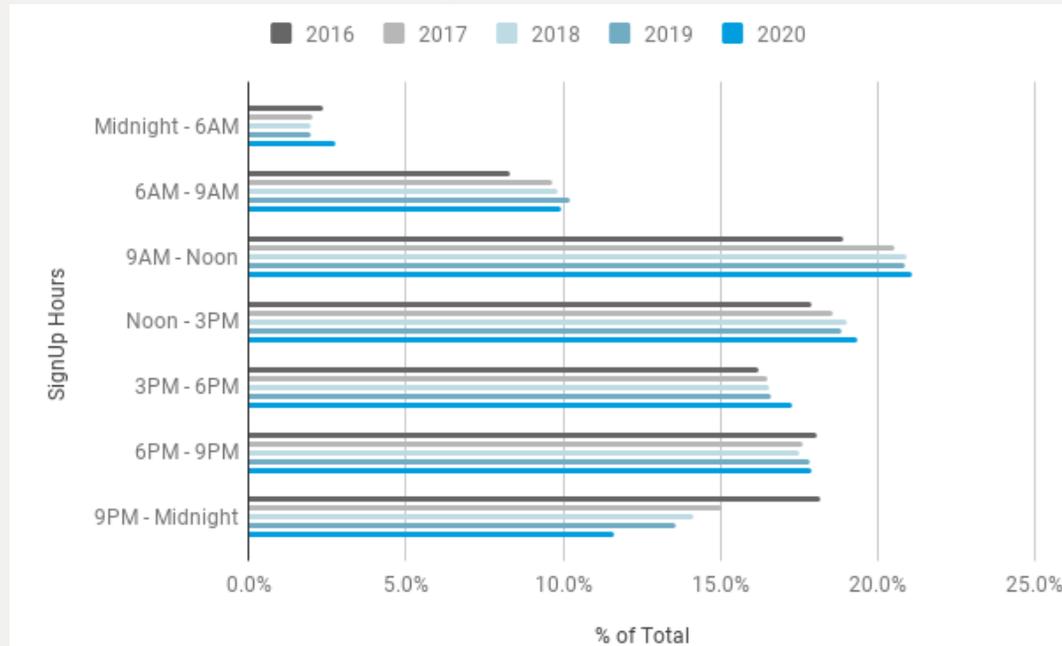
Registration is still 24-hour affair, with computer (and mobile) access readily available. The only shift in 2020 is a slight move towards registrations between 12-6pm, possible as a result of more work-from-home and less rigid schedules.

58%
OF REGISTRATIONS WERE BETWEEN 9AM-6PM

SIGNUP HOURS	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Midnight - 6AM	2.4%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.8%
6AM - 9AM	8.3%	9.7%	9.8%	10.2%	10.0%
9AM - Noon	18.9%	20.5%	20.9%	20.9%	21.1%
Noon - 3PM	17.9%	18.6%	19.0%	18.9%	19.4%
3PM - 6PM	16.2%	16.5%	16.5%	16.6%	17.3%
6PM - 9PM	18.0%	17.6%	17.5%	17.9%	17.9%
9PM - Midnight	18.2%	15.0%	14.2%	13.6%	11.6%

Takeaway

1

If you want to maximize eyes, aim for work hours for email blasts. Don't stress if the time doesn't work out perfectly, though - registrations come at all times of the day (and night).

3.3 Pricing Trends

Race prices in 2020 fell compared to previous years, with longer distances seeing the greatest declines. The switch to so many virtual events is likely the culprit here, with runners traditionally less likely to pay as high a premium for a virtual experience.

The upside? In many cases, prices were reduced because overhead also fell when permits, road closures, and porta-potties were no longer necessary. This also creates a flattening of cost across distances, since a virtual marathon has the same overhead costs as a virtual 5K.

RACE TYPE	2016 AVG PRICE	2017 AVG PRICE	2018 AVG PRICE	2019 AVG PRICE	2020 AVG PRICE	INCREASE
5K	$25.75	$26.38	$26.48	$28.22	$26.44	-6.3%
10K	$31.78	$33.10	$34.91	$36.24	$31.39	-13.4%
Half Marathon	$61.21	$64.46	$67.58	$64.35	$52.66	-18.2%
Marathon	$85.93	$84.13	$94.11	$92.45	$71.13	-23.1%
Ultra	$102.10	$112.38	$107.70	$109.44	$67.33	-38.5%
Triathlon	$87.42	$89.18	$89.69	$90.39	$87.58	-3.1%

RACE TYPE	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% INCREASE
5K	0.7	0.8	0.8	1	0.7	-30%
10K	1	1.2	1.3	1.4	0.8	-42.9%
Half Marathon	1.7	1.9	2	2.1	1.2	-42.9%
Marathon	1.5	1.8	2.1	2.2	1.2	-45.5%
Ultra	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.5	0.6	-60%
Triathlon	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	1.5	-31.8%

HALF MARATHON PRICES FELL

18.2%

IN 2020

It wasn't just average prices that fell. Races also saw fewer price increases over the course of registration, with no event category averaging more than 1.5 price increases.

Uncertainty about restrictions led to shorter registration periods, more virtual events, and gun-shy participants, all of which contributed to more stable pricing.

RACE TYPE	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% INCREASE
5K	$7.99	$8.36	$8.38	$10.51	$10.81	2.9%
10K	$9.40	$9.78	$10.52	$11.58	$10.73	-7.3%
Half Marathon	$19.97	$23.02	$23.93	$24.04	$20.30	-15.6%
Marathon	$27.41	$29.52	$36.31	$37.17	$26.81	-27.9%
Ultra	$30.42	$32.12	$41.16	$39.32	$25.16	-36.0%
Triathlon	$34.12	$27.52	$30.52	$28.70	$27.15	-3.3%

Along with fewer price increases, the difference between the low and high price for races also came down. This change is seen the most clearly with distances over a half marathon, where long registration periods and higher prices usually create a significant difference between prices.

$26.81

SEPARATED THE LOW AND HIGH
PRICE FOR A MARATHON IN 2020

Takeaways

1 Prices will likely rise again in 2021, especially with increased costs for PPE and lower participant caps. Do your homework to understand what price you need to charge to be profitable.

2 Treat runners with respect. If your prices increase due to increased costs, communicate how much you are adding for them and why it costs so much (this year). Alternatively, offer a swag-less option for the budget-conscious runner.

3 Virtual races have a built-in price cap, regardless of the distance. As virtual races take up a smaller share of overall events, expect to see average prices creep back towards 2019 levels.

3.4 Pricing Strategies

Time-based calls to action are traditionally one of the strongest strategies to encourage registrations. This trend changed in 2020, too, with the percent of registrations occurring 3 or less days prior to a price increase or registration close falling from 27% in 2019 to just 14.6% in 2020. Worth noting: the number of price increases per race *also fell* during the pandemic, so there are were fewer opportunities for time-based calls to action.

% of SignUps 3 Days Prior to Price Increases or Registration Close
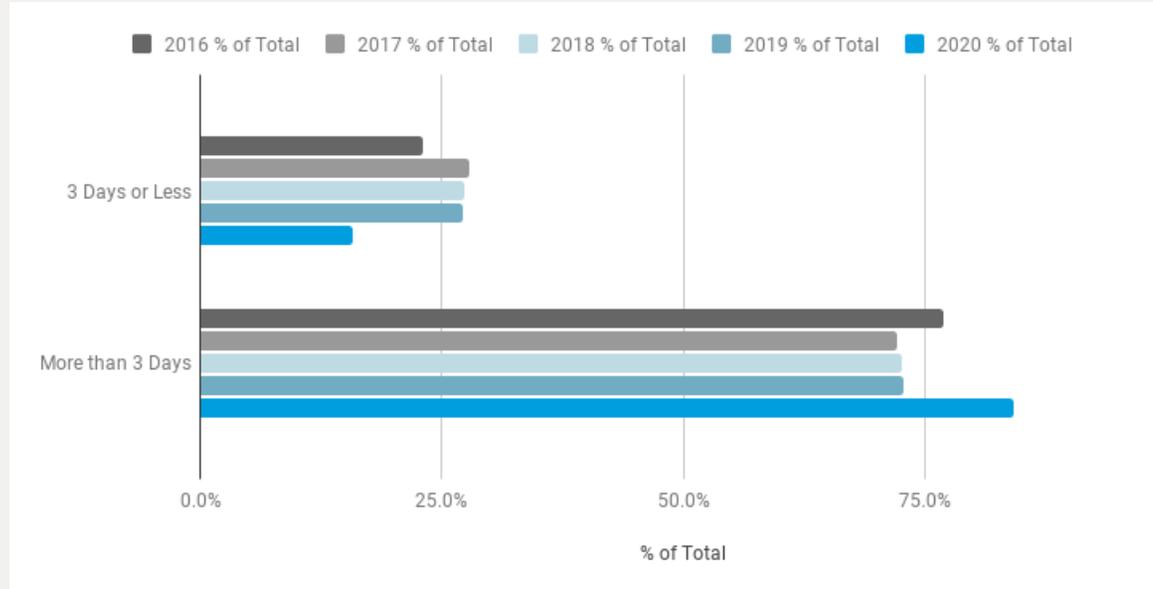
% OF SIGNUPS 3 DAYS PRIOR TO PRICE INCREASE/ REGISTRATION CLOSE	2016 % OF TOTAL	2017 % OF TOTAL	2018 % OF TOTAL	2019 % OF TOTAL	2020 % OF TOTAL
3 Days or Less	23.0%	27.8%	27.1%	27.0%	14.6%
More than 3 Days	77.0%	72.2%	72.9%	73.0%	85.4%

Takeaways

1 Given the steadiness of this data point over time, 2020 looks like an anomaly because of the conditions of the pandemic. Don't de-emphasize your time-base calls to action just yet.

2 Consider the impact of time-based calls to action when deciding if you will have price increases this year - it's about motivating registrations as well as overall revenue.

3.5 Demographic Trends

2020 and the embrace of virtual worsened the endurance industry's challenges with younger runners. Participants under 30 fell from 34.2% in 2019 to just 28.6% in 2020.

On the flip side, the accessibility of virtual events helped draw a larger share of older runners, with 27.2% of all runners over the age of 50. Unknown age also increased, likely because many virtual events do not offer awards or separate results by age group and thus did not require the field.
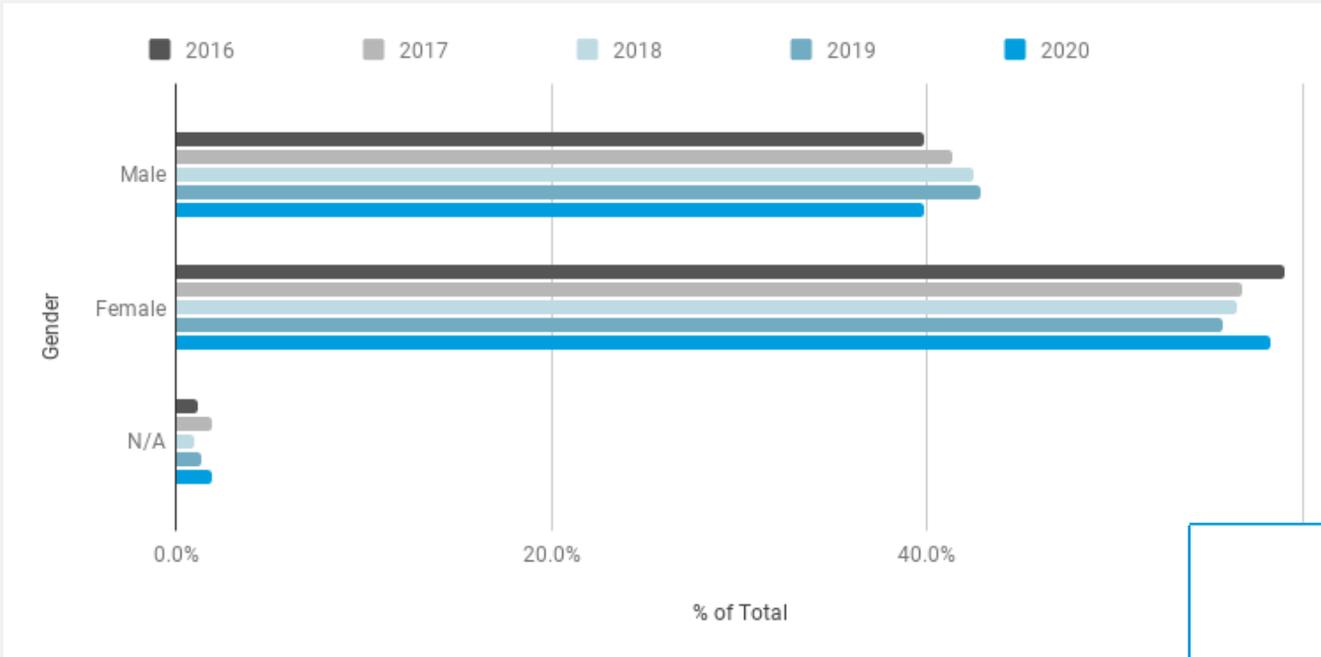
Age Trends
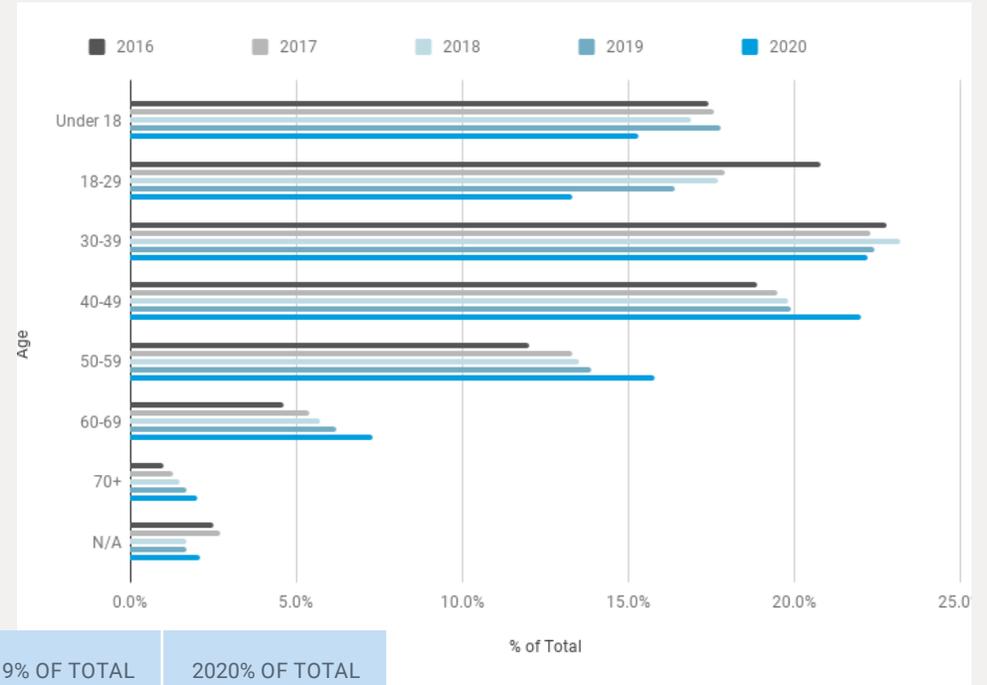
AGE	2016 % OF TOTAL	2017 % OF TOTAL	2018 % OF TOTAL	2019% OF TOTAL	2020% OF TOTAL
Under 18	17.4%	17.6%	16.9%	17.8%	15.3%
18-29	20.8%	17.9%	17.7%	16.4%	13.3%
30-39	22.8%	22.3%	23.2%	22.4%	22.2%
40-49	18.9%	19.5%	19.8%	19.9%	22.0%
50-59	12.0%	13.3%	13.5%	13.9%	15.8%
60-69	4.6%	5.4%	5.7%	6.2%	7.3%
70+	1.0%	1.3%	1.5%	1.7%	2.0%
N/A	2.5%	2.7%	1.7%	1.7%	2.1%

49.2%
WERE 40 OR OLDER, COMPARED TO 43.% FOR THE SAME GROUP IN 2019

58.3%
IDENTIFIED AS FEMALE

2020 reversed the trend of a narrowing gender gap in running, with women increasing their share of participation back to 2016 levels - a full 58.3%. As noted in section 2.2, women are significantly more likely to join virtual events and challenges, and with so many virtual events, that was enough to impact the overall numbers significantly.

GENDER	2016 % OF TOTAL	2017 % OF TOTAL	2018 % OF TOTAL	2019 % OF TOTAL	2020 % OF TOTAL
M	39.8%	41.3%	42.5%	42.8%	39.8%
F	59.0%	56.7%	56.5%	55.8%	58.3%
N/A	1.1%	2.0%	1.0%	1.4%	1.9%

Takeaways

1 To expand your potential pool of participants, take some lessons from virtual and make your in-person events more accessible. Multiple distances, long cutoff times, and training programs can help bring some of those new virtual athletes into the "real" event world.

2 Feature women in your advertising images, and reward their participation by offering gender-specific giveaways.
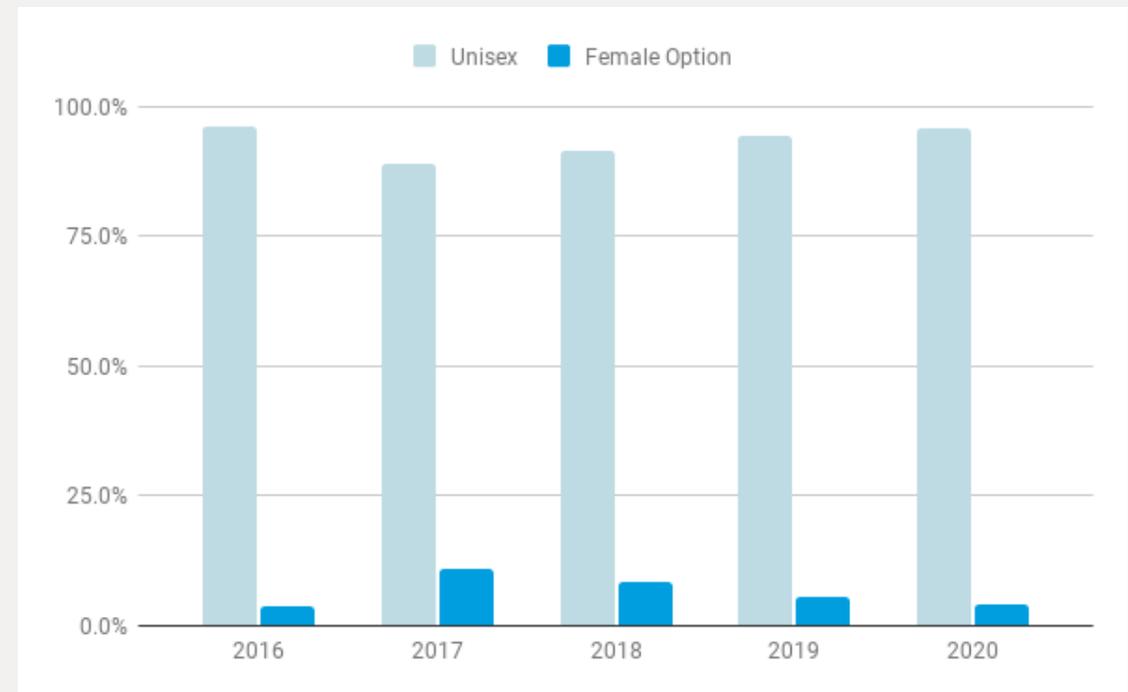
3.6 Giveaways

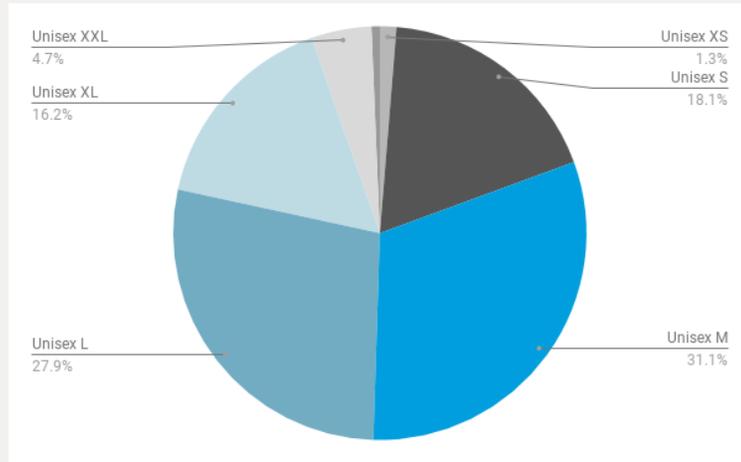**4.1%**

OF RACES OFFERED
GENDER-SPECIFIC
GIVEAWAY SIZES

Despite women increasing their share of participation in 2020, the number of races providing a gender-specific fit for their give-away declined to just 4.1%. Some of this may be driven by the smaller event sizes in 2020, leading to less flexibility to offer multiple styles at a reasonable cost.

% of Races offering Female Size Options
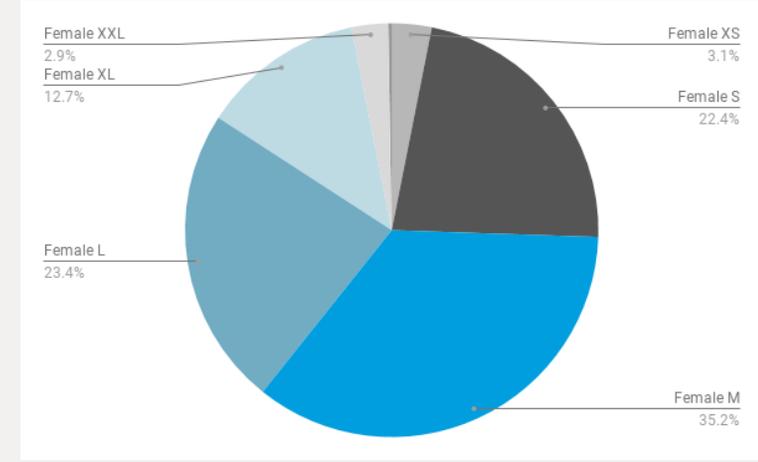
YEAR	UNISEX	FEMALE OPTION
2016	96.2%	3.8%
2017	89.0%	11.0%
2018	91.5%	8.5%
2019	94.4%	5.6%
2020	95.5%	4.1%

Unisex Size Breakdown

- Unisex XXL 4.7%
- Unisex XL 16.2%
- Unisex L 27.9%
- Unisex XS 1.3%
- Unisex S 18.1%
- Unisex M 31.1%

Female Size Breakdown

- Female XXL 2.9%
- Female XL 12.7%
- Female L 23.4%
- Female XS 3.1%
- Female S 22.4%
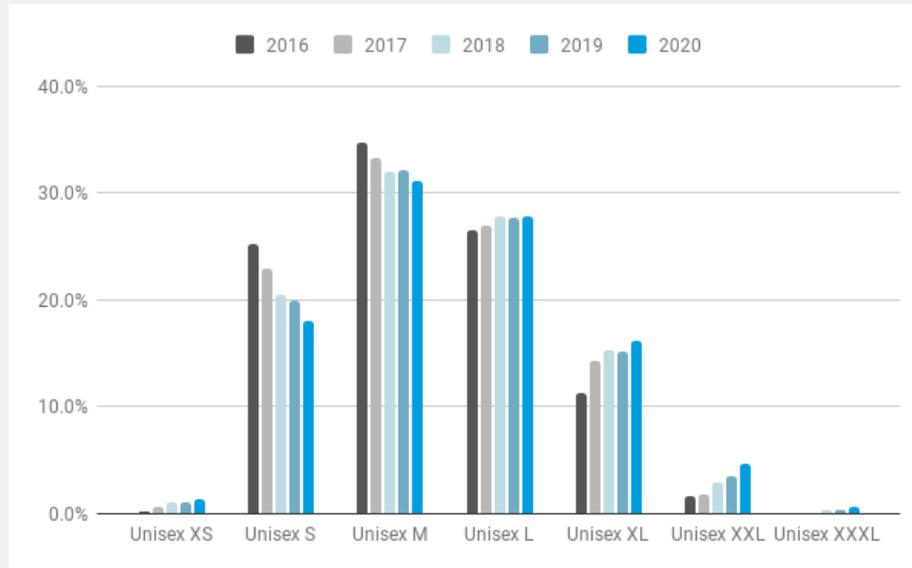- Female M 35.2%

On average, giveaway sizing got larger in 2020. While the shift may have been accelerated by the proliferation of virtual races, it's a continuation of a trend that started several years ago, not the result of a single change

27.9%
OF UNISEX SHIRTS WERE LARGES

Legend: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

Categories: Unisex XS, Unisex S, Unisex M, Unisex L, Unisex XL, Unisex XXL, Unisex XXXL

Takeaways

1 Swag is a huge driver of participation for virtual events. It may be more expensive to offer premium swag in women's sizes, but doing so can help attract more participants to your event.
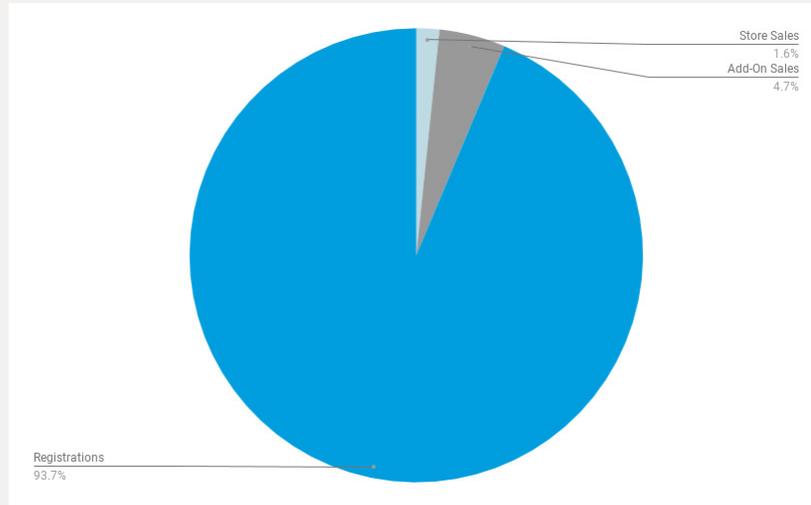
2 If you have kept the same formula for ordering giveaways for years, consider adjusting your estimates this year - especially if you include a virtual option.

3.7 Store/Add-On

With registration dollars down, innovative race organizers found a little more revenue in the margins by increasing their merchandise sales. The percent of revenue from add-on and store sales increased from 4.1% in 2019 to 6.3% in 2020.

Revenue from Race Store & Add-Ons

Store Sales
1.6%
Add-On Sales
4.7%

Registrations
93.7%

6.3%

OF REVENUE WAS FROM
ADD-ONS AND STORE ITEMS

	ADD-ONS 2019	ADD-ONS 2020	STORE 2019	STORE 2020
Percent of Registrations with Merchandise	15.8%	21.6%	1.2%	2.2%
Percent of Revenue from Merchandise	3.2%	4.8%	0.9%	1.7%
Average Amount Paid for Merchandise	$8.27	$7.88	$28.96	$27.13
Average Race Revenue from Merchandise	$1,224,72	$834.67	$1,056.29	$1,188.20

Takeaway

1 Virtual races are often known for their fun themes, funny taglines, and creative design. Capitalize on your branding by offering premium swag either via add-on or store items.
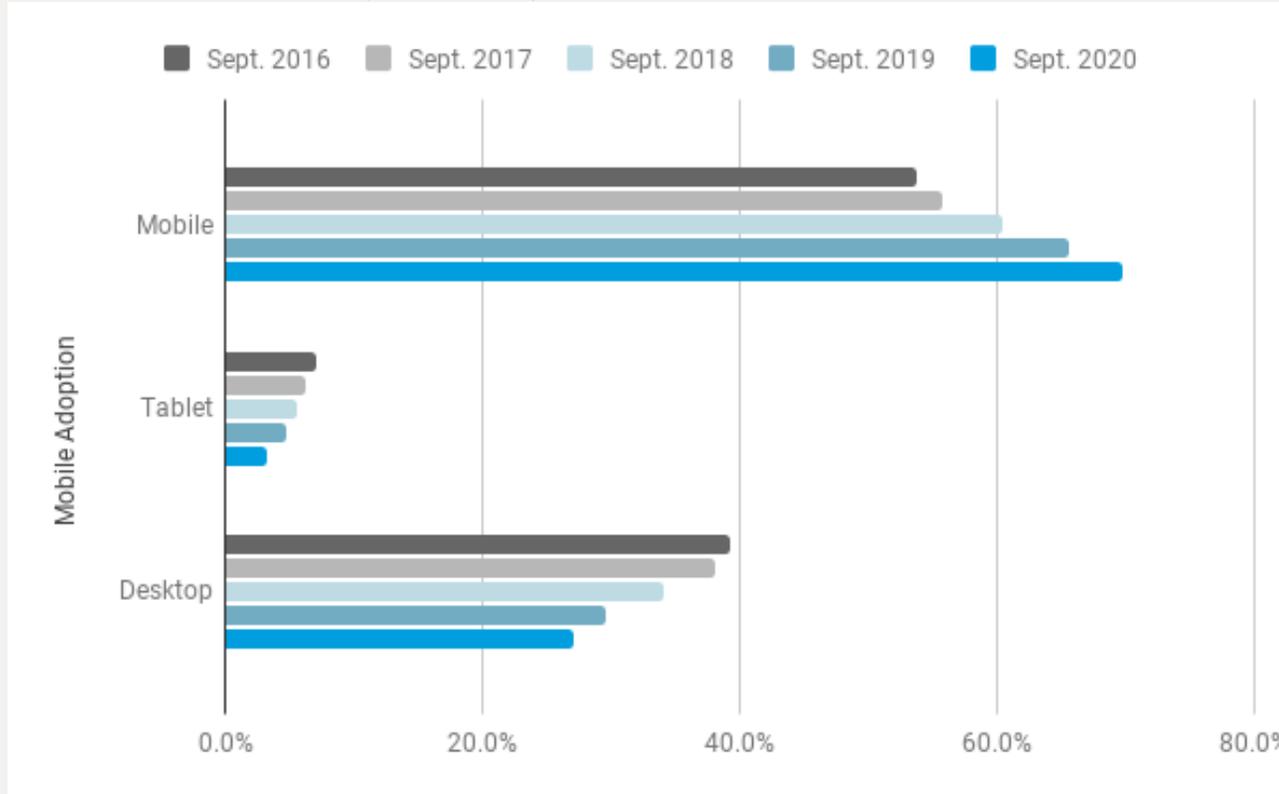
2 While add-ons are often slight upgrades (I.E., a tech shirt vs a tee), store items tend to be high quality items (like a jacket) that appeal even to those not participating in the event. Both can be valuable sources of extra income.

3.8 Mobile Adoption

Race Website Views by Device Type

72.9%

TRAFFIC IS FROM MOBILE OR TABLET USERS

One trend that was not interrupted by COVID-19: mobile adoption. The usage of mobile devices for views of race pages continued to increase steadily in 2020, rising to nearly 70% of all page views. Meanwhile, views on both desktop devices and tablets declined.

MOBILE ADOPTION	SEPT. 2016	SEPT. 2017	SEPT. 2018	SEPT. 2019	SEPT. 2020
Mobile	53.8%	55.8%	60.5%	65.6%	69.7%
Tablet	7.0%	6.2%	5.5%	4.7%	3.2%
Desktop	39.2%	38.0%	34%	29.6%	27.1%

It's not just page views that take place on mobile anymore, either. As people become more accustomed to making transactions on their phones (and payment information is more easily stored), mobile devices are also becoming more common for completing actual transactions. Mobile transactions have increased from just 30.7% in 2016 to 52.3% in 2020, while desktop and table transactions have declined.

Transactions by Device Type
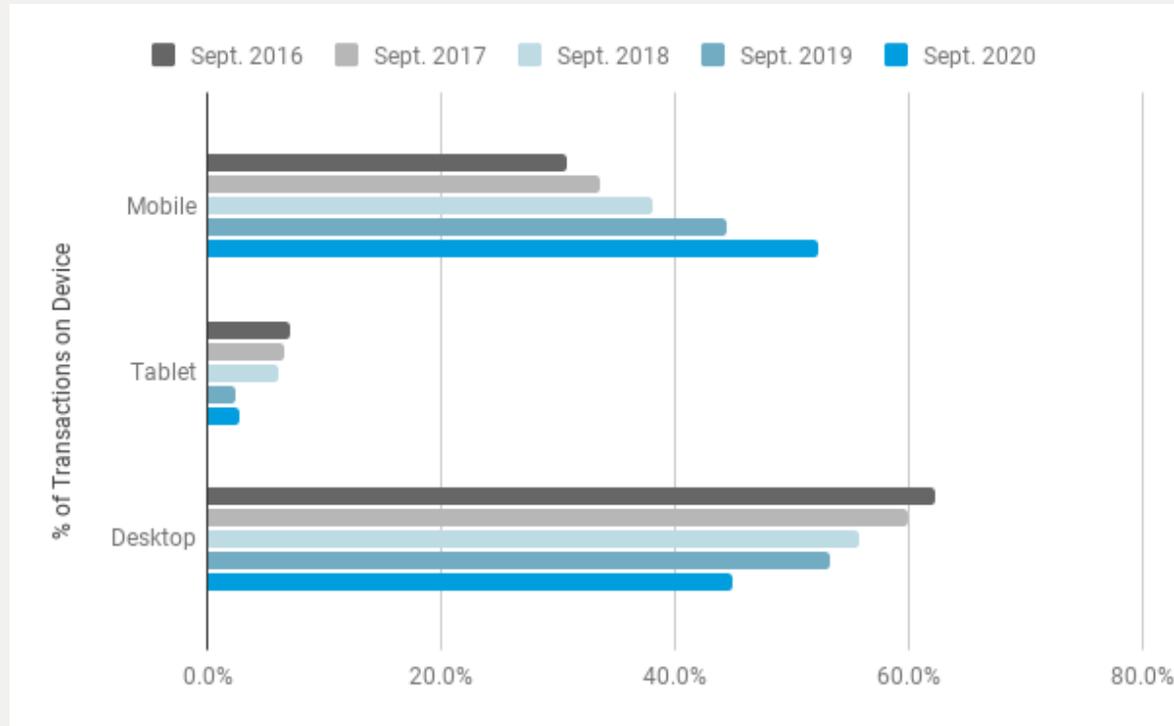
52.3%

TRANSACTIONS TAKE PLACE ON A MOBILE DEVICE

% OF TRANSACTIONS ON DEVICE	SEPT. 2016	SEPT. 2017	SEPT. 2018	SEPT. 2019	SEPT. 2020
Mobile	30.7%	33.5%	38.1%	41.5%	52.3%
Tablet	7.0%	6.5%	6.1%	5.3%	2.8%
Desktop	62.2%	60.0%	55.8%	53.2%	45.0%

Apple continued it's domination of the mobile market, with Apple making up 76% of mobile devices accessing RunSignup. The division between Apple and Android devices has remained relatively steady over the last four years.

DEVICE TYPE	SEPT. 2016	SEPT. 2017	SEPT. 2018	SEPT. 2019	SEPT. 2020
Apple	70%	74%	74%	76%	76%
Android	28%	26%	26%	23%	23%

Apple vs. Android
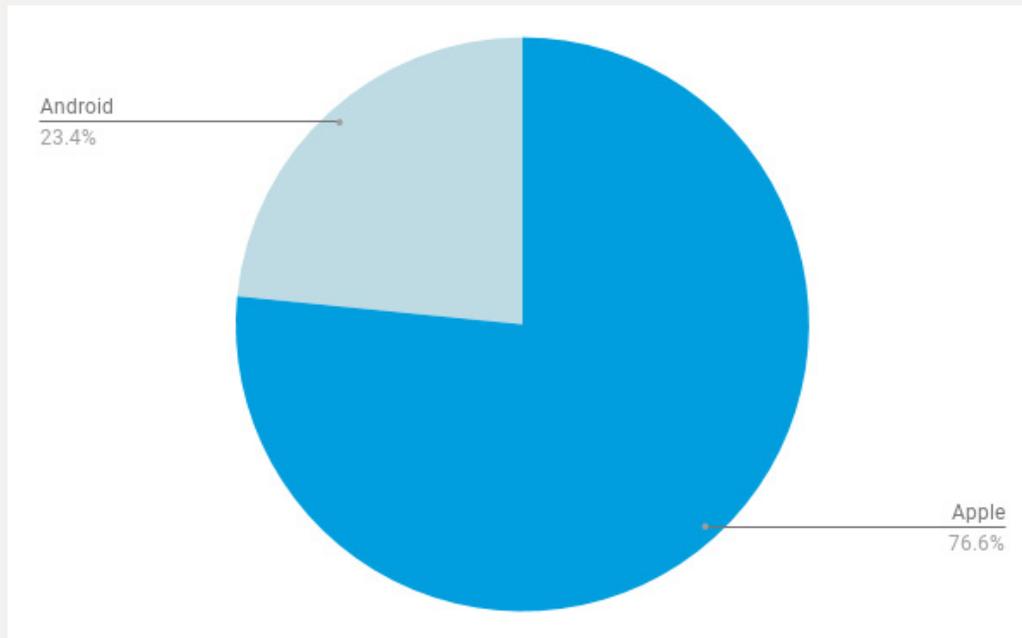
Data about mobile adoption and device usage is gathered via Google Analytics, and is limited to September data each year (one of the busiest months for registration).

Takeaways

1 Mobile doesn't just matter, it's *first*. RunSignup race websites are designed to be mobile friendly, but you still need to review your content on mobile when you make changes.

2 With more than half of your transactions taking place on a mobile device, a simple registration process is increasingly important. Limit your participant fields and additional questions to necessary information to prevent incomplete registrations.

3 While Apple is the clear leader, nearly a quarter of all mobile users are accessing your site from an Android device. Make sure your team has access to both options and can test your website and registration across device types.
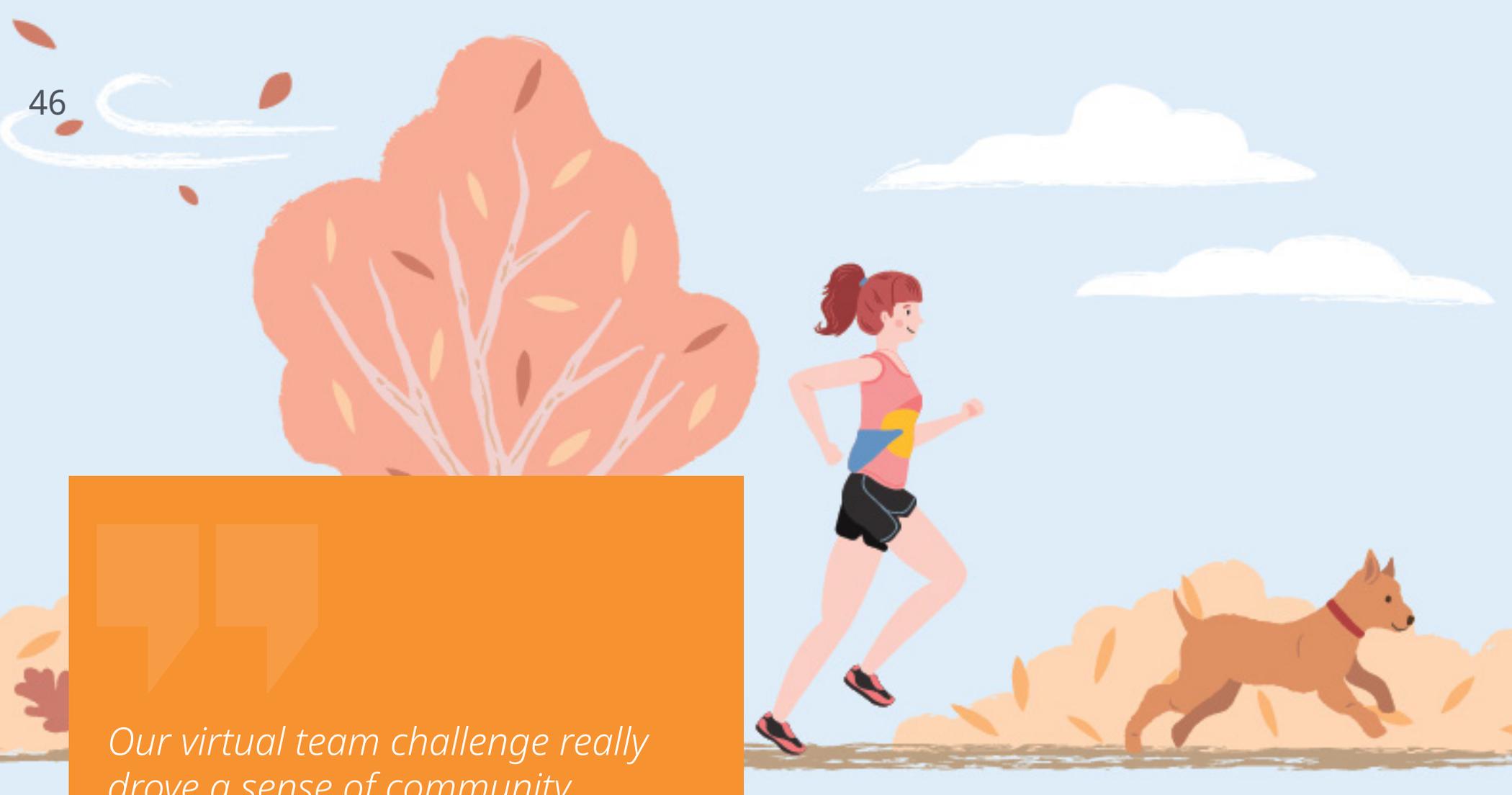
Our virtual team challenge really drove a sense of community amongst team members. This helped address one of the missing components of virtual races - that feeling of being with other people to enjoy running and walking.

- SportsBackers

Promotion Trends

1

KEY FINDINGS AND TRENDS

» Referral rewards, always one of the most effective marketing programs for races, **accounted for 17% of transaction dollars in 2020** - more than double the 7% it represented in 2019.

» Teams became more popular despite social distancing, **with 31.4% of all participants joining** when it was an option.

» Email marketing in 2020 was key for both logistical communications and marketing from afar, with **more than 258 million emails sent from the RunSignup platform**.

» Facebook drove more website views and registrations than ever in 2020, with **23.9% of all website traffic coming from Facebook**.

2

CONCLUSIONS

» Marketing for races is all about community and social connections, even more so in the era of social distancing. Referral rewards capitalizes on that dynamic.

» Email marketing is a dual-purpose service, necessary for both promoting your event and communicating key race logistics.

» Facebook maintains a grip on social media marketing, both via advertising and via organic sharing of your event.

3

RECOMMENDATIONS

» Setup referral rewards programs and team size incentives that are simple to understand, but valuable to referrers, and remind them to refer with each post-registration touch-point.

» Save yourself time and effort by editing and enabling automated emails to keep in touch with both present and past participants.

» Like it or not, Facebook is valuable for races. Customize your social sharing images and messaging to ensure that the best of your race is seen when participants share your event.
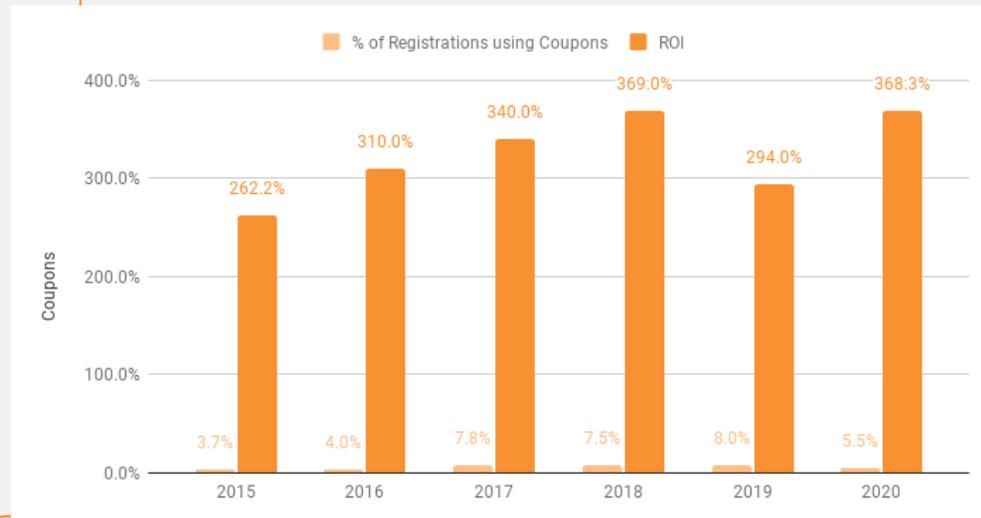
4.1 Coupons

2020 saw the trend of increasing coupon usage reversed, with just 5.5% of registrations using coupons. Along with the reduction in prices and price increases, this is likely attributed to the disruption of normal registration patterns. Additionally, the lower prices in 2020 left less room for further discounting.

While fewer registrants used coupons, both the amount of discount given and the ROI of coupons increased.

COUPONS	% OF REGS USING COUPONS	ROI	AVERAGE DISCOUNT	TOTAL DISCOUNTS	NET REVENUE FROM COUPONS
2016	4%	310%	$12.04	$2,907,418	$9,012,947
2017	7.8%	340%	$15.69	$3,684,319	$12,526,890
2018	7.5%	369.0%	$10.92	$3,559,383	$13,132,704
2019	8.0%	294%	$13.88	$5,696,303	$16,748,501
2020	5.5%	368.3%	$10.71	$2,117.844	$7,800,917

Coupon Performance

Takeaways

1 Uncertainty and lower price points reduced the usage of coupons in 2020, but we expect to see them rebound some in 2021 as events look for ways to motivate participants to return.

2 The industry may have been over-discounting events, with the ROI of coupons dropping in 2019 and rising again with the reduction in coupon usage. Be intentional about the situations in which you offer coupons.
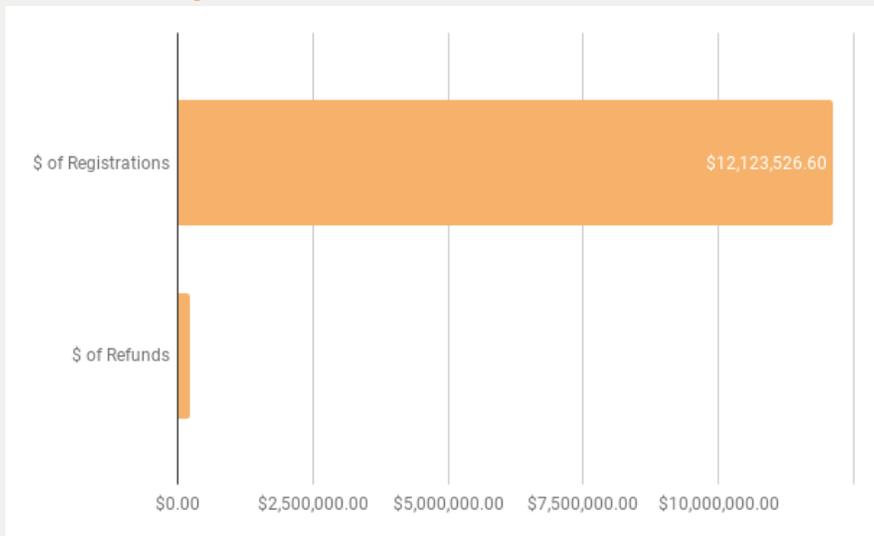
4.2 Referral Rewards

Referral Rewards were tailor-made for the 2020 digital race environment. Efficacy of an already highly effective marketing tool more than doubled, with a full 17% of transactions attributed to referrals when they are enabled, up from 7% in pre-pandemic years.

17%

OF REGISTRATION DOLLARS
ARE FROM REFERRALS
WHEN REFERRAL REWARDS
ARE ENABLED

REFERRAL REWARDS RESULTS	2019	2020	% CHANGE
No. Referral Codes	315,631	436,761	43.41%
No. Race Page Views	2,134,756	12,853,014	519.54%
No. Completed Registration Transactions	109,490	232,034	121.75%
No. Completed Registrations	135,486	269,548	108.17%
Completed Registration Amounts	$6,642,972.09	$12,123,526.60	92.00%
No. Referral Refunds	10,560	21,937	116.53%
Estimated Referral Refund Amounts	$136,934.87	$233,854.27	76.46%
Estimated ROI	$6,506,037.22, (4.751%)	$11,889,672.33 (5,084%)	92.33%
Estimated CPA	$1.01	$0.87	-14.71%

Value of Registrations vs. Cost of Refund Rewards

Referral Rewards Results - # of Registrations
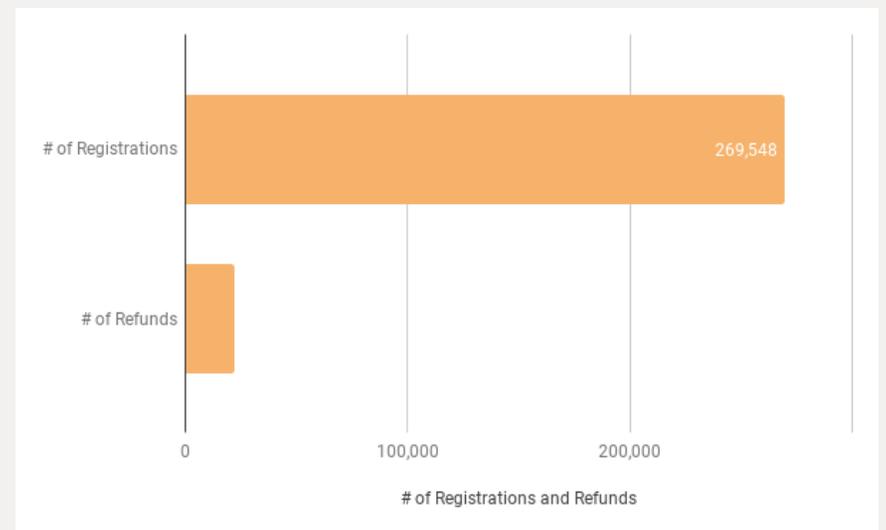
Configurations for referral rewards vary widely depending on the type of event and the cost of the initial registration. Most races elect 1,3, or 5 as their threshold for referral reward refunds. Higher thresholds tend to be more efficient, with CPA's of $0.13-$0.15 for 3 and 5 referrals despite the higher average refund amounts of $11.70 and $22.74.

In comparison, offering a small refund of $4.11 for just one referral leads to a higher CPA of $0.24.

$.87

COST PER ACQUISITION FOR EACH NEW REGISTRATION VIA REFERRAL REWARD REFUNDS

# REFERRALS FOR REFUND	# REFUNDS	#REGISTRATIONS	AVERAGE REFUND AMOUNT	ESTIMATED ROI	ESTIMATED CPA
1	7,610	132,691	$4.11	1,234%	$0.24
2	804	84,111	$6.25	1,740%	$0.06
3	2,560	237,505	$11.70	1,159%	$0.13
4	536	84,805	$15.81	1,298%	$0.10
5	5,125	777,937	$22.74	1,162%	$0.15
6-9	501	115,229	$23.59	1,503%	$0.10
10	109	38,225	$31.51	1,876%	$0.09
11-14	125	9,302	$39.64	2,038%	$0.53
15-19	45	17,757	$18.15	4,327%	$0.05
20-24	26	78,745	$15.00	7,099%	$0.00
25-29	1	559	$10.00	16,820%	$0.02
30+	21	652	$35.23	17,103%	$1.13

Takeaways

1 Referrals work because people trust recommendations from family and friends. To maximize referrals, offer both an in-person and a virtual option for your race, expanding the pool of people that can be referred to your event and allowing people to participate "together" from around the country.

2 The sweet spot for a referral program is somewhere in the middle: a high enough reward to motivate sharing the event ($15 or more), and a threshold that is difficult, but not impossible, to attain (3-5 referrals).

4.3 Groups/Teams

Even with social distancing, groups and teams are an important part of race day. Virtual races were surprisingly good draws for groups, as participants used them as a way to do something "together" with the family and friends they were physically separated from. Participation in teams increased slightly from 29.4% in 2019 to 31.4% in 2020.

% PARTICIPANTS IN GROUPS	AVERAGE GROUP SIZE 2018
2017	30.6%
2018	28.9%
2019	29.4%
2020	31.4%

31.4%
OF PARTICIPANTS JOINED A TEAM WHEN THEY WERE OFFERED

Incentives continue to be an underutilized tool for growing your groups and teams. Offering a small refund for groups that reach specific thresholds (like 5 or 10 participants) encourages group members to invite more friends to join.

	AVERAGE GROUP SIZE 2018	AVERAGE GROUP SIZE 2019	AVERAGE GROUP SIZE 2020
Overall	6.16	6.37	6.57
Non-Incentivized Group	6.12	6.32	6.32
Incentivized Group	7.18	7.55	7.28

Takeaways

1 The social aspect of running is event more important when in-person events aren't happening. Groups and teams are more than a pre-race marketing tool - they also make the participation in your event more rewarding and engaging.

2 Unless they are being scored competitively, allow participants of different events/distances to join the same team. This expands the sense of camaraderie amongst athletes with different ability levels.

3 Offer an incentive like a refund to encourage people to continue recruiting group members.

4.4 Email Marketing

RunSignup's integrated email marketing platform provides a free and easy way for event organizers to reach their supporters - current and former participants, volunteers, fundraisers, and custom lists of contacts. Over the last three years, usage of the email marketing platform has risen from 7.9 million sent emails per month in early 2018 to more than 34 million per month in late 2020. While some of that increase is tied to more races using the platform, the surge this year highlights the importance of free email marketing. Email was used to both promote events from a distance and to communicate participant management options and new protocols amidst a chaotic year.

Total Emails Sent via Email Marketing (in Millions)
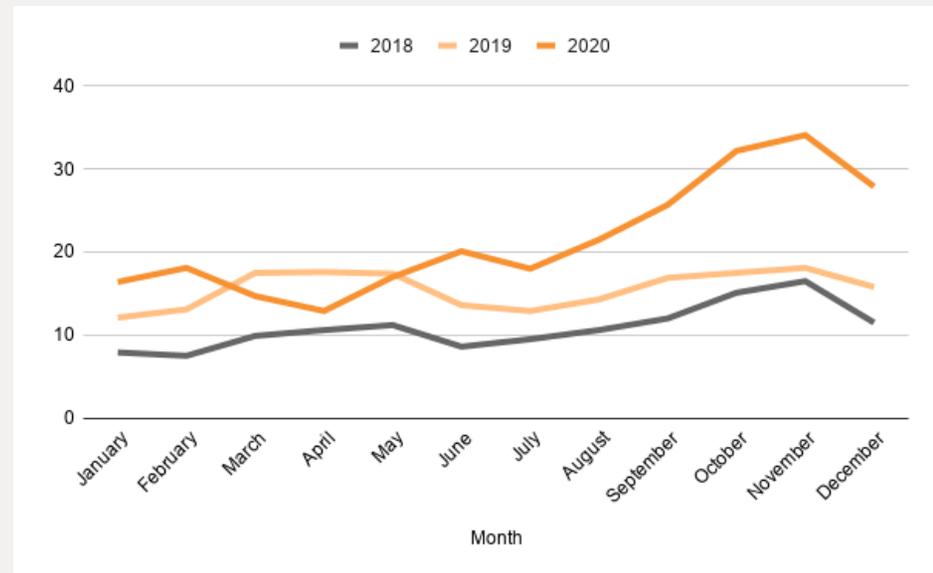
of Races with Automated Emails Enabled

Automated emails simplify the email marketing process, allowing race organizers to simply modify pre-defined emails. Automated email options include:

» *Incomplete Registrations emails* remind supporters who begin, but do not complete, the registration process to return
» *Price increase emails* automate the price increase reminders sent to current and previous participants
» *RaceJoy emails* educate participants on best practices for using the runner tracking app
» *Registration follow-up emails* can be customized by race organizers to highlight and reinforce key programs like referral rewards and fundraising goals.

Races are most likely to enable automated emails for incomplete registrations (13,409 races enabled them in 2020), but price increase emails accounted for more registrations, 65,000+ in 2020.

While manually sent emails still lead to more registrations, automated emails ensure that there is no money left on the table, providing reminders about price changes, following up on incomplete registrations, and fortifying important messages about your event.

258+ Million
FREE EMAILS WERE SENT BY RACE ORGANIZERS IN 2020

of Registrations from Emails

Many races opt to use manual emails sends for reminders about price increases, instead.

Takeaways

1 Email marketing remains a powerful communication tool for races, both for marketing and for critical communications about race day. Make every email count with consistent messaging and timely reminders.

2 Automated emails save time and reduce stress by allowing email marketing to be a "set it and forget it" proposition. Customize automated emails ahead of time instead of trying to remember manual sends at every important juncture.

3 Don't leave money on the table. Incomplete registration emails won't significantly increase your participation, but they will reduce confusion from registrants who did not realize they didn't finish the process, and they provide an extra nudge for those who are on the fence about joining.

4.5 Web Analytics

The data in this section is compiled from our Google Analytics data for September of each year, and provides an overview of how participants find race websites. This is the same data used to evaluate mobile adoption in section 3.8. The first chart (below) shows the volume of traffic and transaction dollars processed as reported to Google Analytics. Google does not capture every session or visit; rather, the reports are based on the volume below.

Traffic Volume Represented

	SEPT 2016	SEPT 2017	SEPT 2018	SEPT 2019	SEPT 2020
Sessions	2,866,000	3,421,377	4,636,812	6,238,604	7,168,916
$ Transactions	$ 12.8M	$13,253,653	$17,848,933	$23,070,206	$19,119.072

Website Sources
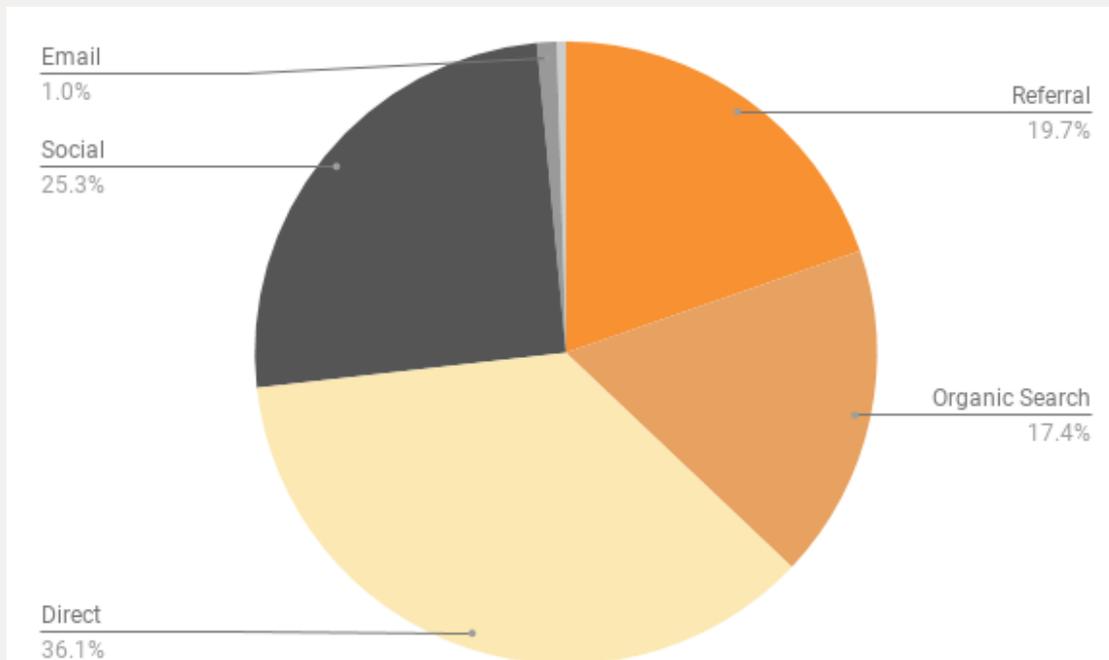
Note: the low attribution to email as a source of traffic is likely due to incorrect source tracking between Google Analytics and different email clients.

For example, a link in an email on a mobile phone opens the browser with a direct link and is counted as such. The 5.3% of visits from email reported by RaceInsights (section 4.6) is likely *more* accurate, but even with RaceInsights, there are a number of links from an email to a race's private domain that we cannot track.

24.9%
PERCENT WEBSITE TRAFFIC
FROM SOCIAL SOURCES

19.4%
PERCENT WEBSITE TRAFFIC
FROM REFERRAL SOURCES

17.1%
PERCENT WEBSITE TRAFFIC
FROM ORGANIC SEARCH

SOURCE	SEPT. 2016	SEPT. 2017	SEPT. 2018	SEPT. 2019	SEPT. 2020
Referral	47%	42.3%	35.8%	26.9%	19.4%
Organic Search	21%	24.4%	28.3%	29.8%	17.1%
Direct	16%	17.6%	20.0%	24.6%	35.5%
Social	15%	14.6%	13.8%	16.6%	24.9%
Email	0.2%	0.5%	0.6%	0.7%	1.0%
Paid Search	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%

Referral Sources for races are usually race calendars like RunningintheUSA.com, websites for races, timers, or race series (like philadelphiamarathon.com). The influence of referral sources declined in 2020, likely due to a reduction of events in general and thus less reliance on local and national event calendars.

Organic Search is a link from Google that is not a paid ad. The high ranking of RunSignup race websites, and the increasing number of races using those websites as their main website, continues to be important as organic search drives the largest share of traffic. Organic search also fell in 2020, likely as fewer people were participating in (or searching for) events. Paid Search, on the other hand, is a minor driver of website traffic and usually utilized only by larger, high-budget events.

Direct Traffic, or typing in the exact URL, increased share of traffic in 2020. Some of this is likely incorrect attribution of traffic driven by emails, while some of the increase indicates more intentional participation in 2020, with supporters checking for the updated plans from their favorite races.

Social sources increased in importance in 2020 and are covered in detail on the next page.

Google groups social into a single source type, but for races, Facebook is clearly the king of social, making up 96% of all social sources. The next most valuable source, Instagram, drove just 2.8% of social traffic and 0.7% of all website traffic.

SOCIAL SOURCE	SEPT. 2017	SEPT. 2018	SEPT. 2019	SEPT. 2020
Facebook	93.4%	93.7%	95.3%	96.0%
Instagram	3.8%	1.8%	2.5%	1.6%
Instagram Stories	n/a	2.0%	0.9%	1.2%
Twitter	1.7%	1.5%	0.7%	0.8%
Other	1.1%	1.0%	0.6%	0.4%

SOCIAL VALUE	SEPT 2016	SEPT 2017	SEPT 2018	SEPT 2019	SEPT 2020
Contributed Social Conversions	7.5%	9.0%	8.9%	8.6%	17.7%
Last Interaction Social Conversions	4.1%	4.5%	4.6%	4.4%	9.6%

Social Interactions are how Google Analytics defines the connection between social media and conversions. Contributed social conversions are interactions that were followed by a conversion, but not immediately, whereas a last interaction social conversion led directly to the conversion.

Social media interaction not only drove more website views this year, it also drove more conversions.

Takeaways

1 Like it or not, Facebook is a huge driver of website traffic. Make sure your social sharing images are updated and customize the message that shows when your supporters share their registration.

2 Prioritize marketing programs that capitalize on social connections, like referral rewards and incentives for teams. You'll reach more people on Facebook if you give your supporters a specific reason to share your content.

3 Make sure your website is optimized for search engines. If you aren't using a RunSignup race website, test your Google ranking by searching for your race and consider a professional SEO audit.

4.6 RaceInsights

RaceInsights, RunSignup's integrated analytics engine, tracks every click, registration, and transaction on each race's website and analyzes the sources to show race directors the true impact of their marketing efforts. Our aggregate data shows that the largest source of registration is people going directly to a race's website, whether that is ScottCoffeeRun.com or RunSignup.com/ScottCoffeeRun.

SOURCE OF REGISTRATION	2017	2018	2019	2020
Google	19.1%	16.8%	18.4%	14%
Email	6.5%	6.1%	7.2%	5.3%
Facebook	5.5%	4.8%	4.6%	12.2%
RunSignup Affiliates	2.9%	3.1%	2.4%	1.8%
Bing	1.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.6%
Yahoo	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%

Our data likely under-reports Google and Facebook as web referral sources since many races use these sources to drive traffic to their independent race websites. However, races that use RunSignup's race website as their primary or only website would have accurate search engine attribution.

This influence of Facebook as a source is also evident from RaceInsights data, with registration attribution increasing from 4.6% in 2019 to 12.2% in 2020. In contrast, fewer registrations came from Google, emails from Run-Signup's system, and RunSignup Affiliates (race calendars).

12.3%
OF REGISTRATIONS CAME FROM FACEBOOK, UP FROM JUST 4.6% IN 2019.

Takeaways

1 Facebook didn't just send traffic to race websites in 2020, it also led directly to registrations. Encourage sharing through social marketing programs like referral rewards and team incentives.

2 Email Marketing has remained a reliable source of registration each year - and RaceInsights only reports emails sent *from* Run-Signup, while emails from other platforms are recorded as direct traffic. Direct communication with your supporters works.
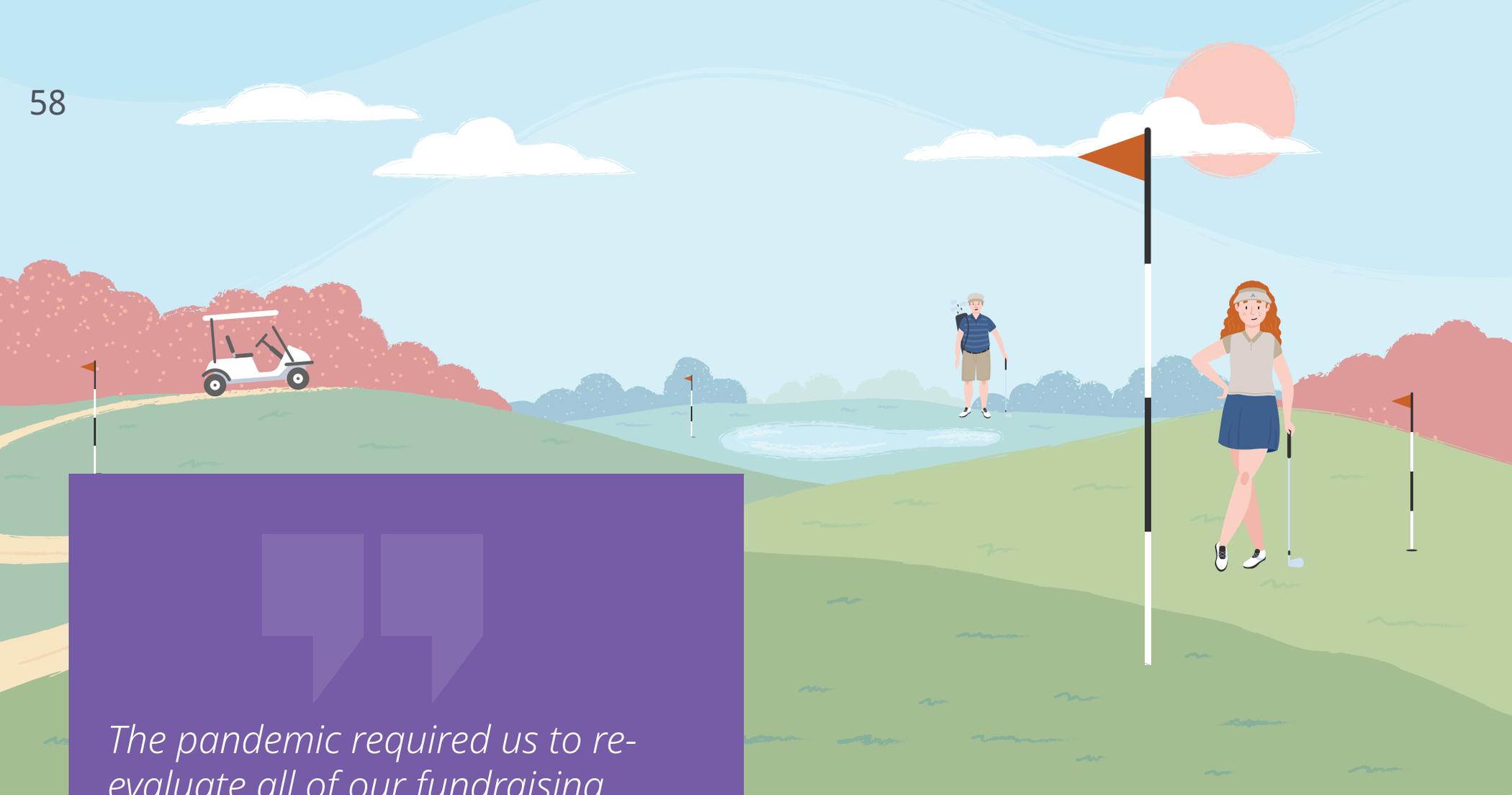
> "
>
> *The pandemic required us to re-evaluate all of our fundraising campaigns for the year. It became clear that our success would be directly impacted by our ability to innovate and use more flexible technology.*
>
> *- Paterson Music Project*

GiveTrends

1

KEY FINDINGS AND TRENDS

» **$6,581,143 in donations came from small-dollar donors**, or those contributing $25 or less, making up 23% of the donations on the platform.

» Enabling fundraising increased the average amount raised by a race **from $969 (for simple donations only) to $5,733** (for races with donations and fundraising).

» Adding a check box donation option nearly tripled the average amount raised by a race compared to simple donations, **taking the average to $3,037**.

» Enabling the free Facebook Fundraising Integration increases the likelihood of a fundraiser reaching their goal, with **49% reaching their goal** compared to 30% for races without Facebook enabled.

2

CONCLUSIONS

» Donations of all amounts matter. To maximize donations, provide options for the $10 donor *and* the $1,000 donor.

» Setting fundraisers up for success requires more effort than flipping a switch to accept donations, but that work pays off in increased donation dollars.

» Adding Facebook Fundraising to your RunSignup Fundraising makes it easier for fundraisers to reach a wide range of friends and family.

3

RECOMMENDATIONS

» Supporters *want* to contribute to your event. Make it easy by offering options for donation levels, and sharing the impact of every donation with your donors (whether the donation is $1,000 or $10).

» If you're cautious about asking for money during a crisis, consider a free, no frills event, and encourage donations in place of registrations fees.

» To maximize fundraising efforts, nonprofits with a dedicated supporter base should enable fundraising and incentivize participants to reach out to their friends and family to contribute.

» Enable the free Facebook Fundraising integration to make it easier for your participants to reach their fundraising goals (and yours).

5.1 Donations

We took a look at both the average number of donations made on our platform and the value of those donations across 2020. While total donations on RunSignup grew in 2020, the range of range of individual donations remained relatively stable. A donation of less than $10 may seem insignificant, but people are more likely to contribute at that level, and all those small donations added up to $2,192,794 and 7.9% of all donation dollars. On the other hand, only 1.1% of donations were over $250, yet, they combined to make up 20% of the total donation dollars and a total of $5,735,564 to nonprofits.

DONATION AMOUNT	NUMBER OF DONATIONS	% OF TOTAL DONATIONS
<$10	386,250	47.8%
$10-25	195,920	24.2%
$26-50	127,754	15.8%
$51-100	71,150	8.8%
$101-250	19,045	2.4%
$251-500	6,269	0.8%
$501-1,000	1,728	0.2%
$1,000+	562	0.1%

Number of Donations
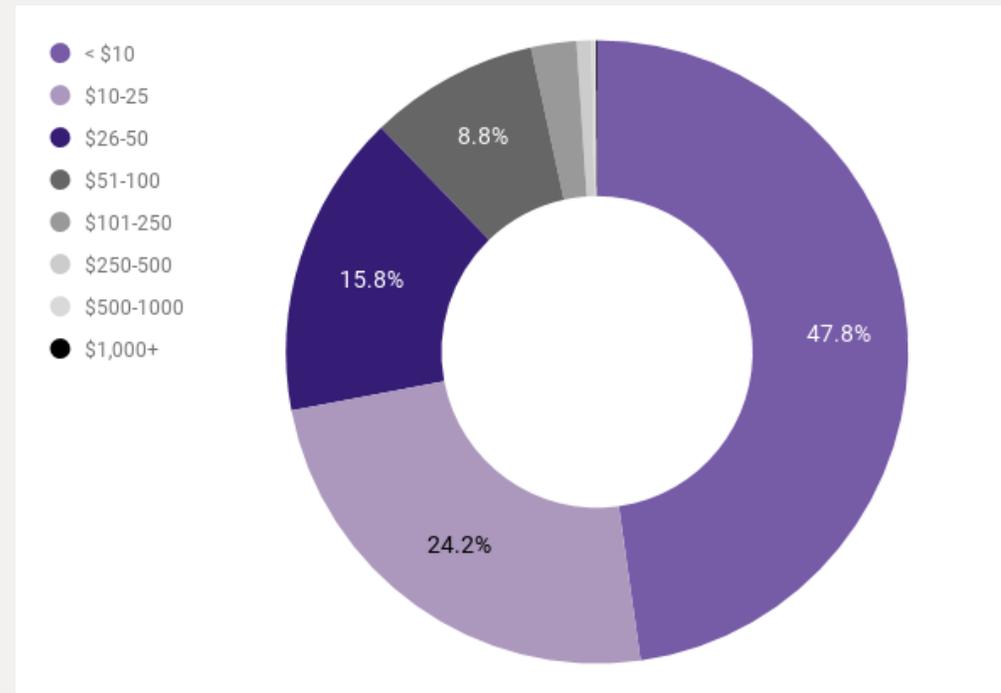
DONATION AMOUNT	VALUE OF DONATIONS	% OF TOTAL DONATION DOLLARS
<$10	$2,192,794	7.6%
$10-25	4,388,349	15.3%
$26-50	5,876,121	20.4%
$51-100	6,813,814	23.7%
$101-250	$3,759,947	13.1%
$251-500	2,754,573	9.6%
$501-1,000	1,582,197	5.5%
$1,000+	1,398,795	4.9%

Value of Donations

- < $10
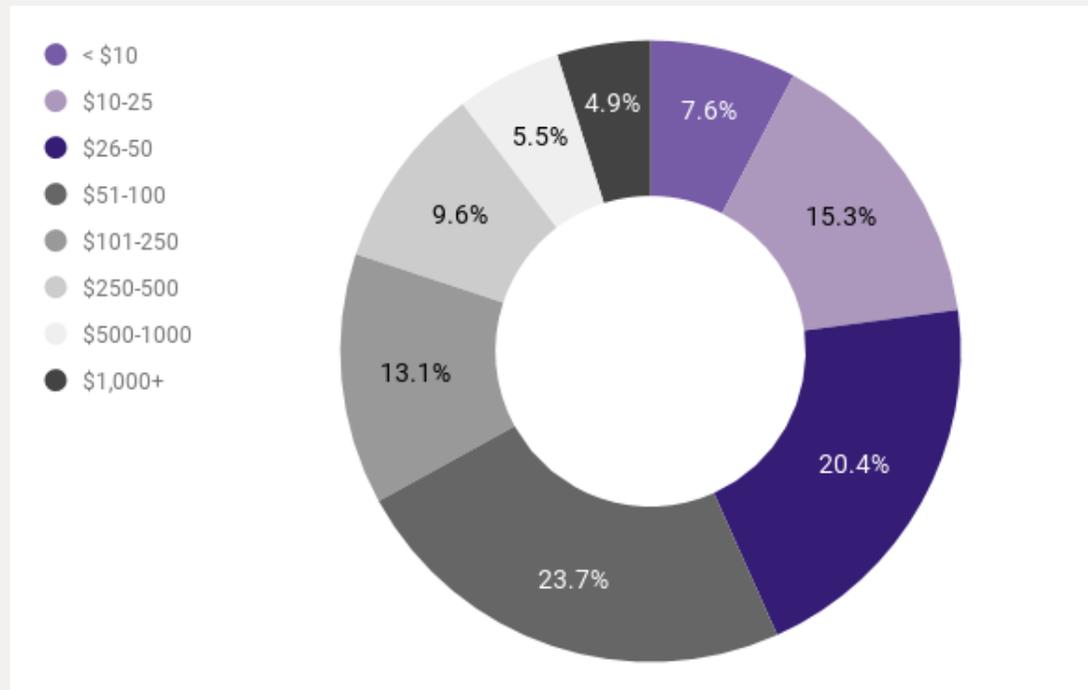- $10-25
- $26-50
- $51-100
- $101-250
- $250-500
- $500-1000
- $1,000+

$6,581,143
IN DONATIONS CAME FROM SMALL-DOLLAR DONORS ($25 OR LESS). THAT WAS

22.9%
OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT COLLECTED IN 2020.

Takeaways

1 Value all donors. A single $10 donation may not seem like a lot, but if you give people the option to donate at a level they're comfortable with even the smallest donations can add up to significant funds for your nonprofit.

2 Asking for money during a crisis can be more uncomfortable. Encourage giving large amounts with a soft ask by sharing the benefits of each donation and providing opportunities to make large donations.

5.2 Fundraising

TYPE OF DONATIONS	AVERAGE TOTAL RAISED BY EACH EVENT					% OF ALL TRANSACTIONS (INCLUDING REGISTRATIONS)				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Donations Only	$536	$527	$581	$670	$969	3.0%	3.5%	3.8%	4.0%	6.4%
Donations & Fundraisers	$3,115	$4,156	$4,745	$5,907	$5,733	4.7%	6.3%	6.6%	7.7%	11.4%
Checkout Page & Donations	$1,314	$1,244	$1,903	$3,186	$3,037	0.5%	0.5%	0.8%	1.6%	2.4%

There are 3 basic ways to raise more on RunSignup:
» Basic check box on the checkout page (with a pre-set donation amount)
» Simple donations during registration
» Fundraising (where participants raise money from their own community)

Across the 14,700+ races that participated in some type of donation collection, those that engaged fundraisers earned significantly more for their cause.

However, while races with either donations only or donations with a check box option increased their average total donations, races with fundraising raised just shy of their average total in 2019. With the financial pressures of 2020, it is likely that supporters who were eager to support their favorite causes and donate themselves, but were less comfortable asking for donations from others.

While fundraising is the way to go if you have an engaged group of supporters, checkout page donations may be the most underrated way to raise money simply. Only a small percentage of races enabled the check box, yet races that did raised markedly more money on average than those that only turned on simple donations.

$5,733
AVERAGE AMOUNT RAISED BY EVENTS WITH FUNDRAISING

$3,307
AVERAGE AMOUNT RAISED BY EVENTS WITH SIMPLE DONATIONS AND A CHECK BOX OPTION

	NUMBER OF RACES			NUMBER OF DONATIONS PER RACE		
	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
Donations Only	9,537	10,505	10,404	24	27	43
Donations & Fundraisers	2,068	2,288	3,116	91	111	107
Checkout Page & Donations	649	867	1,260	102	127	172

Despite the financial hardships of 2020, donations held steady or increased by every metric available, including percent of total transactions on the site, average donations per race, and average number of donations by race.

Average Donation Totals
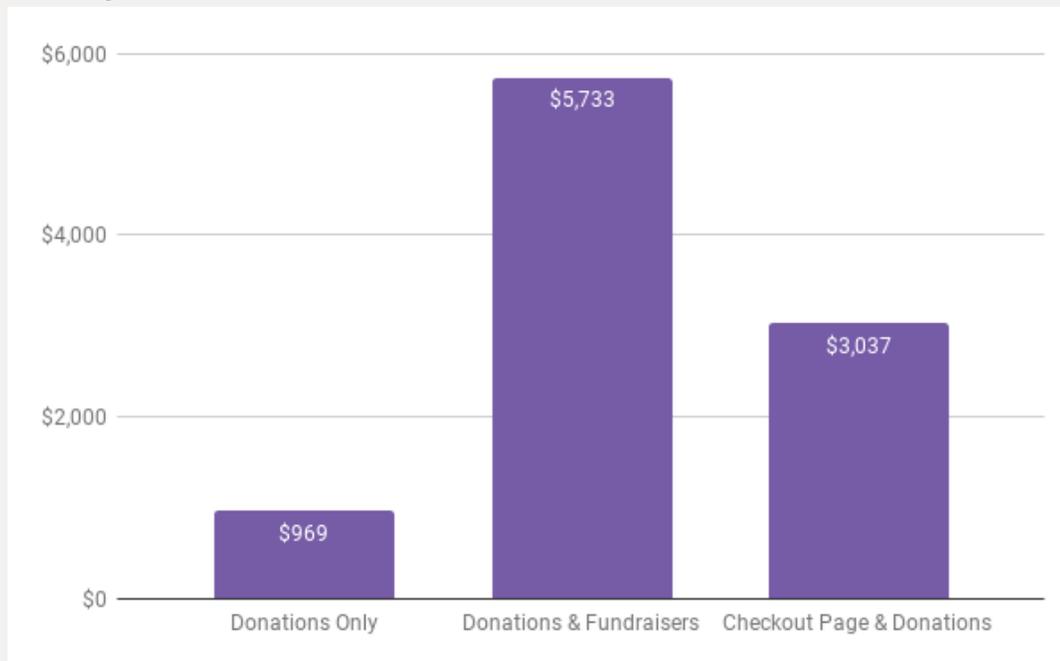
Takeaways

1 It can be hard to ask for money during a crisis, but supporters want to you reach your financial goals. If donations are the priority, consider a free or low cost event with low overhead, allowing supporters to dedicate their money to the cause, not the swag.

2 Enabling donations is a good start, but to maximize the revenue for your nonprofit, either engage your most enthusiastic supporters as fundraisers or turn on the check box option for quick and easy donations.

5.3 Facebook Fundraising

We introduced the free GiveSignup | RunSignup – Facebook Fundraiser integration in July 2019 and nonprofits have raised more than $1.1 Million on Facebook through connected fundraisers. To look at the impact that the free Facebook Fundraiser integration is having during the pandemic, we compare aggregate data from July – December 2019 and July – December 2020.

In 2019, 5.88% of fundraisers created a connected Facebook Fundraiser (when the event enabled the free integration). This increased to 6.93% of connected fundraisers in 2020. We see a growing demand for the Facebook Fundraiser integration from users because they want to reach their goals – and asking for donations via Facebook makes that easy.

The table shows the growth in the number of donations made to fundraisers that happen on Facebook, from 6.4% in 2019 to 15% in 2020. This means that nonprofits are saving more money (Facebook covers the processing fees for donations made on Facebook) and saving time (the integration automatically pulls in the amount raised on Facebook to the individual fundraiser's page and associated team page).

	2019% DONATIONS	2020% DONATIONS
Facebook	6.4%	15.0%
GiveSignup	RunSignup	93.6%	85.0%

48.7%
FUNDRAISERS REACHED THEIR GOAL WHEN RUNSIGNUP AND FACEBOOK FUNDRAISING WERE ENABLED, WHILE JUST

29.7%
REACHED THEIR GOAL WITH A RUNSIGNUP FUNDRAISER ALONE

To get a sense of the impact that GiveSignup | RunSignup's free Facebook Fundraiser is having for fundraisers, we looked at the top 20 events using the GiveSignup | RunSignup-Facebook Fundraiser Integration with the highest volume of donations via Facebook in 2020. Connected fundraisers have, on average, 8.26 donations from Facebook. Approximately 75% of their total raised came from Facebook donations. This is a significant increase from last year's average of 4.71 donations from Facebook and is likely due to two factors. First, many events in 2019 enabled the integration mid-registration when it became available in July 2019 whereas in 2020, the integration was enabled for the entire fundraising period. Secondly, Facebook usage has surged during the pandemic, with a 12% increase in the number of users and a 14% increase in monthly usage.

AVERAGE # DONATIONS ON FACEBOOK	AVERAGE AMOUNT RAISED ON FACEBOOK	AVERAGE # DONATIONS ON RUNSIGNUP	AVERAGE AMOUNT RAISED ON RUNSIGNUP
8.26	353.24	2.85	211.87

	% OF FUNDRAISERS WHO REACHED THEIR PERSONAL GOAL	AVERAGE # OF DONATIONS PER FUNDRAISER	AVERAGE AMOUNT RAISED PER FUNDRAISER
RunSignup + Facebook Fundraisers	48.7%	9.9	$564.59
RunSignup Fundraiser Only	29.7%	5.1	$277.73

Takeaways

1 The GiveSignup | RunSignup-Facebook Fundraiser Integration is the single most powerful tool to empower your fundraisers. Embracing the anonymous Facebook donor makes your fundraisers happier and more successful, helps your nonprofit raise more, and lowers your donation processing fee - the only cost to use GiveSignup | RunSignup.

2 More donations are being made on Facebook. Fundraising events that enabled the free GiveSignup | RunSignup Facebook Fundraiser integration have 15% of donations coming from Facebook, compared to just 6.4% in 2019.

3 Encourage your fundraisers to create a connected Facebook Fundraiser when they sign up for your event with messaging on your race website, Facebook page, and emails.

We've held 3 in-person events, progressing from 300 up to 900 participants. With COVID protocols in place, participants are happy to be out racing and are adopting safety protocols without hesitation.

- Run Toledo

RaceDay Trends

1

KEY FINDINGS AND TRENDS

» Innovative timers stayed competitive by offering virtual race services and swag fulfillment, with **88% of timers saying that they offer services beyond timing.**

» Timers are proactive about the 2021 race season, with **70% reporting they have reached out to their race directors** to plan, and 87% indicating they either have hosted an in-person race, or are working on one for the coming months.

» RaceJoy had a record-breaking year, **increasing the races offering the app by 168%** and the tracked participants by more than 50%.

» With the interruption of in-person events, CheckIn App usage dropped **from 17% of participants checked in 2019 to 7% in 2020.**

2

CONCLUSIONS

» Some race day technology saw light use in 2020, but it will have renewed importance heading into 2021.

» RaceJoy expanded it's value in 2020 by offering solutions for both virtual runners and race organizers looking for new safety mechanisms for modified races.

» Timing businesses are small, competitive operations, and timers who offer a complete compliment of services were best equipped to manage the standstill of in-person events.

» The majority of timers are being proactive by expanding services and getting ahead of the competition, while a small percentage continue to "wait and see" how things will play out.

3

RECOMMENDATIONS

» Now is the time to get up to speed on the latest technology. As in-person races return, technology will play a valuable role in keeping participants, volunteers, and staff safe.

» Offer RaceJoy to bring your virtual and in-person participants together through a shared audio experience, while providing a hands-off safety tool to your race course.

» Expand your services to expand your market share. A diverse set of services both increases your revenue and generates stability for your business by creating races who rely on your expertise.

» Timers should act now to help their races with hybrid options. The first races on the calendar will have an advantage!

6.1 RaceDay Registrations

YEAR	# RACEDAY REGISTRATIONS	# RACE WEEK REGISTRATIONS	%OF RACE WEEK REGISTRATIONS ON RACEDAY	% TOTAL REGISTRATIONS THAT HAPPEN ON RACEDAY
2017	85,064	922,426	9.22%	2.45%
2018	98,772	1,093,761	9.03%	2.15%
2019	121,011	1,328,006	9.11%	2.14%
2020	118,418	1,003,326	11.80%	2.95%

As we saw in section 3.1, registration procrastination only worsened in 2020, with just shy of 3% of all registrations taking place on RaceDay. Additionally, those registering on race week were more likely to wait until the very end this year, with 11.8% of race week registrations coming on the last day compared to 9.1% in 2019.

While some of these registrations may have been for virtual races, we expect to see hesitancy to register as in-person races return amidst continued uncertainty

11.8%
OF RACE WEEK REGISTRATIONS
CAME ON RACE DAY

Takeaway

1 Maximize participation by providing options to register on race day. To reduce touch-points on-site, leave online registration open and encourage people to register on their personal phones rather than using kiosks or paper that must be handled.

6.2 CheckIn App Usage

After three years of expanding usage, the RaceDay CheckIn App saw reduced usage in 2020 as on-site race participation declined in favor of virtual races with little need to check anyone in.

However, we expect a reversal of this trend in 2021 as in-person events return and race organizers look for hands-off technology to reduce touch points and limit the interaction times required to get participants through packet pickup.

YEAR	# RUNNERS CHECKED IN BY APP	# RUNNERS NOT CHECKED IN BY APP	% RUNNERS CHECKED IN WITH APP
2017	657,942	4,402,134	13.0%
2018	694,511	5,533,815	11.2%
2019	1,279,925	6,107,932	17.3%
2020	340,263	4,647,374	6.8%

YEAR	# RACES USING CHECKIN APP	# RACES NOT USING CHECKIN APP	% RACES USING CHECKIN APP
2017	1,429	36,063	3.8%
2018	2,031	41,780	4,6%
2019	2,941	49,108	5.7%
2020	1,402	47,008	2.9%

Takeaway

1 While the RaceDay CheckIn App experienced a decrease in usage, this is a good time to get caught up on check-in technology. With the return to in-person events emphasizing touch-less options, the check-in app will help move participants through check-in efficiently.
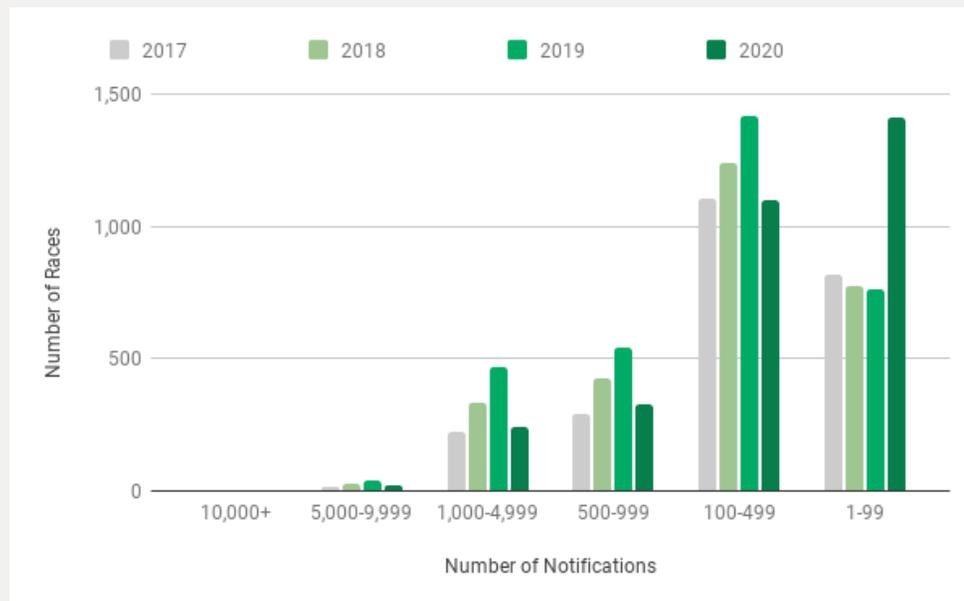
6.3 Scored Results Notifications

While the number of races offering scored results notifications for on-site races stayed pretty steady from 2019 to 2020 (3,102 in 2020 compared to 3,232 in 2019), the makeup of those races shifted. In 2020, the races offering results notifications were much more likely to be small races than in previous years, a response to both fewer large races happening, and a need to provide a remote spectator experience.

In 2021, the importance of technology - whether that's notifications or GPS tracking - will escalate as races look to expand their field of competitors while providing safe ways for spectators to stay engaged from home.

NUMBER OF NOTIFICATIONS	2017 # OF RACES	2018 # OF RACES	2019 # OF RACES	2020 # OF RACES
10,000+	3	5	5	3
5,000-9,999	18	28	42	20
1,000-4,999	221	335	468	244
500-999	292	424	543	330
100-499	1,107	1,239	1,415	1,097
1-99	818	774	759	1,408

Number of Races vs. Number of Notifications Sent
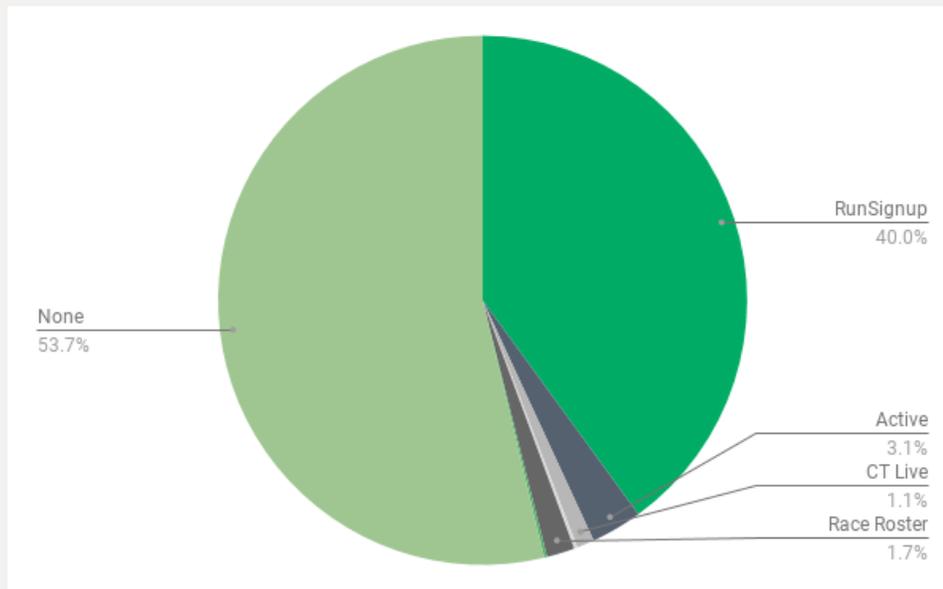

Takeaway

1 Consider multiple technologies to enhance your race day in the absence of crowds and post-race parties. Results notifications are an easy way to both congratulate your participants and prompt friends and family to reach out with their own kudos.

6.4 The Race Director

In 2020, The Race Director scoring software was used to score 5,078 races and 1,452,755 participants, a considerable decline from the 15,340 races and 6,438,967 participants scored by the software in 2019. However, the data is hard to interpret; not only did in-person race participation fall, the way in which the data is currently reported also cannot differentiate virtual participants from in-person participants when both were options in the race. We have a new API service rolling out in 2021 for both The Race Director and RaceDay Scoring that should make the data in this section more complete.

	2017	2018	2018	2020
Total Races	15,040	15,403	15,340	5,078
Total Participants	5,952,791	4,996,330	6,438,967	1,452,755
Average Race Size	396	324	429	286

Number of Races by Registration Integration

RunSignup 40.0%
None 53.7%
Active 3.1%
CT Live 1.1%
Race Roster 1.7%

Takeaway

1 Virtual races reduced the need for traditional scoring software, with participants self-reporting their results for many events. Looking to 2021, we expect the need for next generation software to increase to deal with complicated starts, longer race times, and more remote timing.

6.5 RaceJoy GPS Tracking

RaceJoy had a breakout year, surpassing 1 million lifetime users and a 168% increase of races using RaceJoy. While that may seem surprising for an app designed to help spectators track and cheer for participants on a live race course, RaceJoy did what the entire industry did: pivoted. In Spring 2020, RaceJoy released a new RaceJoy Anywhere feature, allowing participants to use the GPS tracking for a virtual race anywhere in the world. Additional options to provide multiple courses and to automatically report virtual results further enhanced the benefits of using the app for a virtual race.

We also saw RaceJoy used in new ways for in-person races over the summer and fall, as race organizers offered the app as a replacement for on-site spectating and required the app as a safety mechanism for courses that were open for longer with fewer volunteers monitoring the course.

While tracked participants increased dramatically, with more than 165,000 participants using RaceJoy, the supporting spectator usage decreased. This is likely because fewer participants asked family and friends to actively track them on virtual events, the increase in usage was remarkable. With more and more participants accustomed to the app and continued need for better tracking in both virtual and in-person events, we anticipate another strong year for the RaceJoy in 2021.
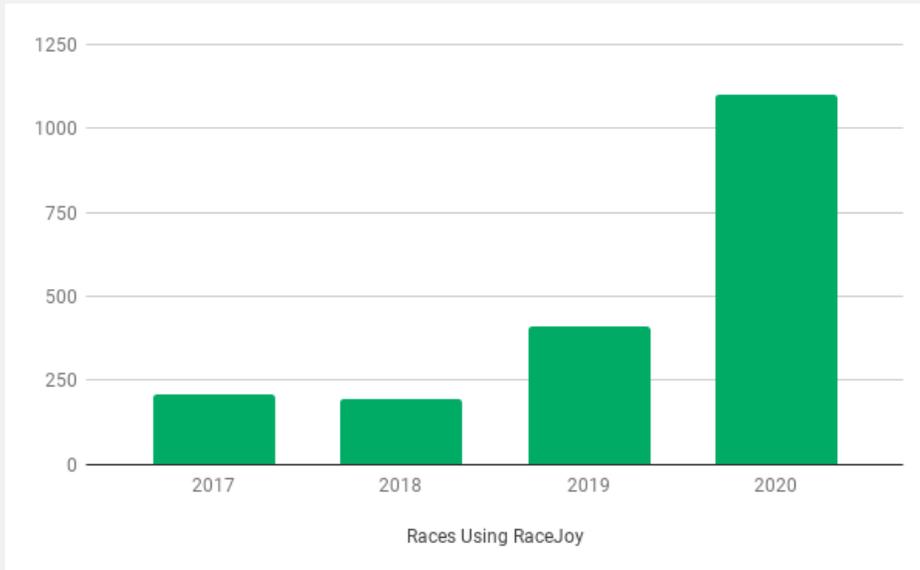
1.1 Million
LIFETIME USERS OF RACEJOY

RACEJOY USAGE	2017	2018	2019	2020	GROWTH 2019-2020
Races	207	197	410	1,097	167.6%
Tracked Participants	73,040	86,005	108,451	165,373	52.5%
Spectators	118,692	93,513	162,109	87,038	-46.3%
Progress Alerts	2,312,161	2,904,057	3,823,954	1,303,158	-65.9%
Cheers Sent	283,598	381,245	477,053	198,375	-58.4%

RaceJoy Usage
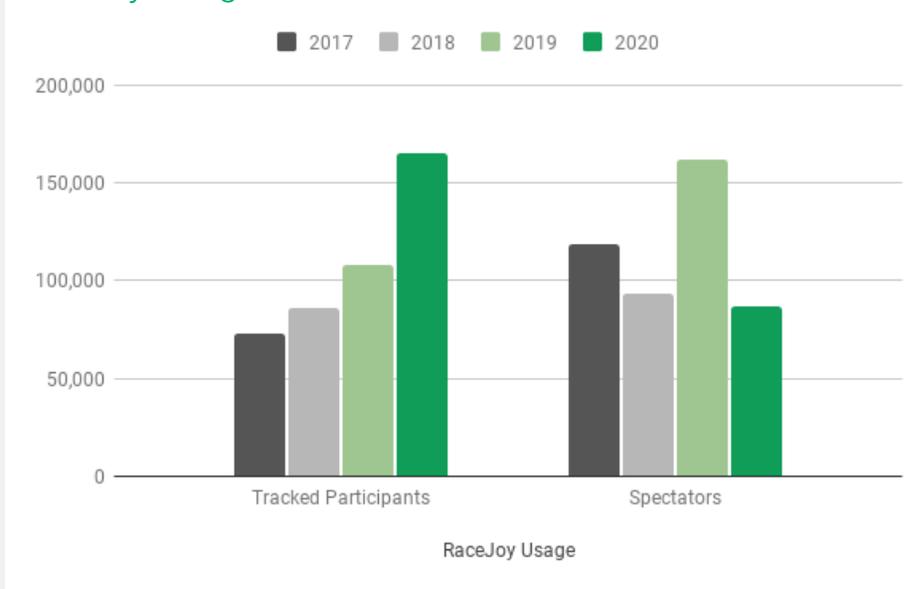
RaceJoy Usage

167.6%
GROWTH IN RACES OFFERING RACEJOY

Takeaway

1 RaceJoy isn't just for in-person events. Offer the app to your virtual participants along with a customized audio experience to create a virtual event that feels real - and encourage them to share the information with friends and family to add the fun of spectator engagement to their day.

2 For an on-site event, RaceJoy is about more than just spectating. Race organizers can enable off-course alerts to keep people on track and use the monitoring system to ensure the safety of participants with fewer on-course volunteers.

2020 Timer Survey
Purpose and Methodology

Purpose

RunSignup issued a timer-specific market survey to help us understand the unique needs of timers. This information will be used to provide industry insights to timers and will help guide our technology road map for timers. We looked at:

» The profile of a timing company
» Services offered by timing companies
» The role of timers in the endurance market
» Impact of COVID-19 on timers (section 1.5)
» Expectations for 2021

Contact and identifying information was not required for participation in the survey.

Survey Collection

This timer-specific survey was issued in January of 2021. Timers were reached for response in multiple ways, including through email (to RunSignup's email list of timers), on RunSignup's social media and blogs, and through Facebook groups targeted to Timers, including Timer Talk, and Race Timing Hub.

While efforts were made to reach timers outside the RunSignup network via Facebook, it can be assumed that RunSignup users are overrepresented in the sample, influencing answers about software and hardware used. Additionally, the hardest-hit companies that went out of business this year were less likely to receive and complete the survey.
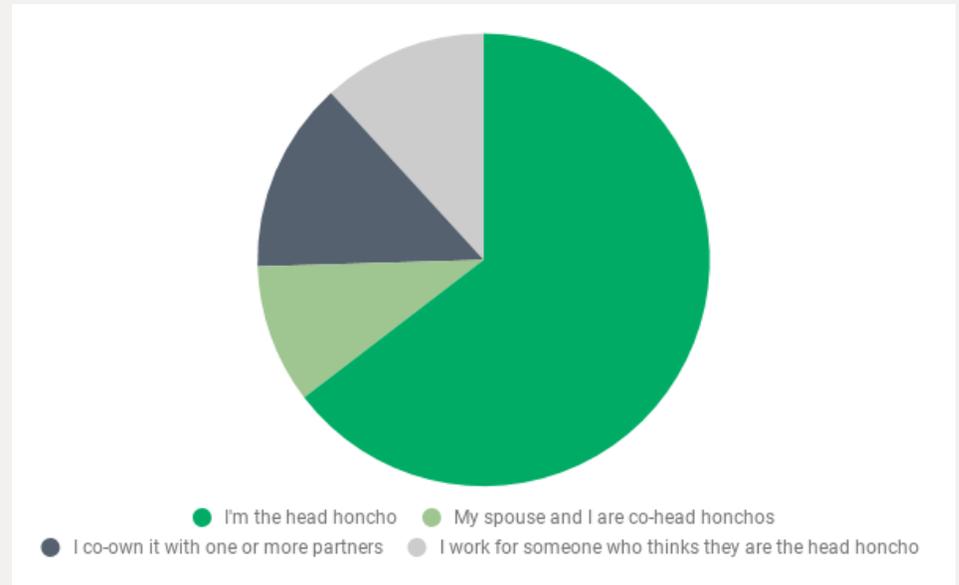
161
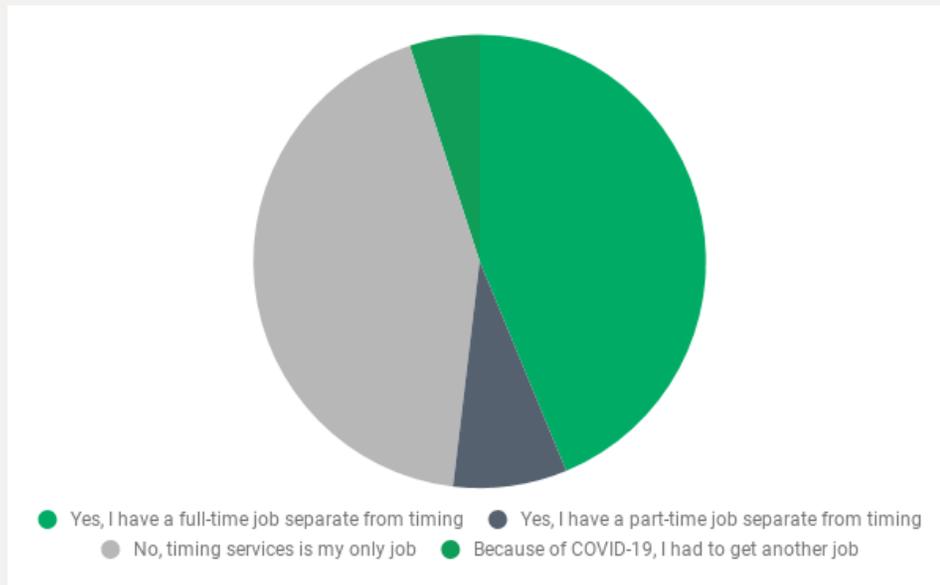### SURVEY RESPONDENTS

6.6 The Timing Business

This set of questions establishes the scope of timing businesses by looking at ownership roles, number of employees, number of events timed, and job status. There is a wide range in the number of races timed by each company in a year, with the largest group (38.8%) indicating between 11-50 events in a normal year. The vast majority of responding timers (88.2%) hold at least shared ownership of their business, yet a significant number of them (56.9%) also maintain another job (full or part-time).

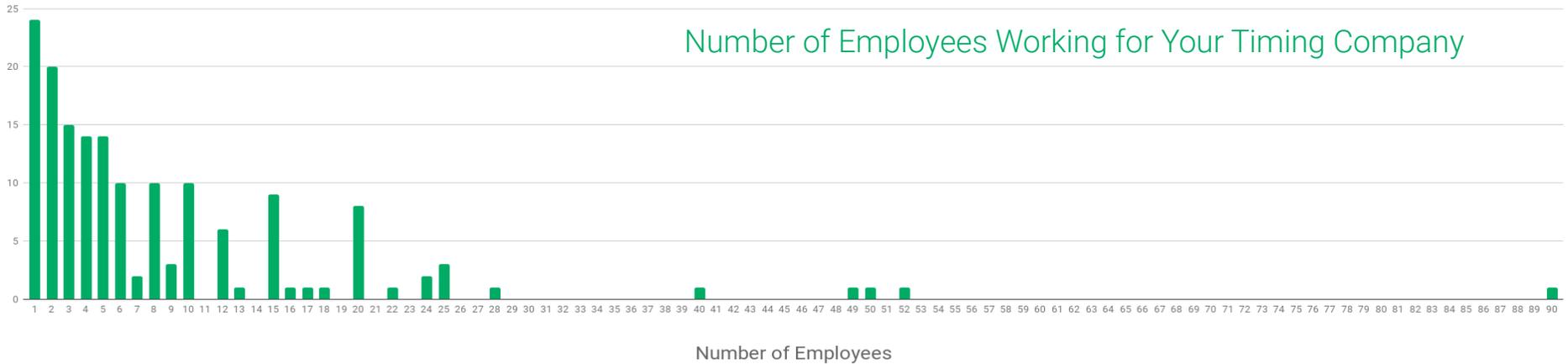| ROLE	2019	2020
Head Honcho	53.9%	64.6%
Co-Head Honcho (with Spouse)	9.8%	9.9%
Owner with Non-Spouse Partner	18.1%	13.7%
Work for Someone Else	18.1%	11.8%

Role within Timing Company

- I'm the head honcho
- My spouse and I are co-head honchos
- I co-own it with one or more partners
- I work for someone who thinks they are the head honcho

Do you have another "Real" Job?

- Yes, I have a full-time job separate from timing
- Yes, I have a part-time job separate from timing
- No, timing services is my only job
- Because of COVID-19, I had to get another job

JOB STATUS	2019	2020
Another Full-Time Job	46.5%	43.8%
Another Part-Time Job	12.2%	8.1%
Timing Service is Only Job	41.3%	43.1%
Got another job because of COVID-19	n/a	5.0%

Number of Employees Working for Your Timing Company

Number of Employees

25.5%
TIME BETWEEN 51 AND 100 RACES IN A NORMAL YEAR

Number of Events Timed in a Normal Year

150+ Events
11.3%

1-10 Events
10.0%

101-150 Events
14.4%

11-50 Events
38.8%

51-100 Events
25.6%

Takeaways

1 Race timing is a labor of love, with hands-on owners, small teams, and frequently, a need to supplement income with an outside revenue source.

2 There is no "one size" for a timing company, with scalability that allows 10% to time just 1-10 events while 11.3% time more than 150 events in a year.

6.7 Market Competition

The perception of competition amongst timers stayed consistent from 2019 to 2020, with the median response of 5 when asked to rank competition on a scale of 1(least) to 10 (most). The top strategies for dealing with competition also remained the same: relationship-building, offering extra-value services (like bibs or tracking), and technology self-education.

How Do You Make Your Business Competitive?
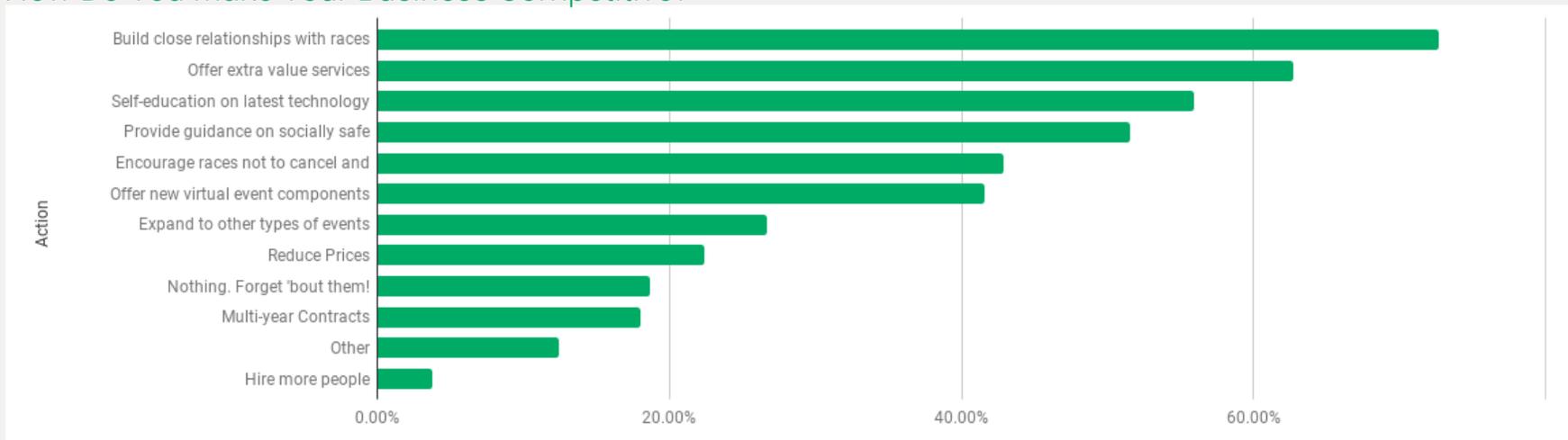
On a Scale of 1-10, How Much Competition do You Face?
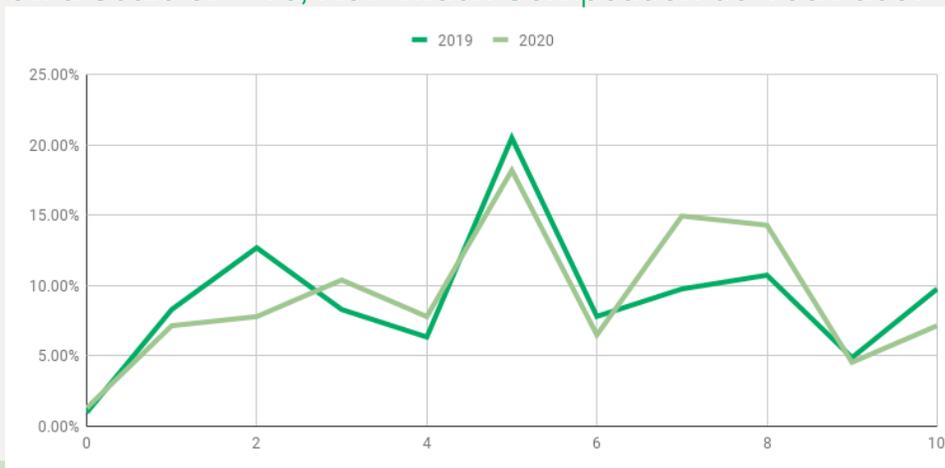

Takeaway

1

One thing 2020 didn't change? The importance of relationships and value-add services for a competitive timing business. Maintain connections with your races - even the ones that convert to virtual or cancel - to stay competitive for years to come.

6.8 Role in the Industry

Offering services beyond timing keeps timing companies competitive, with 88.8% of timing companies providing additional services. While race directing remains the most common service provided, this year's list shows increases in timers offering virtual results and other services for virtual races, such as swag ordering and fulfillment.
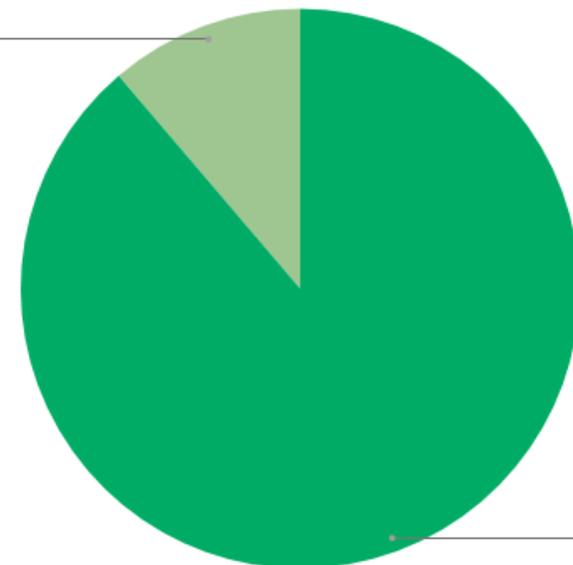
What Other Services Do You Provide?
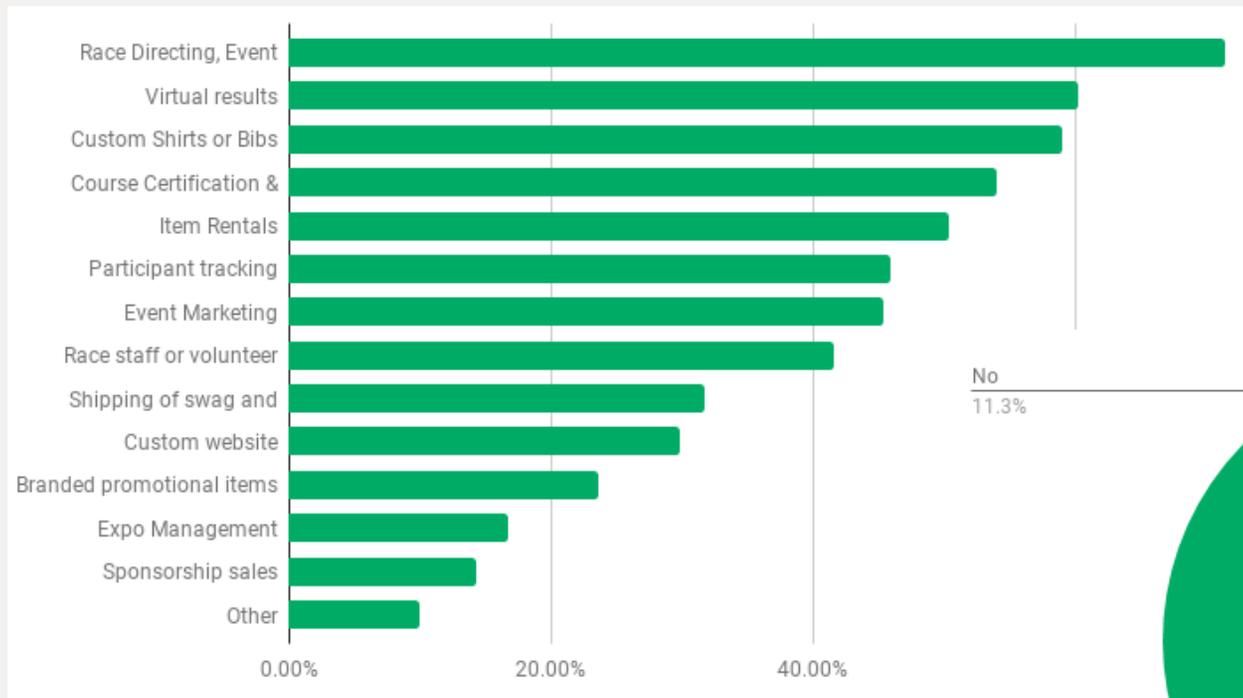
88.8%
OF TIMERS OFFER SERVICES BEYOND TIMING

Do You Provide Services Beyond Timing?

No 11.3%

Yes 88.8%

While there many thousands of race organizers in the U.S., many of whom work only one or two events, timers are more likely to be professionals working in the industry throughout the year. As such, timers are often considered to be the technology experts in the industry, and are relied on by organizers to modernize their events.

Do Races View You as Their Technology Expert?

Not Sure
4.3%
No
5.6%

Yes
90.1%
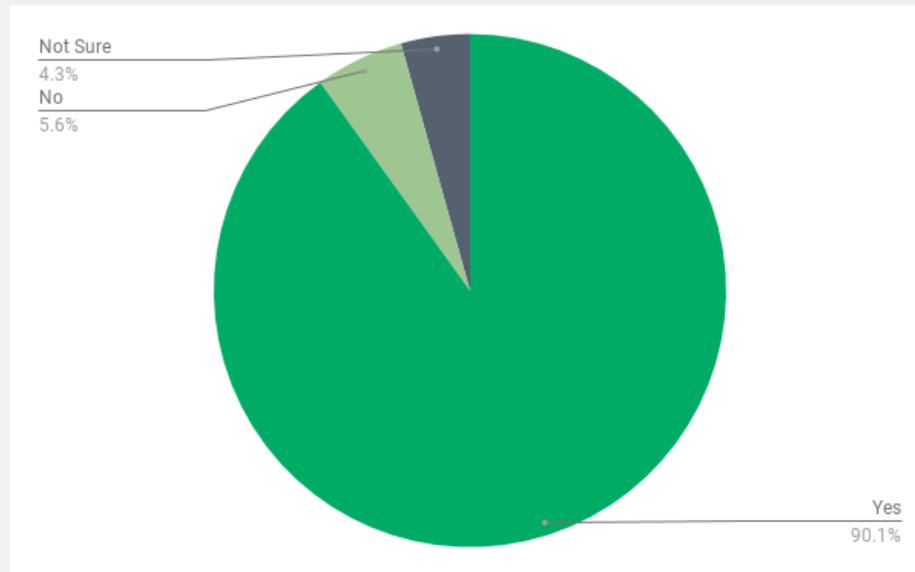
90.1%
OF TIMERS BELIEVE THEIR RACES VIEW THEM AS THE TECHNOLOGY EXPERTS

Takeaways

1 Stay competitive by expanding your roster of services. Timers that learned the ins and outs of virtual technology had a leg up in 2020, but don't stop there - with hybrid events expected through-out 2021, look for races to need more assistance managing the complications of dual events.

2 Races who are looking for guid-ance should seek the input of timers. Timers are accustomed to keeping up with the latest technology and race day prac-tices, and can make the best recommendations for a safe and efficient 2021.

6.9 Timing Technology

Timing software and hardware are the engines of a timing business. With a number of available options in the market, the survey focused on the most common ones.

Response percentages to this question are likely impacted by the larger number of RunSignup users in the sample. Timing software that most tightly integrates with RunSignup may be over-represented.

THE RACE DIRECTOR AND RACEDAY SCORING

While The Race Director and RunScore, the two most prominent legacy software, remained the most popular in 2020 we also saw some movement towards the next generation software RaceDay Scoring. With the sunset of The Race Director approaching, some timers took the down time to move to a more modern software. Additionally, some of the specifics of timing during COVID-19 - like wave starts and remote timing - were more easily managed with RaceDay Scoring.

19.1%
OF TIMERS USED NEXT GENERATION SOFTWARE, RACEDAY SCORING

Timing Software Usage

TIMING SOFTWARE SELECT ALL THAT YOU USE	2019 % RESPONSE	2020 % RESPONSE
The Race Director	35.3%	37.6%
RunScore	18.8%	24.1%
Other	20.8%	19.9%
RaceDay Scoring	12.1%	19.1%
ChronoTrack	8.2%	14.2%
RACE RESULT	9.7%	11.4%
Agee Race Timing	13.0%	8.5%
Custom Software	5.8%	7.8%
Meetpro	1.9%	4.3%
MYLAPS	4.8%	4.3%
RM Timing	4.8%	3.6%
Direct Athletics	2.9%	2.8%
Finish Links	3.4%	2.8%
Active Timing	3.4%	2.1%

To evaluate timing hardware usage we looked at two different sets of data. The first is from the survey data we have used throughout this section. The second is pulled from information about the hardware used for races scored with The Race Director software.

This set of data also has some bias - IPICO, RFID, and MYLAPS timers are more likely to use The Race Director, whereas ChronoTrack timers often use RunScore or CTLive. However, including it does allow us to view a larger sample of the market.

IPICO HARDWARE WAS USED BY

27%

OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS AND

24.4%

OF RACES SCORED BY THE RACE DIRECTOR

Survey Hardware Data

TIMING HARDWARE SELECT ALL THAT YOU USE	2019% RESPONSE	2020% RESPONSE
IPICO	18.9%	27.0%
MYLAPS	23.1%	23.9%
ChronoTrack	13.2%	21.1%
Other	13.2%	19.7%
RACE RESULT	15.6%	16.9%
FinishLynx	18.9%	15.5%
RFID	18.9%	15.5%
Trident	8.05	6.3%
Jaguar	5.25	3.5%
J-Chip	0.9%	2.0%

The Race Director Hardware Data

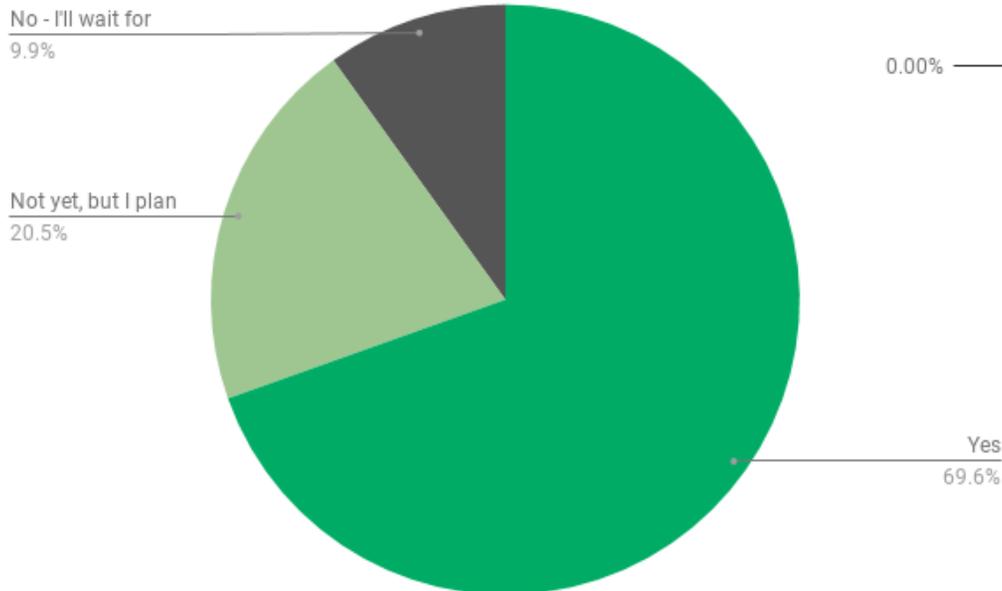| TIMING HARDWARE	# RACES	# PARTICIPANTS
J-Chip	1	1,235
Winning Time	2	493
Trident	321	71,060
RACE RESULT	332	116,631
ChronoTrack	616	252,887
None	587	134,741
MYLAPS	926	254,487
RFID	1,052	304,183
IPICO	1,242	316,038

Takeaway

1 Don't lock yourself into legacy timing options forever. Look for timing hardware that is open and flexible, and allows you to upgrade your software solution seamlessly without interrupting your integrations.

# 6.10 The Timing Industry in 2021

As we discussed in Section 1.5, the timing industry was hit hard in 2020, with 96.4% reporting a negative impact, the majority of whom saw a significant negative impact on their business. Looking to 2021, this section reviews how the timing companies plan to rebound.

A significant majority of timing companies plan to hold onto their current business or increase market share. Accordingly, nearly 70% of timers have already discussed 2021 with their race directors.

What are your plans for 2021?

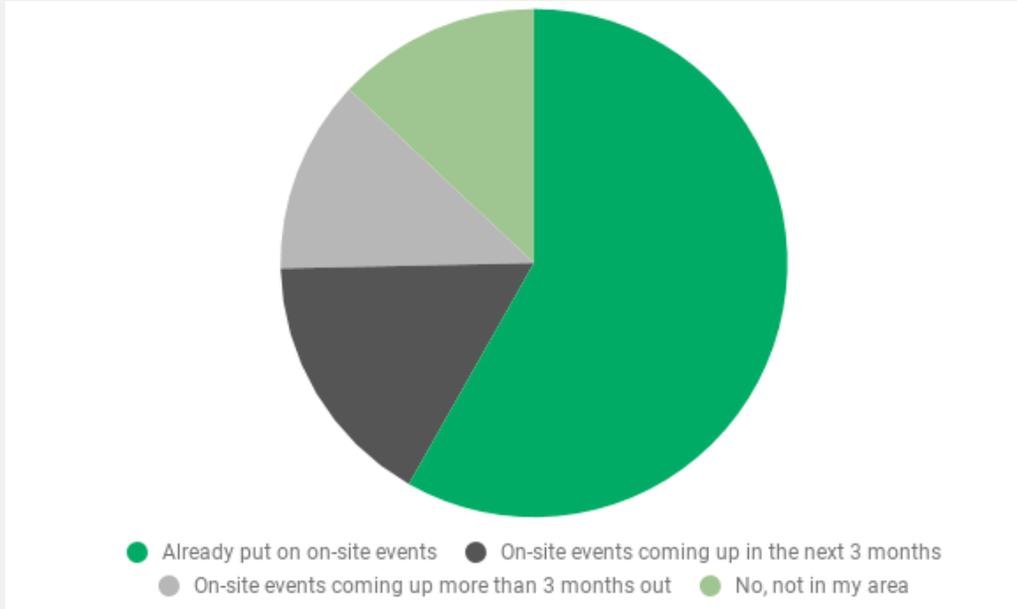## Have you contacted your race directors about 2021?


No - I'll wait for
9.9%

Not yet, but I plan
20.5%

Yes
69.6%
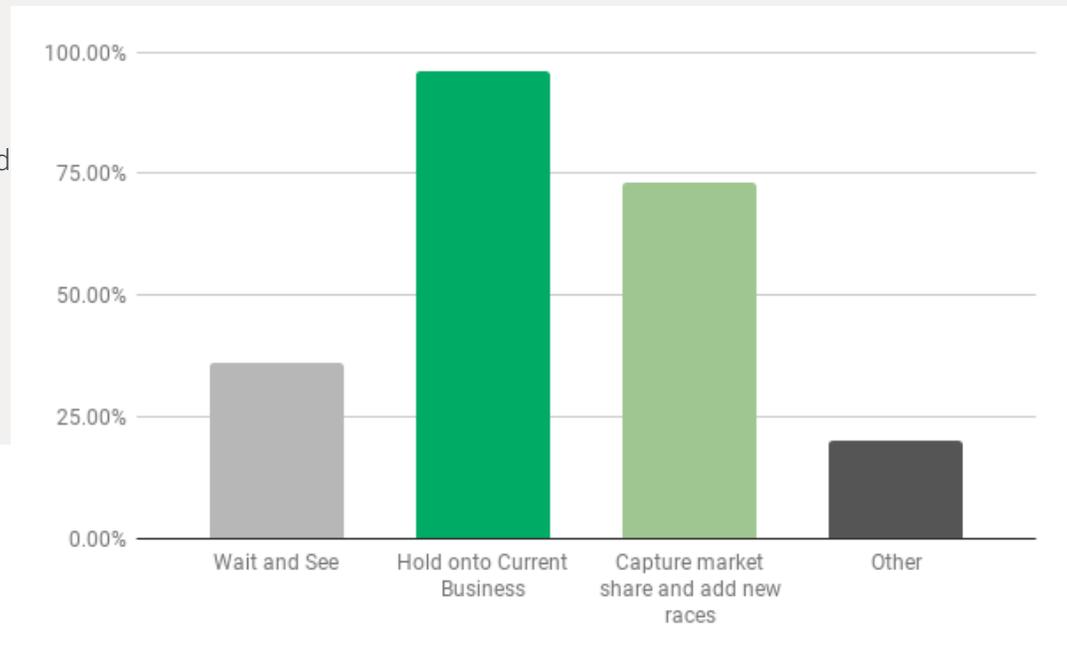
69.6%
OF TIMERS HAVE ALREADY DISCUSSED 2021 WITH THEIR RACE DIRECTORS

Are you providing services for on-site races?

- Already put on on-site events
- On-site events coming up in the next 3 months
- On-site events coming up more than 3 months out
- No, not in my area

On a scale of 1-10, how much guidance are you providing races regarding safe COVID-19 events? Answers show % of respondents with that answer.
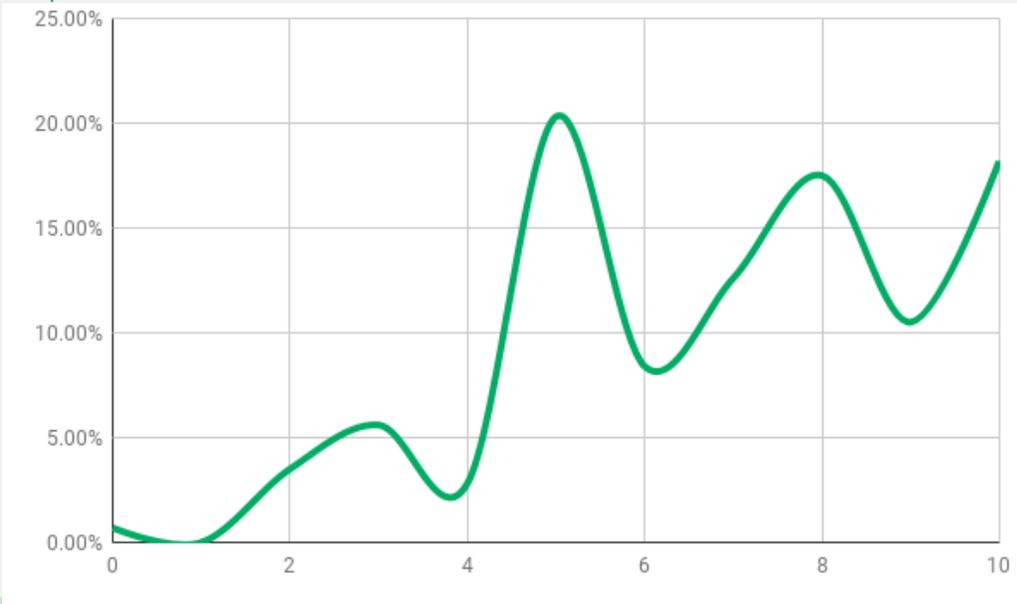
Timers are moving forward with their plans for 2021, with a full 87% reporting that their are already putting on or planning for in-person events in the coming months.

Along with that, timers continue to provide guidance in the industry, with 87.4% rating the amount of guidance they are providing at a 5 or higher on a scale of 10.

87%
OF TIMERS HAVE PUT ON AN IN-PERSON RACE OR ARE PLANNING FOR ONE IN THE COMING MONTHS

Takeaways

1 The time to move is now. Most timers have already begun working with their race directors on a plan for 2021, and many are hoping to pick up market share this year. Don't get left behind waiting for races to contact you.

2 Expand your knowledge base. Races expect timers to help them navigate the challenges of events during COVID-19, including safe on-site events.