



2022 END OF YEAR STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

OVERVIEW

It's no secret that the COVID-19 pandemic rocked the running industry. We're seeing upward trends post-pandemic, but things are bouncing back more slowly than expected.

There are still so many answers that we are searching for. Where are the athletes that used to participate in events and what's keeping them away from racing? What motivates those who have returned to the sport already?

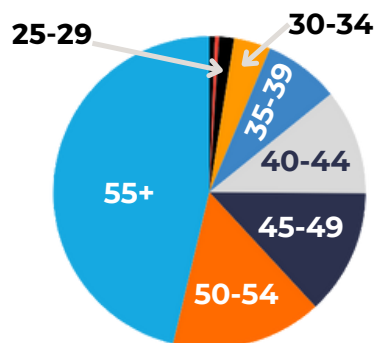
To this point, we'd all had our own theories and speculations, but now we have facts. **Here's what we asked:**

Have you raced since the pandemic began?		Are you registered to participate in an event in the next 12 months?	Where do you find events to participate in?	Are you a part of any running groups?
If so, what motivated you to stick with it?	If not, why, and what would motivate you to get back at it?			

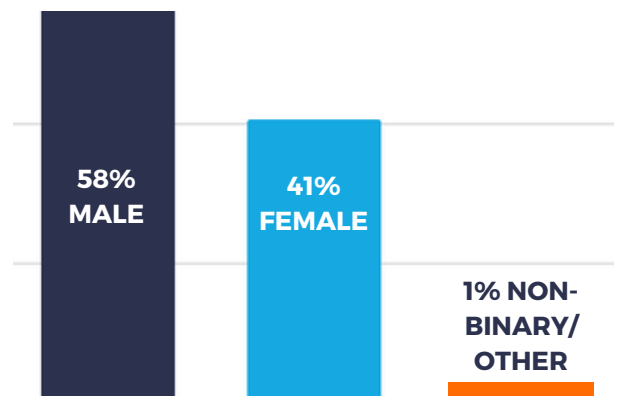
Survey sent to
400k
 Athlinks Users

Primarily located in the
USA

AGE

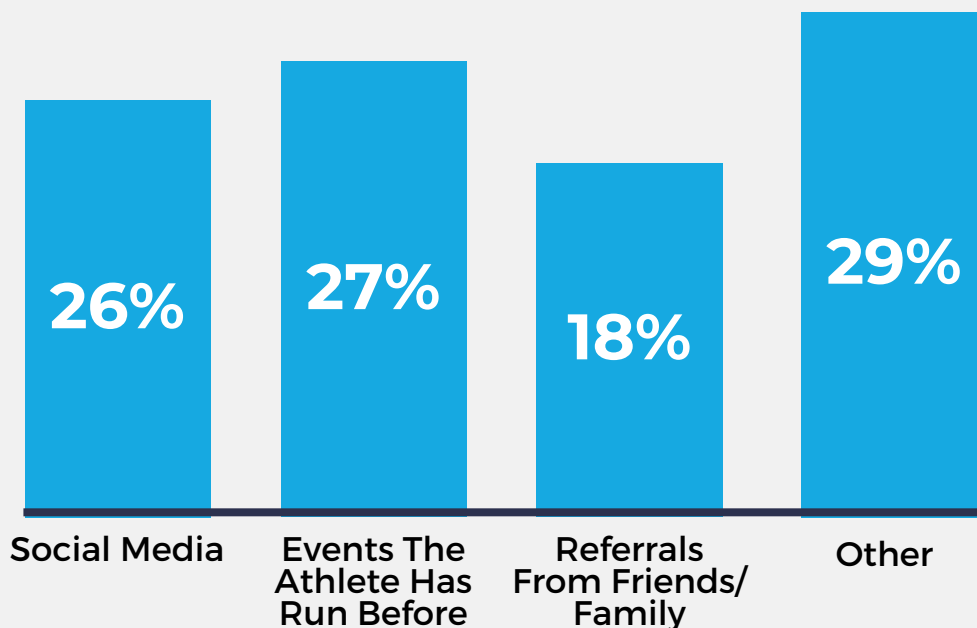


GENDER



76% of respondents are back to running in events post-pandemic.

THERE ARE FOUR MAIN PLACES THAT ATHLETES FIND EVENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN:



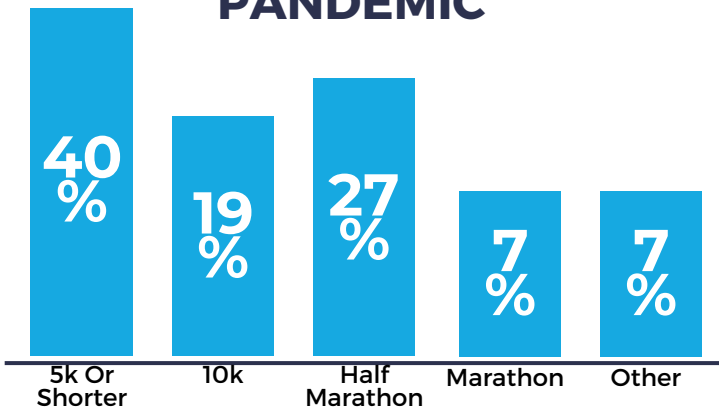
The large majority of "other" responses indicated that they **find their events primarily via google search, or running specific event boards**. Additional notable responses included emails from the event, and through running clubs. These results reemphasize the importance of overall digital marketing efforts for events.

Athletes are actively searching for new events to get involved in, and it is more important than ever for events to put their best foot forward digitally. An active **social media** presence and SEO-optimized, **user-friendly website** is integral to event growth and success.

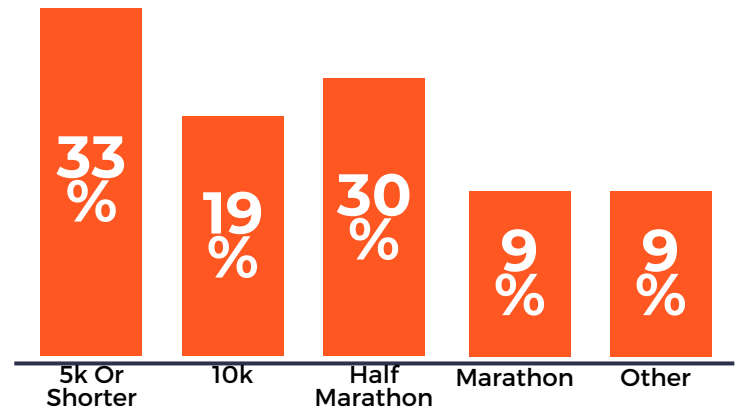
Of those who aren't back to running yet, 45% are either already registered, or plan to register for an event in the next year.

WHAT TYPE/DISTANCE WAS THE LAST RACE THAT YOU RAN?

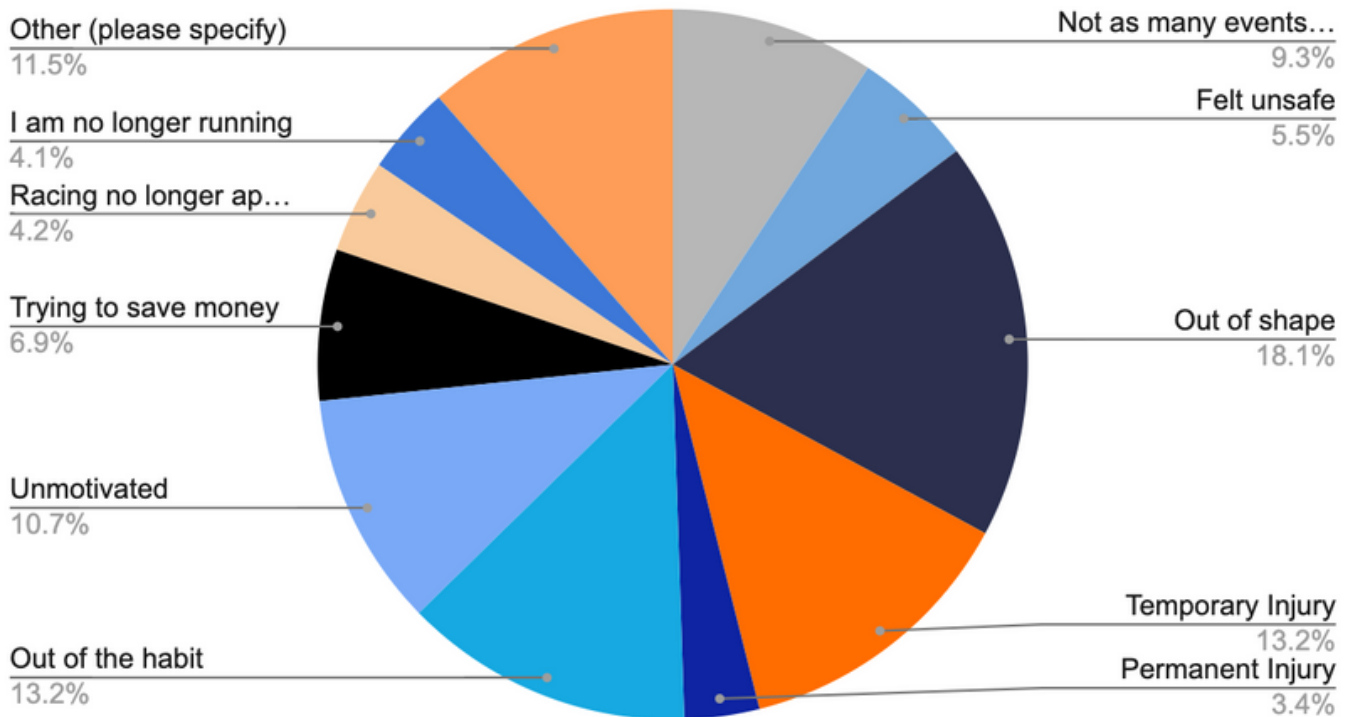
ATHLETES WHO HAVE NOT RACED SINCE BEFORE THE PANDEMIC



ATHLETES WHO ARE BACK TO RACING POST PANDEMIC



WHY HAVEN'T YOU RACED SINCE BEFORE THE PANDEMIC?



43% of total respondents are affiliated with running groups, but **only 22% of those who haven't returned to racing post-pandemic are.**

What are the top motivators for athletes who have resumed racing post-pandemic?



**FUN, FRIENDSHIP
+ SOCIALIZATION**



**HEALTH +
WELLNESS**



COMPETITION



**MOTIVATION +
GOAL SETTING**

Our survey found that **the majority of individuals who have not returned to racing since the COVID-19 pandemic are not running at all.**

Of those who indicated that they are not currently running, approximately 16% cited permanent or temporary **injury**, 31% indicated that they are **out of shape or out of the habit**, and 8% indicated that racing, or running in general **no longer appeals to them.**

This demonstrates that the majority of this population is still interested in running/racing; however, **we as an industry must do more to motivate them to get back into it.**

Those who aren't back to racing say the following would help to get them motivated again:

Getting into better shape

A running buddy/
someone to commit to a race with

Injury recovery

Fun and exciting themes

More affordable registration fees

While the resurgence of the racing industry has progressed more slowly than many of us had hoped, **there is a strong indication of a continued trend of steady growth.**

As an industry, it is important to focus on catering to athletes who haven't returned to racing yet to help them **get back into the habit.** A large focus should be placed on efforts such as **referral programs to reach new audiences,** and now is a great time to experiment with **new themes** and more.

Some athletes also indicated that cost is becoming an increasingly important factor in choosing which events to participate in. Saving on costs where possible in order to lower registration fees may be an impactful strategy as we enter 2023.



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