

The Eventbrite logo, featuring the word "Eventbrite" in a white, sans-serif font inside a white rounded rectangle with a slight shadow.

Report

# Endurance Sports Participant Study

We surveyed 2000+ endurance event participants to learn what they ran, why they ran, and how they roll.





## 2 Top findings

### Participation is a marathon, not a sprint.

Once people try an endurance event, they're hooked. 37% (top answer) indicate that they've participated in 5+ endurance events over the past year, while 99% of those surveyed indicate they will participate in an endurance event in the future. Especially when factoring in the weeks of preparation each event requires, it's clear that endurance event participants are training for and experiencing endurance events year round.

### Endurance participants like to mix it up.

Endurance event participants love to participate in endurance events from 5Ks to marathons and from mud to pavement. On average, over the past year survey respondents attended 3.3 different endurance event types, with 5Ks (64%) mud runs (49%), obstacle events (40%), 10ks (32%) and half-marathons (31%), being the most participated in. Endurance event participants are always looking for their next challenge – event directors should take advantage of cross promotional opportunities at local endurance events from mud runs to marathons.

### They're just as active about attending other live experiences.

The endurance community doesn't just do runs, rides and tris. They are highly active event-goers that crave live experiences of all kinds. On average, participants attended 4.2 other categories of events over the past year, with sporting events (65%), music concerts (62%), food/beverage events (46%), and festivals & fairs (41%) being the most attended. For event directors, adding additional elements to your race such as a post-event festival can increase overall fan engagement and event revenue. Co-Marketing with local promoters in your area can also be a way to extend your reach and attract new participants.

## Ordinary people are participating in extraordinary events.

We found that the majority of endurance event participants aren't serious athletes training year round. In fact, participants identifying with the "hardcore athlete" profile never made up more than 1/3 of the event participant pool, even for ambitious events such as marathons and triathlons. Race directors looking to grow their event should be targeting a range of athlete profiles, from amateur runners looking to challenge themselves to social runners wanting to enjoy a new experience with friends.

## They're active on social media, especially before stepping on the starting line.

80% of endurance participants in our survey reported sharing event photos and updates on social media compared to 70% of event-goers who have not participated in an endurance event. A follow-up analysis of 25 million Twitter posts by Mashwork & Eventbrite revealed that 71% of Twitter conversation surrounding endurance events took place pre-event, compared to 40% of conversation across all types of events.<sup>2</sup> Providing a platform for this dialogue and engaging with participants during the training and event preparation period represents a huge opportunity for race directors to build their brand and drive registrations.

## Participants aren't racing to register.

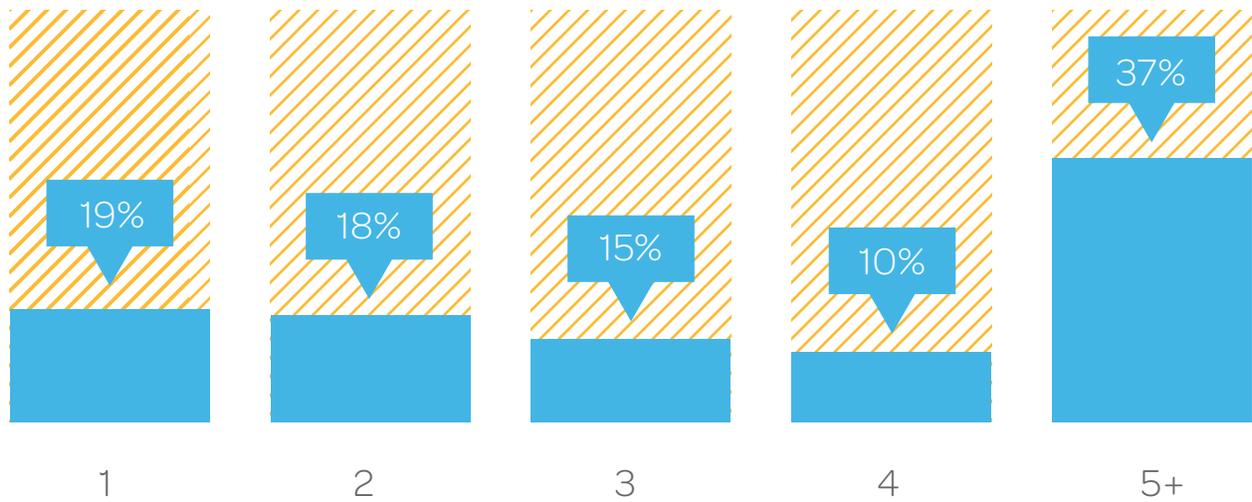
Nearly a third of participants register for endurance events less than one month before the event. Half of participants would sign up earlier if they knew their friends were attending, so make it easy for them to get their friends on board. Be sure to enable social sharing on your registration page, and make it as easy as possible for people to register when they're out and about talking with friends. Participants are increasingly learning about and registering for events on the go – 82% regularly search for endurance events on mobile, and half of respondents have registered for an endurance event on their mobile device. It's crucial for race directors to optimize the registration flow for mobile devices, because even people that like a challenge don't want to be challenged by the registration process.

<sup>2</sup>Eventbrite and Mashwork study, July 2014

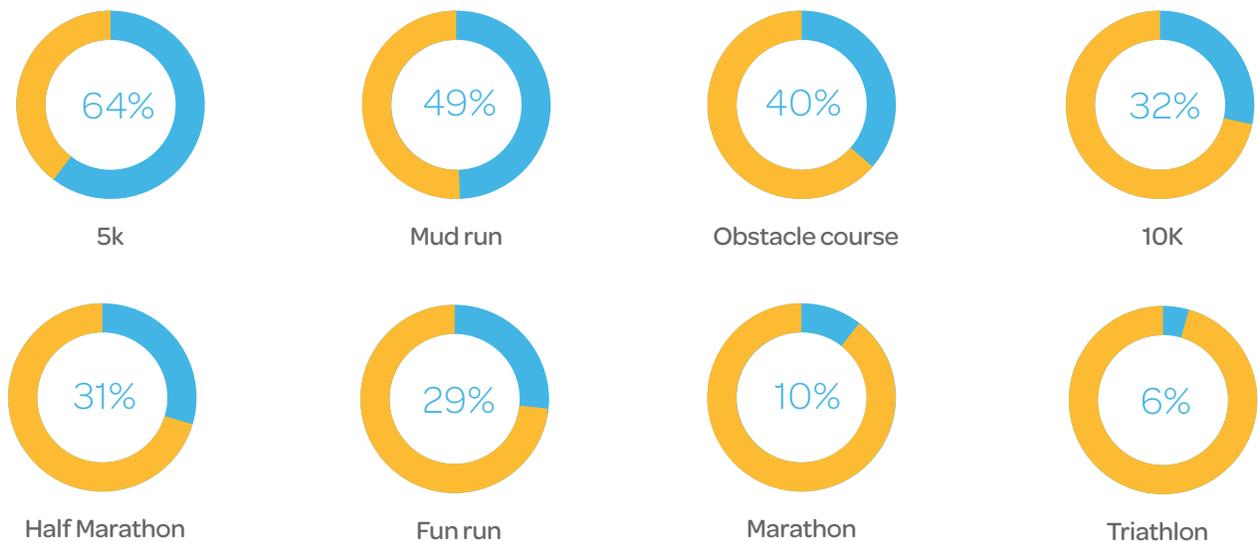
# 3 Popular events among participants

Endurance event participants are an active group, attending a range of live experiences from road races to music concerts to beer festivals. In the past twelve months, the average endurance athlete participated in 3+ different endurance event types and 4+ other event types, including sporting events, music concerts, and food and beverage festivals.

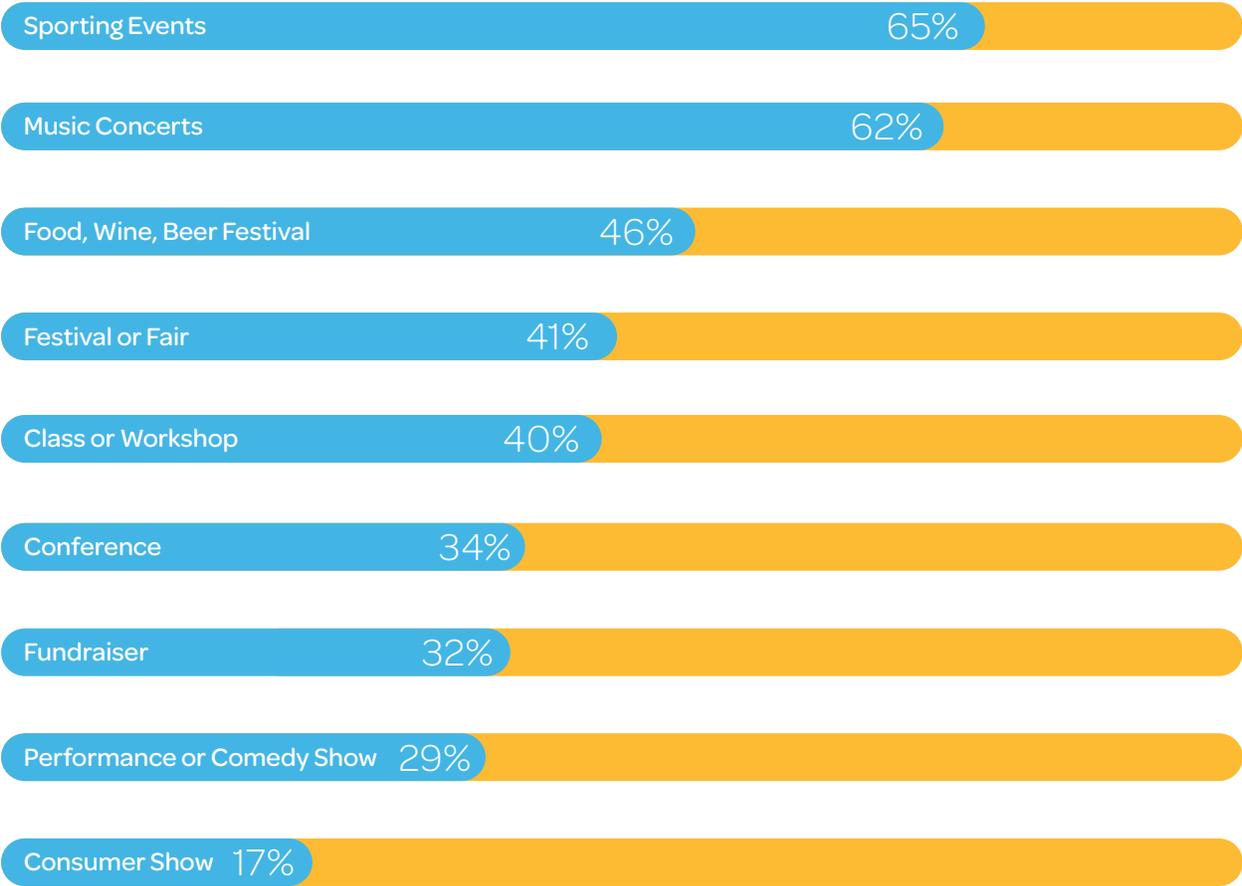
# of endurance events attended in the past year



Most popular endurance events in the past year (% attended)



Other events attended in the past year (% attended)



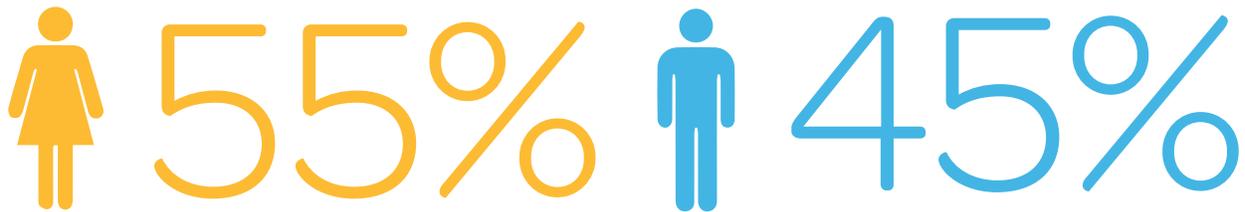
**Brite Tip: Spice up your event**

Think creatively about ways you can incorporate elements of your participant’s favorite events, from local food trucks post-race to a packet pick-up party with a musical performer. Your target audience is likely attending local festivals, classes, and sporting events, so consider co-marketing opportunities with other local events and find a registration partner with a diverse community of event-goers you can access for promotion.

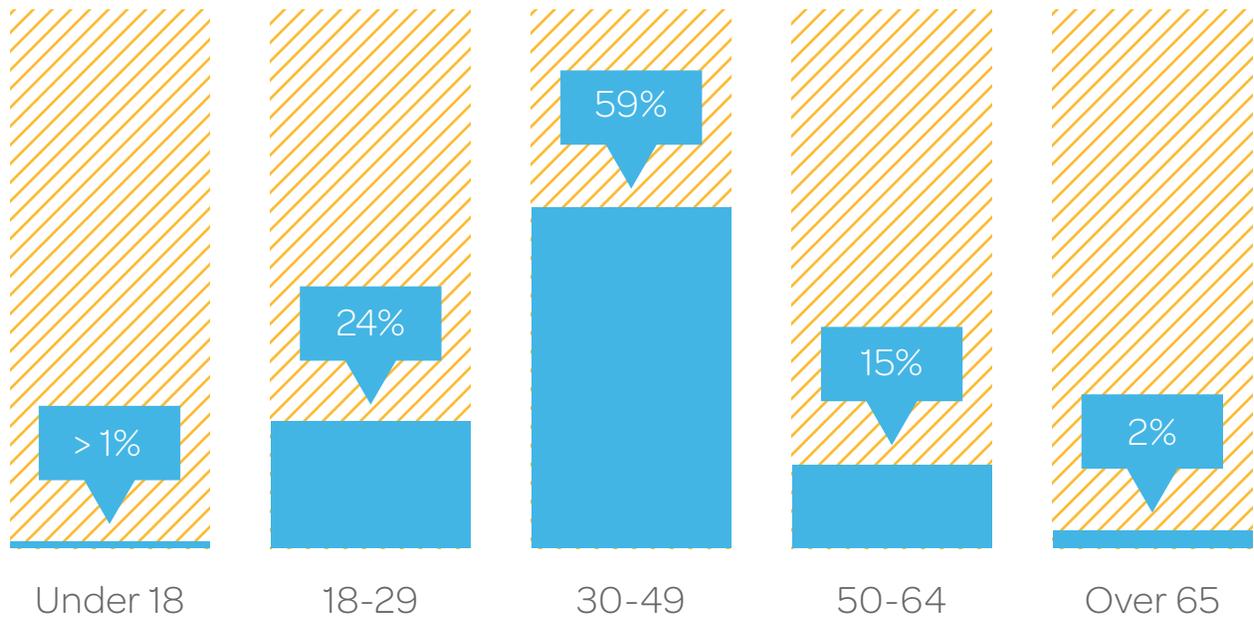
# 4 Athlete demographics and profiles

The most prevalent endurance participants are women between 30-49 who chose your event based on proximity, price, and a unique course offering. Understanding the average participant and their desires is key to planning and promoting a can't-miss endurance event. Across the board, the priority for participants is to find great local events with great value for their money.

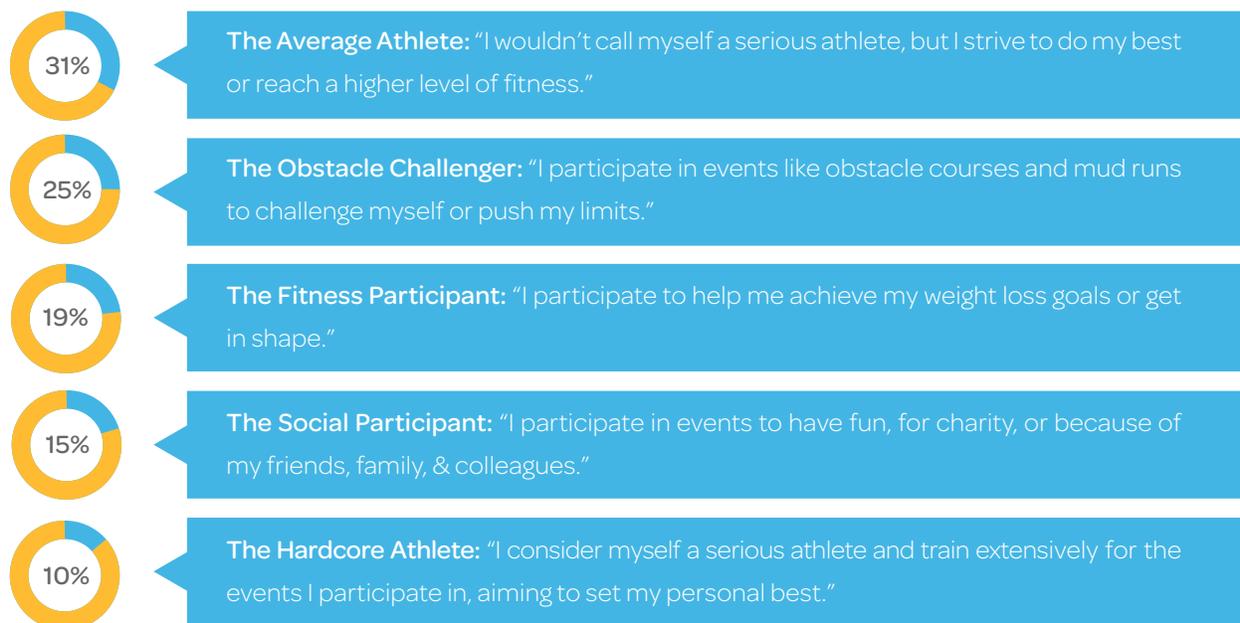
## Gender



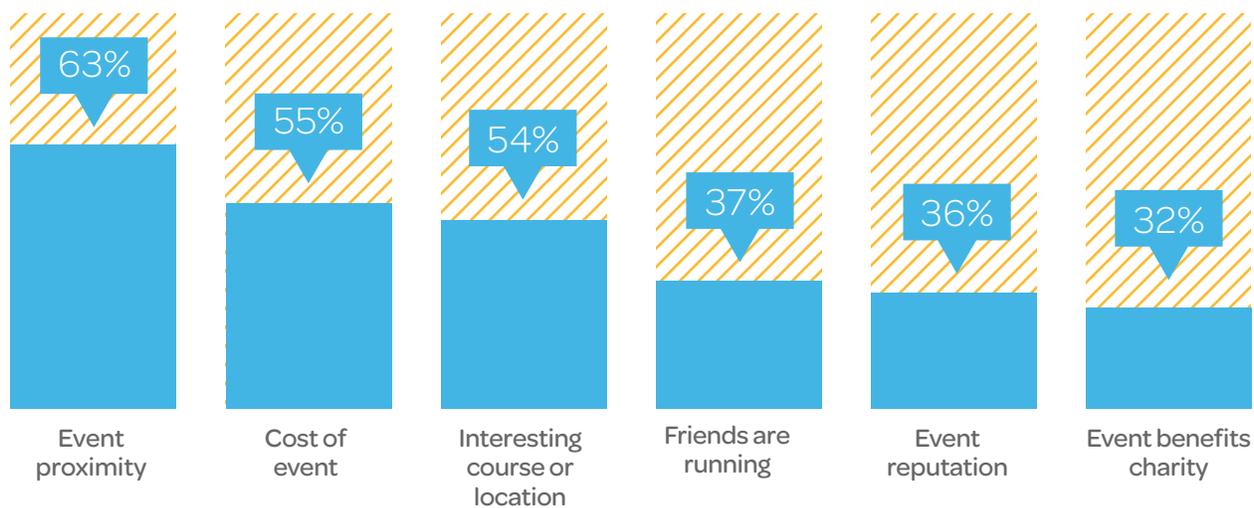
## Age



## Who they are: 5 participant profiles



## Why they participate: Factors considered "very important"

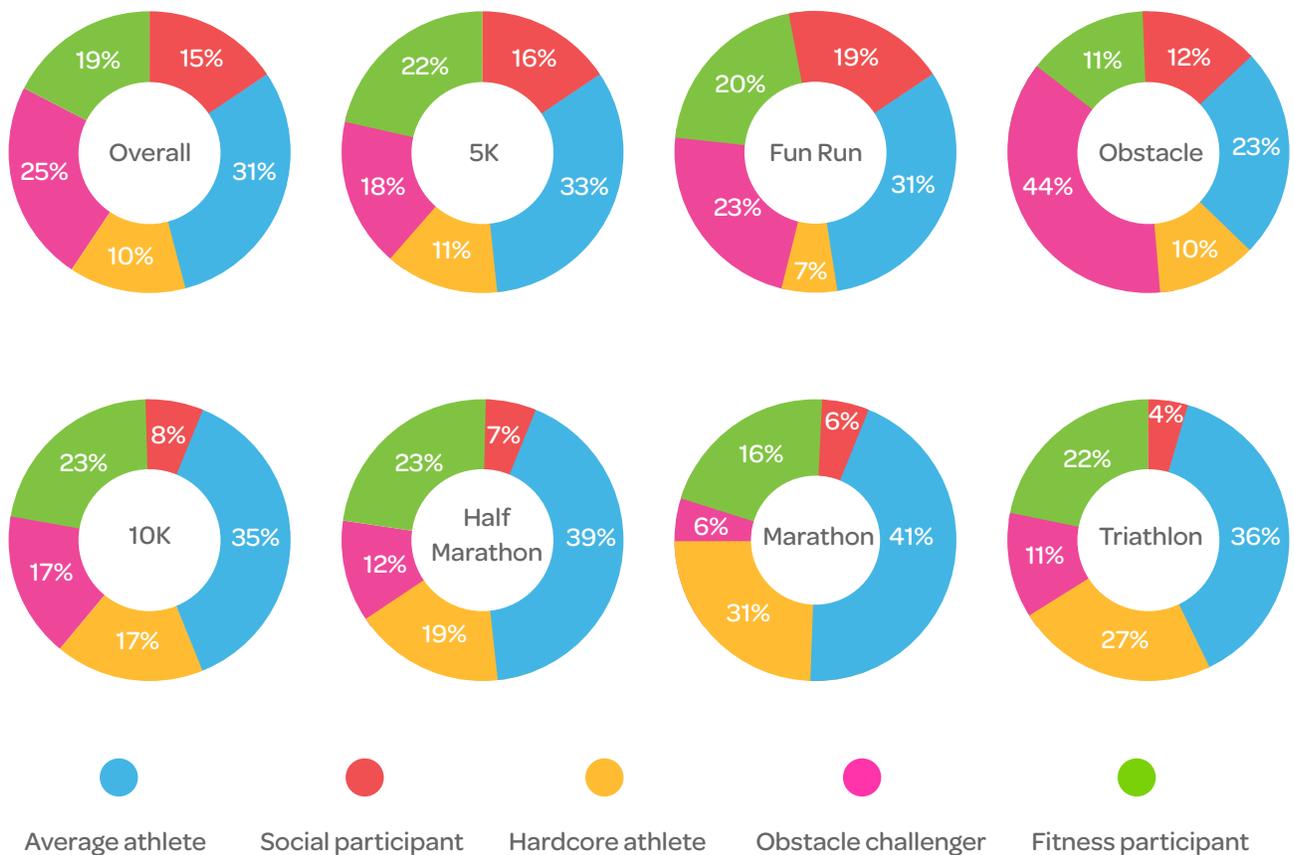


### Brite Tip: Know your audience

These event characteristics varied by participant profile. Hardcore athletes are more willing to travel for a top notch event (+12 percentage points). Obstacle challengers were more likely to value an interesting course (+13 percentage points), whereas social athletes were more likely to value that their friends were running (+23 percentage points). Focus on these values when crafting your event's marketing strategy, and consider offering group incentives and enabling social sharing on the event page for social athletes to get their friends on-board.

# 5 Participant profiles by race type

We broke down the endurance event audience by race type, and found that no one participant profile dominates. Even events with a high difficulty level (such as marathons, triathlons, or obstacle events) have a healthy mix of participants. This data suggests that race directors shouldn't just target the hardcore athletes, and the obstacle event directors shouldn't just cater to obstacle challengers, because over half of their participants don't fit those specific profiles.



## Brite Tip: Highlight aspirational amateurs

Keep in mind that you'll likely have many amateur athletes and first time runners in the mix. Engage and motivate these athletes with your communication and social media strategy by highlighting stories of inspirational and amateur runners.

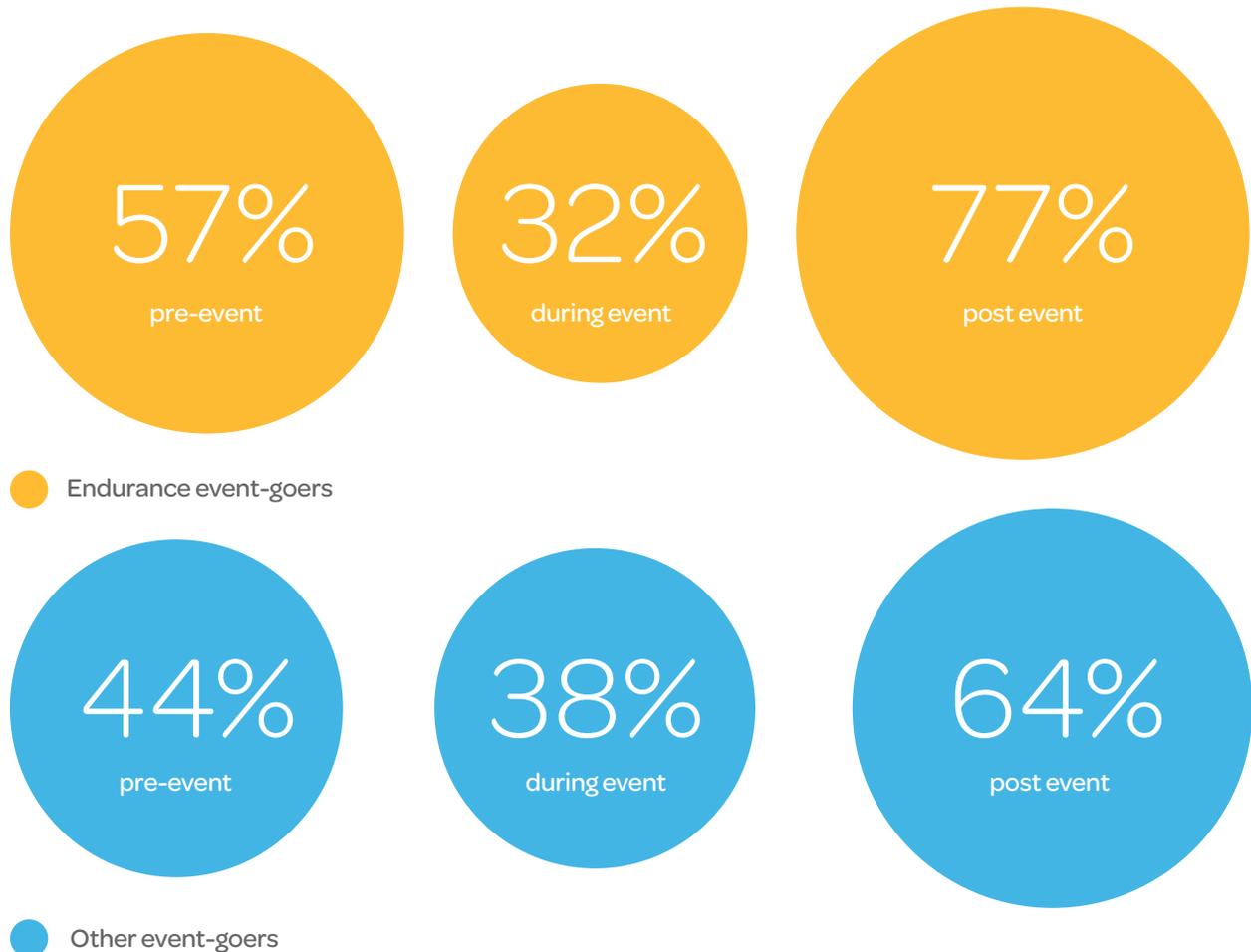
# 6 Spotlight on social media

Endurance athletes are incredibly social on and off-line, 80% of respondents report posting updates and photos to social media compared to 70% of general event-goers. We found that endurance athletes were more likely to post photos and updates to social media both before and after events than other event-goers.

A follow-up analysis of Twitter conversations found that 71% of conversation surrounding endurance events took place pre-event, compared to 40% of conversation pre-event for other event types, including music festivals, conferences, and fundraising events.<sup>3</sup> Preparation, anticipation, and excitement for the event drive almost half of this pre-event social chatter, suggesting a huge opportunity for race directors to engage with participants and provide a platform for this dialogue before the event.

<sup>3</sup>Eventbrite and Mashwork study, July 2014

## When event-goers say they've shared on social



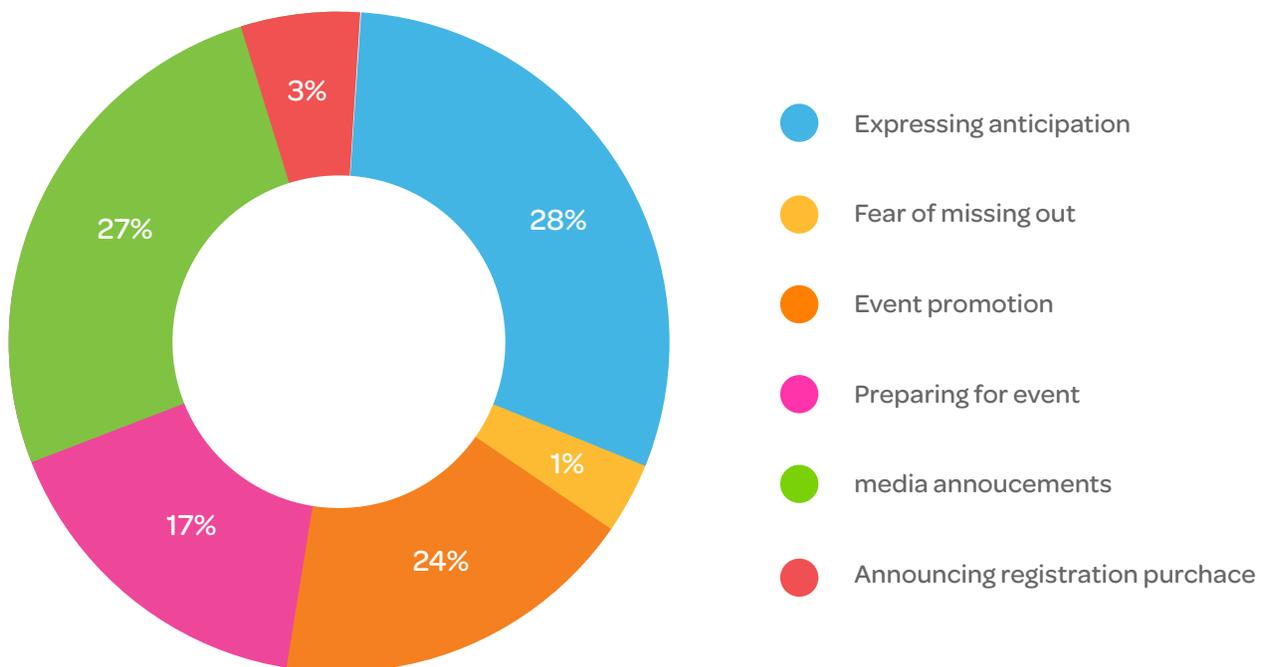
## Pre-event social conversation



71%  
of endurance event  
Twitter conversation happens  
before the event

40%  
of general event twitter  
conversation happens  
before the event

## Endurance conversation drivers pre-event



Eventbrite and Mashwork study, July 2014

### Brite Tip: Create buzz with branded hashtags

Event planners can engage people in the training phase before an event by creating online communities where people can discuss their excitement or concern about a particular event. Endurance event organizers can also cater their branded hashtags to target training conversation. For example, #IronManTraining and #TMPushupClub (Tough Mudder) targeting participants during training have been extremely successful, motivating and challenging participants as they prepare for their event. By focusing chatter around your event under one specific hashtag, buzz around your event will steadily improve.

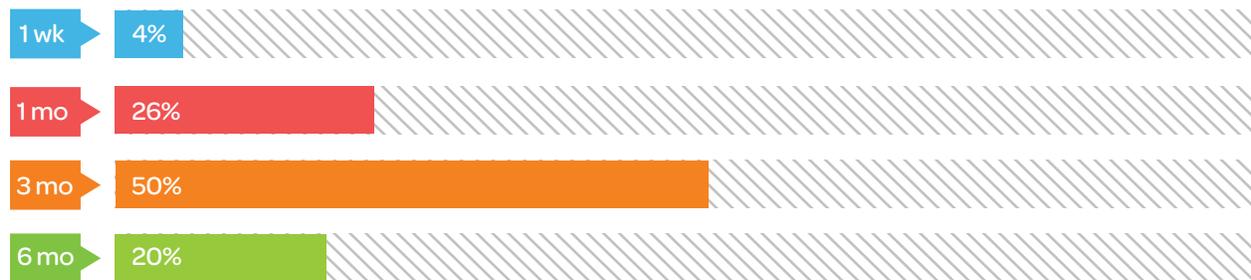
# 7 Mobile & Registration

Over 25% of web traffic worldwide now comes from mobile, and endurance athlete participants are increasingly searching for and registering for events on the go.<sup>4</sup> One third of endurance athletes regularly register for endurance events within one month of the event, with social participants being most likely to sign up late and obstacle challengers being more likely to register earlier. In open response, participants indicated that the top three incentives that would get them to sign up sooner were a reduction in registration price, knowledge that their friends were attending, and race day perks for early registrants.

## Endurance athlete mobile behaviors



## Average time before event that participants register



<sup>4</sup>KPCB Internet Trends Report, 2014

### Brite Tip: Make it easy to register on the go

Make it easy for your participants to find and register for your event with a mobile optimized registration page. Be thoughtful about your tiered pricing strategy and if possible provide assurance that participants can defer their entry to the following year if unforeseen conflicts arise. Consider perks to early registrants including VIP parking or a preferred starting position to improve the event experience and encourage early registrations.



## About Eventbrite

Eventbrite provides a simple, streamlined registration platform to help endurance event organizers and race directors set-up, promote, and manage their events. Event organizers can reach a broader audience of athletes, volunteers and fans, and make smarter decisions along the way with social marketing tools, personalized event discovery, and access to real-time data, all in one place. Eventbrite is one of the fastest-growing registration services with over 10,000 endurance events and more than \$2.5 billion in sales.

To find out more, go to [www.eventbrite.com/endurance](http://www.eventbrite.com/endurance) or give us a call at (888) 203-5531 for detailed information about all the features we offer.

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