



The Marathumb Challenge

Synopsis

Globally we spend over 3 hours and 45 minutes on our phones each day and that number has steadily increased year-over-year. The problem has gotten so bad, we've created a word for this endless, mind-numbing activity: "Doomscrolling".

But rather than simply understand the length of time we doomscroll, Saucony wanted to understand THE DISTANCE we doomscroll, so the brand partnered with a market research firm to survey over 1,000 consumers on their tech usage, and an eye-opening insight came to the forefront: the average person scrolls the distance of three marathons a year on their phone.

That's over 78 miles (or over 125 kilometers) of cat videos, food pics and mindless memes that are destroying our well-being. So, Saucony wanted to position this new scrolling insight as an opponent to outrun by posing a simple question: can you move your feet more than your feed?

Introducing "The Marathumb Challenge" the world's first app based mobile game that computes the distance you scroll and pits it against the distance you move in real-time; literally gamifying the idea of replacing screen time with a run.

Within the platform, users could track their daily and weekly progress, check out past wins, and motivate others by sharing completed challenges on their social media channels. Each week, if consumers moved their feet more than their feed, they were driven directly to the Saucony site and rewarded with exclusive Saucony swag.

The app launched in seven countries (The U.S., The U.K, Canada, Sweden, France, Australia and Italy) on Android and iOS and garnered 1.2 billion media impressions, from outlets spanning a number of verticals including Esquire, Bustle, Runner's World, OK! Magazine, Contagious, Trendhunter,

Sirius XM, AdAge and more. Overall, the launch of the challenge was picked up by over 400 media organizations across the globe, equating to \$11 million dollars in media value.

The game was downloaded thousands of times, and consumers weren't just downloading the experience, they were also keeping it on their devices, leading to a 75% retention rate, double the app industry average of 35.2%.

But here's the best part, The Marathumb Challenge did exactly what it set out to do; it got people moving. Over the course of just 6 weeks, participants logged 739,431 miles (1,189,999 kilometers) on the app. That's the distance to the moon and back ... twice.

Strategy

For this work, Saucony's consumer target was "The Everyday Active". These individuals aren't hard-core runners, but staying active is a huge part of who they are. In short, they simply want to move more to benefit their well-being.

Unfortunately, one of the biggest roadblocks on the path to achieving that goal is excessive screen time, and Everyday Actives aren't alone. Globally we spend over 3 hours and 45 minutes on our phones each day and that number has steadily increased year-over-year.

Research has shown one of the biggest factors contributing to endless scrolling is the fact that our phones are uniquely designed to keep us engaged with them. The stimuli provided by social networks, websites and online shopping activate a dopamine release in our brains that we can't get enough of. But running activates those same brain reward centers. So Saucony wanted to replace a scrolling dopamine release with a running dopamine release, ultimately setting out to make movement as addictive as scrolling.