Dirty Dog 15K Trail Run and RunSignUp

The 2015 Dirty Dog 15K Trail Run came to RunSignUp after hearing about the integration with Race Director during a Webinar, and seeing results of a poll indicating that a high percentage of Race Director users prefer RunSignUp. The important factors in the move included a lower cost (the race chooses to absorb processing fees), and the potential to better integrate with their club system.

About The Dirty Dog 15K Trail Run:

2015 marked the 12th edition of the West Virginia Mountain Trail Runners' Dirty Dog 15K Trail Run, directed by club member Daniel Todd. The event was initially named to indicate that runners' "dogs" (feet) would get dirty….but someone suggested that Daniel allow *actual* dogs as well, and the idea took off. Dogs are not only allowed to participate, but encouraged and provided accommodation (at no additional cost).

Offering Low Cost, Tiered Pricing with a Sellout Race

While the race started with just 63 runners, it has grown over the years and now caps out each year. Because of this, Daniel is able to use a unique tiered pricing system that allows him to reward early registrants.

- The first 100 Runners pay just $15
- The next 150 Runners pay $25
- The remaining runners pay $35

To accomplish this in the RunSignUp system, Daniel sets the race at $35, and uses publicly posted coupon codes (limited to the number of uses for that price range) for the discounted options.

Special Pricing

Pre-registration for the DIRTY DOG 15K TRAIL RUN is ~~$15 for the first 100 runners (ONLINE ONLY), $25 for the next 150 runners~~, and $35 for the final 100 runners.

To get this pricing you MUST use the following coupon codes:
~~$20 off use the Code FIRST100~~
~~$10 off use the Code SECOND150~~

This year, Daniel used the RunSignUp Loyalty Program to give last year's runners first access to the $15 slots by allowing them to register earlier. 60 runners took advantage of the Loyalty Program access; the remaining $15 registrations sold out in a few hours when regular registration opened.

Race Loyalty Program / Priority Registrants

The race loyalty program allows you to open up registration to priority registrants before the general public. To get started, you need to create a priority registrant list. When registering, we'll match participants on either:

1. First name and E-mail address match — This reduces issues with maiden names.
2. First name, last name, and date of birth match

Priority Registrant Lists

Dirtiest Runners
- Manage List

Priority Event Registration

Dirty Dog 15K Trail Run

Because the race sells out, the tiered pricing allows Daniel to know ahead of time how many registrations will be sold at each price point, and budget accordingly . This also helps him to maintain a low price point on the race: his goal each year is just to collect enough in registrations to offer runners a good process, make a donation to a local animal shelter, and put a little bit of funding into the West Virginia Mountain Trail Runners Club.

Building Bib Labels for an Easier Packet Pickup

Daniel used to do Bib Assignment in Race Director; this year he assigned his bibs in RunSignUp and then synced it with Race Director. He was able to customize his bibs to include ALL information that volunteers at Packet Pickup might find important, including information collected in custom questions (like whether they have a dog and need a bandana). The system saves his Bib preferences, so he can re-use that bib label.
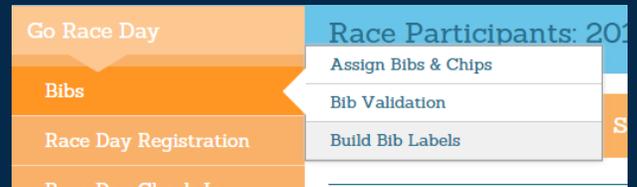
Build Bib Labels

Enter the text for the label below. Anywhere you want runner data, put a question mark (?).

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?, ? - ??
Bib: ? Dog: ?
?
?
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Last Na ▾ , First Na ▾ – Gender ▾
Age ▾
Bib: Bib Nur ▾ Dog: What is ▾
Include ▾
Add On ▾

Label Order
Bib Number ▾

Label Type
Avery 5160 Compatible ▾

"The Bib label builder was very easy and saved automatically. Always, no matter what system I use, somewhere in the mix the labels get screwed up and print off the label...this time, every page printed perfectly. In other words...It WORKED. That's the key." - Daniel Todd

Communicating with Runners: Widgets & Email Marketing

The Dirty Dog 15K is listed on the WVMTR's website; to keep traffic there (and engaged with the club), they use a widget on their Club site for sign ups.

"I really like the addition of widgets. It appears that people are staying on your website; you can customize it and really make it a part of the site. Our entrant list on our website is just a widget to RunSignUp."

The second tool that Daniel used to keep runners informed was the new Email Marketing system. He likes to send both pre and post emails to his runners, and values the ability to use RunSignUp to communicate effectively with those runners.

"One thing we try to do is to make the race a little bit better each year: that much more organized, that much more efficient...the only way you get a good word of mouth is by putting on a good, efficient race with a positive experience for runners."

Differentiators: Creating a Unique Race Experience

The goal of every race is to create an experience that differentiates it from other race options. While allowing dogs was more of a post-naming accident, it has become an integral part of why runners travel to Charleston, West Virginia from throughout the area for the 15K trail run. **In 2015, they had runners from 15 states, as far as Florida and Ontario, Canada.**

Runners can bring 1-2 dogs; dogs must be on a leash for the first mile, but can run the rest of the race off-leash within eyesight, and running dogs receive a bandana. There is also a "Top Dog" prize for the first dog to finish. **A full 107 runners (27% of the race) indicated that their dog was running as well.**

There are a few other bells and whistles that Daniel uses to set this race apart:

- **Notifications**: Because of the remote location, there is no internet and runners cannot get instant notifications; however, notifications are still turned on and go out as soon as an internet connection is made. For a 400-person race, this is a nice perk even with the delay. In 2015, 187 SMS notifications, and 168 Email notifications were sent out.

- **Results Scrolling on a TV Screen**: Daniel further addresses runners' desire to see their results *instantly* by setting up a scrolling results screen on a TV within about 10 minutes of the first runner finishing.

- **Video Results**: There are video results for all runners. This is complicated by the off-sets of having wave starts for a non chip-timed race, but is popular for the runners regardless. *Video Bonus: it also helped Daniel to recognize and disqualify a few runners who were running under someone else's bib, and had "placed" in an incorrect division.*

How did you hear about this event?

Response	Total
Email	14
Facebook	27
Family/Friend	153
Internet/Website	31
Other	14
Past participant	129
Print Marketing	5
RunSignup.com	2
Total	375

Pie chart percentages: 7.2%, 40.8%, 8.3%, 34.4%

Why it matters: As a custom question, the race asks runners a multiple choice question regarding how they heard about the race. 40.8% indicated they heard from Family/Friend; another 34.4% were previous participants coming back.
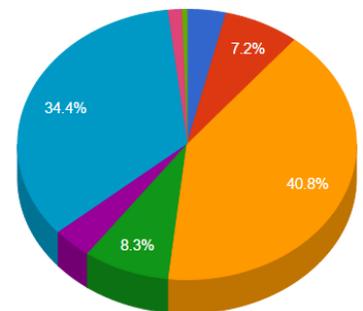
That means an overwhelming 75.2% of participants are registering because either they, or someone they know, had a great race experience.

Photo credit to Mary Shannon Johnstone...fantastic photos and a fantastic race!