



Gladiator Rock'n Run is a Total Experience and Active's Race Management Software Helps Keep it Coming

In just its second year, the 2011 Gladiator Rock'n Run™ * has created a name for itself as the go-to event for thousands of endurance athletes—and spectators—across the country. Its founder Dan Clark was Nitro in the American Gladiator TV series (1989 – 1997), a show that tested the mettle of amateur athletes with a range of endurance games. Fast-forward to 2010 and the first Gladiator Rock'n Run, staged in Los Angeles on a chilly December day. Billed as “the most insane one-day event on the planet,” the Rock'n Run isn't simply a race, marathon, triathlon or any other named endurance competition. It's truly a unique obstacle course challenging participants to conquer extreme obstacles and harsh terrain—including walls to scale, hills to slide (or tumble) down, mud to slither through, dangerous obstacles to zigzag around and more. And when it's all done, everyone celebrates with a post-race party filled with music, beer and food. It's an opportunity for everyone to have a great time, to be inspired not by the workout or competition, but by the entire experience. As the event's tagline states, “It's not a race. It's an experience.”

Dan's first Rock'n Run brought 2500 participants despite dreary weather; the most recent Rock'n Run hosted up to 7500, plus spectators. That growth came about through word of mouth, in part because Dan believes in consumer-to-consumer marketing. The Rock'n Run has a website, <http://www.gladiatorrocknrun.com/> and Active Network, Endurance's online registration and race management software. He places no ads in racing magazines. Given the committed soul of the endurance athlete, and that the event is unlike any other, word gets out.

Challenges

For Dan, “Everything has to carry the spirit of the event.” This keeps him involved in it all, including scouting and designing each course. The unique aspects of Gladiator Rock'n Run demand a creative, seamless means of fitting together the various parts needed for success, including set ‘waves’ of runners throughout the day, teams divided by age group, and more. Only the best in race management, from Active's race management software to local race management firms who can execute course setup and other matters, would do. Overall, it's the outsourcing that keeps the event successful and growing in popularity, allowing Dan to stay focused on the creative aspects and ensure continued consumer-to-consumer marketing success for his days of 5K and 10K “insanity.”

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Active Network helps Dan Clark stay on course with his goal to create a unique endurance experience. Key to this is Active's ability to help him **GET** more participation, seamlessly **MANAGE** each Rock'n Run and continually **BUILD** on his success.

GET

Dan's approach is consumer-to-consumer focused, so he revels in the marketing programs & tools offered by Active. His Spotlight Ads and Active.com Schwaggle have helped him grow the business, along with the social media integration on the online registration page and Active's Facebook page.

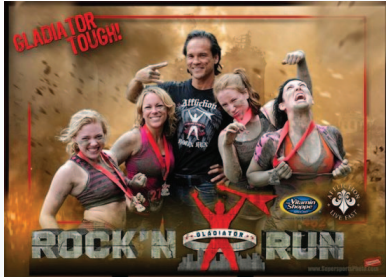
MANAGE

When Dan needs to call his Active rep she always makes him feel like he's the only client in the world. “She's a great guide, with good ideas. Other companies have approached me, but the customer support Active provides to me, and Rock'n Run participants, leads the pack.”

BUILD

Having immediately accessible demographic and geographic information is a huge plus that helps Dan know his participants and target them more effectively in his outreach and event planning.

Case Study: Gladiator Rock'n Run



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—Dan Clark,
Founder, Gladiator Rock'n Run



Solution

His drive to align himself with the best in class brought Dan to Active. Based in Los Angeles, he drove to San Diego so he could meet face-to-face with the Active team about the online registration and race management software he knew he had to utilize. He found at Active a team he knew he could depend on. Now, whenever he calls his assigned rep she makes him feel like he's the only client in the world. “She's a great guide, with good ideas. Other companies have approached me, but the customer support Active provides to me, and Rock'n Run participants, leads the pack.”

With his consumer-to-consumer focus, Dan is pleased with the interface Active provides with its online registration software and his website. He likes to visit the comments section on the registration pages and has been known to post there himself, with encouragement and shout-outs about what's coming. One such post, for the upcoming Pasadena Rose Bowl Rock'n Run advises, “Better get those legs ready. QUADS OF THE GODS obstacle is going to be a beast!” It's one of the ways he keeps that personal touch alive in an event that could end up being just another sea of race participants going from start to finish. And to keep an eye on where his business is coming from, he says, “I constantly check the demographic and geographic information of my participants on my Active event page.” It's a great tool to help him manage and plan for the future.

Dan is also pretty jazzed with Active's Facebook page and its 1+ million followers. “If you put on a kick-ass event, Active will mention it,” he notes. That, and his ongoing tweets, keeps pace with his belief in the power of social media.

Results

Dan keeps the buzz alive with Active race management software's spotlight ads and broadcast email capabilities. Those, and Active's online registration software, have made his part of the process nearly seamless. These tools are helping the event expand in numbers. He has also seen fantastic response to his Active.com Schwaggle—an online deal offering savings of more than 50% on entry for a Gladiator Rock'n Run—that sold out in a couple of hours.

Dan makes a point of aligning with a specific charity partner for each race. Utilizing Active's fundraising module within the online registration software, he has been able to provide donations of close to \$20,000 to organizations such as the Epilepsy Foundation of Los Angeles and Talk About Curing Autism. He even aligned with GreenSneakers, which collected runner's shoes after the race, sending them on to those in need.

What's Next

Dan Clark is now planning 10 events a year, in cities across the country, for participants who could be as young as 14 or 70+. Every race will have a unique obstacle course, a fundraising component and big fun. “I have to build a business based on doing good, not simply for profit,” he says. He views his work in three ways: 1) helping others be more happy, healthy and fit for life, 2) inspiring others through a great experience, and 3) raising money for those in need. “I hope someday to be able to raise \$50,000 a race to give to the causes I believe in, while folks rock 'n' run and have a frickin' good time.”

** Not affiliated with the television show American Gladiator*