TABLEAU CONFERENCE
Run, Mickey, Run!

What does visualizing Walt Disney World Marathon Results teach us about participant behavior?

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The views expressed are my own and not necessarily those of The Walt Disney Company.

Any analytics strategies or techniques attributed to Disney are not necessarily those that Disney may use in a given situation.
About Me

• Current Role: Analytics and Optimization Manager with CIMA
• Celebrating 21 years with as a Cast Member at Walt Disney World
• Completed 10 Walt Disney World Marathons, 19 other Marathons, 14 Disney Half Marathons, 63 other Half Marathons
• Participated as a runner or volunteer at more than 30 runDisney events
• 4th Tableau Conference, 2nd time presenting
• Tableau Fan since version 6.0 from 2010
All data presented is from public sources including runDisney.com and MarathonGuide.com.
1. It all started with a data viz and a comment on a Facebook group run by fans of runDisney races.
2. Evolution of the design – what worked, what didn’t, and what I learned along the way.
3. Dig into some fun charts.
First some background

Disney Wine & Dine Half Marathon Weekend
November 1 - 4, 2018

Walt Disney World Marathon Weekend
January 9 - 13, 2019

Disney Princess Half Marathon Weekend
February 21 - 24, 2019

Star Wars Rival Run Weekend
April 4 - 7, 2019
The Inspiration

Not Tableau.

Wouldn’t this visualization be interesting if it were interactive?

*at least looks like at the moment... no promises on whatever the heck rd does next.
Experimentation: What worked and what didn’t?
The 25th Running of the Walt Disney World Marathon

25th Running of the Walt Disney World Marathon
Sunday, January 7, 2018 5:30 AM

Total Finishers 20,025

Select participation by gender, race or age distribution bar to see subsets. Select again to clear filter. Disney runners completed 40.5 miles in 4 races in 4 days including the marathon. Disney runners completed 36.5 miles in 2 races including the marathon. Marathon runners completed 26.2 miles in 1 race on Sunday, January 7.

Participation by Gender

Average Finish Time by Gender in Hours

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Average Finish Time by Race in Hours

Graph shows the number of runners crossing the finish line by time of day.
2018 Princess Half Marathon

Selected Finishers 20,455

Runners by Gender

Runners by Challenge

Runners by Age Group

Runners Finishing per 6 Minutes

Roughly 4 runners per second crossing the finish line.
2018 Star Wars Half Marathon

Star Wars Dark Side Half Marathon
Sunday, April 22, 2018 at 5:30 AM

Total Runners: 15,092

Average Pace vs. Start Delay

Runners Finishing per 6 Minutes

Peak of 2 runners per second crossing finish line.
Changes in the Marathon 2000-2018

Walt Disney World Marathon
Results from 2000 to 2018

259,602 Marathon Finishers

50.0% Male
129,882

50.0% Female
129,720

Historical Changes to the Race:
2000 - 2005: Participants in the Marathon and the Half Marathon shared the starting line.
2006: Start of Goofy's Race and a Half Challenge, Half Marathon held day before the Marathon.
2010: Introduction of wave start, a technique used to disperse runners in larger races.
2011: Number of waves was doubled from 4 to 8.
2014: Number of waves was doubled from 8 to 16.
2016: Photopass replaced photo vendor enabling runners to bundle race and vacation photos.
2018: Number of waves increased to 16 for 25th running of the marathon.

Click Time Histograms
Hover to see number of runners per each time interval.

Faster Runners

Slower Runners
1. It is easier to believe the data with a reference – people like to find themselves in the data.
2. Be careful how you name your variables.
3. Eliminate unnecessary charts.
4. You can over-do a theme.
5. Reduce saturation on colors and remove extra lines to improve chart readability.
Please complete the session survey from the Session Details screen in your TC18 app.