



OUR REBECCA-BASED ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Prepared by Perry Reed

Rock n' Roll
MARATHON SERIES®



TO BENEFIT THE
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MARATHON & 1/2 MARATHON

PART 1

STRATEGY REPORT

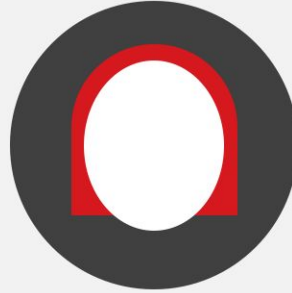
Rock n' Roll
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



WE HAVE A MISSION

Since our first race in 1998, the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series has infused running with fun, live bands, cheer teams, and more. But the market is saturated with fitness activities, including hundreds of other marathons offered by competitors each year. We must increase our market share by recruiting new ranks of runners and building brand loyalty, encouraging participation in multiple Rock 'n' Roll Marathon events.



HAVE YOU MET REBECCA?

In this report, you will meet Rebecca, a persona representing a key audience for the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series. Our Rebecca-based engagement strategy will help us focus our business, build empathy for our customers, and create efficiency. If we do this well, we can hook new runners to #RunRocknRoll and build loyalty to the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series, engaging our customers in marathons around the globe.



LET'S ENGAGE

In the next quarter, we can tune-up our engagement strategy to recruit new runners and re-register previous ones. Social media and blogs can share stories finding fulfillment through rediscovery-of-self. Once registered, the event website and email campaigns can guide Rebecca through the training process as she seeks to become competent, autonomous, and related. Finally, after creating a great event experience, we can use email and social media to remind Rebecca how Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series is associated with achieving her need to explore, achieve, and be self-determined, prompting another registration.

INTRODUCTION



Since our first race in 1998, the Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon Series has infused running with fun, live bands, cheer teams, and more. Today, we offer events in 31 cities across nine countries. We focus on music, runner support, and community engagement to make each event a success. But the market is saturated with fitness activities, including hundreds of other marathons offered by competitors each year. **We must increase our market share by recruiting new ranks of runners and building brand loyalty, encouraging participation in multiple Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon events.**

A persona-based engagement strategy can help us solve this. Personas are character sketches representing the goals, attitudes, and behaviors of key audience segments (Mulder & Yaar, 2007, p. 19). We can use them to help us determine what success looks like for our customers' goals (Cooper, Riemann, & Cronin, 2007, p. 15). Ultimately, this improves engagement as we help customers fulfill their needs.

In this report, you will meet Rebecca, a persona representing a key audience for the Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon Series. Our Rebecca-based engagement strategy will help us focus our business, build empathy for our customers, and create efficiency (Mulder & Yaar, 2007, p. 22). If we do this well, we can hook new runners to **#RunRocknRoll** and build loyalty to the Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon Series, engaging our customers in marathons around the globe.

MEET REBECCA

Rebecca is a 44-year-old nurse and single mom to Greg and Nathaniel. She doesn't have many friends or connections in town, but stays because her kids have established lives. Rebecca is in a rut. She has spent most of her time as a caregiver. It's unfulfilling and she longs to rediscover herself. Rebecca recently picked up running. She enjoys jogging through town and in the nature reserves. It's cathartic. She jogs a couple miles at a time but wants to push herself to do long-distance running. She also wishes she had some comradery during her run. Although she runs primarily for herself, she tends to feel isolated.

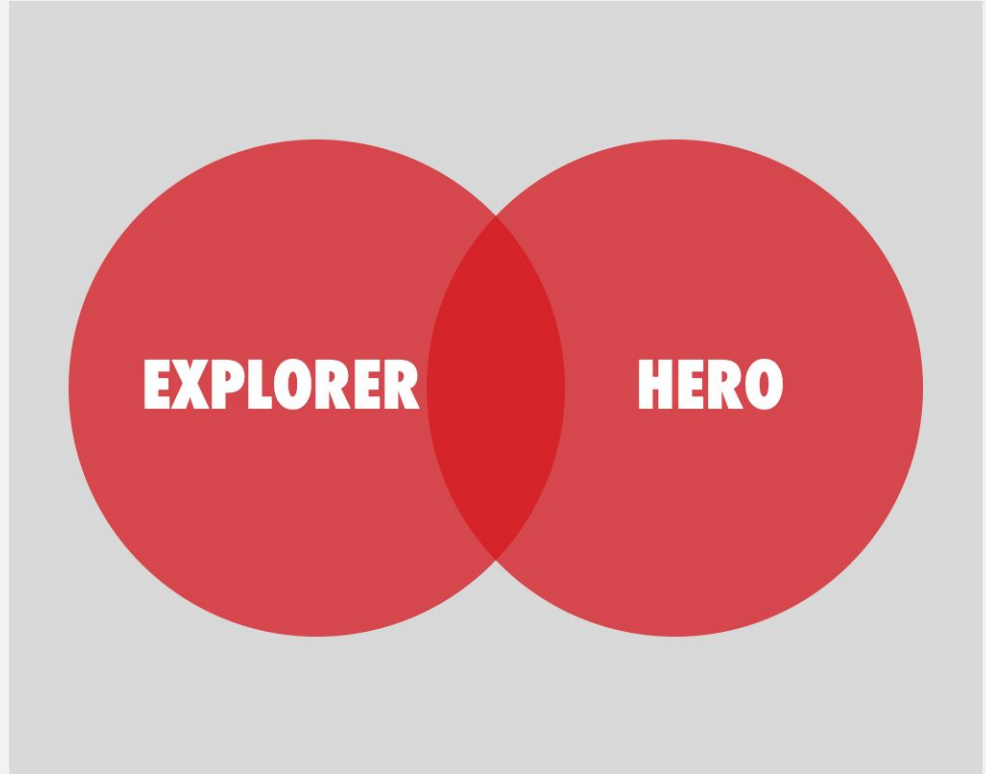
With our focus on runner support and community engagement, Rebecca represents an important audience for our brand. She isn't the "typical marathon runner" but a caregiver looking to recapture sense-of-self through exploration. While focused on competence and autonomy, Rebecca becomes more self-determined by feeling relatedness to others.

Rebecca was created using psychological theories and data mining. Data points from real people were found using Netlytics, Keynote, blog searches, and Twitter. While the persona doesn't necessarily need to be female, the solo caregiver role is very specific to this persona. Research uncovered content from running mothers who find self-determination, exploration, and heroism from running that they do not get from their regular caregiving, less-autonomous life.



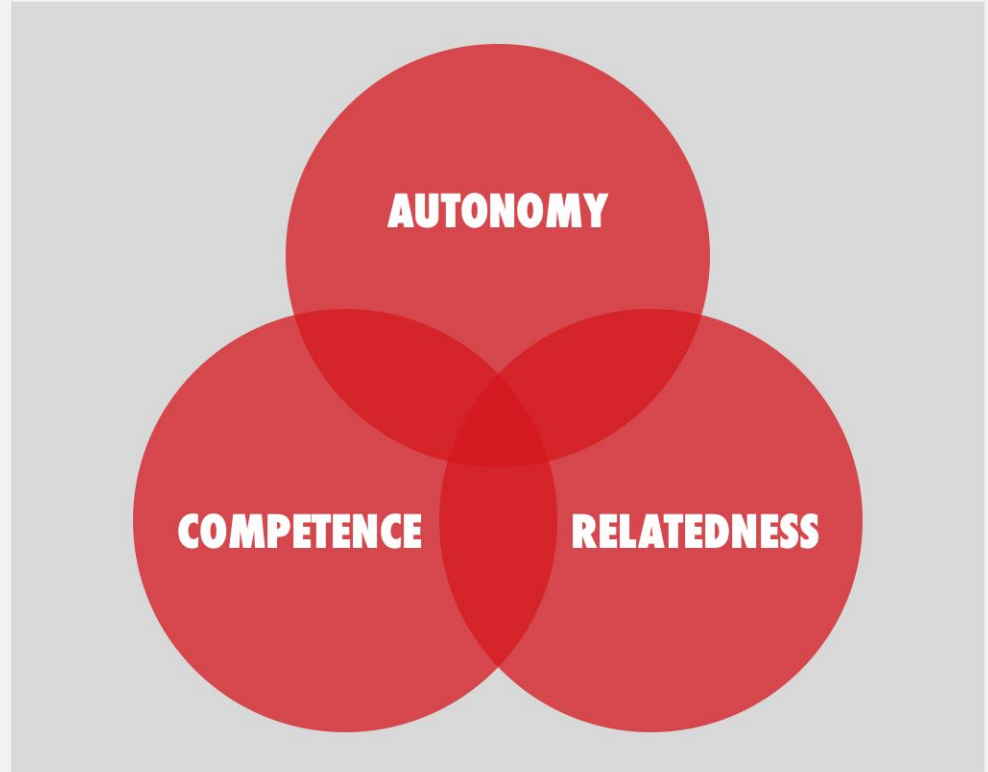
WHY DOES REBECCA THINK THIS WAY?

Many of Rebecca's motivations come from her archetypes as a cross between Explorer and Hero (Mark & Pearson, 2001, p. 13). She feels the need to discover as an Explorer, and ultimately prove herself as a Hero. This sense of discovery is in turn a rediscovery of her own sense-of-self. Don't fence her in: meaning and fulfillment are a result of overcoming challenges and meeting goals. Rebecca needs to discover and prove herself while enjoying the journey by exploring new places and having new experiences. She wants to see herself as a competent, courageous, and heroic individual.



WHY DOES REBECCA THINK THIS WAY?

Although the Explorer and Hero are often individualistic archetypes, Rebecca's self-determination also involves relatedness to others. According to self-determination theory, Rebecca needs autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Rebecca feels some competence through her jogs around town, and wants to increase her competence as a long-distance runner and athlete. She doesn't feel very autonomous, as her time is spent caring for her children and her patients. Furthermore, Rebecca lost her husband and doesn't have a community of friends and family around her, so her relatedness is very low. Our music, expos, and finish-line celebrations could allow Rebecca to still be an Explorer and Hero but feel recognized and related to a community of people.



ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

- ✓ **Plan:** use social media and blogs to share stories of how running has helped people like Rebecca find fulfillment through rediscovery-of-self, ultimately guiding Rebecca to register
- ✓ **Grow:** use event website and email campaigns to guide Rebecca through the training process as she seeks to become competent, autonomous, and related
- ✓ **Go:** create a great event experience and use email and social media to remind Rebecca how Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series is associated with achieving her need to explore, achieve, and be self-determined

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

I've been caregiving too long. I feel a little guilty, but it's time to rediscover ME. I like to run, so these marathon posts are intriguing...



AWARE

CONSIDER

EVALUATE

REGISTER

TRAIN

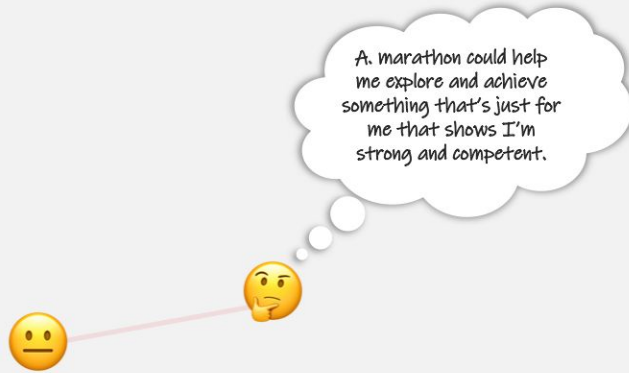
ATTEND

RE-CONSIDER

Rebecca feels unfulfilled, but still hesitant to do something for herself. During this phase, Rebecca would respond well to social media posts and advertising on the stories and quotes of woman and other caretakers who have found fulfillment through running marathons. Imagery should focus on the open outdoor space and celebratory nature of races, helping Rebecca overcome any guilt associated with focusing on herself rather than her current caretaking responsibilities. As a former runner and athlete, the messaging and imagery should have an aspirational but slightly nostalgic tone, reminding Rebecca of previous power and vitality as a runner years ago.

Channels: Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter)

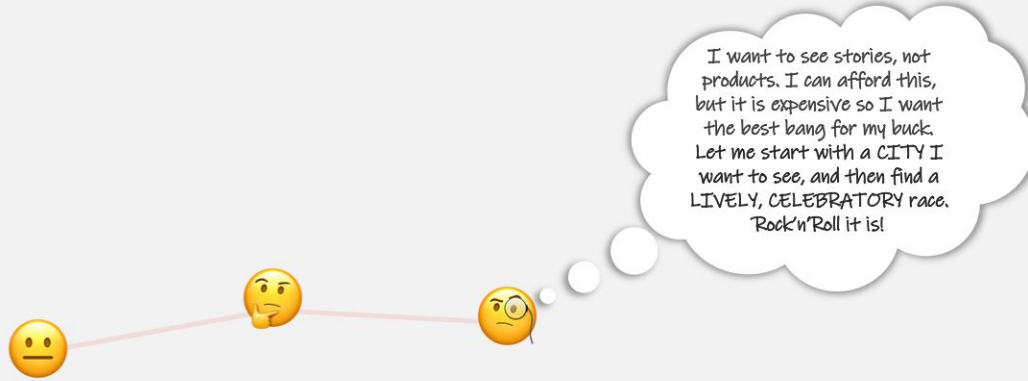
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



Rebecca contemplates registering for a marathon. During this phase, blogs become an important channel for connecting with Rebecca. There are numerous “mother runner” blogs devoted to people in caretaker roles discovering and redefining themselves through their running regimen and achievements. Rebecca wants to see stories of how she’ll accomplish more than the “Regular Guys/Gals” (Mark & Pearson, 2001, p. 105).

Channels: Social Media, “Mother Runner” Blogs

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



AWARE

CONSIDER

EVALUATE

REGISTER

TRAIN

ATTEND

RE-CONSIDER

Rebecca now feels confident running a marathon is something for her. She is ready to go some place new and run. Now Rebecca compares and contrasts the price, destinations, race experience, and medals across different marathons offered by different marathon organizers. During this phase, the RunRocknRoll.com event website becomes important channel for information. Messaging must shift focus from internal drivers to also include the experience of a Rock 'n' Roll Marathon event. The images of race courses with beautiful sights and scenery fulfill her Explorer archetype, while victory at the finish line cheered on by spectators fulfills her Hero archetype. The bands, spectators, and finish-line celebration imagery all help Rebecca feel relatedness to others, wherever she travels to for a race.

Channels: Social Media, RunRocknRoll.com

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



Rebecca is ready to register. We just need to make the registration user interface easy. Rebecca's not the "typical marathon runner", so let's make sure the registration questions are all plain English (ex. explain BIB numbers), the instructions are clear, and nothing is off-putting to Rebecca. For example, we don't want to over-focus on previous race times or corral assignments. This may make Rebecca hesitant and send her back to the *evaluation* or even *consideration* phase. Let's use the registration process as a way to help Rebecca feel increased autonomy, bringing her closer to self-determination.

Channels: RunRocknRoll.com

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



Now Rebecca has to train for the event. Remember that Rebecca doesn't want to be weak or wimp out. Training is difficult, and her emotional valence may decrease. She wants to prove her worth (even to herself) by being disciplined and focused to overcome challenges. We need to provide enough touchpoints for Rebecca to help her overcome any rough patches or hardships during training. She needs to feel supported with the tools to become a competent long-distance runner. Furthermore, exploration and heroism can be lonely, and Rebecca's life is already pretty lonely. Even if Rebecca has people to talk to, none necessarily understand her running goals and desires. Social media and RunRocknRoll.com should provide Rebecca opportunities to connect with other Rock 'n' Roll Marathon runners, including others gearing up for their first event as well as seasoned runners who can provide advice.

Channels: Social Media, RunRocknRoll.com, Email Campaigns

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



Rebecca travels to the city and attends the Expo to pick up her race materials and explore all the booths and vendors catering to runners. This is an opportunity to pre-register Rebecca for a future Rock 'n' Roll Marathon race at a discount, so its critical that she has good customer experience at the expo and all the logistical questions regarding the race have been made easy through email campaigns and information on the event website. On race day, she completes a course she's never seen before, cheered on by "regular guys and gals" who are impressed by her strength and achievement. Ensure she has a good experience with a big cheering crowd at the finish line, happy volunteers, and a cool medal to represent her accomplishment.

Channels: Email Campaigns, RunRocknRoll.com, In-person

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



That was awesome, but the high is coming down. Rebecca contemplates registering for another marathon. Perhaps same race organizer but new city...Hopefully, Rebecca already signed up for another race at the Expo. But if not, then she goes into a new “consideration” phase post-race. It’s critical to have good email communication reminding her of her accomplishments at the race (such as race photos) as well as offers for future races. Email campaigns and social media are good ways to keep the Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon brand on Rebecca’s mind, ideally creating brand loyalty so that she associates the psychological needs the marathon met with our brand. That is, Rebecca shouldn’t feel like just any old race would have made her feel this way – it was a Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon series race.

Channels: Email Campaigns, RunRocknRoll.com, Social Media

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

- ✓ We must ensure that the registration process is easy and encouraging.
- ✓ Once registered for the first race, we must ensure email communications and website information provide clear logistical information for the event so Rebecca doesn't get overwhelmed by the logistics of traveling to the event, find a hotel, navigating the expo, getting to the start line in the morning, etc.
- ✓ The Expo is our best face-to-face opportunity to sign Rebecca up for a future race in another city! We must staff the Expos with our best customer service representatives who understand Rebecca's psychological drivers and provide appropriate encouragement to register for another race.
- ✓ Post race, email campaigns and social media postings are the best way to keep Rebecca engaged with the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series brand. We must connect her psychological drivers (feeling like an explorer, hero, competent, autonomous, and related) to our brand rather than just marathon running in general.

MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

- ✓ # social media posts with #RunRocknRoll
 - ✓ measures stories and engagement from audience
- ✓ # likes and shares on official Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series posts
 - ✓ measures audience reaction to official branded posts
- ✓ % email open rate
 - ✓ once registered, email campaigns including logistics and post-race follow up are critical for encourage registration for future events
- ✓ # Registrations for future events in-person during Expo
- ✓ Net promoter score of online content on blogs and social media channels referencing Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Event Series

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APPENDIX

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REBECCA RUNNER

I am competent, adventurous and true to myself. I will be my strongest self. I am an explorer and hero - but I want some community to go with it.

AGE
44

WORK
Nurse

Single mother of two teenagers

Phoenix, Arizona

Explorer and Hero

Rebecca is a 44-year-old nurse and single mother to Greg, 14, and Nathaniel, 16. She and her now-deceased-husband Josh moved to Phoenix three years ago. She doesn't have many friends or connections in town, but stays there because her kids have established lives. Rebecca has been a nurse for years, but feels like she is in a rut. She has spent most of her time as a caregiver, as a nurse, with her kids, and with her husband before he passed. It's not fulfilling for her and she longs to rediscover and explore herself.

Rebecca was athletic when she was younger and recently picked up running again. She enjoys running through town and in the nature reserves. It's a cathartic experience for her. Upbeat music and fascinating scenery are key elements of her run. She feels competent as a runner, but wishes she had more opportunities to run when she wants. She also wishes she had some comradery during her run. Although she runs primarily for herself, she tends to feel isolated.

Rebecca is itching to travel, and thinks running would be a fun way to see new places. Although she could find someone to check in on the kids, she doesn't have anyone to travel with. That's fine – the run and the adventure are mainly for her to experience. But, she would like to have other like-minded people around.

MOTIVATIONS!

- ✓ I want to identify more with runners and adventurers
- ✓ I need to discover and prove myself while enjoying the journey by exploring new places and having new experiences
- ✓ Don't fence me in: I need to find meaning and be fulfilled
- ✓ I don't want to be weak or wimp out
- ✓ I want to prove my worth by being disciplined and focused to overcome challenges
- ✓ I want to be disciplined and focused
- ✓ Exploration and heroism can be lonely, and my life is already pretty lonely – how can I meet my needs while still connecting with others?

BELIEFS

- ✓ I believe I am a competent, courageous, and heroic individual¹
- ✓ I am confident in my ability to finish this race – and if I register, then I will run and finish this race (self-efficacy)³
- ✓ I am in control of my ability to finish the race (control)³
- ✓ I will feel fully engaged by the run, music performances, and post-run celebration³



IMAGERY



I like open space, navigating beautiful cities, open roads,
blue skies, people moving fast, comradery, overcoming
obstacles, medals, finish line parties

MESSAGING


- ✓ I want to see stories, not products
- ✓ This marathon takes me wherever I want to go
- ✓ It's easy to get signed up and go
- ✓ I'll accomplish more than a "regular guys and gals" and perform at my "upper limit"
- ✓ Bands are local, individualistic, and celebratory
- ✓ Spectators and bands are there to augment my victory
- ✓ Fellow runners are supportive and related to me without taking away my individuality
- ✓ Find me online – Facebook, blogs, travel sites

SELF-DETERMINATION²

AUTONOMY ●●●●●●●●

COMPETENCE ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

RELATEDNESS ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●



Rebecca here. I'm a full-time nurse and full-time mom for my boys. Luckily both are teenagers now and can manage a weekend by themselves – so it's time for mom to do something for herself! I need to go adventure and achieve something for ME. So much of my time is spent as a caregiver, at work and home, and I've always felt guilty about this urge to get away and do something for myself.

But a few months ago, I started running again – I use to do it all the time before I had kids. I can easily do several miles now. I was out of practice at first, so I looked up some tips online and found there are actually a lot of “mom runner” blogs. I've stayed connected with the ones I liked best, and now a lot of the ads I see on social media are urging me sign up for a marathon in really cool-looking places.

I once heard a great quote from Lori Culnane that “everything you ever wanted to know about yourself you can learn in 26.2 miles.” I really see running as something for ME. I can rediscover myself out on the open road, and I imagine there's nothing like the rush that comes from crossing a finish line. I do occasionally feel a little guilty about wanting to do this for me, away from my boys, so seeing finish line photos and the celebration of marathon finishers really makes me feel like its okay to be doing this for me.

So, here I am - ready to go some place new and run! I am strong and capable – I can overcome any challenge with discipline! It might be a little lonely at first, but from what I'm reading on blogs and seeing on social media, there's a community of people who would support me in doing this. So I want to find a place I like, register for a FUN marathon, and beat it's butt! I can't wait for the open road, the adrenaline, the celebratory bands along the course, and the victory medal reaffirming that I am a competent, courageous, and heroic PERSON.

PS. I'm online, but I'm not SUPER tech-saavy – so please make that part easy! And while this is an adventure, I will take some comfort in knowing there will be some directions and hospitality when I get there. So here's hoping a run company has made it easy to get info, sign up, and take care of the logistics to get me to the finish line. Plus, this isn't going to be too expensive, is it? I am a single mom of two...

- Rebecca



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SAN DIEGO

TO BENEFIT THE
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RIGHTING BLOOD BATTER

MARATHON & 1/2 MARATHON

PART 2

COMMUNICATING REBECCA

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PLAY THE REBECCA CARD

TO: Marketing Team, Website Team, Customer Support Team,
Production/Logistics Team

SUBJECT: Play the Rebecca Card

Dear Teams,

Meet Rebecca. She helps us understand the needs and motivations of our customers – which is key to all of our success!

I'll be inviting you to a quick 30-minute meeting soon to introduce you to Rebecca in more detail – we should all understand what makes her tick.

In the meantime, whenever you are brainstorming or debating with your fellow team members, “play the Rebecca card”. Whatever decision you're trying to make for our customers, don't take your word for it – take Rebecca's.

If we make decisions based on what Rebecca needs, we can hook new runners to #RunRocknRoll and build loyalty to the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series, engaging our customers in marathons around the globe.

See you at the meeting,

Perry



Physical cards were distributed to team members.



Rock 'n' Roll
SAN DIEGO

TO BENEFIT THE
LEUKEMIA &
LYMPHOMA
SOCIETY®
fighting blood cancer

MARATHON & 1/2 MARATHON

PART 3

AD CAMPAIGN

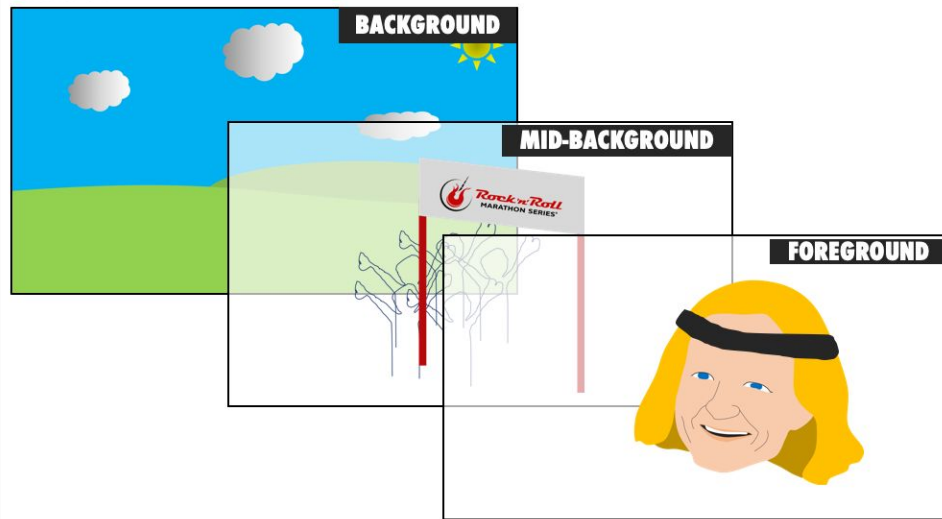
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Sample Campaign during Awareness and Consideration Phases

Rebecca would respond well to social media posts and advertising on the stories of woman and other caretakers who have found fulfillment through running marathons. Imagery should focus on the open outdoor space and celebratory nature of races, helping Rebecca overcome any guilt associated with focusing on herself rather than her current caretaking responsibilities. As a former runner and athlete, the messaging and imagery should have an aspirational but slightly nostalgic tone, reminding Rebecca of previous power and vitality as a runner years ago.

Consider retweeting and reposting true testimonials from runners whenever possible. Focus on Rebecca's psychological drivers. Keep the runner in the foreground, Rock 'n' Roll imagery in the background, and the location behind that.

Facebook



I'd been taking care of my kids and parents so long I'd forgotten the bliss of running. Now I feel like I'm rediscovering myself and doing something great. Thanks to all the crew and volunteers who came out to watch me kick butt during #RunRocknRollDublin. It's about the journey, not the destination - but this destination is pretty great too.