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Marketing-Driven Fundraising: Designing a Community Race to Support the Abraza un Sueño Foundation"

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Abstract: This project focuses on organizing a community race in Bogotá as a fundraising initiative for the Fundación Abraza un Sueño. The event aims to achieve two primary objectives: raise funds to sustain the foundation's programs and increase the foundation's visibility within the local community. The study adopts a marketing-driven approach, applying event management techniques and strategic marketing principles to ensure the race's success.

The research follows a methodology that includes benchmarking similar charity races, conducting in-depth interviews with potential participants, and administering surveys to validate key findings. The insights gathered aim to shape effective promotional strategies, optimize participant engagement, and identify strategic partnerships that align with the foundation's mission.

Results from this project will provide practical recommendations for the foundation's marketing team, including best practices for event organization and community engagement. The conclusions will outline actionable steps to ensure the financial sustainability of the foundation's programs while fostering stronger ties with its supporters. This project offers a comprehensive framework for how non-profit organizations can integrate strategic marketing principles to achieve their mission-driven goals through community events.

Keywords: Fundraising, Charity Race, Non-Profit Marketing, Event Management, Community Engagement

Resumen:

Este proyecto se centra en la organización de una carrera comunitaria en Bogotá como iniciativa de recaudación de fondos para la Fundación Abraza un Sueño. El evento tiene como objetivos principales recaudar los recursos necesarios para asegurar la continuidad de los programas de la fundación y aumentar su visibilidad en la comunidad local. Para lograr estos objetivos, se aplica un enfoque basado en principios de marketing estratégico y gestión de eventos.

La metodología del proyecto incluye un análisis comparativo (benchmarking) de carreras benéficas similares, entrevistas en profundidad con potenciales participantes y encuestas para validar los hallazgos cualitativos. Con esta información, se busca diseñar estrategias promocionales efectivas, fomentar la participación de la comunidad y establecer alianzas estratégicas alineadas con la misión de la fundación.

Los resultados del proyecto ofrecerán recomendaciones prácticas para el equipo de marketing de la fundación, identificando las mejores prácticas en la organización de eventos y en la gestión del compromiso comunitario. Las conclusiones proporcionarán pasos accionables para garantizar la sostenibilidad financiera de los programas de la fundación, al tiempo que se fortalece la conexión con sus seguidores. Este trabajo ofrece un marco integral para que las organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro integren estrategias de marketing en la consecución de sus objetivos sociales a través de eventos comunitarios.

Palabras clave: Recaudación de Fondos, Carrera Benéfica, Marketing para ONGs, Gestión de Eventos, Compromiso Comunitario

1. INTRODUCTION

The **Abraza un Sueño Foundation** has been tirelessly working in Colombia to improve the quality of life for children with cancer and rare diseases. As the foundation expands its operations, the financial demands of its programs have increased, leading to a search for innovative fundraising strategies. Several options were considered, including **online auctions, digital campaigns, and corporate-sponsored events**.

- **Online auctions** offer the benefit of low overhead costs and scalability; however, they often lack the **emotional connection** and community involvement fostered by in-person events.
- **Digital campaigns** provide an effective way to reach a broad audience, but they can result in **donor fatigue** due to the abundance of similar initiatives.
- **Corporate-sponsored events** bring financial stability, but they may limit the opportunity for local community engagement.

Ultimately, the foundation selected a **community race** as the most suitable fundraising strategy. This approach aligns with the foundation's dual goals: promoting community participation and encouraging healthy activities, while also creating multiple touchpoints for donor interaction and engagement.

The **mixture between strategic marketing and event management** has proven to be an effective approach to optimize both participation and financial outcomes in charitable events (Crowther, 2011; Kotler & Keller, 2016). Strategic marketing enables the design of campaigns that maximize emotional impact and visibility, attracting individual donors as well as corporate sponsors (Dessart & Pitardi, 2023). Simultaneously, event management ensures structured and efficient planning, addressing logistical aspects critical to participant and sponsor satisfaction (McNamara & Parsons, 2022).

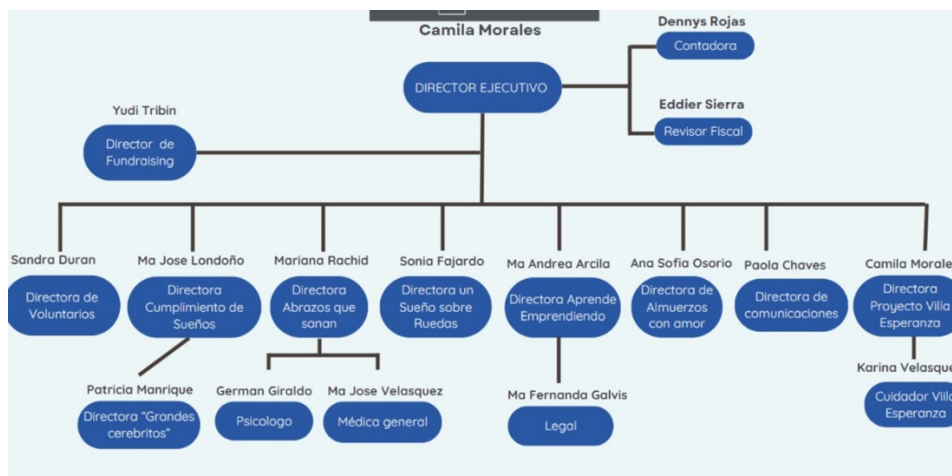
The **Abraza un Sueño Foundation's Structure**
The foundation is divided into several key departments, each dedicated to improving the quality of life for children with rare diseases and providing support for their families. These departments include:

- **Psychological support services**, offering mental health assistance to children and families.
- **Transportation assistance**, ensuring that children can access medical treatments without barriers.
- **Entrepreneurial training programs for mothers**, providing sustainable income opportunities while allowing mothers to care for their children during treatment.

This organizational structure allows the foundation to address both **short-term needs** (such as medical transportation) and **long-term goals** (like empowering families economically). The upcoming **community race in Bogotá** reflects this holistic approach, combining fundraising efforts with community-building activities.

An organigram of the Foundation, which outlines the structure of the organization, is included below.

Image 1: Organization chart



Source: (Fundación Abraza un Sueño, 2023).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW.

1. Donor Behavior: Motivations and Expectations

Donors are motivated by a combination of **altruism, personal fulfillment, and social recognition** (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2011). Charity races appeal to these motivations by offering a tangible way for participants to feel involved with a cause while contributing to a social good. Studies show that donors prefer events that foster a sense of belonging and allow them to see the impact of their participation (Dessart & Pitardi, 2023).

The **Theory of Planned Behavior** suggests that individuals are more likely to donate and participate in events if they perceive that their actions will make a difference and align with their personal values (Ajzen, 1991; PLOS ONE, 2021). In this context, storytelling becomes a powerful tool, as it creates an emotional connection between participants and the beneficiaries of the foundation (Dessart & Pitardi, 2023).

For the Abraza un Sueño Foundation, focusing on personal stories from children and families who benefit from its programs will be essential to building **long-term donor loyalty**. Research suggests that participants are more likely to return to events where they feel emotionally invested and recognized for their contributions (Inoue et al., 2018).

2. Competitive Dynamics in the Non-Profit Sector

The non-profit sector is becoming increasingly competitive, requiring organizations to adopt innovative strategies to **differentiate themselves** (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008). **Global Giving** emphasizes that creating unique and engaging experiences for participants enhances visibility and attracts sponsors, helping non-profits maintain relevance (Global Giving, n.d.).

Local races, such as the **Carrera de la Mujer** and **Carrera Verde** in Bogotá, demonstrate how **partnerships with local businesses** and **media outlets** can amplify visibility and credibility (Carrera de la Mujer, 2024). Additionally, involving volunteers not only reduces operational costs but also

fosters a sense of community ownership, a strategy that aligns with research on sustainable event management (Getz & Page, 2016).

By benchmarking these successful events, the Abraza un Sueño Foundation can adopt **best practices** for planning, marketing, and fundraising, ensuring that its race stands out among other non-profit initiatives. Integrating **sponsorships and media partnerships** will also be key to diversifying funding sources and enhancing event visibility.

3. Trends in Charity Events

Recent trends indicate a growing preference for **virtual and hybrid events** that offer flexibility and reach beyond geographic limitations (Funraise, 2024). Virtual participation options, popularized during the COVID-19 pandemic, have remained relevant due to their convenience and accessibility (Thompson & Nguyen, 2020). Hybrid events, which combine in-person and virtual participation, cater to diverse audiences and maximize engagement (Funraise, 2024).

The concept of the **runner identity** has also gained attention in academic research. Participants in charity races often see themselves as part of a movement that combines personal well-being with social impact (Shipway & Holloway, 2019). Research highlights that runners are more likely to engage in future events if they feel connected to the cause and the community surrounding it (Hickman et al., 2020).

To align with these trends, the Abraza un Sueño Foundation will offer both **in-person and virtual participation options**. This hybrid format will increase accessibility, accommodate diverse audiences, and create opportunities for international engagement. Additionally, offering personalized race elements, such as **custom medals or race t-shirts**, will enhance participants' emotional connection with the event and strengthen their identification with the foundation's cause (Getz & Page, 2016).

4. Insights and Applications for the Project

The insights derived from donor behavior research, competitive analysis, and charity event trends provide a strong foundation for planning the Abraza un Sueño Foundation's race. Several strategies will be implemented to ensure the success of the event:

1. **Storytelling** will be used to foster emotional engagement, featuring personal stories from beneficiaries to create a deeper connection with participants.
2. **Sponsorships and media partnerships** will be leveraged to increase visibility and diversify funding sources.
3. A **hybrid participation model** will accommodate both local and remote participants, maximizing engagement.
4. **Volunteer involvement** will be promoted to reduce operational costs and strengthen community ties.

5. Summary and Implications

This literature review highlights the importance of strategic event management in non-profit fundraising. The following implications are critical for the successful implementation of the project:

1. **Building emotional connections** through storytelling is essential for encouraging repeat participation and donor loyalty.
2. **Establishing partnerships** with sponsors and media outlets will enhance the event's visibility and credibility.
3. **Offering a hybrid format** will expand the event's reach and make it more inclusive.
4. **Engaging volunteers** will reduce costs and foster community ownership, increasing the sustainability of the event.

These insights will guide the Abraza un Sueño Foundation in designing an event that not only meets its fundraising goals but also strengthens its presence within the local and global community.

3. OBJECTIVES:

General Objective:

To plan a charity race event in Bogotá as a fundraising strategy for the Abraza un Sueño Foundation, applying strategic marketing principles and event management to ensure the sustainability of the foundation's programs and strengthen its presence in the community.

Specific Objectives:

1. **Conduct a comparative analysis of 3 to 5 charity races** to identify best practices in planning, execution, and marketing strategies, focusing on aspects such as event scale, sponsorships, and community involvement.
 - i. **Criteria for Comparison:**
 - **Scale** (number of participants and event size)
 - **Marketing strategy** (use of social media, sponsorships)
 - **Fundraising outcomes** (amount raised, revenue streams)
 - **Community involvement** (volunteer participation, visibility)
2. **Design and conduct in-depth interviews** with potential participants to explore their motivations, expectations, and emotional connection to the event and the foundation's cause.
 - i. **Interview Guide Development:**
 - "Based on theoretical insights from studies on donor motivations (e.g., community engagement) and emotional triggers.

- "Sample questions:
 - "What motivates you to participate in charity races?"
 - "How do you perceive the impact of such events on the community?"
- 3. Develop and administer surveys to validate the findings from the interviews and obtain quantitative data to refine the marketing strategy and event planning.
 - i. **Survey Focus:** Participant behavior patterns, race preferences, and willingness to engage in fundraising activities.
- 4. **Formulate conclusions and strategic recommendations** for promotional tactics, strategic partnerships, and content creation based on the research findings.
 - i. **Expected Outcomes:** Detailed recommendations for marketing strategies that align with participant expectations and sponsor requirements.
- 5. **Evaluate the potential impact** of the event in terms of fundraising success and the foundation's community presence, using predefined key metrics.
 - i. **Key Metrics:** Total funds raised, participant satisfaction, media coverage, and volunteer involvement.

4. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the procedures that will be followed to achieve the specific objectives of the project. Each objective will be approached with a tailored methodology, ensuring that the tools and activities employed are appropriate for the desired outcomes. The selected methodologies are justified based on their relevance to the objectives and their effectiveness in generating reliable and actionable insights.

Objective 1: Benchmarking Other Races

To meet the objective of comparing charity races, the project will adopt a comparative analysis methodology. This method involves identifying 3 to 5 relevant charity races—both national and international—whose characteristics align with the goals of Fundación Abraza un Sueño.

- **Criteria for Event Selection:**
 - **Local impact:** Examples include the Carrera de la Mujer and Carrera Verde in Bogotá.
 - **International relevance:** Similar charity events that align with health-related or social causes (e.g., Race for the Cure).
 - **Alignment with target demographics:** Events attracting families, runners, or community-focused participants.

- Comparison Dimensions:
 - Scale: Number of participants and event size.
 - Marketing Strategies: Use of social media, partnerships, and sponsorships.
 - Fundraising Outcomes: Total revenue and funding sources.
 - Community Engagement: Volunteer involvement and media visibility.
 - Data Collection and Analysis:

Justification:

This methodology will provide the foundation with insights on how to enhance the planning and execution of their event, ensuring alignment with best practices in the sector (Saunders et al., 2019)

Objective 2: In-Depth Interviews with Potential Participants

The **interviews** will focus on understanding participants' motivations, expectations, and emotional connection to the foundation's cause.

- **Development of the Interview Guide:**
 - **Framework:** Questions will be informed by literature on **altruism, emotional engagement, and donor loyalty** (Dessart & Pitardi, 2023).
 - **Example Questions:**
 1. "What motivates you to participate in races with a social purpose?"
 2. "How do you think this event can impact the community?"
- **Participant Selection:**
 - A diverse group representing potential participants, including different **ages, occupations, and experience levels** with charity races.
- **Data Collection:**
 - Interviews will be recorded (with consent) and transcribed for analysis.
 - **Thematic analysis** will be used to identify patterns and themes related to participant motivations and expectations (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Justification:

The one-on-one format of interviews allows for deeper insights compared to focus groups, reducing the influence of group dynamics and ensuring participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts freely (Patton, 2015).

Objective 3: Surveys to Validate Qualitative Data

The **surveys** will serve to validate findings from the interviews and provide quantitative data to refine the event planning and marketing strategy.

- **Survey Design:**
 - **Themes:** Participant demographics, race preferences, and willingness to engage in fundraising activities.
 - **Question Types:** Multiple-choice questions and Likert scales to assess participant behavior and preferences.
- **Data Collection:**
 - Surveys will be distributed via online platforms to reach a broad cross-section of the foundation's target audience.
 - Efforts will be made to include participants from diverse backgrounds.
- **Data Analysis:**
 - Results will be analyzed using statistical software to validate qualitative findings and identify trends.

Justification:

The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods ensures a comprehensive understanding of participant behavior and enhances the reliability of the findings (Dillman et al., 2014).

Objective 4: Formulating Conclusions and Recommendations

Objective 4: Formulating Conclusions and Strategic Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations will be based on the **synthesis of qualitative and quantitative data** collected throughout the project, ensuring they align with the findings from interviews, surveys, and comparative analysis.

- **Data Synthesis:**
 - All data collected from interviews, surveys, and benchmarking will be organized into themes.
 - A **comparative matrix** will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of various strategies across different charity races.
- **Strategic Analysis:**
 - The project will analyze the applicability of marketing strategies identified during the literature review and benchmarking phase.
 - Recommendations will include **promotional tactics, strategic partnerships,** and content strategies designed to maximize engagement.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
 - **Promotional Tactics:** Identify the most effective media channels (social media, email campaigns, traditional media) to promote the event.
 - **Strategic Partnerships:** Suggest collaborations with **local businesses or influencers** to extend the reach and impact of the event.
 - **Content Creation:** Develop storytelling strategies focused on the **emotional connection between participants and the foundation's cause**, leveraging personal stories of beneficiaries to foster deeper engagement.
- **Justification:**

- By focusing on actionable recommendations, the project ensures that the foundation will have a clear roadmap for implementing the event successfully.
- The **holistic integration of marketing and event management principles** will help position the foundation competitively within the non-profit sector.

5. RESULTS

Objective 1: Benchmarking Other Races:

Development:

The goal of this objective was to conduct a comparative analysis of three to five charity races to identify best practices in event planning, marketing, and community engagement. This benchmarking process used both academic and business perspectives, integrating concepts from strategic marketing and event management to draw actionable insights that will inform the planning of the Fundación Abraza un Sueño's race.

Theoretical Framework Application:

The research drew on **strategic marketing principles** (Kotler & Keller, 2016) and **event management frameworks** (Crowther, 2011). These frameworks were critical in defining the **criteria for comparison**, including the use of marketing strategies, community engagement, and hybrid models in event execution. Moreover, insights from **Dessart & Pitardi (2023)** emphasized the importance of storytelling in fostering emotional connections with participants, a strategy that many successful races have adopted.

Benchmarking Process and Results:

The following races were benchmarked:

- **Carrera de la Mujer (Bogotá, Colombia):** Focused on women's health and empowerment, leveraging partnerships with health organizations to engage local communities.
- **Carrera Verde (Bogotá, Colombia):** Combined environmental sustainability with physical activity, attracting corporate sponsors aligned with eco-friendly values.
- **Race for the Cure (International):** A large-scale event centered on breast cancer research, widely recognized for its emotional storytelling and impactful fundraising.

These events were analyzed according to:

1. **Event Scale:** Participant numbers and geographical reach.
2. **Marketing Strategy:** Use of social media, storytelling, and media partnerships.
3. **Fundraising Performance:** Total funds raised and structure of sponsorships.
4. **Community Engagement:** Volunteer involvement and partnerships with local organizations.

Key Findings and Application to the Foundation's Race:

1. **Strategic Partnerships Matter:**

Successful charity events relied on **strong alliances with businesses and organizations** aligned with their mission.

- *Application:* Fundación Abraza un Sueño will seek partnerships with local health-focused businesses and media outlets.

2. **Thematic Focus Inspires Engagement:**

Events with **meaningful themes** (e.g., women's health, environmental causes) attract specific target audiences and foster emotional connections.

- *Application:* The foundation will design its race with a **child-centered theme** that aligns with its mission to improve children's well-being.

3. **Hybrid Participation Models Increase Reach:**

Virtual participation enabled events to **expand their reach** and attract participants beyond their immediate geographical area.

- *Application:* The foundation will offer both **in-person and virtual options** to increase accessibility and participation.

4. **Media Visibility Drives Donations:**

Active social media campaigns and media partnerships were crucial for increasing event visibility and donations.

- *Application:* Abraza un Sueño will allocate resources to **social media engagement** and real-time storytelling during the event to attract more participants and donors

Evidence Supporting the Methodology:

1. **Technical sheet:**

A **technical sheet** summarizing the key data points from each race comparison is attached as **Annex A**. This includes participant numbers, total funds raised, and key sponsors for each event.

2. **Cuestionario de entrevistas:**

A **questionnaire used during interviews with participants** is attached as **Annex B**. The questions focused on motivations for participation and expectations for charity events.

3. Capturas de encuestas:

Screenshots from the **Google Forms survey** used to validate findings are attached as **Annex F**. The survey provided quantitative data that confirmed the importance of hybrid models and thematic engagement.

Conclusion for Objective 1:

The benchmarking process allowed for a **detailed understanding** of the best practices in event planning and marketing within charity races. By applying **theoretical frameworks from strategic marketing and event management**, the foundation has identified **key strategies** to ensure the success of its race. These strategies include:

- **Establishing strategic partnerships** with health and child-focused businesses.
- **Designing a thematic event** that resonates with the foundation's mission to improve children's well-being.
- **Incorporating hybrid participation models** to maximize accessibility and engagement.
- **Leveraging media partnerships and social media** to boost visibility and attract participants and donors.

The research concludes that benchmarking is a powerful tool for identifying **innovative opportunities** and avoiding common pitfalls. The foundation's race will benefit from the **lessons learned** from these benchmarked events, ensuring that it is not only **financially sustainable** but also **impactful in the long term** by fostering community involvement and strengthening the foundation's visibility.

Objective 2: In-Depth Interviews with Potential Participants

Development:

This objective aimed to **explore the motivations and expectations of potential participants** through in-depth interviews. The interviews were designed using frameworks on **donor behavior and motivation** (Ajzen, 1991; Dessart & Pitardi, 2023) to capture the emotional drivers that influence participation in charity events. The questions were aligned with insights from the **theory of planned behavior**, focusing on attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, all of which influence individual participation in events.

Methodology Application:

Following the framework, a **semi-structured interview guide** was developed, targeting individuals with prior experience in charity races. The interview focused on **three key areas**:

1. **Motivational Drivers:** Understanding why participants choose to engage in charity events.
2. **Expectations of the Event's Impact:** Gauging how participants view the social impact of such events.
3. **Incentives for Future Participation:** Identifying elements that encourage repeat participation.

The interviews were conducted **virtually** over a two-week period, ensuring diversity among participants in terms of age, gender, and involvement with charity races. A total of **4 interviews** were completed.

Key Interview Questions:

1. *What motivates you to participate in charity events?*
2. *What impact do you expect this event to have on the community or the cause it supports?*
3. *What features or incentives would make you more likely to participate in future events?*

Key Findings:

1. Emotional Connection and Personal Meaning:

- Participants emphasized that **personal connection to the cause** is a significant motivator. Many mentioned that events supporting health-related causes resonate the most, especially when they have been directly affected by the issue (e.g., cancer or child health).

2. Desire for Community Engagement:

- Several participants expressed a **strong interest in community involvement** through volunteering opportunities or post-event activities that extend the event's impact beyond race day.

3. Incentives and Event Experience Matter:

- **Customized medals, t-shirts, and recognition certificates** were mentioned as important incentives for participation. Participants also noted the value of **memorable event experiences** that create a sense of belonging.

4. Virtual and Physical Participation Options:

- Participants appreciated the option of **hybrid models** (both virtual and in-person participation), as it allows for flexibility and broader engagement.

Theoretical Application:

The findings align with **Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior**, which suggests that attitudes

toward an activity, social norms, and perceived control over participation significantly influence behavioral intentions. Participants expressed that **social validation** (from peers or community) and **perceived ease of participation** (e.g., virtual options) were key determinants for their involvement. Additionally, Dessart & Pitardi (2023) emphasize that emotional storytelling strengthens engagement, which was confirmed by participants seeking personal connections to the cause.

Evidence of Methodology Implementation:

1. Interview Transcripts:

Full transcripts of the interviews are attached as **Annex A**, detailing participants' responses to each question.

Disclosure on Interview Translations

The interviews presented in this annex were originally conducted in **Spanish** to ensure that participants could express themselves comfortably and accurately in their native language. For the purpose of this report, the transcripts have been **translated into English**. While every effort was made to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the translation, minor linguistic nuances or expressions specific to Spanish may have been adapted to maintain clarity and coherence in English. The translated version reflects the **meaning and intent** of the participants' responses as faithfully as possible

2. Consent Forms:

Each interviewee signed a **consent form** agreeing to participate, included as **Annex C**.

3. Screen Shot of the interview:

Excerpts of the Interview are stored for validation purposes and can be accessed upon request. ANNEX G

Conclusion for Objective 2

The interviews provided **valuable insights** into the factors that drive participation in charity events. **Emotional connections to the cause** emerged as the most influential motivator, followed by a **desire for community engagement** and the appeal of **incentives like personalized medals and t-shirts**. These insights will guide the **design of the Fundación Abraza un Sueño's race**, ensuring that the event meets participants' expectations and encourages both initial and repeat involvement. Moving forward, the foundation should:

- **Incorporate emotional storytelling** to foster connections between participants and the cause.
- **Offer personalized incentives** that add value to the participant experience.

- **Provide hybrid participation options** to enhance accessibility and engagement.

The interviews demonstrate that successful charity events go beyond fundraising; they foster **community belonging, emotional engagement**, and personal fulfillment. These insights will be crucial in shaping the event's marketing strategy and operational design to ensure a **memorable and impactful experience** for all participants.

Objective 3: Surveys to Validate Qualitative Data

Development:

This objective focused on administering surveys to validate the insights obtained from the in-depth interviews and to gather quantitative data to complement the qualitative findings. The survey design followed best practices in survey methodology (Dillman et al., 2014) and focused on key areas such as participant motivations, event preferences, and engagement incentives.

The survey was created using Google Forms and distributed to participants with a mix of previous experience in charity events and potential new participants. A total of 52 valid responses were collected over two weeks, ensuring a diverse set of responses in terms of age, gender, and prior involvement in similar events.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSenpyx5Gb2vc4WKXIYsLpalnOm57MrrSHuG2Tf2-0bUhYsDgw/viewform>

Survey Design and Key Questions:

The survey questions were derived from the themes identified during the interviews, focusing on:

1. *What motivates you the most to participate in charity events?*
2. *Would you be interested in participating in a hybrid event (both virtual and in-person)?*
3. *What incentives (e.g., medals, t-shirts, certificates) are most appealing to you?*
4. *How likely are you to participate in future events organized by Fundación Abraza un Sueño?*

The survey utilized a **Likert scale** for responses to measure levels of interest and engagement. Open-ended questions were also included to capture additional insights from participants.

Key Findings from the Survey:

1. Motivations for Participation:

- 70% of respondents indicated that **supporting a meaningful cause** was the primary motivator for participating in charity events.
- 60% mentioned that **social interaction and sense of community** were also important factors.

2. Interest in Hybrid Models:

- 68% of respondents expressed a preference for **hybrid events**, citing flexibility and accessibility as key advantages.
- Participants noted that virtual options allow them to engage even if they cannot attend the event in person.

3. Incentives for Engagement:

- 80% of respondents found **personalized medals** and **t-shirts** to be highly appealing incentives.
- Recognition through **certificates or digital badges** was also mentioned as an additional motivator.

4. Likelihood of Future Participation:

- 85% of participants expressed interest in participating in future events organized by Fundación Abraza un Sueño, particularly if the event focuses on **child-related causes**.

Theoretical Framework Application:

The survey results align with Ajzen's (1991) **theory of planned behavior**, confirming that **attitudes toward the event** (e.g., meaningful cause), **subjective norms** (e.g., social interaction and community engagement), and **perceived behavioral control** (e.g., flexibility through hybrid options) significantly influence participant behavior. These findings also reflect the importance of **emotional engagement and storytelling** (Dessart & Pitardi, 2023) in motivating participants.

Evidence of Methodology Implementation:

1. Survey Questionnaire:

The full survey, including all questions and response options, is attached as **Annex A**.

2. Data Analysis in Excel / Sheets:

The raw survey data was analyzed and visualized using **Excel**, with key findings presented in graphs (Annex E).

3. Screenshots of Survey Platform:

Screenshots from **Google Forms** are included as **Annex F** to demonstrate survey administration.

Conclusion for Objective 3:

The survey provided **valuable quantitative validation** of the qualitative insights obtained from the interviews. It confirmed that participants are primarily motivated by **emotional connections to meaningful causes** and **social engagement opportunities**. Additionally, the survey emphasized the importance of offering **hybrid participation options** and **personalized incentives** to enhance engagement.

Based on the survey results, Fundación Abraza un Sueño should:

- **Offer hybrid participation models** to maximize accessibility and broaden the event's reach.
- **Incorporate personalized incentives** such as medals, t-shirts, and certificates to motivate participants.
- **Leverage emotional storytelling** to connect with participants and foster long-term engagement.

The survey results also highlight that future events should emphasize **child-related causes**, aligning with the foundation's mission. These insights will be critical for refining the event's marketing strategy and ensuring the event meets the expectations of participants and donors.

(Objective 4: Formulating Conclusions and Recommendations)

Conclusion for Objective 4:

The conclusions and recommendations drawn from this research are intended to **guide the planning and execution** of the Fundación Abraza un Sueño's charity race. By integrating insights from **strategic marketing, event management, and behavioral psychology**, the foundation will be able to design an event that is both **sustainable and impactful**.

The emphasis on **strategic partnerships, hybrid participation models, personalized incentives, and storytelling** will not only attract more participants but also strengthen community engagement and donor support. This approach ensures that the event aligns with the foundation's mission while fostering **long-term relationships** with partners, participants, and donors.

Moving forward, the foundation should focus on **measuring the event's impact** and using the insights gained to refine future strategies. With the right planning and execution, this event has the potential to become a **flagship initiative** for the foundation, enhancing both its visibility and its capacity to support children with serious illnesses.

6. CONCLUSIONS (Objective 4: Formulating Conclusions and Recommendations)

This section discusses the results obtained from the project in relation to the **theoretical frameworks and prior research** reviewed. The conclusions aim to provide a balanced interpretation of the findings and how they contribute to the **overall objective** of planning a **sustainable and impactful charity**

race for Fundación Abraza un Sueño. The conclusions also highlight the **practical implications** of the project and how they align with the **strategic and operational goals** of the foundation.

1. Strategic Partnerships are Critical for Long-Term Sustainability

The benchmarking of other charity events (e.g., Carrera Verde, Race for the Cure) highlighted that alliances with corporate sponsors and media partners are essential for financial sustainability and visibility. This aligns with Kotler and Keller's (2016) emphasis on partnerships as a core element of marketing strategies.

- **Implication:**
For the foundation's event to succeed, it is necessary to secure long-term partnerships with businesses that align with the foundation's mission and values. These partnerships will not only provide financial support but also enhance visibility and community engagement.

2. Emotional Engagement and Thematic Focus Drive Participation

The insights gathered from interviews and surveys confirmed that participants are more likely to engage when the event has a clear emotional connection to a meaningful cause. The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) further supports this, showing that attitudes, social norms, and perceived control influence behavior.

- **Implication:**
The race should adopt a child-centered theme, consistent with the foundation's mission of supporting children with serious illnesses. This will foster emotional connections and encourage participation from individuals and families who relate to the cause.

3. Hybrid Models Enhance Accessibility and Engagement

The benchmarking results and survey responses revealed that offering both virtual and in-person participation options is a key factor for success. Events like Carrera Verde successfully implemented hybrid models, attracting participants who could not attend in person but still wanted to contribute.

- **Implication:**
Incorporating hybrid participation will increase accessibility and broaden the reach of the event, attracting both local and international participants. This approach aligns with post-pandemic trends and ensures higher engagement and donations.

4. Incentives and Recognition Build Loyalty and Engagement

Survey participants emphasized the importance of personalized incentives, such as medals, t-shirts, and certificates, in enhancing the event experience and motivating repeat participation. Public recognition, especially through social media, was also mentioned as a key motivator.

- **Implication:**
The foundation should design customized incentives and public recognition campaigns to

encourage participation and build long-term loyalty among participants and donors. This aligns with best practices in event management (Crowther, 2011).

5. Media Strategies and Storytelling Boost Visibility and Fundraising

The analysis of successful charity events, combined with insights from the interviews and surveys, emphasized the importance of media visibility and storytelling. Dessart & Pitardi (2023) showed that emotional storytelling strengthens participant engagement by creating deeper connections with the cause.

- **Implication:**
Fundación Abraza un Sueño should invest in a social media strategy focused on storytelling. Sharing stories about the impact of the foundation's work, alongside participant testimonials, will boost engagement and attract more participants and donors.

Alignment with the General Objective

The project's general objective was to plan a charity race that aligns with the foundation's mission and applies strategic marketing and event management principles. The research and results demonstrated that:

- Strategic partnerships and hybrid models are essential for sustainability.
- Emotional storytelling and thematic focus will attract participants and foster long-term engagement.
- Customized incentives and media campaigns will enhance the event experience and visibility.

These conclusions confirm that the race will not only serve as a fundraising tool but also strengthen the foundation's presence in the community and build lasting relationships with partners, participants, and donors.

Next Steps and Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Develop long-term partnerships with local businesses and media outlets.
2. Adopt a hybrid participation model to maximize reach and accessibility.
3. Design customized incentives to enhance engagement and motivate future participation.
4. Implement a social media strategy focused on storytelling to connect with participants emotionally.
5. Monitor and evaluate the event's impact to ensure continuous improvement and sustainability.

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8. ANEXOS

ANNEX A:

Technical Sheets of Benchmarked Events

1. Carrera de la Mujer (Bogotá, Colombia)

- **Event Focus:**
Promoting women's health and empowerment through physical activity and community involvement.
- **Event Scale:**
 - Annual participation: **8,000+ runners**
 - Geographical scope: Primarily Bogotá, with participants from surrounding cities.
- **Marketing Strategy:**
 - Collaboration with local health organizations.
 - **Social media campaign** targeting women between 18-45 years old.
 - Partnership with local media for event promotion.
- **Sponsorship Model:**
 - **Corporate partners** include health-focused companies (e.g., gyms, wellness brands).
 - Sponsorship provides financial support and offers product samples for participants.
- **Community Engagement:**
 - Includes **workshops on health and fitness** before race day.
 - Collaborates with local women's groups for event promotion and volunteering.
- **Fundraising Outcomes:**
 - A percentage of registration fees is allocated to health programs for women in vulnerable situations.

2. Carrera Verde (Bogotá, Colombia)

- **Event Focus:**
Raising awareness about environmental sustainability through physical activity and reforestation efforts.
- **Event Scale:**
 - Annual participation: **5,000+ runners**.
 - Offers **both in-person and virtual participation**, expanding its reach beyond Bogotá.
- **Marketing Strategy:**
 - Strong focus on **environmental messaging**.
 - Partnerships with sustainability-focused brands (e.g., eco-friendly companies).
 - **Campaigns on Instagram and Facebook** highlight environmental impact (e.g., number of trees planted per participant).
- **Sponsorship Model:**

- Collaboration with companies that promote **green initiatives**, such as clean energy or recycling programs.
- Sponsors provide both financial contributions and eco-friendly products for participants.
- **Community Engagement:**
 - Volunteers participate in **reforestation projects** following the event.
 - Local schools and youth groups are invited to run and learn about sustainability.
- **Fundraising Outcomes:**
 - Funds are used to plant trees and support environmental education programs.

3. Race for the Cure (International Event)

- **Event Focus:**

Supporting **breast cancer research and awareness** through a global charity race.
- **Event Scale:**
 - Participation: **Over 1 million participants** globally.
 - Locations: Held in multiple cities worldwide, including virtual participation options.
- **Marketing Strategy:**
 - **Emotional storytelling** campaigns featuring cancer survivors and their families.
 - Extensive media coverage, including partnerships with global media outlets.
 - Use of **influencer marketing** to promote participation and fundraising.
- **Sponsorship Model:**
 - Collaborates with **healthcare companies and beauty brands** that align with the cause.
 - Sponsors contribute to funding the event and promote their products through participant kits.
- **Community Engagement:**
 - Survivor recognition ceremonies held during and after the race.
 - Participants are encouraged to run in memory of loved ones affected by cancer.
- **Fundraising Outcomes:**
 - Raised **millions of dollars annually** for cancer research and treatment programs worldwide.

ANNEX B: Interview Transcripts

Interview with Participant 1 (Virtual Session)

Date: OCT 24 2024

Location: Zoom

Duration: 55 minutes

Interviewer: Thank you for joining us today. To begin, could you tell me what motivates you to participate in charity events?

Participant: Sure! For me, it's about a combination of things. First, it's the emotional connection to the cause. A few years ago, my sister battled cancer, and events that raise awareness or funds for health-related causes really hit home for me. Participating feels like a way of honoring her journey and doing something meaningful. Even if the impact might seem small on the surface, I know that my contribution can make a difference, no matter how little.

Also, I enjoy the **sense of accomplishment** that comes with finishing a race. It's not just about crossing the finish line—it's knowing that my efforts went towards something bigger. It's a powerful feeling when you realize you're not only improving yourself but also helping others. Events like these give me that dual benefit: personal achievement and social impact.

Interviewer: That's very inspiring. So, would you say that personal experience plays a big role in your motivation?

Participant: Absolutely. I think most people are more willing to participate when the cause resonates with them personally. Whether it's because of a family experience, or even if it's just something they care deeply about, like children's education or environmental sustainability, that personal link makes participation feel more meaningful. It makes you feel connected, like you're truly contributing to something that matters.

Interviewer: What expectations do you have for these events? What outcomes do you hope to see?

Participant: I think one of the most important things is **transparency**. Participants want to know where the money goes and how it's used. It's frustrating when you contribute to an event, but you never hear about the results or the impact. I want to see that the funds raised make a tangible difference—whether it's buying medical supplies, funding research, or supporting underprivileged children. Knowing the impact keeps people engaged for future events.

Also, I expect charity events to have a community aspect. It's great when they go beyond the race itself, offering activities like workshops, family gatherings, or post-race celebrations. That kind of engagement makes the event feel like more than just a run—it becomes a meaningful community experience.

Interviewer: What about incentives? What features make these events more appealing to you?

Participant: Oh, incentives matter! I really like it when events offer **personalized medals or t-shirts**. It might sound small, but having something tangible to remember the experience is really meaningful. It's like a badge of honor. And recognition goes a long way, too—when the organization gives participants a shoutout on social media or sends thank-you emails, it makes you feel seen and appreciated.

Interviewer: Do you think a hybrid model with both virtual and in-person options would appeal to you?

Participant: Definitely. I think hybrid models are the way forward. Life is unpredictable—sometimes you really want to join an event, but things come up, or you’re traveling, or you have other commitments. A virtual option ensures that people like me can still participate and support the cause, no matter where we are. It also makes the event more inclusive—you can attract participants from other cities or countries who wouldn’t be able to attend in person. I’ve done virtual races before, and if they’re well-organized, you really feel like you’re part of the event, even from a distance.

Interview with Participant 2 (Virtual Session)

Date: OCT 24 2024

Location: Zoom

Duration: 50 minutes

Interviewer: Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. To start, what motivates you to participate in charity events?

Participant: I’ve always enjoyed being part of community-driven activities. There’s something special about seeing people come together for a shared purpose, whether it’s for health, education, or environmental causes. I think it’s about more than just raising money—it’s about **building connections** with others who care about the same issues.

Also, these events give me a sense of fulfillment. I work in a pretty demanding job, so participating in charity races helps me feel like I’m doing something positive outside of my daily routine. It’s a way to stay balanced—taking care of myself physically while also giving back to the community.

Interviewer: That’s great! And what expectations do you have for these events?

Participant: I think the biggest expectation is that the event will have a **visible impact**. When I run in a charity event, I want to know that the funds are going to the right place and making a real difference. For example, I once participated in a race where the money raised was used to buy medical equipment for a children’s hospital. After the race, they sent us updates about how the equipment was being used, and it felt amazing to know that I contributed to something concrete. That kind of follow-up is important—it builds trust and keeps people engaged.

Interviewer: What kind of incentives do you find most appealing?

Participant: I appreciate medals and t-shirts, but I also think experiences matter. Some races organize post-event activities, like concerts or community fairs, which make the event more enjoyable. Recognition is also important—whether it’s a thank-you message, a digital certificate, or a public acknowledgment. It doesn’t have to be anything fancy, but it shows that the organization values your participation.

Interviewer: Do you think hybrid models—offering both virtual and in-person participation—are a good idea?

Participant: Definitely. Hybrid models are really smart because they make the event more **accessible**. Not everyone can be there in person, but a virtual option gives them a way to still be involved. It’s also great for people with busy schedules—they can join the event on their own time. I think offering a virtual component helps broaden the reach of the event, which is ultimately a good thing for both the participants and the cause.

Interview with Participant 3 (Virtual Session)

Date: OCT 24 2024

Location: Zoom

Duration: 45 minutes

Interviewer: Thanks for joining me. What motivates you to participate in charity events?

Participant: I'm passionate about fitness, and charity events are a great way to combine that passion with doing something good for others. It's a win-win. I get to stay active, challenge myself, and at the same time contribute to a meaningful cause. I think it's a way of giving back while also achieving personal goals.

Interviewer: What expectations do you have for the event's impact?

Participant: I expect transparency. It's important to know where the money goes and how it's used. I also hope that the event creates awareness about the cause—it's not just about raising money but also about spreading the word and getting more people involved.

Interviewer: What about incentives? What motivates you?

Participant: I like personalized incentives—medals, t-shirts, certificates. They're a nice way to remember the event. But more than that, I appreciate follow-up communication. When organizations send updates about the impact, it makes me feel like my participation really mattered.

Interviewer: Would hybrid participation models encourage you to join more often?

Participant: Absolutely. Hybrid models offer flexibility, and that's essential. Life can get busy, so having the option to join virtually makes it easier for more people to participate.

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Interview with Participant 4 (Virtual Session)

Date: OCT 24 2024

Location: Zoom

Duration: 50 minutes

Interviewer: Thank you for meeting with me today. To begin, what motivates you to participate in charity events?

Participant: Honestly, it's the combination of **doing something positive for others** and feeling a personal sense of accomplishment. I've always liked running, and when I found out that I could use my passion to contribute to important causes, it was a no-brainer. It's great to know that my participation is part of a larger collective effort. I also think charity events allow people to **connect**

with their community in ways they normally wouldn't. It feels good to be part of a group that's all working towards a shared goal.

Interviewer: That's interesting. Do you think community involvement plays a big role in these events?

Participant: Definitely. In fact, I believe it's one of the main reasons people keep coming back to charity events. It's not just about running or donating—it's about **being part of a supportive community**. You get to meet people who care about the same things you do, and that makes the experience even more meaningful. I think events like these give people a sense of belonging, which is really valuable.

Interviewer: That's a good point. What kind of outcomes or impact do you expect from these events?

Participant: I expect two main things: **raising funds and raising awareness**. It's important that the money raised goes where it's supposed to, but I also think these events should educate people about the cause. For example, if the event is about supporting children with illnesses, participants should leave knowing more about the challenges these kids face and how they can help beyond the event. I've participated in events where they shared updates and progress after the race, and that made me feel like my participation mattered.

Interviewer: And when it comes to incentives, what do you think motivates participants to engage more actively?

Participant: Medals and t-shirts are always appreciated—they give you something tangible to remember the event. But I think **recognition is just as important**. For example, a shoutout on social media or even a simple thank-you message makes a difference. It shows that the organization appreciates the effort participants put in. I also like when events have post-race activities like community fairs or concerts. It turns the event into a celebration, not just a race.

Interviewer: That's a great insight. Now, what's your opinion on hybrid events? Would the option of participating virtually make you more inclined to join?

Participant: Absolutely. I think **hybrid models** are the future of events. They make participation so much more flexible. For someone like me, who travels a lot, having the option to join remotely means I don't have to miss out. And it's not just about convenience—it also makes the event more inclusive. People from different cities or even countries can participate, which makes the impact even greater. I've participated in virtual races before, and if they're well-organized, they can be just as meaningful as in-person events.

Interviewer: That's very helpful. Is there anything else you'd like to add about what makes charity events impactful?

Participant: I think the most impactful events are the ones that **tell a story**—when the organizers share personal stories about the people or cause they're supporting. It really helps participants connect on a deeper level. I also believe **follow-up communication** is essential. After the event, people want to know how their contribution made a difference. That kind of engagement keeps participants connected with the cause and encourages them to support future events.

Interviewer: Thank you so much for your time and insights. This has been very helpful.

Participant: You're welcome! I'm glad I could help. I look forward to seeing how the event turns out.

ANNEX C: Consent Form for Participation in Interviews

Project Title: Planning and Execution of a Charity Race for Fundación Abraza un Sueño

Researcher: Felipe Leyva

Organization: Fundación Abraza un Sueño

Introduction:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. The purpose of this project is to gather insights on the motivations, expectations, and experiences of potential participants in charity events. Your feedback will help us design a meaningful and impactful charity race.

Participant Rights and Responsibilities:

- **Voluntary Participation:** Participation in this interview is voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw at any point without any consequence.
 - **Confidentiality:** Your responses will remain confidential. Personal identifiers will not be used in the final report.
 - **Use of Data:** The information you provide will be used exclusively for research purposes and will contribute to the planning of the event for Fundación Abraza un Sueño.
 - **Recording and Transcription:** The interview will be audio-recorded with your permission to ensure accuracy in transcription. The recordings will only be accessible to the research team and will be stored securely.
 - **Translation:** Please note that your responses will be translated from Spanish to English for the purpose of this report. Every effort will be made to maintain the integrity of your responses during the translation process.
-

Consent Statement:

By signing this form, I acknowledge that:

1. I have read and understood the information provided above.
2. I voluntarily agree to participate in this interview.
3. I understand that the interview will be recorded and translated into English.
4. I have the right to withdraw at any point without any negative consequence.

Optional Permission for Quoting Responses:

I authorize the use of **anonymous direct quotes** from my interview in the final report:

- **Yes / No** (Please circle one)

Participant #1 Name: Samuel Contreras Caro

Date: OCT 24 2024

Signature or Name: Samuel Contreras

Researcher Name: Felipe Leyva Z.

Participant #2 Name: Samuel Carreño

Date: OCT 24 2024

Signature: Samuel Carreño

Researcher Name: Felipe Leyva Z.

Participant #3 Name: Mariana Valencia

Date: OCT 24 2024

Signature: 

Researcher Name: Felipe Leyva Z.

Participant #4 Name: Maria Paula Mora

Date: OCT 24 2024

Signature: Maria Paula Mora

Researcher Name: Felipe Leyva Z.

ANEXO D: Cuestionario de la Encuesta Completo

Platform used: Google Forms

Objective: To validate the motivations, preferences, and expectations of participants in charity events, complementing the results obtained from qualitative interviews

Preguntas del Cuestionario

1. **¿Qué te motiva más a participar en eventos de caridad?**
(*Seleccione todas las opciones que apliquen.*)
 - Apoyar una causa significativa
 - Interacción social y participación comunitaria
 - Alcanzar objetivos personales de fitness
 - Otro: _____
2. **¿Cómo prefieres participar en estos eventos?**

- Presencialmente
 - Virtualmente
 - Híbrido (ambas opciones)
3. **¿Qué incentivos encuentras más atractivos?**
(*Seleccione todas las opciones que apliquen.*)
- Medallas personalizadas
 - Camisetas conmemorativas
 - Certificados de participación (físicos o digitales)
 - Reconocimiento en redes sociales
 - Otro: _____
4. **¿Qué tipo de causa te motivaría más a participar?**
- Salud y bienestar (e.g., cáncer infantil)
 - Educación y desarrollo social
 - Medio ambiente y sostenibilidad
 - Otro: _____
5. **¿Qué tan importante es para ti conocer cómo se utilizan los fondos recaudados?**
(*1 = Nada importante, 5 = Muy importante*)
- 1 (Nada importante)
 - 2 (Poco importante)
 - 3 (Neutral)
 - 4 (Importante)
 - 5 (Muy importante)
6. **¿Qué formato de evento prefieres para participar en el futuro?**
- Carrera 5K / 10K / 15K
 - Caminata familiar
 - Actividad recreativa (sin tiempo límite)
 - Otro: _____
7. **¿Cómo valoras la interacción social durante estos eventos?**
(*1 = Nada importante, 5 = Muy importante*)
- 1 (Nada importante)
 - 2 (Poco importante)
 - 3 (Neutral)
 - 4 (Importante)

- 5 (Muy importante)
- 8. **¿Qué tan probable es que participes nuevamente en futuros eventos de la Fundación Abraza un Sueño?**
(1 = Nada probable, 5 = Muy probable)
- 1 (Nada probable)
- 2 (Poco probable)
- 3 (Neutral)
- 4 (Probable)
- 5 (Muy probable)
- 9. **¿Qué elementos considerarías esenciales para mejorar tu experiencia en este tipo de eventos?**
(Pregunta abierta)
- 10. **¿Recomendarías este evento a familiares o amigos?**
 - Sí
 - No
 - Tal vez, depende del tipo de evento

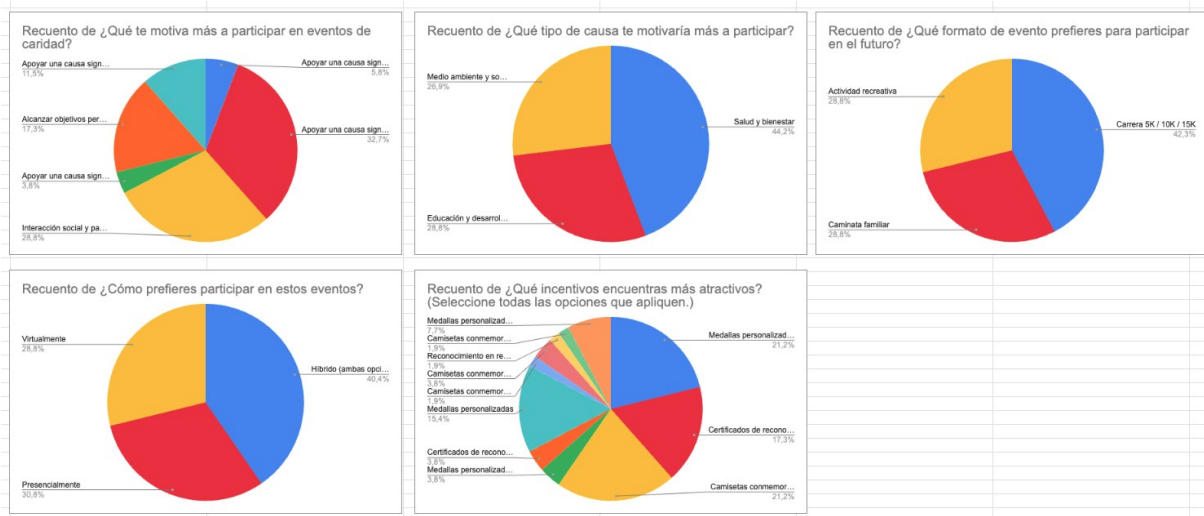
ANNEX E: Survey Responses and Results

In Annex E, you will find the complete document containing all 52 survey responses collected during the research. The data is presented both in tabular form and with visual graphs that illustrate key findings, such as participant motivations, event preferences, and incentives for engagement.

Please note that all surveys were conducted in Spanish to ensure participants could respond comfortably and accurately. The results and graphs have been translated into English where necessary for clarity and ease of analysis.

If any further details or specific data points are required, the full dataset can be consulted in this annex.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1K1kQ2_Lkq50O6wt038fWKw_Ik30JCiZFpUNePAjUBSQ/edit?usp=sharing



ANNEX F: Screenshots of Survey Platform:

Carrera FAUS 2024 - 2025

Validar las motivaciones, preferencias, y expectativas de los participantes en eventos de caridad, complementando los resultados obtenidos en las entrevistas cualitativas.

[Acceder a Google para guardar el progreso. Más información](#)

¿Qué te motiva más a participar en eventos de caridad?
(Seleccione todas las opciones que apliquen.)

Apoyar una causa significativa

Interacción social y participación comunitaria

Alcanzar objetivos personales de fitness

Otros: _____

¿Cómo prefieres participar en estos eventos?

Presencialmente

Virtualmente

Híbrido (ambas opciones)

¿Qué incentivos encuentras más atractivos?
(Seleccione todas las opciones que apliquen.)

Medallas personalizadas

Camisetas conmemorativas

Certificados de participación (físicos o digitales)

Reconocimiento en redes sociales

Otros: _____

¿Qué tipo de causa te motivaría más a participar?

Salud y bienestar (e.g., cáncer infantil)

Educación y desarrollo social

Medio ambiente y sostenibilidad

Otros: _____

ANNEX G: Screenshots from the interviews

