

Charity races losing money, but not going extinct

By Brian Alexander, Outdoor

Has the charity race craze—all those walks, runs, rides, and mud runs done to raise money for good causes—begun to fizzle? The numbers for 2014 aren't in yet, but a survey of the top 30 programs showed a total drop of \$44.5 million in 2013.

Make no mistake. Despite the declines, charity races and endurance events are still big business. In 2013, the top ten powerhouses affiliating with, or holding, such events raised more than \$1 billion, led by the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life at \$380 million, followed by the Susan G. Komen for the Cure's Race for the Cure at almost \$107 million, according to Peer-to-Peer Professional Forum. But six of those top ten events saw income declines, continuing a trend despite the improving economy.

Industry pros say the overall participation rates are flat or down only very slightly. So what accounts for the decline in total revenues? It may be that newer, jazzier events are cannibalizing participants from the older, established pioneers. Three day walks are out, mud runs are in.

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