Mobile fitness apps: profiling RunKeeper users
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Purpose
The use of mobile fitness apps (e.g. Endomondo, RunKeeper) has seen a strong growth in recent years. This research focuses on the potential of these apps to promote physical activity. A quantitative survey was conducted on a sample of 254 users of RunKeeper in order to gain insight in the profile of RunKeeper users.

Method
A sample of RunKeeper users was created by following #RunKeeper on Twitter. Next, these users were invited, via an @mention on Twitter, to participate in an online survey. A shortened version of the Motivation of Marathoners Scale was used to assess running motivation, measuring nine dimensions (general health orientation, weight concern, affiliation, recognition, competition, personal goal achievement, psychological coping, self-esteem and life meaning). Additionally, the dimension “enjoyment” was measured.

Results
The majority of the sample consists of male runners (82%). Respondents run a weekly average of 24 km over 3 runs per week on average. Results indicate that RunKeeper users are mainly recreational runners with general health orientation, enjoyment, personal goal achievement and weight concern as their most important motivations. Competition is not a motivation at all. Our sample consists of highly motivated runners.

Conclusions
Our results provide insights into the profile of RunKeeper users and indicate that the motivation of these runners is mainly recreational with, for many, a strong emphasis on health and weight improvement. Our findings suggest that mobile fitness apps have a good potential for promoting physical activity, especially to those looking for extra motivation to start and keep running.