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CASE FOR THOSE, WHO DON'T GIVE  
**A SQUIRREL'S DICK ABOUT RUNNING**

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London / Lisbon, May 2025

# THE FUNCTIONAL LUXURY EXPERIENCE

OVER THE LAST DECADE, ON HAS EVOLVED FROM A NICHE EUROPEAN BRAND FOR RUNNING NERDS, TO A GLOBAL PREMIUM CHALLENGER OF WIDE APPEAL.

BETWEEN THE BRAND'S AVERSION TO DISCOUNTS, ITS STRONG DTC SERVICES, THE PREMIUM RETAIL EXPERIENCE AND THE COLLABORATION WITH LOEWE, ON SEEMS TO AIM FOR LEADERSHIP IN THE TECHNICAL LUXURY SEGMENT, BECOME THE RIMOWA OF RUNNING.





## FUNCTIONALLY EXCELLENT PREMIUM TRAINER BRANDS

### HAVE 3 CORE CONSTITUENCIES:

#### SERIOUS RUNNERS

Who'd like to achieve more without losing toenails and would benefit from professional support On is uniquely qualified to provide.

#### LUXURY SHOPPERS

Who'd like to associate with a palatably edgy, inspiring, premium brand.

The modern luxury experience principles we've outlined, would apply to On and Hoka as much as they do to Gucci and Miu Miu.

**It's a riveting read, check it out.**

#### THE RUNNING-CURIOUS

Who recognise the benefits of fitness, but face a number of barriers they don't feel particularly equipped (or motivated) to overcome.

This deck is about appealing to them – **the busy, latently anxious urban dwellers, who like the idea of getting fitter and all the swell stuff that comes with that, but wouldn't torture themselves to get there.**



# MOST WEEKDAYS, I WALK ABOUT 15K AT A VERY BRISK PACE

Would running save me time? Obviously.

Would it improve my middle-age silhouette? Most likely.

Would I do it? Not a chance.

When it comes to running, many of us (and I looked it up)  
share a number of barriers.





# LACK OF TIME

I remember working 12–14 hour days, skipping lunches altogether or inhaling yoghurts while scanning emails. I love my job, but the dynamic was unhealthy.

So, I started walking to– and from work. It allowed time to decompress and listen to podcasts, which made me feel both – more interesting and more attractive; all-in-all – a winner.

## **Lowering the barrier:**

Programs integrated into otherwise mandatory activities – walks home, dog walks, weekend plays in the park etc.





# PERCEIVED LACK OF FITNESS / LACK OF ENJOYMENT

We don't like to do things we suck at.

Ask me to binge The Diplomat – and I'm there.

A swim – and (assuming it's summer and we're in a nice-enough pool) you are on.

But to waddle for a few hundred meters to immediately feel out of shape and utterly unf\*ckable?

Life can be pretty stressful as it is – why on Earth would I invite those vibes into mine?

## **Lowering the barrier:**

Introduce running-adjacent gamified activities that are more entertaining than straight runs, allow variable intensity that doesn't draw attention, and thus – are more fun and inclusive.





## FEAR OF INJURY

If anyone asked, why I walk more than Moses, but wouldn't trot, I'd say that trotting is unbecoming and running on asphalt – bad for my joints. I don't know if it's true, but it feels like it could be. Running on a softer surface is also ripe with danger.

Long story short – one wrong landing can cost me more than an evening on the couch, so – one could argue – Netflix and wine are the **rational** choice...

### **Lowering the barrier:**

Assuming fear of injury is the real problem – teach novices not just how to pick appropriate footwear, but also – how to run; in a fun, dignified, not patronising manner.





# LACK OF ROUTES

Going to– and from work was great because I didn't need to think much about the route – just pick the streets that would get me from A to B with minimal exposure to traffic and possibility of getting stabbed.

I walked a few marathons and the greatest benefit were the routes. Putting together an enjoyable route isn't easy; regularly coming up with new ones to keep excitement going – a skilled full time job.

## Lowering the barrier:

Suggest routes and activities along the way for anyone interested in giving it... a go.





## LACK OF MOTIVATION, BOREDOM

Walking helped me discover podcasts that make me a more informed, happier and empathic being.

If I didn't have that in my life, my media intake would either exclude anything topical or be limited to news scrolling – making me a more anxious, depressed and aggressive man, with more than a shadow of a belly and a weak libido.

I look forward to, and rarely skip, my walks, in part, because it is my podcast time.

### **Lowering the barrier:**

Make the workout enjoyable for the unconvinced. Not everyone lives for breaking barriers and becoming their physical best – some of us like ourselves the way we are, but still wouldn't mind a joyful activity that's also good for health.





# SAFETY CONCERNS

A walk can feel pretty safe until it suddenly doesn't and – in the span of a few minutes – changes one's life forever.

The issue is obviously much more consequential for women, but even as a fairly average man who does not display vestiges of financial comfort, I can vouch that seeing a blade up close is not just a downer, but can put one off the blissfully deserted evening streets for life.

## **Lowering the barrier:**

Safety tools, group activities, daytime activities.





SO –  
WITH ALL THAT THERAPY-WORTHY BAGGAGE IN MIND,  
HOW COULD A CUSTOMER-CENTRIC BRAND WIN OVER  
THE RUNNING-CURIOUS?

**LOOK BEYOND  
SELLING SHOES TO  
SELLING *RUNNING***



# THE PHYSICAL DIMENSION

A smaller store near a park, or in a converted trailer, parked in popular running/hiking locations, to serve as a gathering point for running enthusiasts and a source of motivation & support for the running-curious.

- The pit-stop format puts shoes on people's feet when moving is already on their mind.
- It offers limited choice of contextually relevant products.
- Expert product advice – right gear for the right foot / activity / intensity / time.
- Continuous engagement program – introduction to running, tips, gamified activities.
- Local routes with relevant sights and amenities (shared digitally).
- Weather permitting – complimenting partner services (e.g. massage).





# THE HUMAN DIMENSION

Focussing on engaging, entertaining and inspiring customers rather than selling products. Obviously, when it comes to picking the right shoe, the format only carries one brand, but the ultimate goal is not to sell, but make people want to participate.

- A small enthusiastic team:
  - Helps choose the right products
  - Teaches running in a fun, inclusive manner
  - Expertly leads runs and gamified adventure sessions
- Opportunity to meet likeminded individuals
- Weather permitting - adjacent partner services
- Supported, cross-channel shopping
- For those, only available on weekends: rich program & weekday challenges





# THE DIGITAL DIMENSION

The pit-stop format is not all things to all people, but serves as an excitement-generating portal into the larger brand environment. Using the brand's own and / or partner digital tools, it makes moving and, ultimately, running – a more accessible and enjoyable activity.

- Regularly updated local routes, highlighting gamified milestones (e.g. through a treasure hunt), sights & conveniences along the way.
- Running basics and performance tips.
- Portal to the brand's e-commerce.
- For the time-starved: helping make the most of the little time available, by suggesting activities that could be integrated into the day-to-day, and applications to support.





# CODA

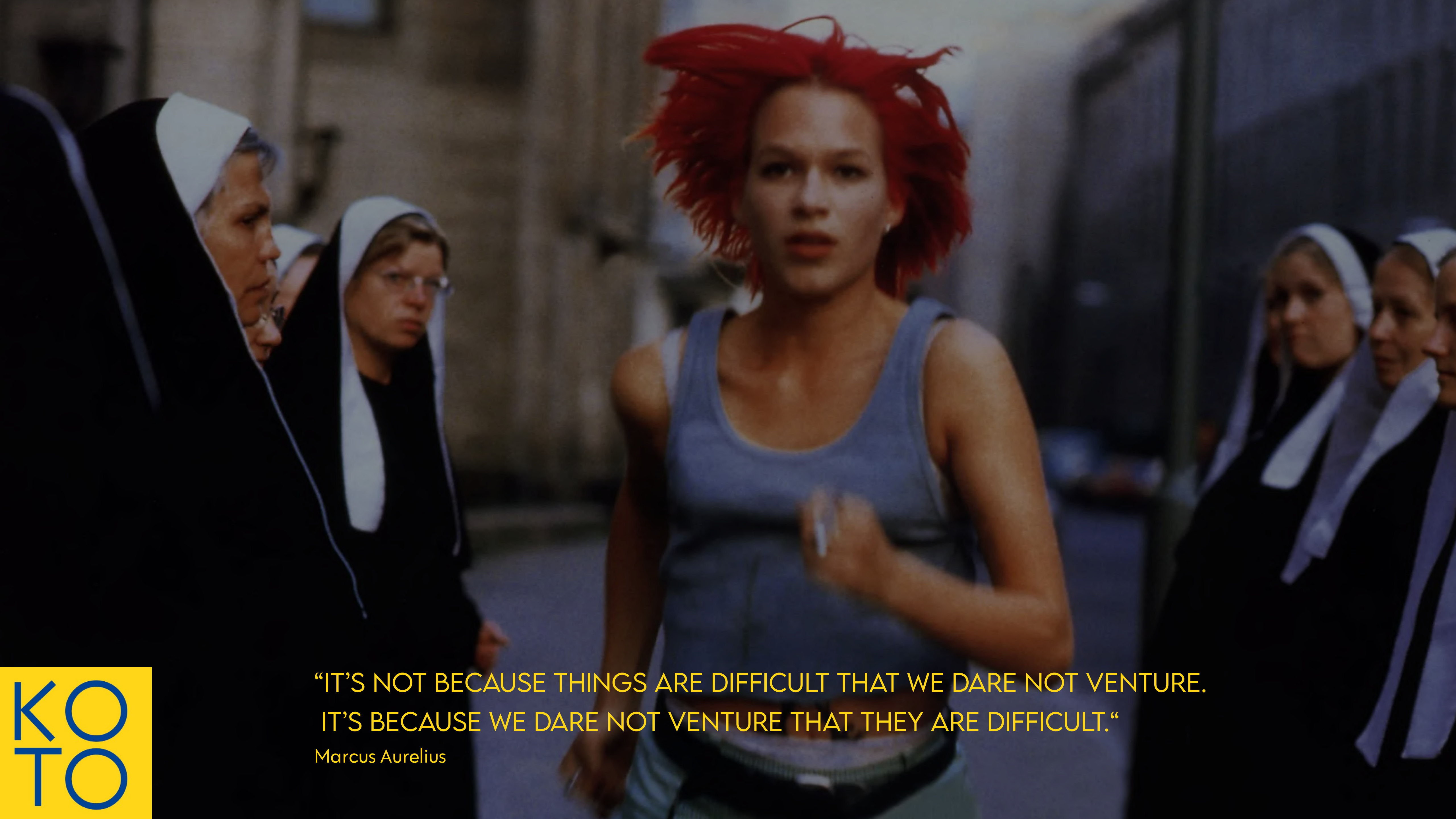
ACROSS THE WORLD, A CLASS OF FINANCIALLY COMFORTABLE CONSUMERS YEARNS TO LEAD HEALTHIER, HAPPIER LIVES.

Unmoved by bootcamp rhetoric, they await a champion that would make running a more enjoyable experience. In return, they promise elevated sales, loyalty and the potential of future subscription-based services.

Their journey is unlikely to start at a trainer store because getting into one would require breaking with the conviction that running is for other people and barriers erected over years will not be brought down by a marketing campaign.

**The pit-stop format engages the group of customers who may already lead healthy lifestyles, but just don't give a dick about running; because no-one ever taught them it can be enjoyed.**





“IT’S NOT BECAUSE THINGS ARE DIFFICULT THAT WE DARE NOT VENTURE.  
IT’S BECAUSE WE DARE NOT VENTURE THAT THEY ARE DIFFICULT.”

Marcus Aurelius

