

BEAT PROCRASTINATION

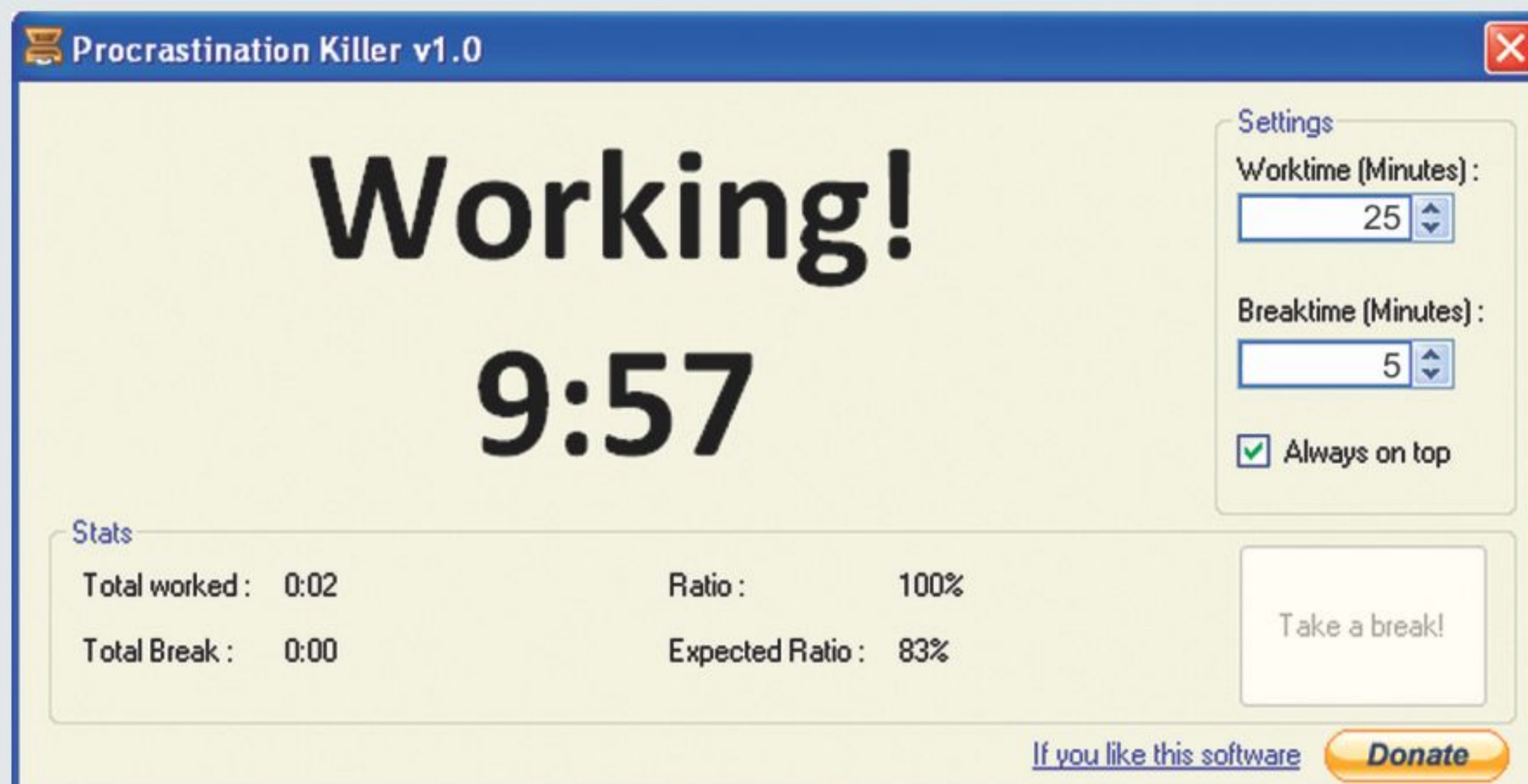
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Why read this article instead of one by a productivity coach? Simple: I get you, bro. I procrastinated on writing this article by researching (read: randomly browsing the internet) on beating procrastination. Hence I was able to trial the techniques suggested by productivity gurus to accomplish this article. Here's what I have learned.

The To-do List aka the Procrastination Planner

Make detailed to-do lists of things you want to accomplish along with deadlines for completing each task.

To-do lists are suitable for remembering chores, not preventing procrastination. Every time I attempted to follow my schedule I kept postponing the writing because of insurmountable obstacles like construction noises or cat gifs that *needed* my attention right then. I even tried breaking the work into small chunks and then making a to-do list (the Swiss cheese method). Fail. My rationale was if I were to start writing the article, I might as well finish it. But finishing it would take time, so I opted for relaxation until I was in the creative zone. Nevertheless I think



the Swiss cheese method could work for achieving long-term goals like learning to play an instrument for instance.

The Reward/ Punishment System, winner of Mother's Choice Award

Reward yourself for accomplishing a task by eating your favourite snack or watching your favourite TV show. Punish yourself for not getting your task done by maybe paying some money to a trusted friend.

Come on, if I had the self-restraint to actually impose the reward/ punish-

ment system on myself I would not be procrastinating in the first place. So I am just going to munch on that Twix now and perhaps start the article later.

The Pomodoro Method

Work for 25 minutes then take a 5 minute break; work for another 25 minutes and take another 5 minute break and so on, over time increasing your work period while taking breaks less frequently.

The prospect of breaks helped me get started on this article. However my advice: do not go to YouTube or social media during the 5 minute break.

Instead drink some water, do a few pushups, relax to your favourite soundtrack or tick off your sibling with a casual poke.

It worked!

Apps don't apply

Seriously, since I am in control of the apps I just end up enabling my procrastination. If you really want to cut off the distractions just turn off the WiFi and put your phone on silent; no need to get a fancy app. If you're following the Pomodoro Method, you can use the 5 minute break to check your missed calls. Do NOT get sucked into idle WhatsApp banter during the 5 minute break.

Personally I struggle with procrastination because I know I can still get the work done (haphazardly so) in the last minute. I also indulge in too many fantasies about what I could do and the desired outcomes instead of doing the work itself. In the end you have to remember you are *choosing* procrastination over labour. To help you *choose* the labour, list reasons for wanting to do the work and try to genuinely enjoy what you're learning or doing.

"It is not really work if you are having fun." – Pierre Omidyar

A GUIDE TO SEO AND CONTENT CROWDSOURCING

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When I was a new kid on the block, a fresher, SEO always attracted me the most. In this instalment of the Digital Marketing series I'll list SEO and crowdsourcing tactics.

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

SEO is one of the most important aspects of digital marketing. You need to ensure that the name of your brand/service/product comes out easily through search engines like Google. For example, if a customer searches for "customised PC in Bangladesh" they should be getting your website in the search result.

SEO optimisation may ensure the highest traffic to your website, visibility of product, and service.

Over the years, SEO has been all about knowing the tricks of the trade. The SEO of tomorrow will be less about having the right hashtag or the right keywords on the page and more about creating interesting, original content that is socially consumed and shared. Overall, the focus will shift from on-page SEO to the various components of off-page SEO that come together for a holistic and powerful strategy.

One great example would be Trip Advisor. Through their web page, they will tell us not only where to go, but also what to eat, what to do and how to be there through customer reviews and feedback.

Content Crowdsourcing Tactics

Crowdsourcing is deliberate, active listening. Brands often seek engagement through

crowdsourcing via direct appeals for feedback, contests, polls or surveys. When brands are creating a new product line or service, crowdsourcing gives fans an opportunity to be heard.

We have seen a good number of companies using customer feedback to develop new product and services. For example, Starbucks asked for customer opinion on the flavour of new coffee. Another example is Mountain Dew's 'DEWmocracy'.

Socially-generated content, where your audience is the main player (usually through a contest), has been done for years. But there is an even bigger opportunity for crowdsourcing platforms that contribute to new marketing ideas. As the social footprint is growing, marketers are finding more ways to leverage crowd creativity through interesting and viral pieces of content.

Stay tuned for the third instalment of this series, which will be on social media integration and mobile based marketing.

The writer is a professional with over 11 years of experience in mobile banking and digital marketing and is currently the Head of mCommerce Operations at Airtel Bangladesh Ltd.

DIGITAL MARKETING

