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# Characters from the virtual world are invading the real world — and people are loving it

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By **Matt Rocheleau**

GLOBE STAFF JULY 11, 2016

The new smartphone [app Pokémon Go](#) has become quite a catch.

Data shows that the augmented reality game, which was released Wednesday, has already become nearly as popular as, if not more popular than, a host of mainstay mobile apps, including social media platforms Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, and dating app Tinder.



[SimilarWeb](#), a company that monitors website and app usage data, said that just one day after the Pokémon Go



**Through the Pokémon Go app, an animated character appeared in front of Trinity Church in Copley Square**

app launched, it had been installed on more Android devices in the US than Tinder, and a day later, the app had been installed on about twice as many devices.

People who download the game are playing it — and spending a lot of time doing so.

As of Friday, two days after Pokémon Go's launch, the app boasted nearly as many active users as Twitter, among Android device owners, according to Similar Web.



## The money behind Pokémon Go

The augmented reality game gives players 150 more reasons to walk around staring at their cellphones.

**Pokémon Go's unexpected side effect: injuries**

**One thing you don't want to catch playing Pokémon Go: malware**

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And the app was being used for an average of 43 minutes, 23 seconds per day, which was a higher mean usage time than other popular apps, including WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat and Messenger.

As of Monday morning, the app, which is free to download but offers in-app purchases, was listed in Apple's App Store as the most popular free app, and the top grossing app.



And the app appears to have generated a [significant deal of interest locally](#).

On a city-by-city [ranking](#) of places where the term "Pokemon Go" had been searched the most on Google,

**Boston ranked second, tied with Orlando and trailing only Detroit.**

**As players move around in the real world, Pokémon characters appear on the screens of their smartphones, superimposed on whatever is in front of the smartphone's camera, making it appear as if the characters are there in reality.**

**The colorful characters' invasion of the real world has had some real-world consequences.**

**Pokémon Go's instant popularity led to a [surge in the stock price of Nintendo](#), which helped develop the app.**

**Some people have reportedly been [injured](#) while playing the game, and in Missouri players were [apparently targeted by armed robbers](#).**

**In Wyoming, authorities are investigating after a [woman playing the game found a man's body in a river](#).**

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