EventTrack 2021

The Event & Experiential Marketing Industry Forecast & Best Practices Study

mosaic | event marketer

Survey of Consumers & Brands on the Impact of Event and Experiential Marketing

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Introduction

EventTrack: The Event & Experiential Marketing Industry Forecast & Best Practices Study—analysis of consumers and brands on the impact of event and experiential marketing

Welcome to the eighth edition of the Mosaic and Event Marketer EventTrack Study, which uniquely monitors the evolution of the experiential marketing industry from the perspective of both leading brands and consumers. This edition of the study reflects the profound impact of the pandemic, and the major challenges it has posed for the experiential industry. The goal of this year's study is to deeply analyze these impacts with a view on informing brands to assist with the recovery and re-activation period ahead.

Also new in this year's report is analysis of how brands have temporarily shifted to digital/virtual events and experiences; and for consumers, how their lifestyles and purchasing behavior has changed. There is also a unique multi-year aspect of this report as four surveys were conducted to develop the analysis—surveys of top brands in the summer of 2020 and a follow-survey conducted in early 2021, along with two surveys of consumers conducted over the same time period, spread over about six months.

Some of the key areas studied in the report include:

- How consumer purchasing behavior has changed in the past year
- What consumers value most at events and experiences
- How virtual and in-person events and experiences change brand perception
- How brands have pivoted to digital/virtual events and experiences
- Outlook for in-person event re-activations
- Brands' event and experiential budget growth outlook post-pandemic
- The biggest opportunities for brands, and many other key benchmarks and insights

The report provides a mix of quantitative survey data as well as dozens of write-in comments from both brand executives and consumers that have recently participated in in-person and/or digital events. In total, the surveys received over 1,500 responses from top brands and consumers based primarily in the U.S. and Canada. Mosaic and Event Marketer thank all of the respondents for their invaluable contributions to the study.

Executive Summary

Embrace the Change. Re-Set Your Events and Experiences for the New Era

In 2020, the world changed dramatically for the event and experiential marketing industry. Yet, in 2021 brands have been starting to reactivate their in-person programs—or are planning for the re-start—and as this unique study shows, there will be a strong in-person event and experiential marketing industry again.

In response to what had once been nearly unimaginable challenges, event and experiential marketing groups rapidly shifted to programming digital/virtual events. In the first quarter of 2021, 72% of brands said they were implementing online options to stay connected to audiences, customers, partners and stakeholders. But digital/virtual events are very different in many ways from live in-person events and experiences. They are essentially two different channels. As one brand marketer responded in the EventTrack survey:

> *"Going to digital/virtual events won't replace in-person event goals. We are treating them as separate strategies. In-person events are still and will always be more important."*

Consumers Have Changed and Want to Move Forward. Events and Experiences Will Help Lead the Way

A critical issue is how consumers and audiences have changed as a result of the pandemic, and how they will behave in the future. The way brands tailor products and services, marketing messaging and experiences to serve customers and prospects will be critical. As one brand executive mentioned in the survey:

> *"We need to realize that how a consumer shops is changed for the long term, and how they engage at events and activations is also different than before. We need to ensure when someone engages with the brand they feel safe and comfortable."*

Consumers have been understandably shaken. This is starkly shown in many of the write-in responses to questions about how they have been impacted by the pandemic and the resulting changes they have made. One of the consumer survey respondents summed up their own feelings, which fits with many others, when they wrote:

> *"I'm paying more attention to the little things in life to be grateful for."*

Another explained their outlook like this:

> *"Our family focus is now on experiences vs. objects."*

These types of sentiments were expressed in one way or another by the majority of the consumer respondents.

There's Significant Pent-Up Demand for Live Events and Experiences

Probably the most relevant insight from the study is that there is significant pent-up demand to get back to live in-person events, experiences and gatherings. A large majority of brands expect their budgets to snap back to levels last seen in 2019 once the pandemic subsides and restrictions are lifted. Consumers highly value and miss being able to attend a wide range of events and experiences. The desire to gather face-to-face in groups is innate to humans. But there are still many questions about the path forward. One path is suggested by one of the respondents to the consumer survey:

> *"The more brands can get innovative to help busy consumers and surprise and delight them, they will remain top of mind."*

Clearly, the in-person reactivation and recovery period will require potential major changes to events, consumer experiences, exhibitions, meetings and gatherings of various types. There are a number of issues and challenges, many of which focus on the fundamentals of health and safety, and following new protocols for conducting in-person group business and gatherings. But these changes also open up important opportunities.

Never Underestimate the Power of Experiential

The only sure thing is that there are still many uncertainties especially around the pace of recovery and reactivation. But the pent-up demand for live in-person events and activations is real. How the industry collectively responds to the range of challenges and opportunities, especially how the event and experiential reactivation process moves ahead over the next few years—and how live events are re-imagined and integrated with hybrid digital platforms and in-person programs—will set the course for the industry for many years.

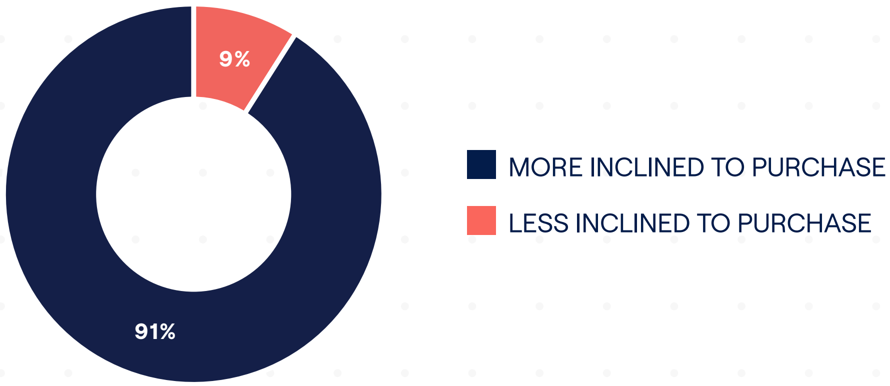
What follows are summaries of eight key insights from the new consumer and brand research followed by specific action steps brands need to consider.

Experiences Create Meaning and Connections—and Drive Sales

Key Insight #1: Consumers say that events and experiences work very powerfully to drive sales—and significantly improve how they feel about and perceive brands

At a time when many consumers are accessing a significantly increasing amount of digital content and information, and shopping more online, the power of in-person events and experiences to improve brand perception and product knowledge is still very strong. The impact of live in-person events and experiences on purchase inclination remains powerful in the minds of consumers. In the new EventTrack survey of consumers conducted in the first half of 2021, 91% said, assuming the product/service demonstrated was one they were interested in, that participating in events and experiences makes them more inclined to purchase the brand.

Consumers Say Participating in Brands' Events and Experiences Makes Them More Inclined to Purchase



It's also important to note that 46% of consumers say they feel more positive about a brand or product/service after participating in a brand-run event or activity—and 41% say they maintain the same opinion of the brand after participating. Another survey question found that over 40% of consumers feel they become more loyal to brands after attending their events and experiences.

Consumers value events and experiences to learn something new, sample a product, see a demonstration, access an incentive, interact with brand staff or ambassadors, and, critically important, have fun and enjoy themselves. After a year of lock-down, consumers deeply miss live events and experiences and want them back. They want to see what they've been viewing on screens come to life. One consumer responded in the survey: *"It's hard to replace the assurance of being able to touch and feel a product before purchase."*

The takeaway for brands is that in-person experiences help build stronger bonds with consumers by engaging the full range of senses and emotions. And live experiences are almost always more memorable than other marketing channel engagements. While there are still many unknowns about the timing of re-openings around the country, and in-person event reactivations, brands need to prepare for how to respond to the significant pent-up demand consumers have for events and experiences. The expected explosion of demand for events, experiences and gatherings, whether it happens in 2021 or 2022, is likely to be significant, although after six to twelve months of "getting back to normal" the excitement may subside. That means brands need to look at the first year of in-person reactivations as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. In this environment, effective live in-person programs have the potential to strengthen, or even remake, consumers' connections to brands.

Action Points:

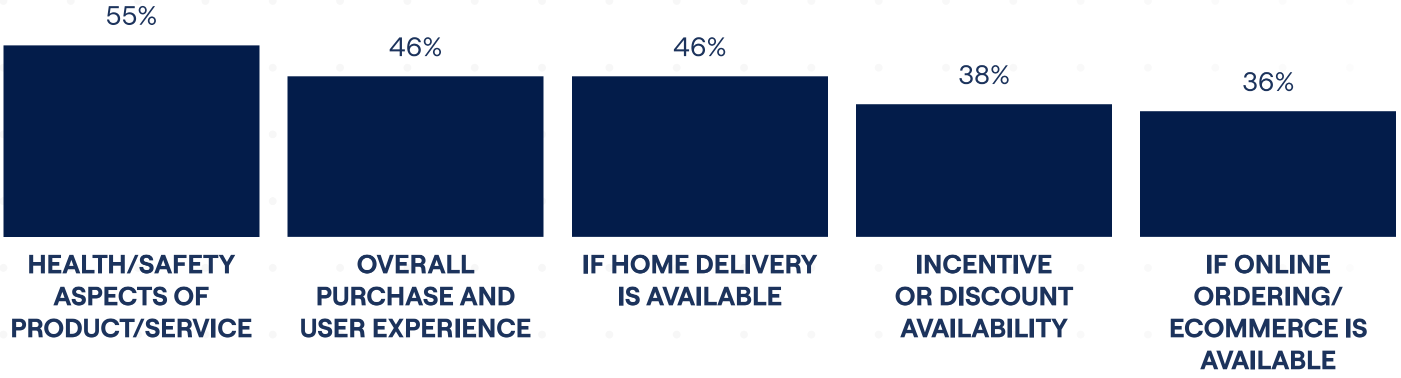
- Welcome consumers and attendees back to in-person with sense of celebration and appreciation.
- Understand the power of experiential to make connections, drive sales and build loyalty.
- Sampling programs and demonstrations now need to be designed for safety.
- Screen fatigue is real and will help drive demand for in-person events and experiences

Make Consumers Feel Safe, Special and Appreciated

Key Insight #2: Health and safety concerns are the top issue influencing consumers' most meaningful purchasing decisions

Besides the critical issue of health and safety, the other top issues impacting important purchase decisions are the overall purchase and user experience, and if home delivery is available. These areas are more important than the availability of incentives or discounts. The survey question was: *In response to the challenges faced in 2020, which of the following now have greater influence on your most meaningful spending and purchase decisions?*

What Now Has Greater Influence on Consumers' Most Meaningful Purchase Decisions



According to the survey, essentially over half of consumers are now considering the safety of products and services as well as the purchase process before they buy. They are also concerned or at least are more often thinking about the overall purchase and user experience. They're asking a basic question: is your brand safe? Consumers have been shaken by the pandemic and the memory is likely to last for years.

Analyzing the data by age group finds that over 70% of consumers under 25, as well as those over 55 years old, say product/service health and safety concerns now have a greater influence on their purchase decisions. This is much higher than the respondents between the ages of 26 and 55. Online ordering availability is more important to people aged 36 to 65, compared to younger survey respondents. Similarly, product home delivery options are most important to those between the ages of 36 to 55. Online ordering and home delivery, which are often closely related, is most important, overall, to those mostly likely in the workforce and raising families.

Age Breakouts: What Now Has Greater Influence on Consumers' Most Meaningful Purchase Decisions

	Under 25	25 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	Over 65
HEALTH AND SAFETY RELATED ASPECTS OF THE PRODUCT/SERVICE	71%	57%	54%	53%	79%	89%
OVERALL PURCHASE AND USER EXPERIENCE	51%	46%	46%	51%	69%	56%
IF HOME DELIVERY IS AVAILABLE	44%	43%	49%	53%	46%	44%
INCENTIVE OR DISCOUNT AVAILABILITY	58%	40%	47%	44%	43%	39%
IF ONLINE ORDERING/ECOMMERCE AVAILABLE	23%	38%	45%	43%	44%	22%

Action Points:

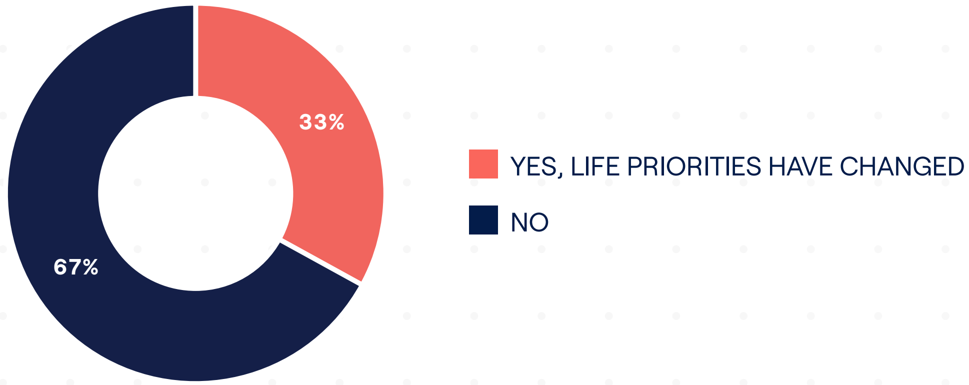
- Make consumers feel safe and comfortable at your events and experiences.
- Tie your experiential reactivation safety plan to your strategic plan, and make this a continually updated “living” document.
- Realize you’re selling features and benefits, but also safety and comfort.
- It is well understood that in-person event formats and operations need to change, including: audience traffic patterns and flow, contracting larger or different spaces, using outdoor areas when available, adding touch-less technology, and possibly providing on-site temperature and health screening.
- Consider providing smaller guided-tours through your experiences.
- Capture more video of your initial reactivated live programs to show how they work and the approach to health and safety.
- Over-communicate about the health and safety procedures and protocols before events as well as on-site.

Change Opens Opportunity. Now's the Time to Re-Imagine Your Experiences

Key Insight #3: One-third of consumers say their top life priorities and values have changed as a result of the challenges and opportunities faced in 2020

The survey asked consumers if the issues faced in 2020 have changed any of their key life priorities and values. One-third of consumers say their life priorities and values have changed. Many of the themes in their responses can be grouped in the following core areas: they're spending more time with family, focusing on health and wellness, and saving money. Many consumers are simply getting back to basics and evaluating their core beliefs and priorities.

Percentage of Consumers Whose Life Priorities and Values Have Changed



While 33% of the surveyed consumers have changed their life priorities and values, certainly many more have deeply thought about and reevaluated these concerns for themselves and their families. Major societal changes and uncertainties have forced reflection. Interestingly, the age groups that have changed their priorities and values the most are those between the ages of 25 and 35 as well as consumers between 56 and 65. The age breakouts are in the table below. These two age segments are often experiencing major life transitions anyway—such as starting careers and families for the younger cohort, and transitioning to late career and retirement for the older group—and the pandemic may have accelerated these changes.

Age Breakouts: Percentage of Consumers Whose Life Priorities and Values Have Changed

	Under 25	25 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	Over 65
YES, LIFE PRIORITIES HAVE CHANGED	21%	42%	35%	34%	43%	25%

Action Points:

- Understand in detail how your customers, prospects and audiences have changed.
- Have your key customers and influencers help you build your new events and experiences. Address their concerns and feedback.
- Reassess your commitment to sustainability and diversity and inclusion issues, areas growing in importance to consumers.
- Remember, consumers have also been bored for over a year. How can you add excitement and interest to their lives with your experiences?

We're All in This Together: Innovate to Help Consumers Make Their Lives Easier

Key Insight #4: Large segments of consumers expect their pandemic-related lifestyle changes to continue in the future

Looking out post-pandemic, over 40% of the respondents say they will continue to save money, shop more online, and pay more attention to their health and wellness. Only 6% checked the answer option *none/no change/not applicable* suggesting just how many consumers have changed their habits and behaviors in one year.

Top Five Lifestyle Changes Consumers Say are Here to Stay

Consumers have certainly been forced to reassess many areas of their lives and make changes. But they also yearn to get back to a sense of what had been normal before. Consumers tell us in the survey they are budgeting and planning more, scrutinizing or deferring large purchases; and many are buying higher quality products, or are trying to spend more with local businesses. They are also more conscious and cautious. This is a challenge and balancing act for brands: what do brands change about their products and services, and messaging and experiences, while keeping a sense of what consumers valued in the past?

Action Points:

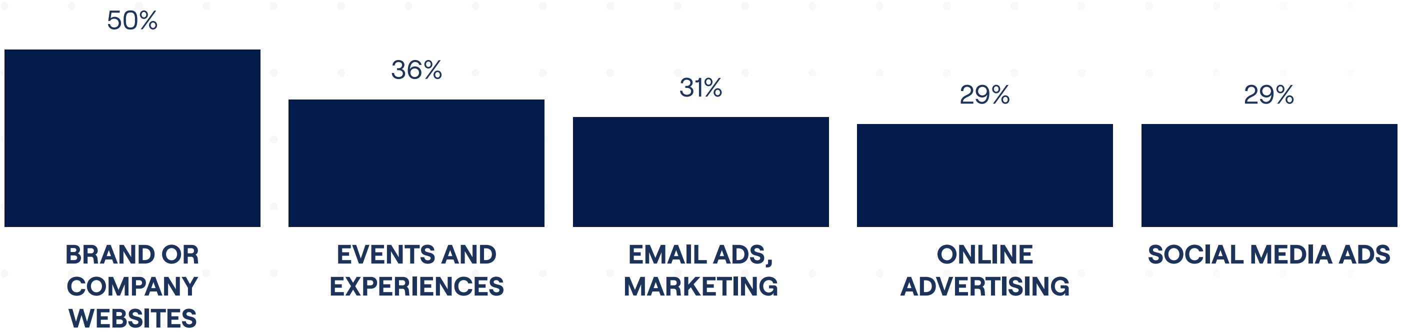
- Emphasize how your products and services—and experiences—help consumers save money and, if possible, positively impact their health and wellness.
- Online shopping has accelerated and will continue to grow rapidly. Better integrate in-person events and experiences with online purchasing and home delivery options.
- Digital and streaming content consumption has exploded and will continue to grow rapidly. Consider how your customers and prospects have changed in this regard and build your experiential programs with a more robust digital content sharing strategy.
- Consumers are open to what's new and different in a safe environment. This requires brands to reassess their approach to live events and experiences. Embrace the change and re-set for the new era.
- Remember, consumers have been through a crisis and need care and attention.

No Other Channel Provides the Full Value of Experiential

Key Insight #5: Event and experiential marketing—along with brand websites—continue, even in a pandemic that's sharply limited gatherings, to lead other advertising and marketing channels in terms of effectiveness and value to consumers

The chart below provides a ranking of the most effective advertising methods that best help consumers understand the benefits of products and services. Brand websites and events and experiences are the primary advertising and marketing channels that provide the most value, according to consumers, followed by emails and online ads.

Consumers Rate the Best Advertising Methods to Understand Product Benefits



Event and experiential marketing is so highly valued by consumers because it offers a sense of spontaneity and fun, and they are simply more memorable than other marketing channels. Brands come to life when consumers and brand staff interact in-person.

That websites are considered the best channel for learning about products and services is not surprising. It's almost second nature to go to a brand or company website, or find a site via a search engine, when considering product and service categories or to find out basic brand information. But brand websites only provide information and content, and are not experiential. Brands with event and experiential programs may need to do a better job at connecting their websites and digital strategies to their in-person activations, and vice versa. For example, too often information about "events" on brand websites is hard to find, very limited, or even not provided at all. Hybrid in-person and digital events and activations are an obvious potential bridge between experiential programs and websites and other digital media.

Action Points:

- Reassess how events and experiences need to play a greater role within your integrated campaigns.
- Consider how your websites can better integrate with event and experiential programs to more effectively leverage both channels.
- Build your hybrid in-person and digital strategy with the connection between the brand website and experiential programs in mind.
- In-person and digital amplification and content sharing strategies that received so much attention pre-pandemic will need to be increased, and should be better integrated with brand websites.
- Don't underestimate the power of fun, unique and memorable experiences. These are what make events and experiences stand out and so effective.

Budget Expectations Show Pent-Up Demand for Live Experiences is Real

Key Insight #6: Post-pandemic, 81% of brands believe their event and experiential budgets will match or exceed their pre-outbreak levels—and this positive sentiment has increased over the past year

The findings here provide some of the best news for the live events and experiential marketing industry during a challenging period. Sixty-one percent of brands believe their live in-person event and experiential marketing budgets will be reinstated to a level similar to before the pandemic, and 20% expect their funding to actually be increased above that level. This good news is underscored by the one-year comparison in the data table below. The total percentage of brands expecting their post-pandemic budgets to rebound to pre-pandemic levels, or be even larger, jumped from 63% in the summer of 2020 to 81% as of the first half of 2021. This reflects growing confidence in the future of the industry and significant pent-up demand to reactivate face-to-face marketing activations.

Will Post-Pandemic Event and Experiential Budgets Rebound to Pre-Outbreak Levels?

	2021	2020	*Difference*
BUDGET WILL INCREASE	20%	9%	*+11%*
REBOUND TO LEVEL SIMILAR TO BEFORE THE OUTBREAK	61%	54%	*+7%*
DECREASE	19%	37%	*-18%*

Why are brand budgets expected to snap back so quickly? As one of the executives that responded to the brand survey noted: *"There is no single solution that gives you everything a live event does."* But let's be clear, live events and experiences will be different. Other *Event Marketer* research conducted recently has found brands expect to emphasize the following as they reactive live in-person programs: hybrid experiences, more regional events and community activations, as well as road shows and mobile tours. Most brands have also been making a number of important investments, mainly around health and hygiene, event technology, and adding new staff roles to prepare for in-person reactivations.

Industry Sector Comparisons: Will Post-Pandemic Event and Experiential Budgets Rebound to Pre-Outbreak Levels?

The findings to this questions are broken-out by five key industry sectors in the table below: IT and Consumer Technology, Entertainment and Media, Financial Services, CPG (Consumer Packaged Goods), and Retail. The data show a mixed picture, but overall the majority of brands in each industry expect their event and experiential budgets to rebound or exceed the level in 2019 once the pandemic is over. Comparatively, the IT and Consumer Technology sector has the highest percentage of respondents (27%) that expect their post-pandemic event and experiential marketing budget to be larger than it was in 2019. Over 20% of entertainment and media and CPG brands also expect their post-pandemic budgets to be higher than in 2019.

	IT and Consumer Tech	Entertainment and Media	Financial Services	CPG	Retail
BUDGET WILL INCREASE	27%	22%	19%	21%	11%
REBOUND TO LEVEL SIMILAR TO BEFORE THE OUTBREAK	47%	78%	56%	50%	67%
DECREASE	26%	0%	25%	29%	22%

Action Points:

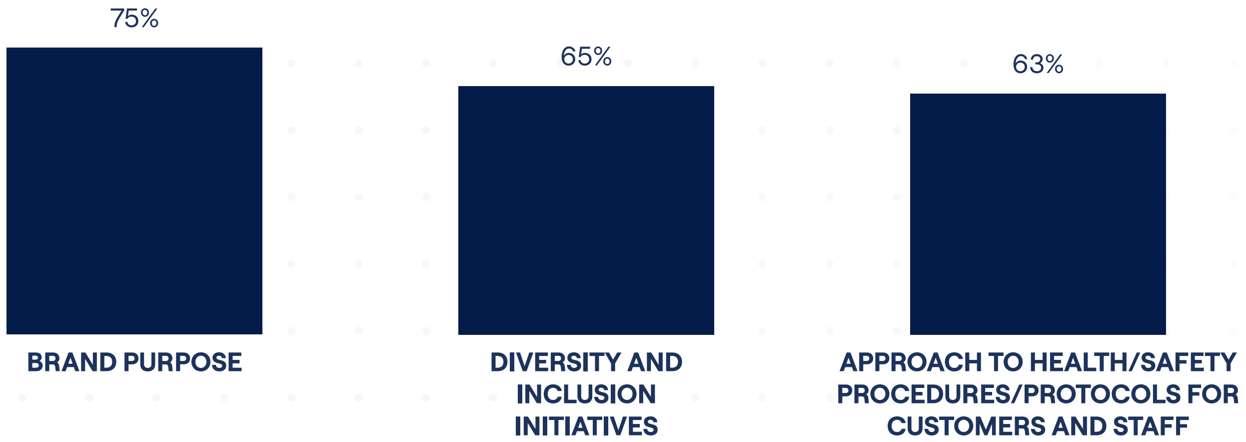
- Understand that post-pandemic safety requirements require significant attention and planning, new formats, and more communications and signage—and likely increased resources for these areas.
- Clearly, new budget lines for PPE, different locations, audience traffic flow, touch-less technology and social distancing is required.
- Watch your competitors closely. Some will hold back on in-person reactivation while others will see the new opportunities and move quickly to reactive in-person. Don't be left behind.

New Brand Purpose and Changed Customers Require New Experiences

Key Insight #7: Brand messaging themes and marketing communications have changed considerably with major reviews and changes in brand purpose

By far today's most important brand messaging themes relate to reinstating brand purpose, explaining diversity and inclusion initiatives, and the brand's approach to health and safety. A number of other areas and themes are also considered to be important to brands, and are outlined later in this report, suggesting just how challenging the marketing and communications industry is today and will likely remain for a number of years.

Top Three Extremely/Very Important Aspects of Brand Messaging and Marketing Communications



Yet these challenges also point to new opportunities. Many brands have undergone significant brand purpose reviews. Many have increased their community support efforts and messaging, and are emphasizing sensitivity during this challenging time of change. One brand executive responded in the survey: *"Experiential is always about the user journey. Our job is to make that journey as seamless as possible, and ensure that at the end, the brand's objectives are met. This means it's always changing as the customer's needs change."*

Action Points:

- Tie event and experiential programs even closer to brand purpose.
- Build initiatives and messaging around the key themes of health and safety, community, problem-solving, empathy and resilience.
- Use your in-person programs to show your commitment to sustainability and diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- Better understand audiences and how they have changed due to the pandemic, and be aware of how their media consumption and purchase behaviors have changed.
- Consider more targeting and personalization in communications.

Your Brand Has Changed or Been Reevaluated. Now Your Experiences Need to Change, Too

Key Insight #8: Large segments of brands have made significant business shifts and developed new products and services as a direct result of the challenges faced in 2020

Less than half but a still meaningful 38% of brands say that their company has shifted or pivoted what their business does in a significant way as a result of the challenges faced in 2020. Forty-two percent of the brand respondents say their company has developed new products or services as a result of the pandemic and related issues. This level of major corporate change, in less than one year, has simply never been seen before in the modern era.

% of Brands that made significant business shifts	*% of Brands that developed new products/services*
38%	*48%*

Even if your brand hasn't changed much due to the pandemic, a significant segment of your customers probably have changed. A new or additional brand purpose should be considered to engage these changed consumers.

Industry Sector Comparisons: Percentage of Brands that Made Significant Business Shifts and Developed New Products/Services

CPG, financial services, and entertainment and media brands were the most likely to have made significant business strategy shifts during the pandemic. Entertainment and media along with IT and Consumer Technology companies, on a percentage basis, developed the most new products and services in response to the rapid shift to streaming and digital content consumption resulting from consumers' increased time at home. Entertainment and media companies also had to shift as restrictions stopped events and gatherings.

	IT and Consumer Tech	Entertainment and Media	Financial Services	CPG	Retail
% OF BRANDS THAT MADE SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS SHIFTS	28%	43%	50%	50%	33%
% OF BRANDS THAT DEVELOPED NEW PRODUCTS/SERVICES	40%	76%	33%	23%	11%

Action Points:

- Embrace the change.
- Build and strengthen a sense of community tied to events and experiences.
- Show consumers new ways to use your products and services.
- Be ready to make changes and adjustments quickly, and develop contingency plans.
- Remain creative, audience-focused and flexible.

With re-openings around the country, optimism is building. There are many challenges and unknowns still. But the risk for brands may be in not moving fast enough to reactivate safe event and experiential programs.

The new era in experiential marketing starts now.

About the Consumer Survey Respondents: The consumer survey received responses from consumers in the U.S. and Canada that have participated in branded events and experiences. Half of the respondents are based in the U.S. and the other half live in Canada. Slightly more females than males responded to the survey.

About the Brand Survey Respondents: The survey respondents primarily work for large companies in a range of categories including technology, financial services, retail, beverage, medical and pharmaceutical, entertainment and media, consumer packaged goods, automotive and other lifestyle-related sectors. In terms of total company revenue, 56% work for companies with over $100 million in revenue, and 32% generate over $1 billion in annual gross revenue.

The findings in this Executive Summary provide only a portion of the insights from the study. The next sections are packed with additional insights, data and benchmarks. The consumer findings are presented first, followed by the brand data.

I. Consumer Findings

Mosaic and *Event Marketer* surveyed a wide cross-section of consumers that have participated in branded events and experiential marketing activities. The complete consumer survey findings are provided in this section. By far, the most commonly attended type of event and experience according to the consumer survey respondents have been in-store demonstration or sampling experiences. The findings are presented in five sections:

- Consumer Purchasing Changes and Trends as a Result of the Pandemic
- How Consumers' Lifestyles, Priorities and Values Have Changed
- Value of Events and Experiences and Motivation to Participate
- Perception Changes and Event and Experiential Impact on Purchasing
- Consumers Describe Memorable Branded Events and Experiences

Consumer Purchasing Changes and Trends as a Result of the Pandemic

Consumers' Likelihood of Attending Various In-Person Events and Experiences

Survey Question: After the COVID-19 outbreak restrictions are lifted, how likely are you to participate in the following in-person events and experiences?

Besides small gatherings with friends, the consumers that responded to the survey say, once restrictions are lifted, they will be most likely to go to restaurants, sporting events and concerts. Over half of the respondents say they will be likely to attend most all other types of gatherings with varying sized crowds once outbreak restrictions are lifted.

	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Neutral	Not Very Likely	Not at All Likely
SMALL GATHERINGS WITH FRIENDS	70%	18%	8%	3%	2%
RESTAURANTS	56%	24%	11%	6%	4%
SPORTING EVENTS	43%	22%	16%	8%	10%
CONCERTS	42%	23%	18%	10%	7%
IN-STORE SAMPLING EXPERIENCES	40%	24%	17%	14%	5%
FESTIVALS	36%	28%	15%	13%	9%
MALLS	35%	21%	20%	17%	7%
TRADE SHOWS/EXHIBITIONS	33%	31%	17%	14%	5%
OTHER LARGE GATHERINGS	31%	25%	26%	14%	5%
BARS/NIGHTCLUBS	29%	18%	20%	19%	14%
TECHNOLOGY DEMOS IN STORE	26%	35%	24%	13%	3%
PUBLIC TRANSIT	23%	20%	22%	20%	15%
STREET SAMPLING EXPERIENCES	20%	22%	30%	15%	12%

Biggest Participation Barriers to Attending Live In-Person Branded Events Post-Pandemic

Survey Question: What are the biggest barriers to consideration of attending live in-person branded events post-Covid?

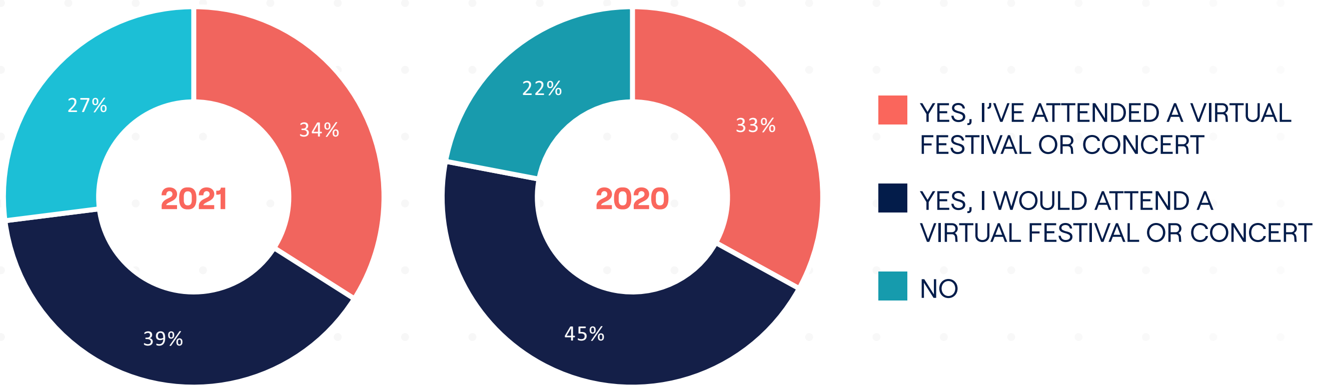
By far, and not surprisingly, consumers' biggest barrier to attending live in-person events are related to health and safety concerns.

	1 = Most Important	2	3	4	5	6 = Least Important
HEALTH AND SAFETY OF YOURSELF AND THOSE ATTENDING	70%	14%	9%	5%	2%	1%
UNCERTAINTY OF HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS AND READILY AVAILABLE PRODUCTS	29%	34%	18%	9%	7%	3%
TRUST IN EXPERIENCING A SAFE EVENT	28%	27%	23%	7%	7%	7%
UNCERTAINTY OF EVENT TAKING PLACE DUE TO VIRUS OUTBREAK	25%	21%	25%	15%	11%	3%
RELUCTANCE OR HESITATION OF LIVE IN PERSON EVENTS BEING WORTHWHILE	18%	16%	27%	14%	12%	14%
OTHER UNFORESEEN AND UNKNOWN FORCES	14%	18%	27%	14%	9%	18%

Consumers' Virtual Festival and Concert Participation

Survey Question: Have you or would you be willing to attend a virtual festival or concert?

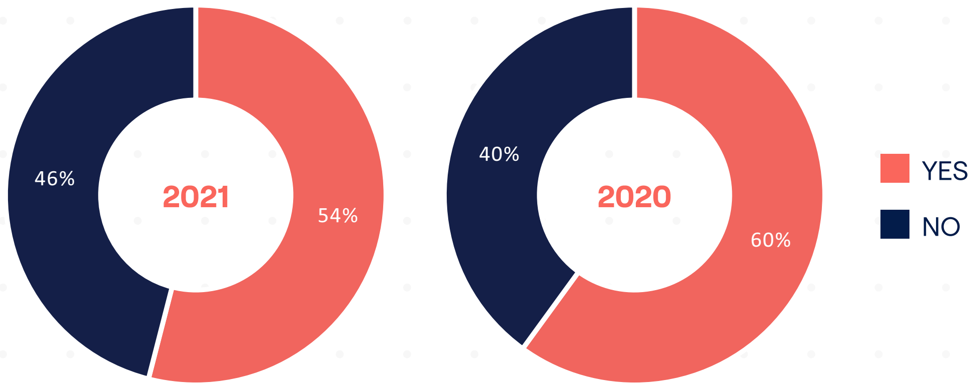
A total of 73% of consumers either have already attended a virtual festival or concert, or are open to participating in the future. Comparing the early 2021 findings with the same survey conducted in the summer of 2020 finds there has been a slight reduction in the percentage of consumers that say they would attend a virtual festival or concert, from 45% in 2020 to 39% in the new survey.



Percentage of Consumers Willing to Pay to Attend a Virtual Festival or Concert—and What They Would Pay

Survey Question: If you would be willing to attend a virtual festival or concert, would you be willing to pay for it?

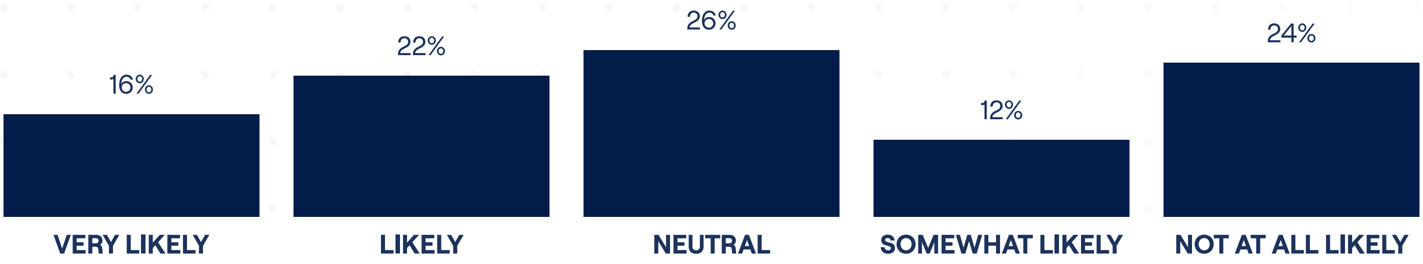
Just over half of consumers said they would be willing to pay to attend a virtual festival or concert. The average amount the consumer survey respondents said they would pay, in the 2021 survey, is $44.54. Over the past year there has been a slight reduction in the percentage of consumers that say they would be willing to attend a virtual festival or concert.



Likelihood of Trying a VR Experience

Survey Question: How likely are you to try a VR (virtual reality) experience of a live event (with or without a headset)?

The findings to this question are varied. A total of 38% are *very likely* or *likely* to try a virtual reality experience.



More Consumers Agree that Digital Experiences are as Not as Good as Real Life Experiences

Survey Question: How much do you agree disagree with this statement: "Brands' digital experiences are just as good or influential as in real life experiences."

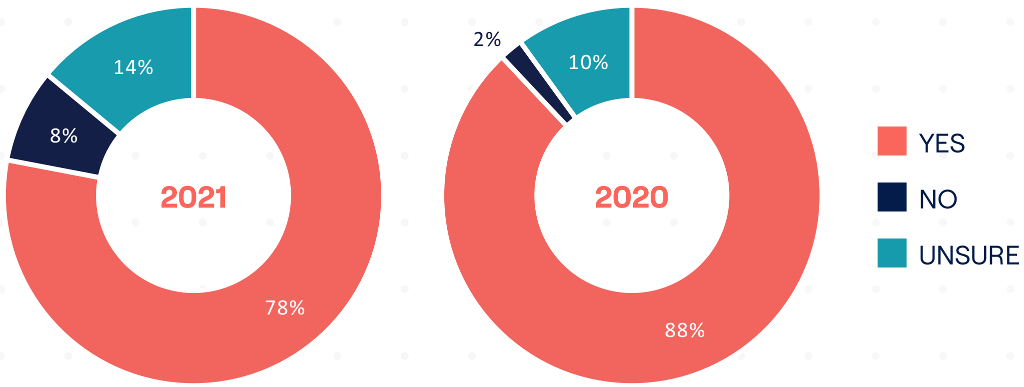
While there is a varied distribution in this question response, it is clear that more consumers (46%) disagree with the statement in the survey question than agree (28%), and over the past year it looks as though more consumers now *disagree* that brands' digital experiences are just as good or influential as in real life experiences. Consumers like live events and experiences better than digital experiences that try to replicate the in-person experience in some ways. Yet, as brands' digital/virtual events and experiences and technology platforms improve, and as consumers get used to viewing these, it is possible that consumer sentiment could change.

	2021	2020	*Difference*
STRONGLY AGREE	7%	8%	*-1%*
AGREE	21%	29%	*-8%*
NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	26%	22%	*+4%*
DISAGREE	34%	29%	*+5%*
STRONGLY DISAGREE	12%	11%	*+1%*

Are Live In-Person Experiences Liked More than Digital Experiences?

Survey Question: Do you prefer brands' live in-person experiences more than digital experiences?

More than three out of four consumers say they prefer brands' live in-person experiences more than digital experiences. Only 8% indicate they like digital events better, and 14% are unsure. But this sentiment has decreased overall when comparing the 2020 and 2021 findings. This year, 78% of consumers said they prefer live in-person experiences more than digital experiences, while the 2020 survey found 88% saying this.

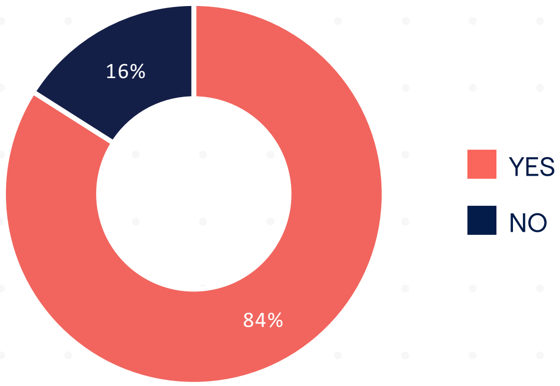


There are a number of reasons for these findings. Digital content and in-person experiences are two different channels. Digital platforms provide effective content distribution and can foster two-way communication, but live in-person experiences engage the full range of a person's senses and emotions, and help build stronger bonds between consumers and brands. Live events and experiences give consumers and attendees a greater sense of control, they feel less scripted and scheduled, and they don't require that customers be tethered to a screen for hours. Events and experiences are more spontaneous which is more engaging and fun. And live experiences are almost always more memorable. It's hard to feel like a VIP, or even a valued customer, when you're staring at your laptop or mobile device. Screen-time simply isn't experiential and it's usually not very memorable either.

Parentage of Consumers Shopping More Online as a Result of Pandemic

Survey Question: Are you doing more online shopping as a result of COVID-19?

It's been well documented that the shift to online shopping has been historic and has accelerated trends that had been underway for many years. This survey finds that 84% of consumers have been doing more online shopping as a result of the pandemic.



Categories Consumers are Shopping More Online

Survey Question: Which categories are you buying more online?

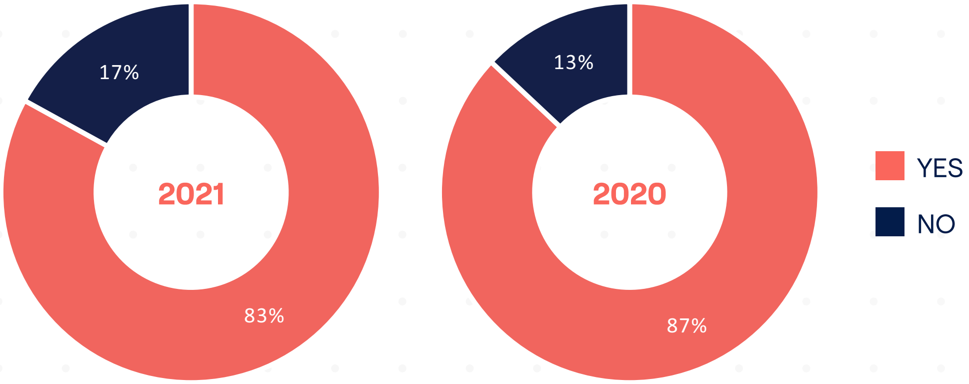
The top three shopping categories that consumers say have received the bulk of their increased online spending has been apparel/clothing, home goods and housewares, and health and beauty aids. These three categories were selected by 50% or more of the survey respondents. The one-year comparison finds small upticks in the percentage of consumers shopping more online for clothing, home goods, and health and beauty aids, but a very significant increase (from 14% last year to 30% in 2021) in online purchases for computer equipment as many people continue to work and attend school at home.

	2021	2020	*Difference*
APPAREL/CLOTHING	71%	69%	+2%
HOME GOODS AND HOUSEWARES	52%	50%	+2%
HEALTH AND BEAUTY AIDS	50%	48%	+2%
PACKAGED FOOD PRODUCTS	41%	40%	+1%
HOME FURNISHINGS	35%	33%	+2%
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT	30%	14%	+16%
PREPARED FOOD	29%	39%	-10%
GAMING	28%	25%	+3%
OTHER ELECTRONICS	27%	27%	0%
MOBILE PHONES	19%	11%	+8%
OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS	19%	20%	-1%
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	17%	16%	+1%
BEER/ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES	16%	14%	+2%
SODA	15%	16%	-1%
NON-SODA BEVERAGES	13%	15%	-2%
TRAVEL	10%	7%	+3%
CARS/TRUCKS	4%	5%	-1%
MOTORCYCLES OR OTHER VEHICLES	3%	3%	0%
OTHER	3%	6%	-3%

Percentage of Consumers that Expect to Continue to Shop More Online After Restrictions are Lifted

Survey Question: Do you expect to continue shopping these categories more online after COVID-19 restrictions are lifted?

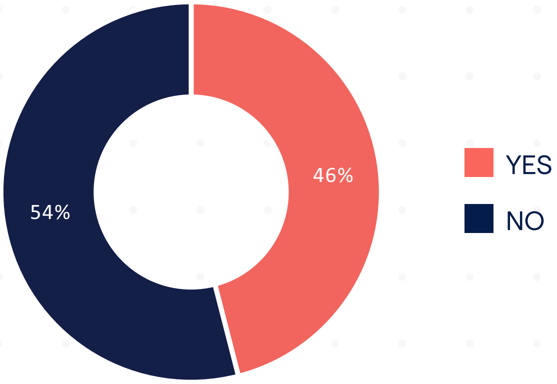
A significant percentage (83%) of consumers expect to continue shopping these categories more online after pandemic restrictions are lifted. This is slightly down from the 2020 survey data.



Spending Habit Changes

Survey Question: In response to the challenges faced in 2020, have you made any important changes to your spending habits?

While there has been a significant increase in online shopping over the past year, according to a large majority of the respondents, less than half say they made important changes to their spending habits in direct response to the challenges faced in 2020.



The respondents were then asked to explain the changes they have made. Key themes in the written responses include:

- Spending less, saving more
- Budgeting and planning more
- Increased online shopping
- Stocking up on essential products
- Scrutinizing or deferring large purchases
- Less spending in restaurants, malls/shopping centers and for entertainment
- Increased spending on groceries
- Reduced or eliminated travel

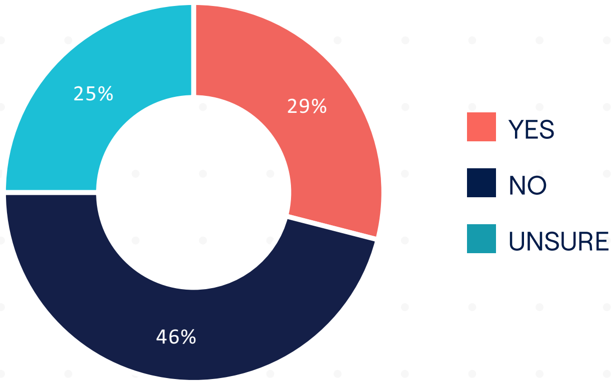
Select comments:

- "A lot less money going out to restaurants, bars and concerts has been replaced by a smaller amount of to-go things."
- "A lot less spending and a lot more saving."
- "Buying more groceries rather than eating out/ordering take out."
- "Changed to more online friendly vendors."
- "Cut back on discretionary spending, less gas for not commuting, etc."
- "I am more strict about sticking to my budget."
- "I do grocery pick up now which is a huge change in my house."
- "I have tried to budget my money and buy better quality."
- "I shop online way more than I ever used to."
- "I'm more conscious of my spending/saving habits overall."
- "I'm trying to buy more local."
- "I've been putting off some non-essential items."
- "I've reined in my spending, but still splurge every now and then."
- "Non-essential purchases pared back."
- "Obviously less on travel and live entertainment."
- "Online purchases that offer curbside pickup or delivery."
- "Shifted spend from some areas (gas, auto upkeep) to utilities (home based)."
- "Spend more on furnishings."
- "Spend more on items that can be delivered to my home or office."

Are Further Purchasing Habit Changes Expected?

Survey Question: Given the current economic outlook, do you expect your purchasing habits to be impacted beyond how they have already been due to the impact of Covid?

Twenty-nine percent of consumers indicated they expect their purchasing habits to be impacted beyond how they have already been changed due to the impact of the pandemic.



Those that responded yes to this question were asked to explain the changes. Some of the key themes in the responses include:

- Concern of continued economic weakness and uncertainty
- Continuing to watch or reduce expenses
- Expectations that food cost may go up
- More online shopping expected

Select comments:

- "Buy more online."
- "Cautious of big purchases."
- "Continue on savings."
- "Grocery goods have increased in price quite a bit."
- "Having to cut back even more on spending due to uncertainty in employment."
- "I expect the economy to be unstable."
- "I will be more conservative and only be spending what's necessary and all nice-to-have things will have to wait."
- "I will still be budgeting."
- "I will try to save more money and spend less in the future."
- "I'll spend more on events and travel."
- "Keep to strict budget."
- "More long-term planning."
- "More online shopping."
- "Return of impulse purchases during in-person shopping/browsing."
- "Shopping online and spending less."

What's Influencing Today's Most Meaningful Purchasing Decisions

Survey Question: In response to the challenges faced in 2020, which of the following now have greater influence on your most meaningful spending and purchase decisions?

Besides the critical issue of health and safety, the other top issues impacting important purchase decisions are the overall purchase and user experience, and if home delivery is available. These areas are slightly more important than the availability of incentives or discounts.

	%
HEALTH AND SAFETY RELATED ASPECTS OF THE PRODUCT/SERVICE/EXPERIENCE	55%
OVERALL PURCHASE AND USE EXPERIENCE	46%
IF HOME DELIVERY IS AVAILABLE	46%
INCENTIVE OR DISCOUNT AVAILABILITY	38%
IF ONLINE ORDERING/ECOMMERCE IS AVAILABLE	36%
IF CURB-SIDE PICK-UP IS AVAILABLE	34%
SUSTAINABILITY/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	29%
HOW THE COMPANY/BRAND TREATS ITS STAFF AND FRONT-LINE WORKERS	25%
WORD OF MOUTH OR OPINION OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS	24%
COMPANY OR BRAND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY INITIATIVES	20%
EASE OF SHARING THE PURCHASE, SERVICE OR RELATED INFORMATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA	11%
IF PART OF A MEMBERSHIP OR SUBSCRIPTION	10%
NONE / NO CHANGE / NOT APPLICABLE	7%
OTHER	2%

Most Important Aspects of Company Brand Messaging and Communications

Survey Question: How important are the following aspects as part of a company's brand messaging and marketing communications when you're making important purchase decisions and/or comparing products or brands?

The most important brand messaging should focus on the approach to health and safety procedures and protocols, according to the survey respondents. Diversity and inclusion initiatives are also important to many consumers.

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
APPROACH TO HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURES/ PROTOCOLS (FOR CUSTOMERS AND STAFF)	41%	29%	22%	6%	4%	0%
STAFF/TEAM/PARTNER/ FRONT-LINE WORKER SUPPORT	22%	28%	36%	11%	4%	0%
SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES	22%	24%	29%	17%	8%	1%
DIVERSITY & INCLUSION INITIATIVES	22%	18%	27%	18%	13%	3%
ESG INVESTMENTS (ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE)	16%	19%	28%	23%	13%	1%
OVERALL CSR (CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY)	16%	17%	35%	25%	7%	1%
BRAND PURPOSE	15%	27%	34%	18%	6%	0%
CHARITABLE GIVING/SUPPORT	12%	18%	35%	23%	10%	2%

Best Advertising Methods to Understand Product and Service Benefits

Survey Question: Which of the following marketing techniques are best at helping you understand the benefits of the products and services advertised? (Select all that apply).

The table below provides a ranking of the most effective advertising and marketing methods that best help consumers understand the benefits of products and services. Brand websites and events and experiences are the primary methods, according to consumers. The various EventTrack consumer surveys conducted over the past decade have consistently found websites and events and experiences as the top two most effective advertising and information dissemination channels.

	%
BRAND OR COMPANY WEBSITES	50%
EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES	36%
EMAIL ADS, MARKETING	31%
ONLINE ADVERTISING	29%
SOCIAL MEDIA ADS	29%
PHYSICAL RETAIL STORES	28%
ONLINE MARKETPLACES (E.G., AMAZON, EBAY)	23%
DIRECT MAIL	19%
TV ADS	16%
MOBILE ADS	14%
PRINT ADS	12%
RADIO ADS	9%
OUTDOOR ADVERTISING BILLBOARDS	8%
TELEMARKETING/PHONE ORDERING/CALL CENTERS	3%
OTHER	4%

How Consumers' Lifestyles, Priorities and Values Have Changed

Lifestyle Changes

Survey Question: In response to the challenges faced in 2020, in which of the following ways has your lifestyle changed?

Fifty-three percent of the consumer respondents say they are working from home as a result of the pandemic as well as shopping more online. It is important to note that only 13% of consumers selected the answer option "none/no change/not applicable."

	%
WORKING FROM HOME	53%
PURCHASING MORE ONLINE/ECOMMERCE	53%
FOCUSING ON SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE	17%
ATTENDING SCHOOL AT HOME	16%
MOVED PRIMARY RESIDENCE	11%
NONE/NO CHANGE/NOT APPLICABLE	13%
OTHER	5%

Lifestyle Changes Consumers Expect to Continue in the Future

Survey Question: Which of the following changes, or new ways of doing things, do you think you'll continue into the future? (Select all that apply.)

Looking out to the future, over 40% of the respondents say they will continue to focus on saving more money, doing more online shopping (for apparel in particular), and focusing on their health and wellness. Only 6% checked the answer option none/no change/not applicable suggesting just how significantly consumers have changed their habits and behaviors in one year.

	%
SAVING MORE MONEY	46%
MORE ONLINE SHOPPING FOR FASHION/APPAREL	43%
FOCUSING ON HEALTH AND WELLNESS	43%
WATCH MORE STREAMING PROGRAMS AND ONLINE VIDEO	39%
MORE ONLINE SHOPPING FOR GROCERIES	36%
MORE ONLINE SHOPPING FOR HEALTH/BEAUTY AIDS	34%
INCREASING ONLINE/VIDEO COMMUNICATIONS (ZOOM CALLS, ETC.)	34%
MORE ONLINE SHOPPING FOR TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONICS	33%
INVESTING MORE/DIFFERENTLY	25%
MORE PREPARED FOOD DELIVERY PURCHASES	24%
INCREASED FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY/ENVIRONMENT/RECYCLING, ETC.	20%
DECREASING ONLINE/VIDEO COMMUNICATIONS (ZOOM CALLS, ETC.)	7%
NONE/NO CHANGE/NOT APPLICABLE	6%
OTHER	1%

Consumers' Day-to-Day Shopping Challenges and How Brands Can Help

Survey Question: On a typical day, what are some of the at-home or shopping-related challenges you face — and how might major brands you purchase help with these day-to-day issues?

Common themes found in the responses:

- Improving product availability
- Faster shipping and product delivery
- Offering more online coupons
- Better focus on sustainability

Select quotes:

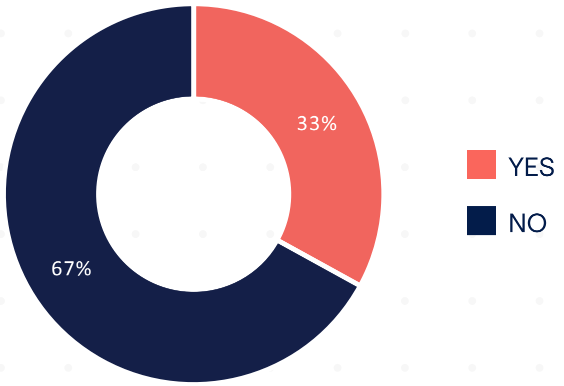
- "All the shopping is online now, so having online coupons is helpful."
- "Availability of the product."
- "Better visibility of inventory in local stores. What is actually available when you want to go get it curbside."
- "Biggest problem is items I need not being in stock."
- "Buying clothes online for myself is tricky because of sizing and not all return policies are easy."
- "Companies need to offer faster curbside pickup and reduce waste from all the shipping boxes and delivery trucks driving around."
- "Delivery fees online."
- "Delivery schedule."
- "Delivery speeds, sizing for apparel purchased online, I would be open to more widely available home delivery services in my area."
- "Do they have curbside pickup. Do they protect their staff/workers."
- "Don't have much time to shop online or going to store, need new ideas especially for preparing meals."
- "Figure out ways to balance the work-life balance."
- "Finding all of the items that I used to find at the grocery store or pharmacy. The online availability is lower."
- "Finding product to actually look at as more brick and mortar stores close."
- "Finding specific goods."
- "Focus more on sustainability."
- "Free delivery and curb side pickup options."
- "Groceries are still a challenge for us. I think a grocery subscription would be helpful."
- "Having a minimum to place an order."
- "Having a quick response time. Easy to reach."
- "I keep being surprised how many retailers, especially smaller local brands, don't have the capability for customers to buy online."
- "I will always prefer the in-store retail experience when shopping for apparel/shoes, mainly because sizing and fit are a challenge. If more brands offered a try before you buy option, I'd be more inclined to stick with the ecommerce experience."
- "Lack of ability to have time alone."

- "Lower hurdles on delivery, i.e., minimums."
- "More same-day delivery delivery without huge delivery fees."
- "Not being able to see or find a full description like I'd be able to find on the product box."
- "Not being able to see the actual product in person before buying it."
- "Not being able to try things in store, i.e., makeup. Companies could send samples to consumers before they buy the products."
- "Online shopping for food doesn't allow me to always choose the food brands I like or preferred type/condition of produce. I can't try clothing on or see the true color of furniture and housewares and I don't like returning products. Make returns easier by always providing a return label and offering pick up for returns vs. having to take them to a shipping center."
- "Price comparison takes time to jump from site to site."
- "Real time availability of products be more accurate."
- "Returns. Free shipping of returned items that do not fit or are not what expected."
- "Seeing demonstrations and learning about new products."
- "Shipping and delivery delays."
- "Shopping for groceries online is harder than it should be and time consuming: availability of product, quality of substitutions, hard to find things on the websites."
- "Shopping is more difficult. I really only go to buy online when I know pretty much what I want."
- "Simplify ordering weekly items such as groceries."
- "Sometimes it's hard to replace the assurance of being able to touch and feel a product before purchase."
- "Supply shortages for certain items and having to pay for shipping. Zoom calls are difficult for parents also trying to juggle online school for their children and/or general childcare. The more brands can get innovative to help busy consumers and surprise and delight them, they will remain top of mind."
- "Timing on order pickup or delivery. Getting the actual product that we wanted."
- "Wildly variable prices for the same product depending on who the seller is."

How Life Priorities and Values Have Changed

Survey Question: As a result of the challenges and opportunities faced in 2020, have any of your key life priorities and values shifted or changed which you are willing to share?

One-third of consumers say their life priorities and values have changed as a result of the challenges and opportunities faced in 2020.



Consumers that have changed their priorities and values were asked to explain these changes. Many of the themes in their responses can be grouped in the following areas:

- Spend more time with family and friends
- Focus on health and wellness
- Saving money

Comments:

- "Appreciating simple pleasures."
- "Be a kinder person."
- "Be positive and enjoy every moment of my life and take care of the people around me."
- "Buying more online."
- "Diversity and environment focused."
- "Embrace family more."
- "Family and health."
- "Family is the most important."
- "Figure focus on mental health and wellness, like yoga and relaxation oriented products, as well as many more purchases to keep young kids entertained like craft kits and such."
- "Focusing more on appreciating time with family and in nature."
- "Focusing more on health and friendships."
- "For the first time, I've been able to put more focus on my family/children since we've been home, I could finally slow down and spend a significant amount of time together."
- "I feel like I have disconnected from the rat race."
- "I focus more on my friends and family and those around me I care about."

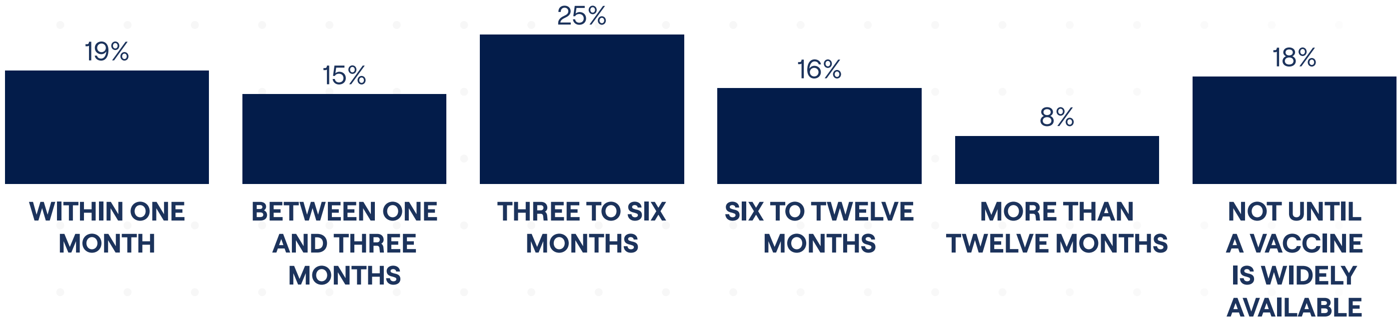
- "I have started valuing money much more."
- "I look forward to socializing more and traveling more."
- "I value eating healthier and living a better quality lifestyle."
- "I value having separation of work and home life; looking forward to commuting into the office and seeing coworkers in person."
- "I would like to experience more with friends now that I have been unable to."
- "I'm more focused on sustainability, and social justice work."
- "More focused on paring down to what's essential."
- "My children were forced to stay home and I became a teacher I didn't know I could be."
- "My values are more big picture spiritual based and living one day at a time."
- "Our family focus is now on experiences vs. objects."
- "Safety is top of mind."

Value of Events and Experiences and Motivation to Participate

When Consumers Will be Willing to Attend In-Person Events and Experience After Restrictions are Lifted

Survey Question: How soon will you be willing to attend an in-person event or experience after restrictions are lifted?

A total of 34% of the consumers that responded to the survey say they will need up to three months after pandemic related restrictions are lifted before attending an in-person event and experience. Twenty-five percent indicate they feel they will need between three and six months.



What Motivates Consumers to Participate in Brands' Events

Survey Question: What typically motivates you to participate in or attend events and experiences?

Pre-event advertising most often prompts over half of the consumer survey respondents to attend events and experiences. Word of mouth from family and friends is also a factor according to 46% of the respondents.

	%
I SAW AN ADVERTISEMENT AND INTENTIONALLY WENT TO IT AS A RESULT	52%
MY FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER USUALLY ASKED ME TO ATTEND WITH THEM	46%
IT WAS AT AN EVENT I WAS ALREADY ATTENDING	38%
I STUMBLED UPON IT	27%
OTHER	4%

Product Category Promoted at the Event

Survey Question: What type of product category was promoted at the recent events you attended?

Overall, food and beverage sectors are the product categories that the largest percentage of the respondents said their recent event covered.

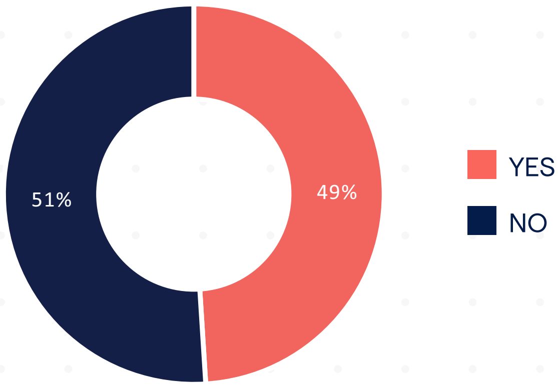
	%
PREPARED FOOD	30%
BEER/ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES	28%
PACKAGED FOOD PRODUCTS	26%
SODA	19%
APPAREL/CLOTHING	18%
HEALTH AND BEAUTY AIDS	17%
GAMING	14%
OTHER ELECTRONICS	14%
MOBILE PHONES	13%
HOME GOODS AND HOUSEWARES	12%
NON-SODA BEVERAGES	10%
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT	10%
JOINING/APPLYING FOR AN ORGANIZATION OR COMPANY	10%
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	9%
ECOMMERCE/WEBSITE	9%
TRAVEL COMPANY	9%
CARS/TRUCKS	8%
HOME FURNISHINGS	7%
OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS	6%
MOTORCYCLES OR OTHER VEHICLES	3%
OTHER	9%

Perception Changes and Event and Experiential Impact on Purchasing

Before Attending Recent Brand Event or Experience, Percentage of Consumers that Were Previous Customers

Survey Question: Thinking about the most recent event you participated in, were you already a consumer of this brand?

Just under half of the respondents said they were already consumers of the brand that held the event and experience they attended.



After Attending, Percentage of Consumers Buying or Using Products/Services More or Differently

Survey Question: As a result of attending the event are you buying or using the product/service more or differently?

Forty percent of consumers say they or a family member are now buying the product or service more often as a result of attending the event or experience.

	%
I'M BUYING IT MORE	40%
SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD OR FAMILY IS BUYING IT MORE	29%
I/WE FOUND NEW USES FOR THE PRODUCT WE LEARNED AT THE EVENT	29%
I'M ENGAGING WITH THE BRAND IN MORE/DIFFERENT WAYS	26%
OTHER	6%

How Consumers Engage with Brands in Different Ways After Attending an Event

Survey Question: Please describe how you're engaging with the brand in more or different ways.

Many consumers responded to this write-in question by stressing they now view brands' social media feeds and content development, as well as now use the product or service in a different way.

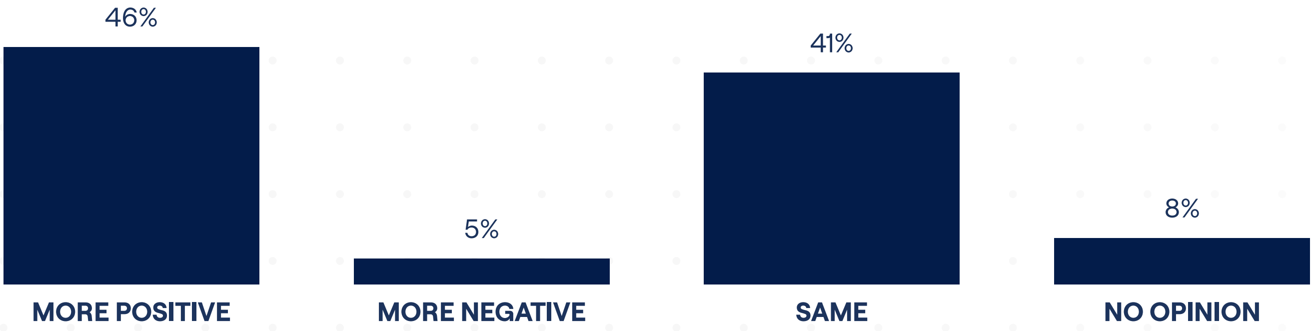
Select comments:

- "Discovered new products they sell in addition to the ones I already used."
- "Have more contact with the company staff."
- "I am just trying something different."
- "I follow their social media and subscribe to their newsletter."
- "I follow them on social media as a result and I've kept an eye out for the product in stores more than I would have otherwise."
- "I have started using other products of the brand that I wasn't using before."
- "I'm engaging to learn more and possibly purchasing if enough value is demonstrated."
- "Using social media to get product information."

Feelings About Brand, Product or Service After Attending the Event

Survey Question: How did you feel about the company, brand or product/service that provided the event or activities after you participated?

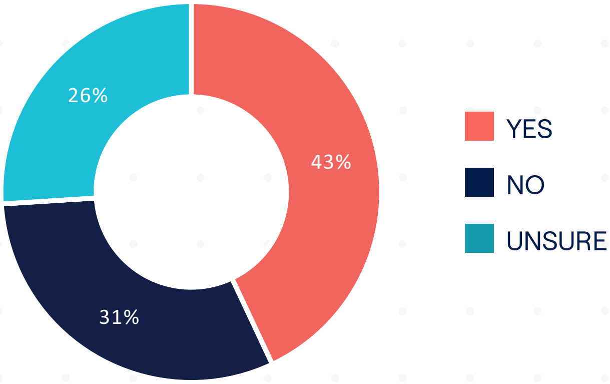
Forty-six percent of consumers say they tend to feel more positive about a brand or product/service after participating in a brand-run event or activity.



Do Consumers Feel More Loyal to a Brand After Attending an Event?

Survey Question: Do you feel you are more loyal to the brand after attending the event?

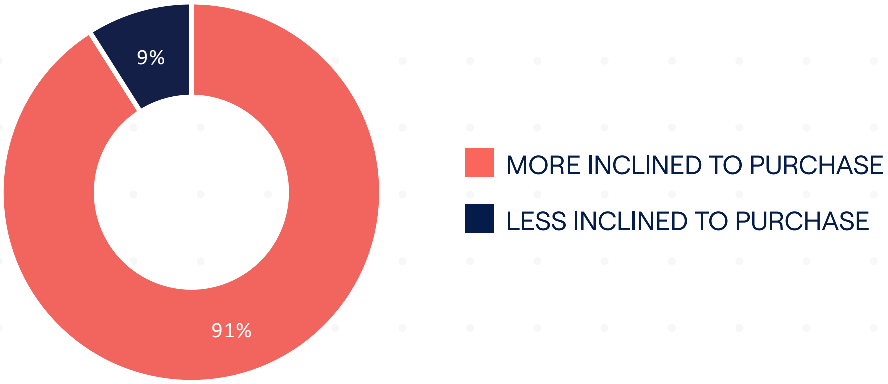
Over 40% of consumers feel they become more loyal to brands after attending their events and experiences.



Did Participating in the Event Make Consumers More Inclined to Purchase

Survey Question: Assuming the product or service displayed or demonstrated at the event was one you were interested in, did participating in the event make you more or less inclined to purchase?

In a time of pandemic, and with many consumers consuming a significantly larger amount of digital content and information, the impact of in-person events and experiences on purchase inclination also remains powerful in the minds of consumers. Ninety-one percent said in early 2021 that, assuming the product/service demonstrated was one they were interested in, participating in events makes them more inclined to purchase.



Why More Inclined to Purchase

Survey Question: If you are purchasing this product more, or feel you are more inclined to purchase, please indicate why?

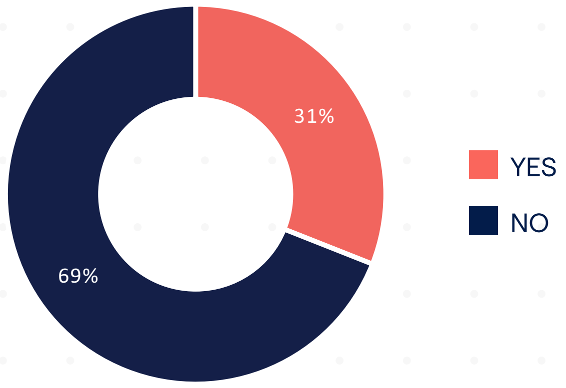
It's straightforward: if a consumer likes the products being promoted at events and experiences they are highly likely to purchase. After attending events and experiences consumers are primarily more inclined to purchase if they try a sample or use the product, and like it, after gaining a better understanding of the product features and benefits.

	%
I TRIED THE PRODUCT AND LIKED IT	57%
PRODUCT BENEFITS	46%
DISCOUNT, COUPON OR SPECIAL OFFER	41%
PRODUCT FEATURES	40%
FREE GIVEAWAY	32%
LEARNED PRODUCT WAS BETTER THAN OTHER PRODUCTS	29%
EXPERIENCE AREA WAS COMFORTABLE, RELAXING	22%
ABILITY TO PLAY A GAME OR ENTER CONTEST	8%
OTHER	2%

Percentage of Consumers that Have Paid an Admission Fee to Attend a Brand Event

Survey Question: In the last 24 months, did you pay an admission fee to attend an event or experience put on by a brand or company?

Thirty-one percent of consumers say they have paid an admission fee to attend a brand's event or experience.



Aspects of Brand Events Consumers Particularly Enjoy, Find Fun or Valuable

Survey Question: Which of the following aspects of events and experiences put on by a brand or company do you particularly enjoy, find fun or valuable? (Please check all that apply.)

The top two most enjoyable, fun or valuable aspects to consumers are free samples and receiving special offers. Forty-two percent say that knowledgeable experienced store staff are also valuable.

	%
FREE SAMPLING	62%
SPECIAL OFFERS, DISCOUNTS, COUPONS	53%
KNOWLEDGEABLE EXPERIENCED STORE STAFF OR SPECIALISTS	42%
FUN EXPERIENCES	41%
PRODUCT DEMONSTRATIONS	38%
OTHER GIVEAWAYS	30%
INSTANT SALES INCENTIVES	27%
BEING TREATED AS A VIP, SPECIAL TREATMENT	27%
GAMES, CONTESTS OR DRAWINGS	23%
ENTERTAINMENT OFFERED	21%
PRICING COMPARISON	20%
PRODUCT COMPARISONS WITH COMPETITION	17%
EXCLUSIVE CONTENT AND INFORMATION	16%
UNIQUE THEMED STORE EVENTS	15%
PHOTO SHARING	8%
OTHER	1%

Consumers Describe Memorable Branded Events and Experiences

Consumer Recommendations on How to Improve Brand Events and Experiences

Survey Question: Please describe a particularly memorable event or experience that you have seen or participated in — and describe why it was memorable?

Important themes in the responses include:

- Consumers want to be made to feel special, and in a unique situation
- Demonstrations are effective
- Entertainment-based events are often favored
- Knowledgeable, energetic staff are appreciated
- Accessing samples is very helpful

Select write-in comments:

- "A bourbon tasting in connection with a concert. Made to feel like a VIP with special entry and seating, etc."
- "A store grand opening, was invited as a VIP and was treated as a loyal customer and felt appreciated."
- "A new men's apparel brand demonstration of the product at a technology event, not a fashion event, showing why it's better."
- "Attended a high-end luxury brand event and I was treated like royalty."
- "Auto shows are great with the various types of vehicles with no pressure sales."
- "Being able to use a product guided by staff and then trying to use those same features on the competition's product."
- "Bourbon Tasting. The brand sent five mini bottles of whisky for the virtual party."
- "Customer service, the employee knowing the product, pushing it and being personable."
- "Great, energetic, knowledgeable staff."
- "I enjoyed a tasting at a store that offered a personalized laser etched bottle with purchase."
- "Impressive robotics demonstrations."
- "In-person demonstration of technology by a vendor. It allowed for personal interaction."
- "It was a product launch and it was very well done. The brand sent samples of the product so I had something in my hand as it was being demonstrated."
- "Learning the benefits of a new product and having a sample to take home led to repeat purchases of product."
- "Make me feel like I am only one there. Personable."
- "An athletic shoe brand has sponsored group runs from my local running store, allowing runners to test shoes and giving away t-shirts or hats."
- "Photo booths to let me get a free picture, it's great, memorable to have a picture."
- "Smaller instruction with the ability to see the product in use and audience was able to participate and ask questions."
- "The interaction with others. Shared experiences create meaning and connection."
- "The most memorable events all shared the same underlying characteristic which was the staff was inviting and the atmosphere of the event was welcoming."
- "When things are colorful and there's good music, it tends to stay in my mind longer."

II. Brand Findings

The brand survey data and insights are provided in this section. The findings are presented in five main sub-sections:

- Impact of the Pandemic on Event and Experiential Marketing Programs
- Goals and Budgets for Event and Experiential Marketing Programs
- ROI and Measurement
- Fee-Based Events and Consumer Purchases
- Challenges and Opportunities

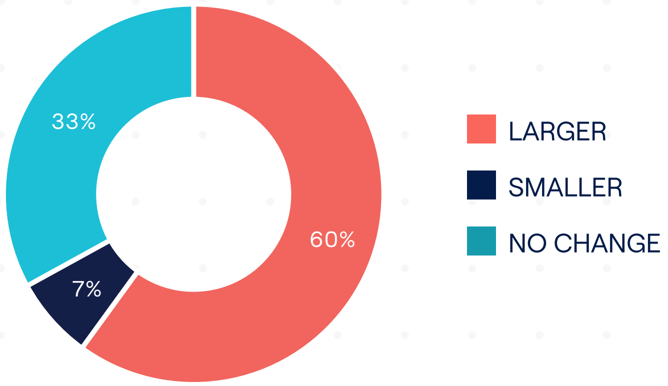
Impact of the Pandemic on Event and Experiential Marketing Programs

It has been well documented that the pandemic's impact on live in-person events and gatherings has been severe and is still a major challenge with many unknowns. This section quantifies this impact, the shift to digital/virtual events, supply chain disruptions, how KPIs have changed—and the impact of this challenging period on brand purpose.

Event and Experiential Marketing Planning Before the Pandemic

Survey Question: Before the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak was your company planning to execute a larger or smaller number of event and experiential programs in 2020 compared to 2019?

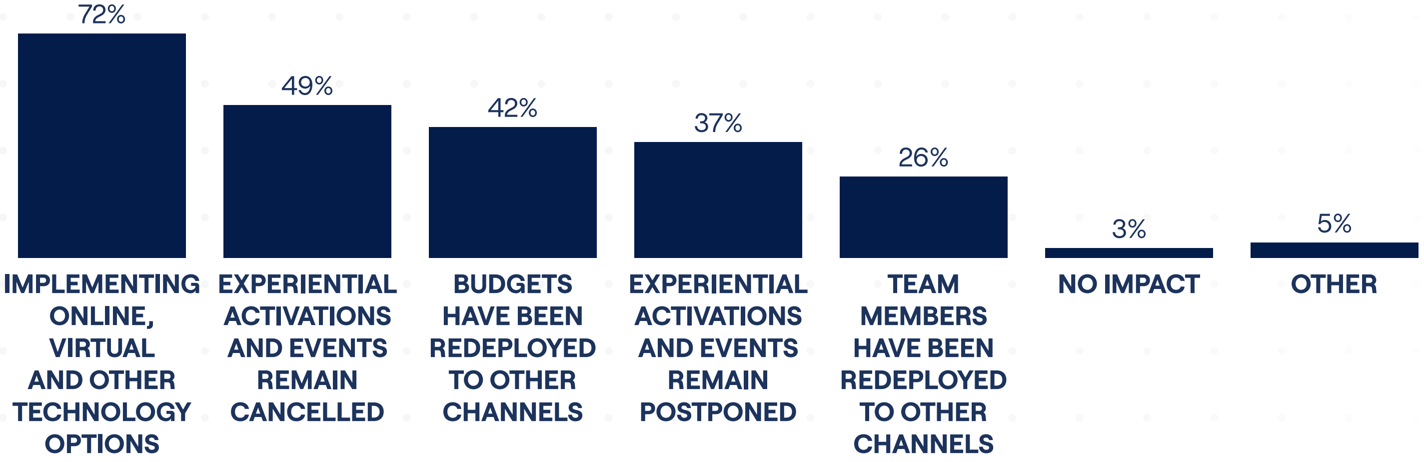
The survey finds that prior to the pandemic, in early 2020, 60% of brands had been planning to run a larger number of event and experiential programs compared to 2019. One-third were expecting the number to be about the same, and only 7% were planning to execute fewer programs.



Pandemic Impact on Event and Experiential Marketing

Survey Question: How has the COVID-19 outbreak impacted your organization's experiential and event marketing operations and related activities and business plans?

As of early 2021, the impact of the pandemic is still a major challenge for brands with in-person events and experiences with many municipalities still limiting large gatherings and many unknowns about the roll-out of vaccination programs. As of early 2021, 72% of brands say, in response, they are implementing online, virtual and other event technology options to stay connected and provide information to customers, audiences and communities. Forty-two percent indicate that event and experiential budgets have been redeployed to other channels, and 26% say that some event team members have been redeployed to work on other marketing channels.



Channels that Have Received Redeployed Event and Experiential Marketing Funds

Survey Question: What channels have received redeployed event and experiential marketing funds?

Besides digital/virtual events, digital and content marketing channels have received most of the shifted in-person budget funding. The data table compares the survey data gathered in early 2021 and the summer of 2020. Over that roughly six month period digital advertising in particular looks to have increased in importance to brands, in terms of receiving redeployed event and experiential marketing funds.

	2021	2020	*Difference*
DIGITAL/VIRTUAL EVENTS	58%	62%	*-4%*
DIGITAL ADVERTISING	34%	26%	*+8%*
CONTENT MARKETING	25%	28%	*-3%*
SEO	15%	11%	*+4%*
CREATIVE	15%	14%	*+1%*
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	12%	10%	*+2%*
INFLUENCER MARKETING	11%	13%	*-2%*
TV ADVERTISING	6%	3%	*+3%*
MARTECH	5%	5%	*0%*
RADIO ADVERTISING	1%	3%	*-2%*
OTHER	5%	6%	*-1%*
DON'T KNOW	16%	10%	*+6%*
NOT APPLICABLE	11%	18%	*-7%*

How Goals and KPIs Changed with the Pivot to Digital/Virtual Events

Survey Question: How have your live in-person event goals and KPIs changed with a pivot to digital/virtual events?

This was an open-ended question. Some of the key themes in the responses include:

- Emphasis on engagement
- Content enhancement focus
- Expanded audience reach potential
- Same KPIs, but with either larger or smaller audiences expected or experienced
- Different ROI calculations and conversion rates
- Reduced focus on networking
- Digital/virtual events allow for more immediate data capture

Select verbatim responses:

- "Across the board reduction of expectations and results, but from similar KPIs."
- "Change in revenue expectations, higher expectations of survey result data from event, lower sponsors expectations."
- "Especially as we move into 2021, there is so much Zoom fatigue that we have seen a precipitous decline in registrations and participation in digital events. We will not be participating in most digital events this year."
- "Expect higher attendance but lower conversion rates."
- "Focusing on engagement."
- "Historically networking was a huge goal and KPI for all of our events. This has changed, so quality content is more important than ever."
- "In 2020, we kept our virtual conferences free so we could build our event database for live events in 2021. We wanted to expand our database to find those who wouldn't necessarily pay for a live event in the past to provide them with a reason to attend a live event."
- "Increased potential reach goals. Decreased revenue goals. Decreased time spent at the event."
- "Increased target reach, pivot from net new opportunities to deal acceleration."
- "KPIs have become more data-focused since we're able to retrieve usable data from virtual events and put that toward how we market our brand and implement new strategies."
- "Larger/broader audience is higher priority, amount of engagement/consumption are new measures."
- "Lower expectations, expect Zoom fatigue."
- "More personal invitations; goal of higher attendance; more broadcast production quality; lower expectation of sponsorship money and attendance fees."
- "More top-of-funnel lead generation goals and less focus on high-touch."
- "Most likely looking at integrating hybrid conferences or how to integrate the virtual world more into our live experiences."
- "Our benchmarks increased in terms of reach and interactions for virtual events compared to live events. We also understand the quality of the interactions may be slightly lower."

Will Shift to Digital/Virtual Events Be Temporary?

Survey Question: Do you expect the shift to digital/virtual programming from live events will be temporary or permanent?

The response to this question shows that brands generally fall into three groups in terms of the outlook for the permanency of the shift from in-person to digital/virtual events. Just over one-third (37%) expect the pivot to be temporary, while 31% feel it will be permanent post-pandemic. Yet, nearly a final one-third of the industry are simply unsure of the outlook as of early 2021. Below, the new findings are compared with the data captured in mid-2020. There has been a 14-point drop in the percentage of brand personnel that feel the shift to digital/virtual programming from live events will be temporary. Also note the increase in the percentage of brand executives over the year that are still unsure.

	2021	2020	*Difference*
TEMPORARY	37%	51%	*-14%*
PERMANENT	31%	22%	*+9%*
UNSURE	32%	27%	*+5%*

How Goals and KPIs Changed with Pivots to Other Marketing Channels

Survey Question: How have your live in-person event and experiential marketing goals and KPIs changed with a pivot to other channels?

This open-ended question generated a diverse range of responses. Key themes in the write-in comments include:

- Ability to potentially reach larger audiences
- Focus on total audience, total views and viewing/engagement time
- Emphasizing digital advertising and social media
- Increased and improved email marketing

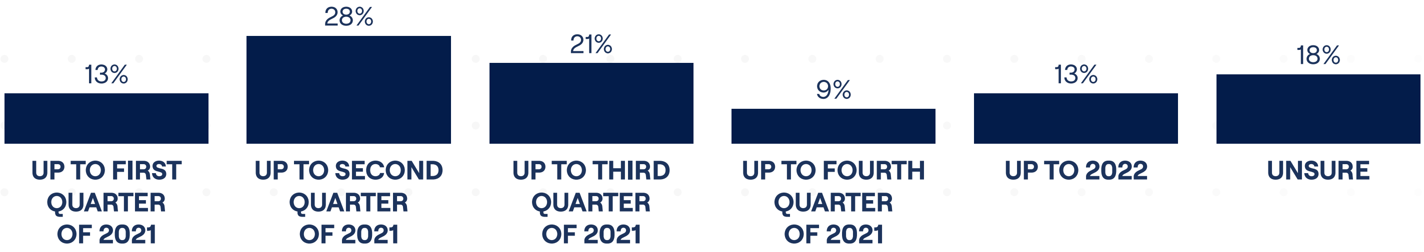
Select verbatim responses:

- "Adding in sentiment for virtual events. Click-throughs and views for content."
- "Demand generation is the hardest achievable KPI, which should move us to understanding the greater value of brand, thought leadership and awareness events in virtual."
- "Focused on quality of the engagement and sales."
- "Focusing on virtual and email marketing."
- "Increasing growth goals due to broader audience with which we can engage."
- "Instead of throwing together weak virtual events, we moved budget to researching future different deeper events."
- "It's much harder as there is no single solution that gives you everything a live event does."
- "KPIs have not changed."
- "KPIs now include lead generation and soft engagements."
- "Less focus on volume and shift toward more meaningful and authentic relationship building for a stronger foundation."
- "Many just paused waiting to return to in-person."
- "More campaign-based marketing, coordination with account teams to map out a virtual strategy."
- "More emphasis on digital outreach and amplification."
- "More funds and resources to digital advertising and campaigns to promote products."
- "More SEO optimization, redesigning user interface."
- "Much more about viewership and view-time, rather than other perception metrics."
- "Smaller more intimate settings for the right consumer/product vs. massive large scale events that would maybe not be the right person."
- "Social media channels have been amped up and digital marketing. Our vehicle reveals have all been virtual and PR driven events have been scaled back."
- "Still trying to make the virtual events experiential."
- "There's much more of an emphasis on full-funnel and integrated campaigns, rather than experiential functioning in its own silo."
- "We focused on retention metrics vs. lead-gen efforts."
- "We have added networking groups/increased webinars."

In-Person Experiential Marketing Cancelations Period

Survey Question: If you have cancelled many of your experiential marketing activations, what has been the time period of cancellations?

This survey question is another example of the varying approaches brands have taken in response to the challenges and unknowns due to the pandemic. This question gauges the time period of event and experiential program cancellations in 2021 and up to 2022. A total of 41% of brands say their in-person programs are cancelled in the first quarter and up to the second quarter of 2021, suggesting that they may re-activate these in the second half of 2021. A total of 30% say their in-person events are cancelled up to the fourth quarter of 2021.



In-Person Experiential Marketing Postponement Period

Survey Question: If you have postponed many of your experiential marketing activations, what has been the time period of postponements, and when are you planning to reactivate these programs?

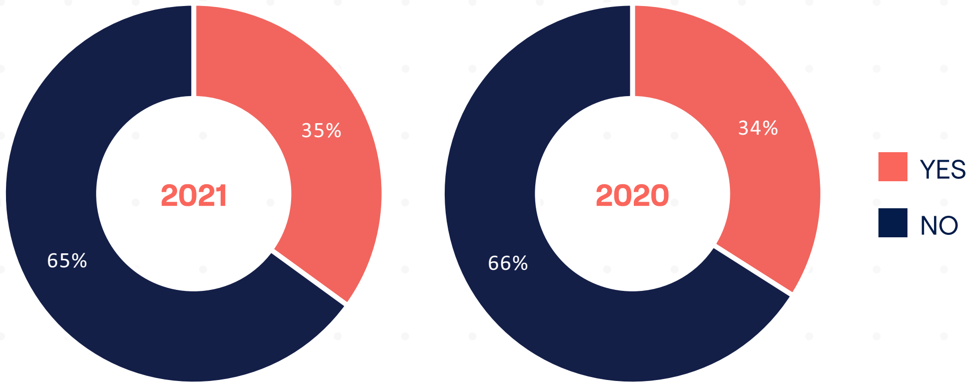
Just over one-third of brands are still unsure about their live event re-scheduling plans, and just under half have even set their actual reactivation schedule. Yet as of early 2021, one-third of brands indicate that their company plans to reactive live in-person events and experiences in 2022.

	Postponement Period	Reactivation Schedule
FIRST QUARTER OF 2021	12%	1%
SECOND QUARTER OF 2021	28%	4%
THIRD QUARTER OF 2021	11%	7%
FOURTH QUARTER OF 2021	9%	8%
2022	6%	33%
UNSURE/STILL RE-SCHEDULING	34%	47%

Has the Pandemic Caused Supply Chain Issues

Survey Question: Has your brand experienced any significant supply chain issues especially related to inventory availability as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak?

Thirty-five percent of brands say they have been dealing with significant supply chain issues impacting inventory. This percentage has not changed much between early 2021 and the summer of 2020 suggesting that this has been a persistent problem for some brands and for manufacturers in particular.



How Supply Chain Issues are Impacting Marketing Plans

Survey Question: If your company has experienced supply chain issues, how has this impacted your marketing plans?

Over 30% of brands with supply chain issues have responded by cutting back marketing spending and/or by changing their marketing mix—and 27% have had to change their messaging. The table compares the two brand survey data sets showing, in the top row, that there has been a reduction in the percentage of brands facing supply chain issues that have, in response, cut back on all of their marketing spending, from 42% in mid-2020 to 35% as of early 2021.

	2021	2020	*Difference*
CUT BACK ON ALL MARKETING SPENDING	35%	42%	*-7%*
CHANGED MARKETING MIX	32%	33%	*-1%*
CHANGED MESSAGING	27%	28%	*-1%*
CUT BACK ON SPECIFIC CHANNELS	25%	22%	*+3%*
CHANGED MEDIA MIX	19%	22%	*-3%*
CUT BACK ON SPECIFIC DEMOGRAPHICS OR REGIONAL TARGETING	13%	13%	*0%*
CHANGED PRICING	13%	19%	*-6%*
NO IMPACT	11%	3%	*+8%*
UNSURE	16%	10%	*+6%*
OTHER	4%	4%	*0%*

Channels Impacted by Supply Chain Issues

Survey Question: What channels have been most impacted by supply chain issues?

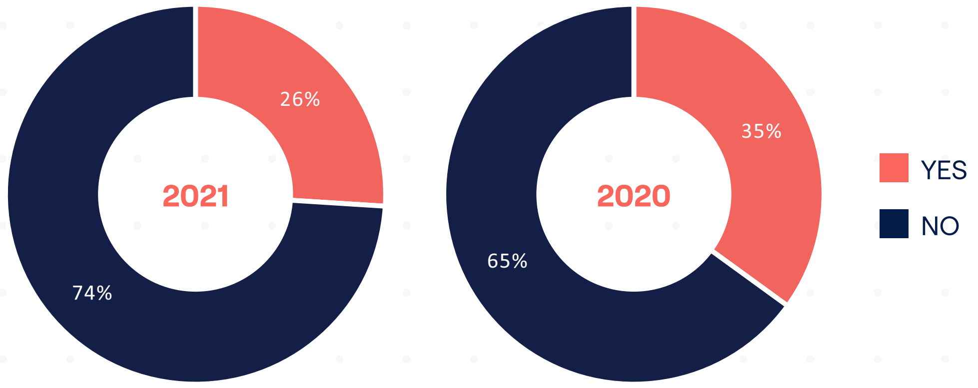
The primary marketing channels impacted by supply chain problems have been creative, selected by 25% of brands with supply issues. Note the very significant change in the percentage of brands indicating that TV advertising has been impacted by supply chain issues. In 2020, 57% of brands noted that TV advertising was being impacted at that time, assuming either put on hold or pivoted with new messaging or entirely new spots. But by the start of 2021 this percentage had dropped to only 13%. Advertising and marketing strategies and messaging shifted dramatically in 2020 for many companies, and in many ways are still in flux in 2021.

	2021	2020	*Difference*
CREATIVE	25%	14%	*+11%*
DIGITAL/VIRTUAL EVENTS	19%	29%	*-10%*
DIGITAL ADVERTISING	19%	14%	*+5%*
CONTENT MARKETING	19%	29%	*+10%*
MARTECH	19%	0%	*+19%*
TV ADVERTISING	13%	57%	*-44%*
SEO	13%	14%	*-1%*
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	13%	43%	*-30%*
RADIO ADVERTISING	0%	29%	*-29%*
INFLUENCER MARKETING	0%	14%	*-14%*
DON'T KNOW	13%	0%	*+13%*
OTHER	13%	14%	*-1%*

Has the Pandemic Impacted Brand Purpose?

Survey Question: Has the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak impacted your brand purpose?

Essentially one out of four brands say the pandemic has impacted their brand purpose. Comparing the two brand survey data sets shows that the sense of brand purpose was impacted and reviewed for 35% of brands during the initial phase of the pandemic, but has settled down as of early 2021 to 26% of brands indicating their brand purpose has been impacted in the more recent survey. The survey question below provides write-in responses expanding on how the brand purpose has changed especially related to positioning, communications and activations.



How Brand Purpose Has Changed in Terms of Positioning, Communications and Activation

Survey Question: How has your brand purpose changed from a positioning, communication or activation stand point?

Key themes:

- Many brands have undergone significant brand purpose reviews
- Increased community support and CSR messaging
- Emphasizing sensitivity during a challenging time
- Providing more information and details to consumers and stakeholders

Select comments:

- "All external communication has been highly scrutinized and rationalized, effectively on hold."
- "Distinction between short-term and long-term purposes."
- "Emphasis on community."
- "Even greater focus on solving business problems and moving people to new services quicker in order to combat impact of COVID on businesses."
- "Hasn't really changed, but more of a shift and should accelerate implementation of technology being deployed to provide better experiences."
- "More focus on CSR, more focus on empathy."
- "Our brand has become more core to people's lives following the pandemic. We have become a more integrated brand into day-to-day lives."
- "Positioning our customer's safety is a top priority."
- "Positioning to inform our audience."
- "Sensitive to all messaging about the virus and impact to the communities we serve."
- "Slight focus on being and servicing essential businesses."
- "We are even more focused on hyper-local businesses."
- "We are focusing more on how we help remote teams."
- "We get less direct interaction which was a key goal."
- "We have always been people and community-focused but now even more focused."
- "We have focused more on resilience."
- "We're backing away from mass un-personalized communications that seem to be bombarding our recipients from so many other sources trying to be relevant and focusing on highly curated content driven to the specific needs of the recipient."

Goals and Budgets for Event and Experiential Marketing Programs

Clearly, as a result of the unprecedented challenges faced in 2020, marketing budgets and event and experiential budgets in particular were significantly impacted unlike any other period in modern history. This section covers this impact with both a look back to pre-pandemic event and experiential budgets, and a look forward to when restrictions are lifted and live in-person events are reactivated.

Brands' Primary Event Marketing Goals

Survey Question: Which of the following best describes your organization's event and experiential marketing goals and strategies?

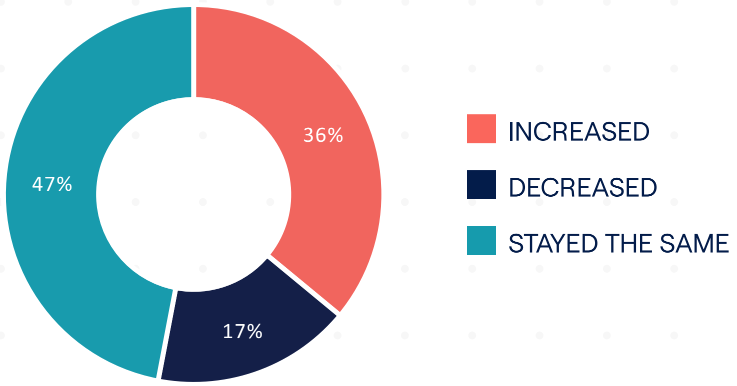
The data table compares the early 2021 findings with the same question asked in the 2018 edition of the EventTrack study. Over this time the top goals and strategies for events and experiences have remained similar, although there have been a small uptick in the percentage of brands that say their top focus is on increasing or creating brands awareness. The biggest changes over this multi-year period characterized by rapid growth followed by a full-stop in 2020 are seen in the percentage of brands say that using events to generate social media activity and create content has actually become a little less important.

	2021	2020	*Difference*
INCREASE / CREATE BRAND AWARENESS	69%	67%	*+2%*
INCREASE SALES	67%	69%	*-2%*
ENHANCE PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING	56%	52%	*+4%*
INFLUENCE DEEPER CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT	50%	53%	*-3%*
GATHER LEADS	49%	51%	*-2%*
LAUNCH NEW PRODUCTS	45%	46%	*-1%*
GENERATE SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY	32%	39%	*-7%*
INCREASE WEBSITE TRAFFIC	25%	23%	*+2%*
GENERAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS / PRESS COVERAGE	25%	29%	*-4%*
CREATE CONTENT	25%	32%	*-7%*
CONDUCT RESEARCH, LEARN	19%	17%	*+2%*
IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP INFLUENTIAL BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS BRAND AMBASSADORS	18%	16%	*+2%*
CHANGE PERCEPTION	14%	20%	*-6%*
IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP INFLUENTIAL CONSUMER-BASED BRAND AMBASSADORS	11%	18%	*-7%*
INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS OF OTHER MEDIA	10%	17%	*-7%*
GENERATE TRIAL	9%	15%	*-6%*
OTHER	2%	5%	*-3%*

Pre-Pandemic Event and Experiential Budget Changes

Survey Question: Before the COVID-19 outbreak, had your organization's total 2020 event and experiential marketing budget increased, decreased or stayed the same compared to 2019?

Before the pandemic started to impact North America, a total of 83% of brands had their 2020 event and experiential marketing budgets set to stay the same or increase compared to 2019. The overall average budget had increased by 2% according to the respondents to this survey.



Why Budget Had Been Decreasing Pre-Pandemic

Survey Question: If your budget had been decreasing prior to the outbreak, why?

The brands that had cut back on events and experiences prior to the outbreak were either simply running a smaller number of events and activations or had some of their budget moved to other channels, but both of these actions were pursued by a relatively small percentage of the industry.

	%
WE ARE DOING LESS EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVATIONS AND EVENTS	15%
EXPERIENTIAL AND EVENT BUDGETS HAVE BEEN USED FOR OTHER CHANNELS AND ACTIVITIES	10%
WE ARE DOING SMALLER EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVATIONS AND EVENTS	8%
COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH ACTIVATING EXPERIENTIAL EVENTS ARE DECREASING	7%
OTHER	3%
NOT APPLICABLE — BUDGET HAD NOT BEEN DECREASING	76%

Why Pre-Pandemic Budget Had Been Increasing

Survey Question: If your budget had been increasing, were the increased funds...

Most of the increased funds pre-pandemic were funded directly by corporate and were not coming out of other marketing budget channel allocations.

	%
GETTING FUNDED DIRECTLY BY CORPORATE AND NOT OUT OF OTHER MARKETING BUDGET BUCKETS	22%
COMING FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE MARKETING MIX	12%
OTHER	4%
NOT APPLICABLE	62%

Post-Pandemic Budgets are Expected to Rebound to Pre-Outbreak Levels

Survey Question: After the impact of COVID-19 outbreak subsides and restrictions are lifted, how do you think your future experiential marketing investment will change?

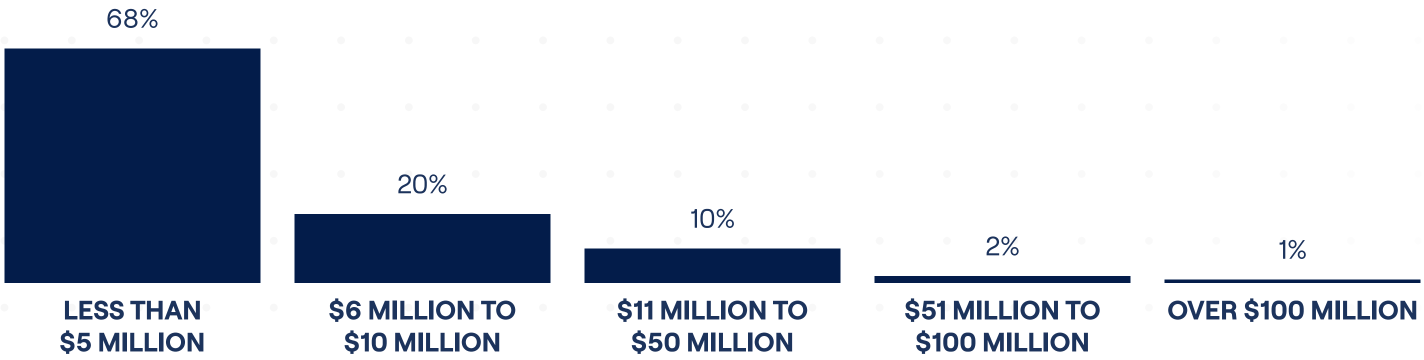
The findings here provide some of the best news for the live events industry during a very challenge period. Sixty-one percent of brands believe their live in-person event and experiential marketing budgets will be reinstated to a level similar to what they were before the pandemic, and 20% expect their funding to be increased from that level. The fact that this data should be very good news for the event and experiential marketing industry is underscored by the one-year comparison below. The total percentage of brands expecting their post-pandemic budgets to rebound to pre-pandemic levels, or be even larger, jumped from 63% in the summer of 2020 to 81% as of early 2021. This reflects growing confidence in the future of the industry and significant pent-up demand for face-to-face marketing activations and networking.

	2021	2020	*Difference*
INCREASE	20%	9%	*+11%*
REBOUND TO LEVEL SIMILAR TO BEFORE THE OUTBREAK	61%	54%	*+7%*
DECREASE	19%	37%	*-18%*

Event and Experiential Marketing Budget Size Pre-Pandemic

Survey Question: Please provide an estimate for your organization's total event and experiential marketing budget size in 2020 or the most recent fiscal year before the COVID-19 outbreak.

The chart here provides the industry budget level breakouts prior to the pandemic. A total of 13% had budgets over $11 million.



In-Store Sampling Programs

Survey Question: Are your in-store sampling programs continuing, cancelled or on hold?

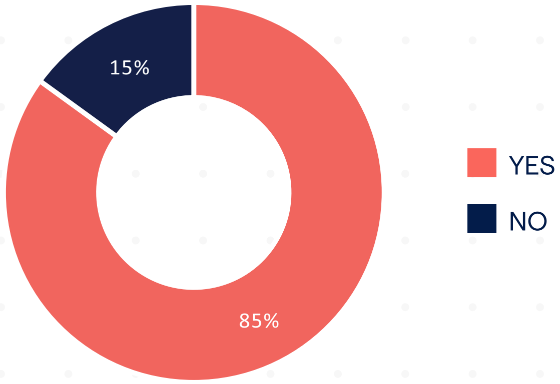
This data table provides the entire response as well as the data calculated for only those brands with in-store sampling programs.

	2021	Brands with In-Store Sampling
CONTINUING	3%	13%
CANCELLED	6%	26%
ON HOLD/POSTPONED	14%	61%
NOT APPLICABLE	77%	–

Event and Experiential Marketing are a Key Part of Integrated Marketing Campaigns

Survey Question: Is event and experiential marketing a part of your company's overall integrated marketing campaigns?

A large percentage of brands (85%) say their event and experiential marketing programs are a part of their company's overall integrated marketing campaigns.



Role of Experiential in Integrated Marketing Campaigns

Survey Question: What role does experiential marketing play as part of your company's overall integrated marketing campaigns?

Just over two-thirds of brands indicate their event and experiential marketing programs are a supporting channel for their company's integrated marketing campaigns.

	%
SUPPORTING CHANNEL	67%
PRIMARY MARKETING CHANNEL	27%
CORE CREATIVE IDEA	17%
OTHER	1%

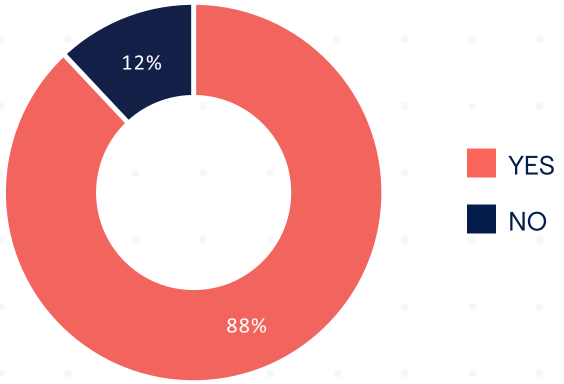
ROI and Measurement

This data covering ROI and measurement was collected in July 2020.

Percentage of Brands Measuring Their Events and Experiences

Survey Question: Does your organization measure the effectiveness of your event and experiential marketing programs?

Eighty-eight percent of brands measure the effectiveness of their event and experiential marketing programs.



Measurement Criteria Used by Brands to Evaluate Events and Experiences

Survey Question: What criteria do you use to measure your events and experiences?

	%
TOTAL NUMBER OF ATTENDEES/VISITORS/PARTICIPANTS	87%
ATTENDEE EVALUATIONS AND EVENT FEEDBACK	70%
LEADS GENERATED AT OR AS A RESULT OF THE EXPERIENCE	59%
RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)	55%
SALES GENERATED WITHIN A DEFINED TIME PERIOD AT OR AFTER THE EXPERIENCE	49%
TOTAL OVERALL SALES RELATED TO THE EVENT (OVER PRODUCT/SERVICE LIFE CYCLE)	45%
DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT ONLINE BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE EVENT	44%
ATTENDEE SATISFACTION	44%
BRAND PERCEPTION AND PLANNED ACTION CHANGES BY ATTENDEES/PARTICIPANTS	42%
SALES GENERATED DIRECTLY AT THE EXPERIENCE	39%
PRESS COVERAGE, PUBLIC RELATIONS IMPACT	39%
ENGAGEMENT IN SPECIFIC ON-SITE DEMOS OR DIGITAL ELEMENTS	38%
DWELL TIME (TOTAL TIME SPENT INSIDE THE ACTIVATION)	31%
RETURN ON OBJECTIVES (ROO)	27%
REDEMPTIONS OF INCENTIVES OR SPECIAL OFFERS	26%
TIME SPENT WITH THE PRODUCT OR EXPERIENCE BY ATTENDEES/PARTICIPANTS	26%
PRESS COVERAGE, IMPACT	26%
COST PER LEAD	25%
PHOTOS TAKEN, SENT, DOWNLOADED	22%
MOVEMENT PATTERNS THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE OR EVENT	15%
COST PER SALE	13%
COUPON REDEMPTION	10%
OTHER	2%

Measurement Time Period After Events and Experiences

Survey Question: How long after an event and experience do you measure that program's effectiveness?

Over half of brands measure their program effectiveness within a three month window following the event or experience.

Measurement Methods

Survey Question: What methods do you use to measure your events and experiences?

Surveys and interviews, followed by social media tracking, are the primary event and experiential data capture and measurement methods.

	%
POST-EVENT SURVEYS OR INTERVIEWS	79%
ON-SITE SURVEYS OR INTERVIEWS	56%
ATTENDEE SATISFACTION SURVEYS	56%
SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT AND SHARES MONITORING	45%
FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY	40%
OTHER ATTENDEE EVALUATIONS AND EVENT FEEDBACK	39%
BADGE-SCANNING SYSTEMS	38%
WEBSITE HITS	37%
ON-SITE STAFF WITH TABLETS, CHECK-IN OR REGISTRATION SOFTWARE	33%
NET PROMOTER SCORE	28%
APP DOWNLOADS	24%
GEO-LOCATION BEHAVIOR TRACKING TECHNOLOGIES: RFID, NCF, BLE	18%
SENTIMENT AND MESSAGE RETENTION SURVEYS	11%

Information About Event and Experiential Performance Provided to Senior Management

Survey Question: What specific information do you provide to senior management about the effectiveness of your event and experiential programs?

	%
SALES ACTIVITY REPORTS	62%
SOCIAL MEDIA, DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT AND ACTIVITY	56%
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RATINGS	50%
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION REPORTS	43%
IMPACT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS ON OTHER MARKETING INITIATIVES	37%
PRESS COVERAGE SUMMARY	36%
BRAND ENHANCEMENT/IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	33%
OTHER	4%

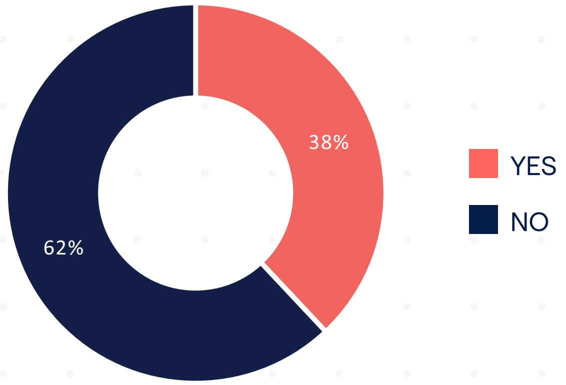
Fee-Based Events and Consumer Purchases

The next few question cover how brands use events and experiences to sell products and services directly to consumers and audiences.

Are Products Sold Direct to Consumers at Events and Experiential Activations?

Survey Question: Do you use events and experiential to sell products direct to consumers/customers?

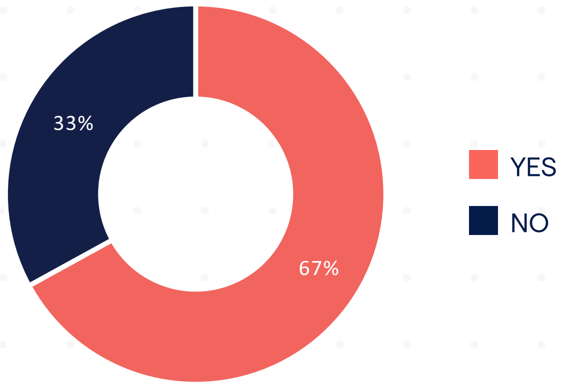
Thirty-eight percent of brands say they sell products direct to consumers/customers at their events and experiences.



Do Consumers Purchase Direct at Branded Events and Experiences

Survey Question: Do consumers/customers purchase products direct from your branded events and experiences?

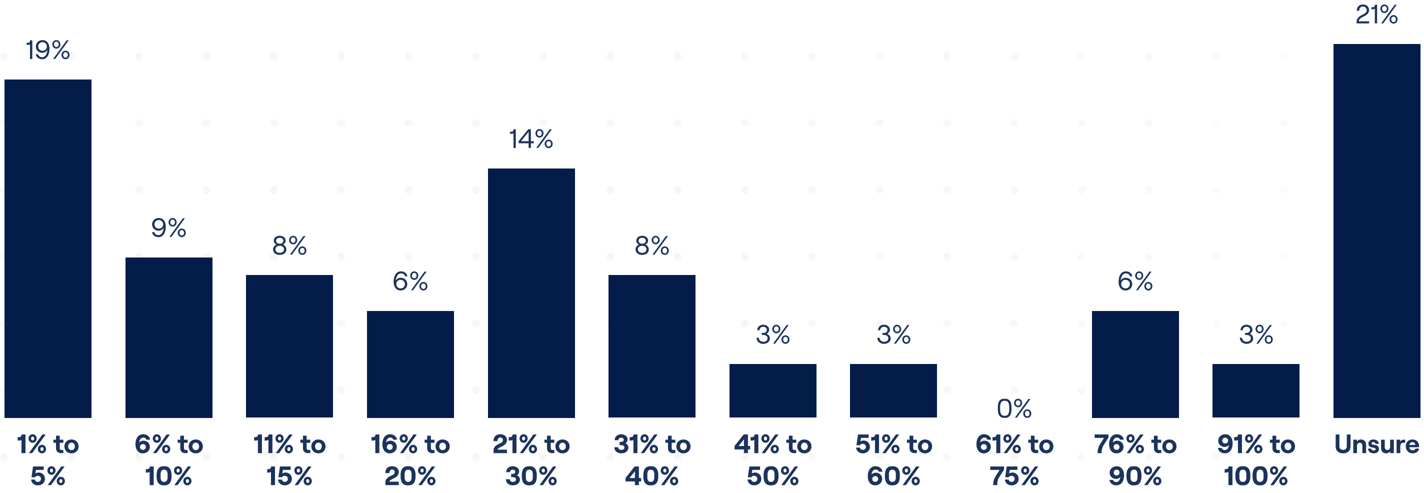
Two-thirds of brands say that consumes/customers area able to purchase directly at their branded events and experiences.



Percentage of Consumers that Purchase On-Site at Events and Experiences

Survey Question: At events and experiences that feature a way for attendees to purchase your products, what percentage of those that engage in your experience purchase on-site?

There is a wide distribution in this response. While 28% of brands say between 1% and 10% of consumers purchase on-site, a total of 39% of brands indicate that between 11% and 50% of attendees purchase on-site. Twenty-one percent of brands say they are unsure.



Challenges and Opportunities

While this period has been very challenging for brands, and for in-person event and experiential groups in particular, there are many opportunities raised as well. Both are covered in this section.

Biggest Post-Pandemic Event Reactivation Challenges

Survey Question: What are the biggest challenges you are facing or expect related to planning events post-Covid?

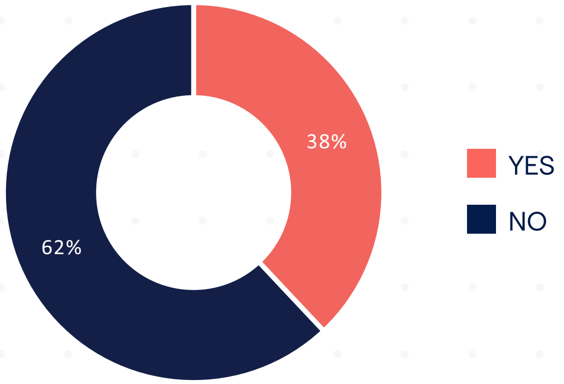
By far, and not surprisingly, the biggest event reactivation challenges are expected to relate to the health and safety of staff, partners and guests.

	1 = Most Important	2	3	4	5	6 = Least Important
HEALTH AND SAFETY OF STAFF, PARTNERS AND GUESTS	79%	8%	7%	1%	3%	1%
RELUCTANCE OR HESITATION OF GUESTS TO ATTEND LIVE IN-PERSON EVENTS	41%	33%	14%	6%	3%	1%
UNCERTAINTY OF PLANNING AND LOGISTICS DUE TO VIRUS OUTBREAK	35%	25%	24%	7%	6%	2%
UNFORESEEN AND UNKNOWN FACTORS	22%	22%	27%	12%	10%	7%
EXPENSES FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY PRODUCTS AND PROTOCOLS	18%	25%	23%	13%	11%	10%
TRUST OF OTHER EVENT/EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING PARTNERS/VENDORS TO DELIVER SAFE EVENTS	18%	16%	24%	16%	15%	11%

Significant Business Shifts Directly Resulting from 2020's Challenges

Survey Question: As a direct result of the dynamics faced in 2020, has your company shifted or pivoted what your business does in a significant way?

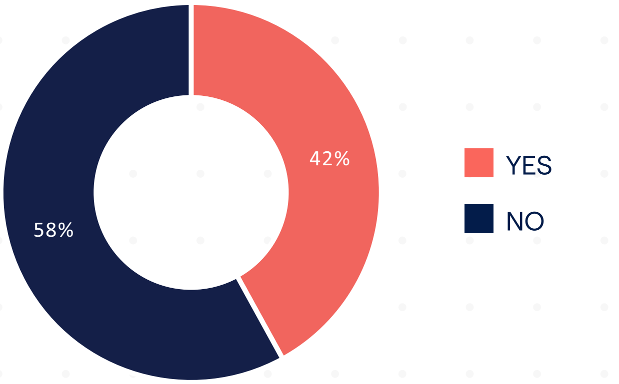
Less than half but a still meaningful 38% of brands say that their company has shifted or pivoted what their business does in a significant way as a direct result of the challenges they faced in 2020.



Percentage of Companies that Developed New Products and Services Due to Challenges Faced in 2020

Survey Question: Has your company developed new products or services as a direct result of dynamics faced in 2020?

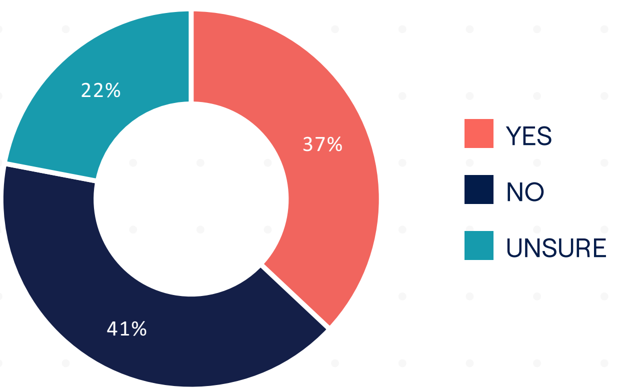
Forty-two percent of the brand respondents say their company has developed new products or services as a direct result of the challenges seen in 2020.



Is Too Much Virtual/Digital Content Flooding Key Markets and Channels?

Survey Question: Overall, do you feel there is too much virtual/digital content being developed in your key markets and channels?

Thirty-seven percent of brand executives feel there is currently too much virtual/digital content being developed in their markets and channels. Although 22% say they are unsure if this is the case.



Important Aspects of Brand Messaging and Marketing Communications

Survey Question: How important are the following aspects of your overall brand messaging and marketing communications?

By far today's top three most important brand messaging themes relate to brand purpose, diversity and inclusion, and their approach to health and safety procedures/protocols. A number of other areas and themes are also considered to be important to brands, suggesting just how many challenges the marketing and communications industry faces today.

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Applicable
BRAND PURPOSE	50%	25%	16%	6%	2%
DIVERSITY & INCLUSION INITIATIVES	42%	23%	19%	7%	3%
APPROACH TO HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURES/ PROTOCOLS (FOR CUSTOMERS AND STAFF)	42%	21%	20%	9%	4%
OVERALL CSR (CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY)	24%	27%	22%	16%	4%
STAFF/TEAM/PARTNER/FRONT-LINE WORKER SUPPORT	23%	24%	31%	9%	6%
CHARITABLE GIVING/SUPPORT	22%	24%	24%	19%	5%
SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES	21%	23%	25%	15%	6%
ESG INVESTMENTS (ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE)	14%	20%	26%	20%	8%

Conclusion: How Brand Marketing Groups Need to Evolve with Changing Consumers

Consumers and audiences had been the driving force in the event and experiential marketing industry for many years—and they will be again. The growth of the industry was directly attributable to the value consumers and attendees received from live in-person events and experiential activations. Going forward as live events pick up steam, how consumers and event attendees respond to brands' health and safety procedures, new activation content and programming elements—and overall approach to what may very well be a new experiential industry—will be absolutely critical.

Below in their own words are recommendations from brands to their colleagues, and the industry as a whole, on how the industry needs to evolve along with rapidly changing consumers. The brand survey posed this question: *How do you feel that brand marketing groups, experiential and beyond, need to evolve along with changing consumers?*

Key themes in many of the responses include:

- Better understand audiences and how they have changed due to the pandemic
- Be aware of how media consumption and purchase behaviors have changed
- Build and strengthen a sense of community tied to events and experiences
- Consider more targeting and personalization
- Be ready to make changes and adjustments quickly
- Remain creative, audience-focused and flexible

Select comments from brands include:

- "Acknowledging that consumers are not going to behave like they did prior to March 2020."
- "Adopt more touch-less approaches and integrate more readily into existing digital marketing tech."
- "Back to the basic design. Where do they want to buy, how do they want to buy, etc."
- "Be more creative, stop saturating the market with the same types of experiences and offerings."
- "Be more targeted in needs based marketing."
- "Be quick to react to different needs of customers as well as different types of customers."
- "Brand marketers have to be way ahead of consumers by bringing them tech-enabled experiences that they never themselves imagined."
- "Build community through offering real interactive events."
- "By staying knowledgeable about their consumers and the content/product they desire and the ways they prefer to consume that content/product."
- "Continue evolving the consumer experience with unique, unexpected, fun activations."
- "Develop a better understanding of how to execute virtual and hybrid events."

- "Expand the vehicles being used to capture customer attention and help smaller businesses stay afloat."
- "Experiential is always about the user journey. Our job is to make that journey as seamless as possible, and ensure that at the end, the brand's objectives are met. This means it's always changing as the customer's needs change."
- "Fresh look at buying motivations, relevancy to lifestyles."
- "Greater recognition of the new working order of WFH and the larger global environment. People are not in the same mindset nor have the same lifestyle. Instead of overloading them and over-saturating, need to be more cognizant of the new balance of home and work, society and work, etc. There needs to be greater human focus."
- "If consumers are hesitant to interact with your brand outside their home, bring your brand to them. I've seen a few different big brands do this in 2020, bringing activations straight to the consumers, and I think it's something a lot of brands may have to do in 2021."
- "It's really about finding a way to reach our customers where they are and providing them with the resources and experiences that make them feel supported and like they're not alone, while also very softly selling our services. We're doing a lot more around wellbeing than I think we would have done before the pandemic."
- "More consumer-focused language: we and you instead of us."
- "More engagement points."
- "More personalization, real understanding of how to execute hybrid."
- "Need to focus on how to make customers' lives easier."
- "There needs to be less quantity and more quality. We're getting too bogged down with everyone trying to do so many virtual events that people are becoming numb to it and not really creating an experience for customers to enjoy."
- "We need to meet customers where they're comfortable. Online, transitioning to small and safe gatherings in controlled environments and more regional than national. Eventually we'll slowly scale up in-person experiences."
- "We need to realize that how a consumer shops is changed for the long term and how they engage at events and activations is also different than before. We need to ensure when someone engages with the brand they feel safe and comfortable."
- "With everything being digital right now (events, shopping, new movies released through subscription services, etc.) everyone is feeling screen fatigue. When your live event becomes a hybrid event it's not one event. Both live and hybrid events need to engage with attendees very differently, and will require more resources to be successful."

About the Consumer and Brand Respondents and Methodology

About the Consumer Respondents

Gender

	%
MALE	42%
FEMALE	57%
OTHER	0%
PREFER NOT TO SAY	1%

Age Ranges

	%
UNDER 25	5%
25 TO 35	29%
36 TO 45	29%
46 TO 55	26%
56 TO 65	9%
OVER 65	2%

Consumers' U.S. Location

	%
U.S. — NEW ENGLAND: CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT	8%
U.S. — MID-ATLANTIC: NJ, NY, PA	20%
U.S. — MIDWEST: IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI	19%
U.S. — GREATER WASHINGTON, DC REGION: DE, DC, MD, VA	2%
U.S. — SOUTH ATLANTIC: FL, GA, NC, SC	22%
U.S. — EAST AND WEST SOUTH CENTRAL: AL, AR, KY, LA, MS, OK, TN, TX, WV	12%
U.S. — MOUNTAIN: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY	2%
U.S. — PACIFIC: AK, CA, HI, OR, WA	16%

Consumers' Canadian Provinces

	%
ONTARIO	52%
QUEBEC	13%
BRITISH COLUMBIA	13%
ALBERTA	7%
SASKATCHEWAN	2%
MANITOBA	3%
NOVA SCOTIA	3%
NEW BRUNSWICK	2%
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND	1%
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR	2%

Types of Events Consumers Participated in Over the Past 24-Months

	%
IN-STORE EVENTS/EXPERIENCES/DEMOS/SAMPLING	62%
TRADE SHOWS/EXHIBITIONS/CONFERENCES	24%
POP-UP STORES	21%
FESTIVALS	21%
SPORTING EVENTS	21%
CORPORATE EVENTS/MEETINGS/CONFERENCE	20%
OUT-OF-STORE RETAIL EVENTS/EXPERIENCES/DEMOS/SAMPLING	19%
CONCERTS	18%
PRODUCT LAUNCH EVENTS	13%
COLLEGE/CAMPUS MARKETING	10%
EVENTS/EXPERIENCES IN COMPANY VEHICLES (MOBILE MARKETING TOURS)	6%
ESPORTS EVENTS	4%
OTHER	10%

About the Brand Respondents

Does Company Primarily Leverage B-to-C or B-to-B Event and Experiential Marketing

	%
B-TO-C	23%
B-TO-B	47%
BOTH	30%

What Percentage of Events and Experiences are B-to-C and B-to-B (Total must add to 100%)

	%
B-TO-C	40%
B-TO-B	60%

Brand Respondents' Industry

	%
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	16%
ENTERTAINMENT AND MEDIA	11%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	7%
CONSUMER ELECTRONICS & MOBILE TECHNOLOGY/TELECOMMUNICATIONS	6%
EDUCATION	6%
MEDICAL, HEALTHCARE AND PHARMACEUTICAL	6%
CONSUMER PRODUCTS	5%
RESTAURANTS AND HOSPITALITY	4%
RETAIL	4%
AUTOMOTIVE AND TRUCKING	3%
SPORTS AND RECREATION	3%
APPAREL	1%
BEVERAGE	1%
OTHER	26%

Company Revenue

	%
LESS THAN $100 MILLION	44%
$100 MILLION TO $1 BILLION	24%
$1 BILLION TO $10 BILLION	16%
$10 BILLION TO $25 BILLION	8%
OVER $25 BILLION	8%

Types of Events and Experiences Utilized by Brand

	%
CORPORATE EVENTS/MEETINGS/CONFERENCES	66%
TRADE SHOWS	62%
SPONSORSHIP ACTIVATIONS	46%
PRODUCT LAUNCH EVENTS	29%
INFLUENCER MARKETING EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES	25%
PRESS EVENTS	21%
IN-STORE EVENTS/EXPERIENCES/SAMPLING/SHOPPER MARKETING	17%
OUTDOOR EXHIBITS	17%
OUT-OF-STORE RETAIL EVENTS/EXPERIENCES/SAMPLING	15%
PRODUCT SAMPLING EVENTS	14%
COLLEGE/CAMPUS MARKETING	14%
FESTIVAL ACTIVATIONS	14%
POP-UP STORES	13%
NIGHTLIFE EVENTS	12%
STREET/ GUERRILLA PROGRAMS	10%
MOBILE MARKETING TOURS (VEHICLE)	9%
BUZZ/WORD-OF-MOUTH PROGRAMS	9%
RETAILTAINMENT EVENTS	5%
ESPORTS	5%
MULTICULTURAL/LGBTQ EVENTS	5%
OTHER	1%

Methodology

Between July 2020 and January 2021, Mosaic and Event Marketer conducted surveys of a cross section of consumers in the U.S. and Canada as well as leading brands. The surveys were conducted via email. The brand respondents were offered an incentive to receive a summary of the findings. The consumer survey received a total of 1,590 responses, and the brand survey received 649 responses.

<u>About the Consumer Survey:</u> The consumer survey received responses from consumers in the U.S. and Canada that recently participated in branded events and experiences. The survey of consumers received 1,590 responses. The gender breakout is split evenly among females and males. Half of the respondents are based in the U.S. and the other half live in Canada.

<u>About the Brand Survey:</u> The brand survey respondents represent many of the largest corporations and brands in the world with experiential marketing programs. The brand survey received 649 responses. The survey polled leading brand marketers at large companies in a range of categories including technology, financial services, retail, beverage, medical and pharmaceutical, entertainment and media, consumer packaged goods, automotive and other important sectors. The confidence level for both surveys is 95%.

About Mosaic

Mosaic is a North American integrated marketing agency that uses our collective creativity and expertise to solve our clients' business challenges. We start at the nexus of culture, creativity and context of where and how people engage with brands. From those insights, we channel the power of integrated ideas to drive commerce and conversion, and ultimately build brands in dimension. By focusing on every touchpoint along the multi-dimensional consumer journey, we create purchase and brand-building opportunities where they didn't exist before.

Our key capabilities — Experiential, Retail & Commerce, Content Development, Brand Development & Design and Assisted Selling & Training, give us the ability to deliver strategic, creative, and effective integrated solutions designed to influence consumer behavior and solve our client's business challenges through all aspects of the funnel.

About Event Marketer

Event Marketer was founded in 2002 to serve the information needs of strategic brand-side event marketers and agency executives across the spectrum of face-to-face marketing. It has become the world's most respected provider of content for the event and trade show industry. Our portfolio includes our flagship magazine, active website with daily content, a bi-weekly newsletter, the annual Experiential Marketing Summit executive conference and Ex Awards, the Experience Design & Technology awards, Experiential Marketing Training Camp, Women in Events Week and more.

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