

# Impact of Digital Marketing Innovation in Competitive Event Industry During Covid-19: Evidence from Malaysia and The United States

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**Abstract**—Events are crucial to the industry’s growth and economic benefits. Nearly 1.5 billion people visit corporate events each year across the world. Even though the event was formerly regarded as the industry’s fastest-growing segment, it is currently undergoing a significant transformation and shift because of the COVID-19 epidemic. Businesses are embracing digital marketing to communicate with their customers during this pandemic catastrophe. As a result, the pandemic has an impact on core ideas and marketing innovations. The objective of the research is to look at the effects of digital marketing in the event industry in Malaysia and the United States (USA) during covid-19. Samples of the study were consumers who attended virtual events in Malaysia and the United States (USA) for a period of two years following the pandemic Covid-19 from 2019 to 2021. This study used a survey questionnaire to obtain the primary data. The study’s findings revealed that digital marketing had an impact on attitude, brand awareness, and trust. Whereas trust is the most critical factor for Malaysian participants, attitude is the most important factor for American participants in generating an intention to attend the event. This study recommends that event planners to develop digital marketing strategies that keep up with new technology developments and shifting customer expectations.

**Keywords**—attitude, brand, trust, behaviour intention, digital marketing

## 1 Introduction

The events industry was previously classified as the fastest-growing segment, and it is currently undergoing a substantial shift and transformation because of the Covid-19 outbreak. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been noted that human behaviours and habits shaped by hundreds of years of experience have undergone significant alterations in a short amount of time [1]. Global events with a high tourist potential have experienced uncertainty and changes, with some being cancelled or postponed [2]. Global events are tourism’s most important pillars, and it has been among the worst affected industries [3]. Throughout the pandemic crisis, businesses used the internet to conduct business, launch new goods, and share experiences.

Some virtual media platforms and mobile applications have shown tremendous growth in recent months. According to Wood [4], 6Connex, a virtual event platform, has grown 1000 percent by organizing 52,000 events and sub-events on social media platforms such as YouTube and Facebook for new product launches, while concurrent meeting platforms like Zoom, Google Meet, Hangout, and WebeX have received quick response during the pandemic crisis.

Covid-19, which was declared a global emergency by the World Health Organization early on, drew a lot of attention from researchers. China, for example, published a large number of publications in important international journals within a short period of time [5]. In the area of event management, professionals and academics have recently conducted research and studies, however, it was mainly focused on workplace digital transformation or work-from-home culture [6]. Studies related to the impact of digital marketing on customer behaviour are still limited and vague. Spending on digital marketing has increased dramatically since the outbreak and marketers are seeking ways to build their brands to generate the necessary leads and revenue. Although businesses must complete this transition as smoothly and painlessly, many other critical ramifications for business continuity are often overlooked, including the impact of Covid-19 on customer behaviour.

Digital marketing is rapidly expanding and being addressed by educators and practitioners all over the world because it enables organisations to build customer relationships by creating online marketing offerings and engaging with them. According to Nidhi [7], digital marketing is one of the easiest ways to build and quickly reach many clients from all around the world as it uses digital resources that make marketing simpler. Similarly, [8] argued that digital and social media marketing influence customers' purchase decisions. However, there is a lack of understanding of the impact of digital marketing on various aspects of consumer behaviour. As a result, more extensive research on the effect of digital marketing on customer behaviour components is required [9]. Accordingly, the current study was considered in order to investigate the impact of digital marketing on each component of customer behaviour, particularly in Malaysia and the United States. In line with the main objective, the following research questions were developed.

RQ1: Does digital marketing directly impact customer behaviour (i.e., attitude, brand awareness, trust, and intention)?

RQ2: Does customer attitude, brand awareness and trust impact behaviour intention?

This paper includes a review of the literature, methodology, findings, discussion, practical implications, and a conclusion.

## **2 Literature reviews**

The challenge of generating and managing events with minimal disruptions throughout the supply chain adds to the complexity of MICE's (Meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions) fragmented nature. Exhibitors and organizers either cancelled or postponed events, meetings, conferences, and trade exhibitions in response to the effects of Covid-19. According to the Center for International Events Research and Training

or CIMERT, 74 nations, predominantly in Europe and the Asia Pacific, have cancelled, rescheduled, or relocated their meetings due to health and safety risks, travel restrictions, and quarantine requirements. This impact would be determined by how long the pandemic lasts, and it might be aggravated further by restrictive measures imposed by the countries across. Similarly, it also had a negative impact on the Visit Malaysia 2020 campaign and resulting in the campaign and events being cancelled. According to Akel [10], digital transformation benefits the economy by increasing productivity, employment, and revenue. Following the current epidemic, social media platforms were inevitably inferred to be a crucial tool for battling and revitalizing the event industry.

## **2.1 Digital innovation changing marketing**

Around the turn of each year, there is always a lot of interest in digital marketing trends and marketing innovation. The year 2022 will be no different, especially as the epidemic has put downward pressure on marketing budgets, forcing marketers to seek out new cost-effective approaches. Due to constantly developing issues linked to changes in competition, markets, technologies, regulations, and the external environment, the innovator's dilemma remains unsolved [11]. In these instances, breakthrough innovations are deemed critical for gaining and maintaining a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

Digital technologies were fast-evolving, affecting how marketers developed plans and communicated with their target audiences. Today, rapid digital innovation has been replaced by the smart use of new marketing technology. Artificial intelligence and automation are beneficial to businesses on several levels. Benefits such as more qualified leads, greater conversions and revenues, and improved user experiences are all promised [12]. These tools, when used in conjunction with digital marketing techniques, allow the company to not only improve the performance of its marketing programs but also to achieve the previously defined corporate goals [13]. Therefore, enterprise digitalization allows businesses to increase the efficiency of their processes, better their marketing tactics, and strengthen their competitive moat in the global marketplace [14].

The use of social media is gradually expanding due to the advanced technology and the ease of access to the sites. Modern firms that offer new content to create loyal customers and expand their brand's reach have altered their engagement mindsets due to social media platforms. Hence, social media serves as a focal point for connecting the volunteers instantaneously. Users that participate in social media marketing tactics actively contribute to marketing initiatives that benefit these platforms [15].

## **2.2 Digital marketing and customer behaviour**

Digital marketing is defined as a wide range of brand marketing initiatives, services, and products, which for the most part, use the internet as a primary promotional medium in addition to smartphones and other promotional media [16]. According to Akel [17], digital marketing enhances the primary benefits of effective event management that improve the quality of life of the event's target audience. The degree of efficacy of managerial functions varies greatly and integrated management functions in event management are critical to a company's success.

The use of social media plays an important role in resurrecting pandemic-induced prejudice and negative opinions of impacted tourist destinations and businesses [18]. Past research suggested that social media and other digital marketing sources such as blogs may help to speed up the recovery of the event industries in the post-pandemic era [19].

Recognizing consumer or customer behaviour is one of the cornerstones of a successful business since it is impacted by the evolving market, which manifests itself in the type of clients' behaviour that is always changing [20]. Today consumers have evolved into researchers because of easy access to the Internet, and they are much more educated and motivated as a result. They are bombarded with digital content daily, and almost every company now uses digital media to sell their products. Digital word of mouth is the most dependable source of recommendation and advice that clients trust. According to Choudhury [21], buyers would ensure that they study what previous customers of the brand reviewed about the product/service before making any decision to purchase. Research done by Al-Azzam [22], proved that digital marketing positive impact on the consumer's behaviour. Therefore, it is the obligation of businesses to monitor and forecast their own clients' behaviour.

### **2.3 Digital marketing impact on customer attitude**

Attitude is a favourable or negative assessment of people, actions, ideas, things, events, or anything else in the environment [23]. Attitude is viewed as the totality of those specific actions that contribute toward some activity of the organism. The attitude is the dynamic element in human behaviour; it is the cause for action and behaviours which are thought to be the consequences of personal experience or observation of their surroundings.

The digital marketing media or the digital disruption are apparently much more used and demanded among consumers. In the ever-changing business environment, digital marketing has been able to have a favourable impact on consumer psychology. Most consumers indicated their preference for digital marketing mediums in a variety of ways [24]. Magano and Cunha [25], further explained digital marketing as the important driver for the players in the tourism industry to manifest ideas and connect with customers. According to Ahmed [26], customers' favourable opinions are influenced by digital advertising efforts in social media.

### **2.4 Digital marketing impact on brand awareness**

Brand awareness is defined as a buyer's capacity to recognize a brand in enough detail to make a purchase decision [27]. With the help of digital media, today's customers can interact with major brands in a variety of ways. All this is feasible and only possible through digital marketing, which makes it easier for new companies and brands to reach consumers. Boric [28] highlighted the conceptual branding framework in a digital context and showed how such framework can help Internet branding strategies by organizing and integrating or merging existing data.

Customers are more likely to do business with a company if they have a connection with its brand. When they have a positive experience, they can quickly become

brand ambassadors who will help to disseminate positive messages without hesitation. Hence, building awareness through digital marketing needs to ensure an understanding of the proper use of channels [29]. According to a study conducted by Elaydi [30], social media marketing activities on Facebook have an impact on brand recognition. Meanwhile, Say'idah [31] also emphasized that, social media marketing entails the use of social media technologies to connect and interact with consumers in new ways and increase brand awareness.

## **2.5 Digital marketing impact on trust**

Trust is defined as the amount of reliability promised by one party to another within a specific trade or economic relationship [32]. Furthermore, brand trust is the willingness of a client to rely on a brand's ability to deliver on its promises [33]. Building trust in the digital marketing world has grown more difficult. Every company is continuously looking for new tactics and technology to help them build clients' trust. The need for trust is highlighted by the lack of viable regulations in virtual communities.

In essence, Kim and Park [34] investigated the significance of trust in the relationship between social commerce characteristics and behavioural intentions. According to the research, people are more inclined to trust or rely on social commerce if it provides a favourable online landscape in terms of communication, transaction security, reputation, scalability, information quality, and word-of-mouth referrals. Tatar and Eren-Erdogmus [35] recommended future researchers to look at the impact of digital marketing on brand trust and loyalty.

## **2.6 Relationship among digital marketing, attitude, brand awareness, trust, and behaviour intention**

Behaviour intention is defined as an individual's behavioural predisposition before he or she adopts specific conduct. It is crucial in predicting potential customer behaviour and it has long been regarded as one of the most dependable sources of information about potential customers [36]. Obtaining customers is undoubtedly one of the most important goals of any business, and its success is dependent on the effectiveness of digital marketing.

While past study proved that digital marketing such as email marketing, social media, online advertising, and mobile services improve consumer purchase behaviour [37], one of the most important antecedents for predicting and explaining consumer behaviour is customer attitudes [38]. Researchers such as Dehghani and Tumer [39] discovered that branding boosts behaviour intention of customers in the digital marketing context. On the other hand, Delafrooz [40] confirmed that attitude leads the favourable behaviour intention. Based on the previous research limitation, this study proposed the following hypothesis with the research framework which is shown in Figure 1.

H1: Digital marketing impact on customer behaviour (i.e., attitude, brand awareness, trust, and behaviour intention).

H2: Customer attitude, brand awareness, and trust impact on behaviour intention.

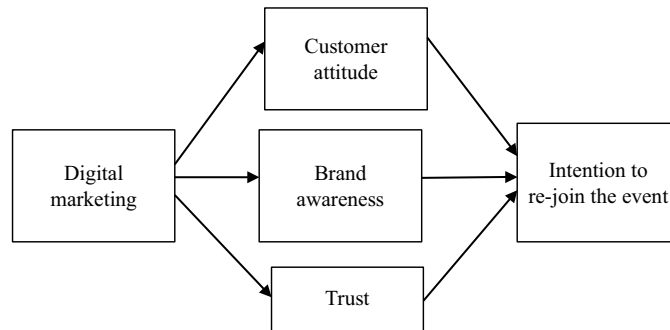


Fig. 1. Proposed research framework

### 3 Methodology

This study incorporated exploratory data and a descriptive research design. The targeted population were those who had attended the virtual event. This research targeted 300 participants who attended virtual events in Malaysia and the United States (USA) for a period of two years following the pandemic Covid-19 from 2019 to 2021. The study used stratified sampling, and the sample for the study was divided into two groups, 150 respondents from Malaysia and another 150 respondents from the United States (USA). As a rule of thumb, the minimum sample size should be at least five times the number of variables to be examined [41]. This study met the criteria and hence the sample was sufficient for the study.

The quantitative technique was used and the primary data was gathered via a survey-questionnaires using a Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree) distributed online. Regarding the operational measurement of variables, six items of digital marketing [42], four items of customer attitude [43], four items of brand awareness [44], five items of trust [45] and four items of behaviour intention [46] were adapted to suit the nature of the study. The questionnaire was pre-tested by 30 respondents. The survey received 160 valid responses and was checked for completeness and abnormal answers. The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) statistical software.

### 4 Results

For this study, a total of 160 were qualified samples, 80 of whom were from Malaysia and the other 80 were from the United States. There are 60 males and 100 females among the responses. 44 percent of them are between the ages of 36 and 45, 18 percent are between the ages of 26 and 35, and 15 percent are above 55. A total of 52 percent of respondents had a bachelor's degree or above. Employees from commercial companies make up 63%, government employees make up 10%, and entrepreneurs make up 13%. Out of 80 Malaysian respondents, 42 picked Microsoft Teams and 27 preferred zoom

video webinars. 47 out of 80 respondents from the United States selected Zoom video webinars and 15 of them preferred Cisco WebEx Meeting.

When respondents from both Malaysia and United States were asked which features are the most engaging features, 48% of them preferred rich and wonderful content, 25% of them wanted passionate speakers and 18% of them chose interactive features (Q&A/polling/quizzes/etc). When it comes to the type of virtual event/webinar/meeting, 52.5% of respondents from United States preferred webinar (pre-recorded and can be viewed at any time), 27.5% of them desired to attend the hybrid event (physical meeting and in which an online audience also participates) and 20% of them preferred live streaming. On the other hand, 37.5% of respondents from Malaysia preferred live-streaming conferences/webinars, 29% selected webinars (pre-recorded and can be viewed at any time) and 21% favoured hybrid events.

In comparison to 67% of respondents in the United States, 58% of Malaysians attended a virtual event/webinar after receiving an invitation from the organiser through email. In comparison to 9 percent of respondents in the United States, 17 percent of Malaysian respondents joined the invitation via social media. Overall, the majority of respondents from Malaysia and the United States said that the virtual platform needs to be improved.

#### 4.1 Reliability

The Cronbach’s alpha values for all the variables, including digital marketing, brand awareness, customer attitude, customer trust, and behaviour intention, were all greater than 0.70. According to Nunnally and Bernstein [47], a value of .70 or higher for Cronbach’s alpha proves satisfactory reliability. This holds true for Malaysia as well as the United States (USA). Table 1 shows the reliability analysis of the variables.

**Table 1.** Reliability analysis

Variables	Country	Cronbach’s Alpha	No. of Items
Digital Marketing	Malaysia	.843	6
	United States	.762	
Brand Awareness	Malaysia	.853	4
	United States	.775	
Customer Attitude	Malaysia	.798	4
	United States	.742	
Trust	Malaysia	.833	5
	United States	.836	
Behaviour Intention	Malaysia	.811	4
	United States	.730	

#### 4.2 Correlation

The correlation values of five variables such as digital marketing, customer attitude, brand awareness, trust, and behaviour intention are shown in Table 2. Robinson [48]

suggests that construct validity is satisfied if the item-to-total correlations score is greater than 0.50 and the inter-item correlations score is greater than 0.30. Finding from both countries showed that all the variables have a positive association with one another with a significance level at  $p < 0.05$ . Although all correlations in both countries have a positive R-value, the correlation statistic between customer attitude and brand awareness of the United States is insignificant at  $P > .05$ , with an R-value less than 0.4. Table 2 shows the correlation analysis among the variables.

### 4.3 Multivariate analysis

The multivariate test was performed for the sample groups in Malaysia. Wilk’s Lambda was used to evaluate whether there were any variations in the means of defined subject groups on the dependent variable i.e., customer behaviour (customer attitude, brand awareness, trust, and purchase intention) due to an independent variable i.e., digital marketing. The results proved that there was a statistically significant change in customer behaviour due to the impact of digital marketing with a value of  $F = 2.445$ ,  $p < .0005$ ; Wilk’s  $\Lambda = 0.156$  and partial  $\eta^2 = .372$ . In the same way, multivariate tests were performed for sample groups in the United States. The results proved that there was also a statistically significant change in customer behaviour due to the effect of digital marketing with the value of  $F = 3.577$ ,  $p < .0005$ ; Wilk’s  $\Lambda = 0.132$  and partial  $\eta^2 = .397$ .

**Table 2.** Correlation analysis among variables

Construct	Country	DM	CA	BA	T	PI
DM	Malaysia	1 .000	.467(**) .000	.455(**) .000	.568(**) .000	.595(**) .000
	United States	1 .000	.491(**) .000	.307(**) .006	.512(**) .000	.600(**) .000
CA	Malaysia	.467(**) .000	1 .000	.411(**) .000	.698(**) .000	.602(**) .000
	United States	.491(**) .000	1 .000	.198 .079	.516(**) .000	.608(**) .000
BA	Malaysia	.455(**) .000	.411(**) .000	1 .000	.569(**) .000	.490(**) .000
	United States	.307(**) .006	.198 .079	1 .000	.433(**) .000	.301(**) .007
T	Malaysia	.568(**) .000	.698(**) .000	.569(**) .000	1 .000	.690(**) .000
	United States	.512(**) .000	.516(**) .000	.433(**) .000	1 .000	.645(**) .000
PI	Malaysia	.595(**) .000	.602(**) .000	.490(**) .000	.690(**) .000	1
	United States	.600(**) .000	.608(**) .000	.301(**) .007	.645(**) .000	1

Notes: Digital marketing (DM), customer attitude (CA), brand awareness (BA), trust (T), purchase intention (PI). \*\*  $P < 0.05$ .



Table 3 indicates multivariate analysis used to test the direct impact of digital marketing on customer attitude, brand awareness, trust, and behaviour intention among the respondents from Malaysia and the United States. Finding of the analysis from the context of the study in Malaysia showed that digital marketing impact on customer attitude with F value = 2.747 at P< 0.001, brand awareness with F value = 4.076 at P< 0.000, trust with F value = 5.430 at P< 0.000 and behaviour intention with F value = 4.842 at P< 0.000. Finding of the analysis from United States showed that digital marketing impact on customer attitude with F value = 5.394 at P< 0.000, brand awareness with F value = 3.390 at P< 0.001, trust with F value = 5.884 at P< 0.000) and behaviour intention with F value = 7.523 at P< 0.000.

**Table 3.** Multivariate analysis

Model	Dependent Variables	Country	Mean Square	F Value	Sig.
Digital marketing	Trust	Malaysia	23.414	5.430	.000
	Behaviour Intention		18.587	4.842	.000
	Brand awareness		9.153	4.076	.000
	Customer attitude		7.446	2.747	.001
Digital marketing	Trust	United States	17.702	5.884	.000
	Behaviour Intention		16.548	7.523	.000
	Brand awareness		10.205	3.390	.001
	Customer attitude		14.475	5.394	.000

#### 4.4 Regression analysis

Table 4 shows the regression model in the context of the study in Malaysia. The model was statistically significant at F = 27.178 (p<0.01). It can be interpreted that 49% of the variance for customers’ behaviour intentions to attend the event could be explained by trust, brand awareness, and attitude. The finding further showed that trust ( $\beta = .448$ , p<0.05) followed by customer attitude ( $\beta = .232$ , p<0.05) impacts behaviour intention among the Malaysian participants. On the other hand, the regression model in the context of the study in the United States showed that the model was significant at F = 27.499 (p<0.01). It showed that 52% of the variance for customers’ behaviour intentions to attend the event could be explained by trust, brand awareness, and attitude. The finding further showed that customer attitude ( $\beta = .433$ , p<0.05) followed by trust ( $\beta = .377$ , p<0.05) impact behaviour intention. Surprisingly, respondents from both countries believe that brand awareness does not impact behaviour intention.

**Table 4.** Regression analysis

Model	Dependent Variable	Country	Standardized Coefficient Beta	T Value	Sig.
Trust	Behaviour intention	<sup>a</sup> Malaysia	.448	3.633	.001
Brand awareness			.140	1.443	.153
Customer attitude			.232	2.089	.040
Trust	Behaviour intention	<sup>b</sup> United States	.377	4.064	.000
Brand awareness			.039	0.446	.657
Customer attitude			.433	4.292	.000

\* <sup>a</sup> Malaysia – R = 0.719, R<sup>2</sup> = 0.499, p = 0.000, F = 27.178

\* <sup>b</sup> United States – R = .721, R<sup>2</sup> = 0.520, p = 0.000, F = 27.499

## 5 Discussion

During the pandemic, digital disruption creates a technology shift rather than a market shift. Digitalization is a global transformation that affects almost every aspect of the business. Organizational administrators cannot disassociate themselves from this growing and continuous radical process of change [49], and hence we must focus on understanding the changing behaviour of customers. During the lockdown, practically all marketing channels went digital, and the impact of digital marketing on consumer behaviour is altering the industry by driving companies to modify their digital marketing approach and strategy.

Overall findings of this study proved that digital marketing impacts customer behaviour. In the context of Malaysia, digital marketing has the greatest impact on trust. The finding of the study aligned with the study done by Ebrahim [50] and stated that digital marketing is seen as an excellent strategy for establishing customer relationships, and such interactions help to build trust and remove any doubt that may prevent customers from engaging with the company. Whereas in the United States, digital marketing has the highest impact on behaviour intention. Similarly, previous research has also suggested that social media communication could impact customers’ decision-making process in attending events [51].

Finding further proved that Malaysian participants believe trust is the most important factor in developing an intention, whereas Americans believe that customer attitude is the most important factor in developing an intention. Both countries, however, do not believe that brand awareness leads to an increase in the customers’ intention to join the virtual event. Even though companies with a virtual presence are attempting to build and increase brand awareness in the hopes of influencing real-world intentions, previous research has also suggested that brand experiences in virtual environments may influence consumers’ purchasing behaviour in traditional marketing channels, this phenomenon has yet to be proven in an online setting [52]. Therefore, digital marketing firms should have a good understanding of how to make the most of the digital world to increase a brand’s effect and exposure.

## **6 Practical implication**

COVID-19's disruptive impacts have undoubtedly had an impact on the event sector. A considerable number of meetings and conferences have been remodeled as virtual events in the last year. As the digital world becomes more complex, marketers are expected to provide relevant messaging across an ever-expanding array of platforms. Hence, post Covid-19 companies are now challenged to ensure that their organization is responsive in changing customer behaviour.

This research proved that digital marketing plays an important role in building Malaysian participants' trust in online events. In today's digital world, trust is the foundation of every relationship and digital marketing is at the heart of establishing the connection between customers and events. This study suggests event companies create content that is worthy of reference, honest and truthful, has its value and rewarding to the participants. On the other hand, participants from the United States will have the intention to join the online events if digital marketing is effective. This study recommends event managers create a digital platform with content that is up to date, accurate, informative, and interactive.

Due to the epidemic, virtual events are predicted to increase as more attendees expect to be able to fully participate both online and in person. For individuals who can't be on-site, the platform is designed to augment reality and give a nearly-physically-present user experience. Finding from this study prove that participants from the United States believed that attitude developed through digital marketing is an important factor in their intention to join the online events. This study request event managers to ensure that event must meet the participants' objectives, create a unique experience, and empower them with rich information. The main purpose of any event is to provide value to participants and must create a unique experience. If the event manager can create an experience that meets the expectation of the participants, they are highly likely to join the same events again in the future. Participants from Malaysia, on the other hand, are convinced that they must have the confidence to participate in the events. Prior to the event, event organisers must spend time learning about the attendees and designing an event around their interests. Hence, this study advises event planners to create trust by interacting with attendees and making the event as interactive as feasible. This goes a long way toward establishing a strong, trusting relationship.

## **7 Conclusion**

Digital marketing has always encapsulated the essence of progress, and it is now emerging as the face of the future. COVID-19's squabbles have engulfed every aspect of the economy, and the ramifications will be felt for years to come. Old business models have been demolished, and virtual, remote, and contactless solutions have replaced them, resulting in shifts in consumer behaviour. This study contributes to the marketing and customer behaviour literature by shedding light on the association of digital marketing with customer behaviour.

The study has achieved the research objectives through investigating the role of digital marketing on customer attitude, brand awareness, trust and behaviour intention

among the participants from Malaysia and the United States. The current study has shown that digital marketing improves customer attitudes by empowering them with sufficient information and satisfying the objectives of the event. In addition, the study revealed that digital marketing increases brand awareness by embedding the company's logo/symbol of the brand in the virtual event/platform. Furthermore, participants believe that digital marketing improves their trust if the virtual event is honest, rewarding, and has value. Finally, digital marketing has a great impact on participants' willingness to attend the virtual event.

It is vital to note that in self-isolation mode, consumers spend substantially more time in the digital world. As a result, businesses should capitalise on this by enhancing their own websites, updating their social media accounts, actively managing their profiles, and allocating a healthy portion of their marketing budget to digital marketing. Companies that are the quickest and most adaptable to the new reality will have a major edge in the market and will become industry leaders. In this new competition to be acknowledged as a market leader, digital marketing is critical. It generates more business, attracts more customers, and, most importantly, builds and strengthens customer loyalty to the brand.

The study's findings suggest that event planners develop digital marketing that keeps up with new technological innovations and changing customer expectations in terms of content that should become more tailored and relevant to the individual, as well as a customer-focused and wow-factor-filled attendee experience. In the future, this research could form the basis of a scientific method to analyse the economic effects of implementing digital marketing and identify key customer behaviour trends that can be utilised to design tailored policies or e-commerce strategies for certain industries.

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