

TRADE SHOWS IN TIMES OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

LECTURA and ANMOPYC survey about exhibitors' and attendees' perspectives



About ANMOPYC

ANMOPYC, The Spanish Manufacturers' Association of Construction, Public Works and Mining Equipment, ANMOPYC, is a national sectoral organization that has been defending and representing the interests of Spanish Construction, Public Works, and Mining companies for more than **35 years**. It currently has more than **110 associates**.

ANMOPYC's mission is to promote internationalization, industrial quality and safety, and technological innovation of its associated companies with the aim of contributing to making them more competitive in international markets. To this end, ANMOPYC offers its members a wide range of value-added services and activities, especially in the areas of international promotion, technical regulations, R & D, technical innovation, marketing, and communication.

ANMOPYC is a member of the European Construction Equipment Committee (CECE), the Spanish Association for Standardization (UNE), the Spanish Construction Technology Platform (PTEC), and the National Federation of Innovative Business Groups and Clusters (FENAEIC).

About TPI

TPI was founded in **1964** and is the leading communications provider in Spain for information relating to the construction, civil engineering and mining machinery industries via its brands Potencia, Canteras y Explotaciones, Allrental and Máquinas de Derribo y RCDs. Through print, digital, and online media, in newsletters and at events, TPI content reaches thousands of professional readers each year looking for the best information to help them make decisions.

Since its inception, the company has developed significantly from a traditional publisher to a global communications company, and from the outset has felt a need to provide the best possible service and to benefit readers, advertisers and sponsors.

About LECTURA

Founded in **1984**, LECTURA is a leading provider of machinery intelligence on the market and attracts around **900,000 professionals every month**, sourcing all kinds of heavy machinery data.

LECTURA's database contains over **150,000 heavy machinery models** and provides evaluations of used machines through online tools and digital solutions. LECTURA's service offer also includes technical specifications and data enrichment, product and market analyses, high-value lines, country-specific price development determinations and a variety of further, client-tailored services.

In addition, the web portal LECTURA Press provides the latest news from the heavy machinery industry and exclusive interviews with industry experts and market leaders. LECTURA also publishes the quarterly online magazine DigiMessenger and runs surveys on a variety of current heavy machinery industry topics.

Content Overview

INTRODUCTION	6
METHODOLOGY	8
RESULTS	10
Survey Sample Overview	10
Exhibiting Companies	17
Attendees	37
CONCLUSION	54
APPENDIX	56
INDIVIDUAL SURVEY	57

Introduction

The Coronavirus has drastically modified and disrupted our day-to-day lives and, in particular, our work and business relationships. Among the many activities developed by the companies, without a doubt, is the participation in sectoral fairs, either as visitors or exhibitors.

Fairs are one of the most important tools that companies have to promote their products, as well as establishing new contacts with potential customers. In the same way, visitors can be up to date with the latest developments in the market.

For all these reasons, we wanted to carry out a survey, due to the cancellations that have occurred, motivated by the pandemic in the last year and a half worldwide, and the emergence of new alternatives such as virtual fairs.

From Anmopyc we are aware that face-to-face fairs are still fundamental, and that virtual fairs can be a complementary tool in the scenario in which we are currently living.

The advantages of virtual fairs are that, from anywhere in the world, with connection to the network, a computer, or mobile device, you can access any virtual event and visit the stands of the exhibitors and, on the other hand, the exhibitors will cover a greater number of visits and potential customers. In the case of face-to-face fairs, they give you the opportunity to interact in a more direct and personal way between the exhibitor and the visitor, in addition, the potential customer can see and check the quality of the products and services exhibited.

The objective of the survey has been to analyze how the cancellation of face-to-face fairs has affected both exhibiting companies and visitors in a pandemic situation, and the alternatives that have emerged. The survey has been aimed mainly at international companies, with profiles of both exhibitors and visitors from the construction, mining, agriculture, transport, and industry sectors, asking them about the frequency in which they visit or participate in international fairs, their advantages, alternatives to the cancellations of face-to-face fairs among others.

Of the replies received, we have analyzed in particular those obtained from Spanish and Portuguese companies and compared them with those received from Latin American companies.



Methodology

The survey ran from 20th April to 31st May and targeted respondents from a variety of industry sectors and primarily focused on respondents from Iberian countries (Spain and Portugal) and Latin American Countries (most South and Middle American countries).

Since the survey aimed to inspect how people react to traditional trade shows cancellation because of the pandemic, we also split the respondents according to the position from which they visit trade shows - whether they describe themselves as exhibitors or attendees, respectively.

The latter characteristic affected both the number of questions respondents received and what we asked them (the content of the question). Those who do never attend trade shows were asked the first three survey questions only. Whereas those who answered they attend trade shows (regardless of attendance frequency) were provided with 9 - 12 questions depending on their replies. See the survey structure in the appendix. To briefly sum this up:

Those who do not attend trade shows were asked to share their sector of industry and channels where they usually research details about machinery/equipment and related services/products before purchasing.

On the contrary, both attendees, and exhibitors, were provided with somewhat similar questions. We asked them about the location of such trade shows (whether they prefer international or local), what, in their opinion, is the best advantage

of trade shows, which alternatives they prefer over traditional (during pandemic postponed or canceled trade shows) - together with their preference over the traditional one. Then we were also curious about what aspects of traditional trade shows they are missing and what would improve their experience from the alternatives. The last question was about whether they think the alternatives have at least some benefits.

The survey was published on Spanish LECTURA Specs pages. In total, 10620 respondents agreed on participation. Speaking then about the geographical distribution, 3809 respondents were people from Iberia, 6567 respondents were from Latin America. Due to the high numbers, we believe in obtaining somewhat relevant results and the potential to reflect the situation in the real world, thus, exceeding the frame of our survey sample.



Results

The survey analyses consisted of inspecting the responses received by the total sample and a more in-depth focus on differences between replies according to the region of origin. Specifically, since ANMOPYC is the Spanish association, the analyses focused on Iberian countries (Spanish and Portugal) and due to cultural and linguistic similarities on Latin America (generally understood to consist of the entire continent of South America in addition to Mexico, Central America, and the islands of the Caribbean).

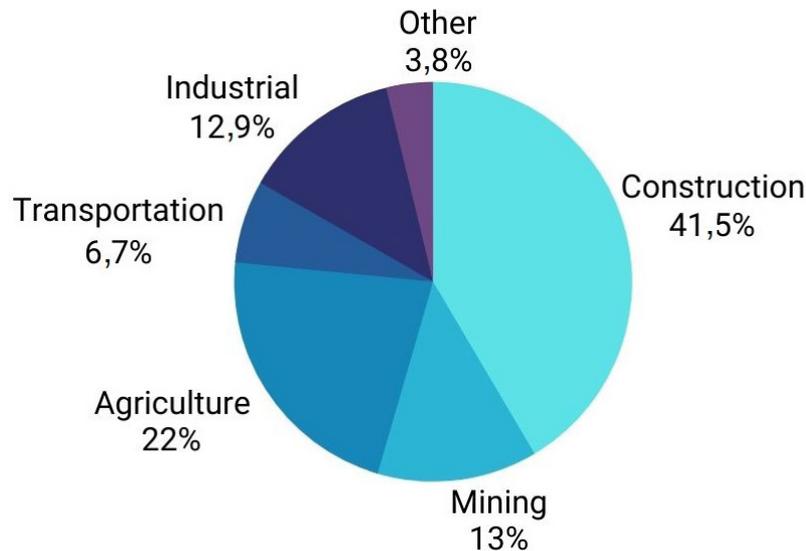
Survey Sample Overview

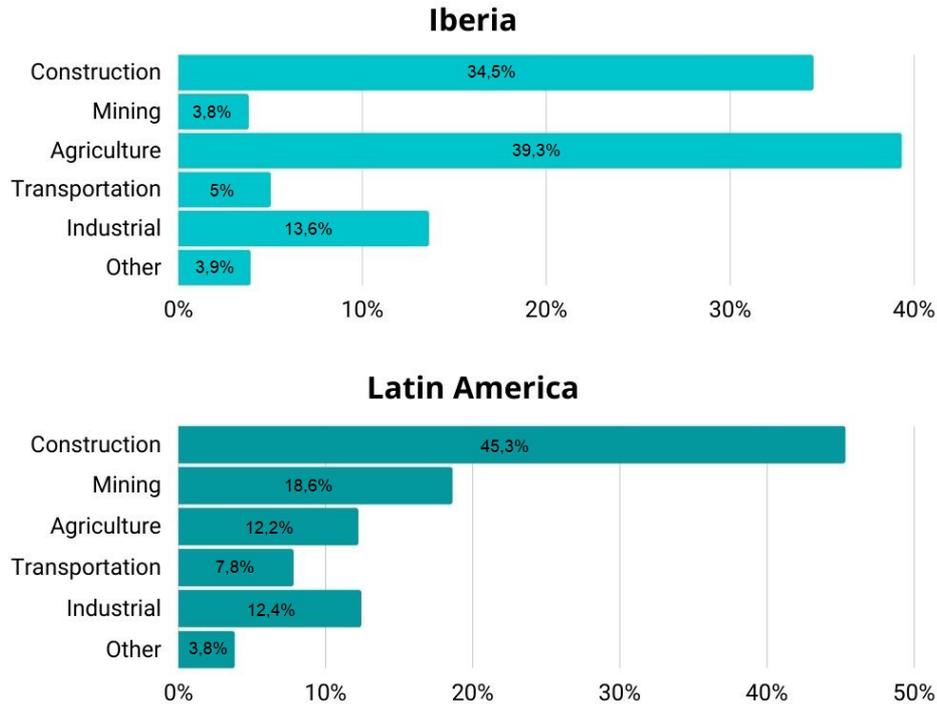
- **About 65% of respondents visit trade shows**
- **Whereas about one-third prefers other channels to research details about equipment and related services**
- **The most popular channels where people search for information instead of on trade shows are Manufacturers' web/materials and Comparison shopping websites**

This very first results chapter aims to explore who the people who participated in the survey are - in which sector of the industry they work, how often, and from which position they visit trade shows. With this, we aimed to give more in-depth insight on who will be the results applicable. Indirectly, we can also assume people working in these sectors are both most often represented in the heavy machinery and concerned in alternatives of traditional trade shows.

Globally, most of the survey respondents (41,4%) were from the construction sector, followed by those from the agricultural sector (22%). Also, about 10% of the respondents claimed they work in the mining (13,0%) and industrial (12,9%) sectors. From the remaining, we were able to identify 6,7% of people from the transportation sector. However, still, about 3,8% of respondents claimed they work elsewhere than in the predefined sectors. Focusing on particular regions, in Latin America, more respondents indicated they work in construction and especially the mining sector. In the Iberian sample, the majority of respondents work in agriculture. The impact of such distribution is discussed in the following chapters. However, such distribution is quite logical, at least when comparing the natural sources of both regions.

What is your sector of activity?





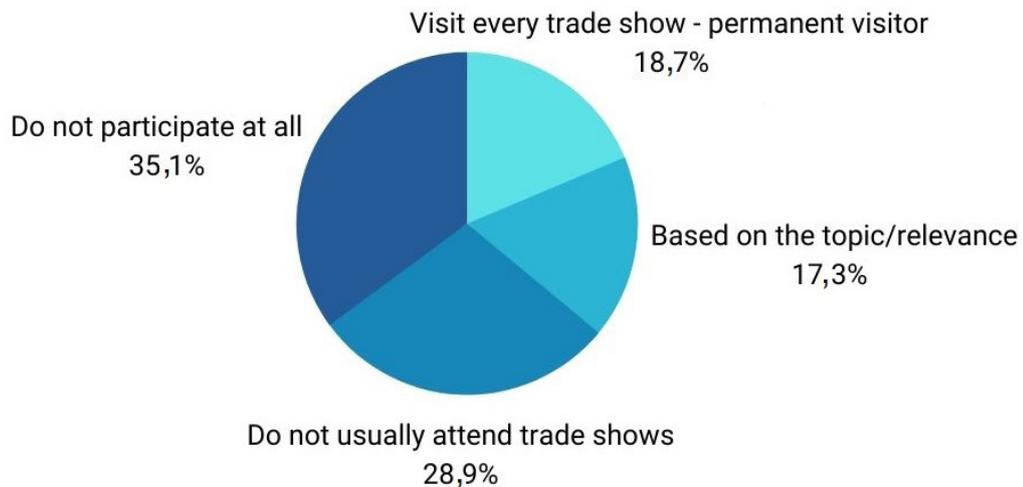
The next question aimed to explore how often respondents usually visit trade shows. Before the pandemic, about 65% of respondents were concerned about these. Respectively 18,7% of respondents even claimed they do their best not to miss any trade show. The remaining 46,2%, however, are more concerned about what the trade show is about and make their decision better based on the trade show theme.

Still, about 35,1% of respondents claimed they do not visit trade shows at all. However, especially manufacturers' websites (and other materials in general) have a relatively high potential to replace the trade shows with its potential to be reached from almost all over the world. Also, other web-based sources like comparison

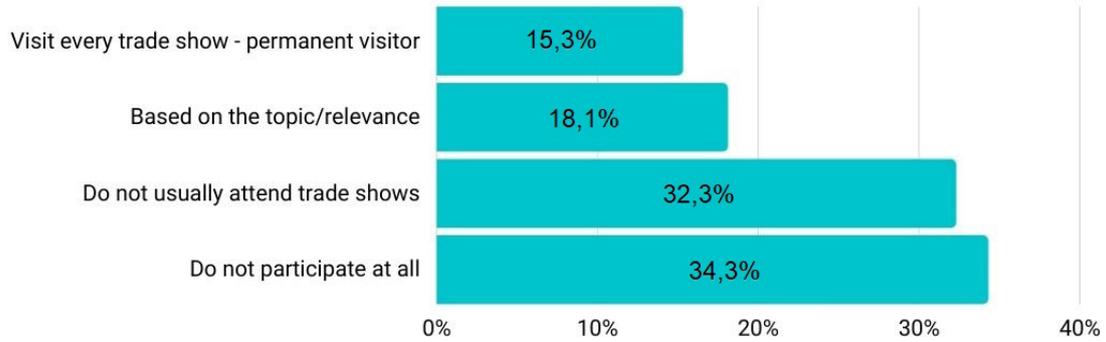
shopping websites (27,4%), social media (10,6%), and machine databases (13,8%) are quite popular. However, 10% of respondents would look for information elsewhere - from these, 4,4% will look for advice on discussion forums.

Considering regional differences in replies of respondents that do not visit trade shows and better search information elsewhere (about 35% from each region), there were only a few differences based on the region of origin, indicating that Iberian respondents better prefer web materials and discussion forums. Whereas those from Latin America better browse machine databases and (social) media.

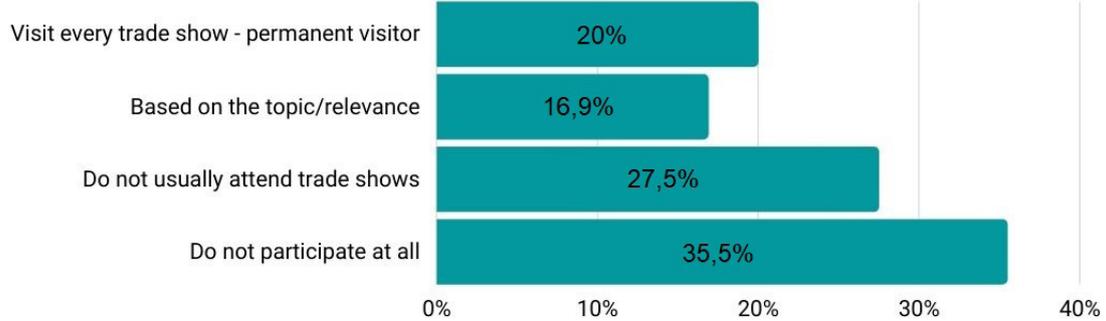
How often do you visit trade shows?



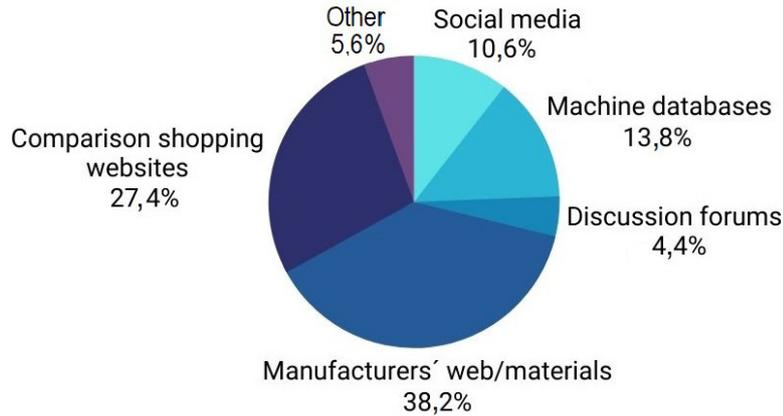
Iberia



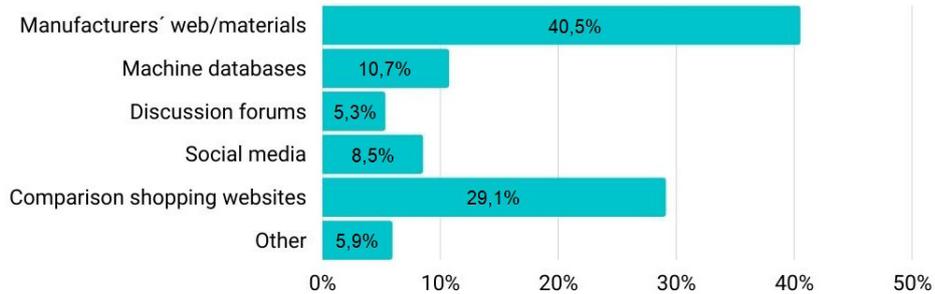
Latin America



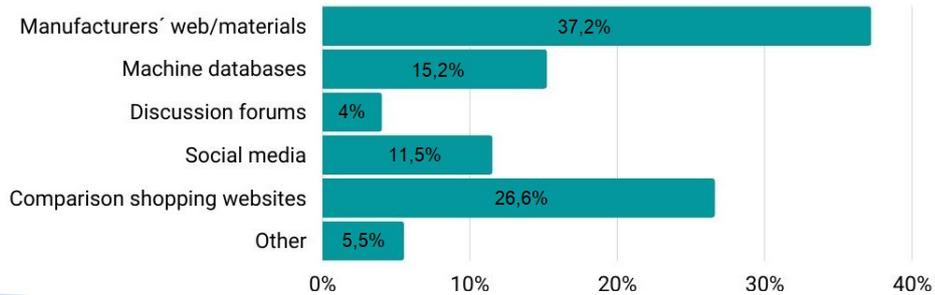
Where do you normally research details about machinery [...] ?



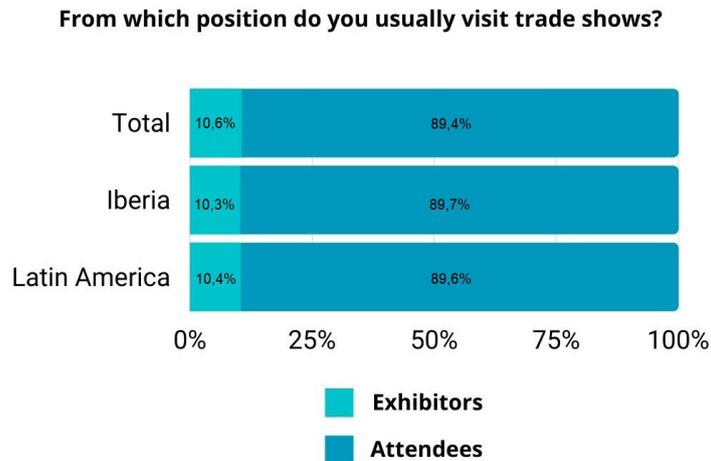
Iberia



Latin America



Back to respondents who visit the trade shows, the following analyses are conducted on both groups of respondents exhibiting company representatives (10,6%) and visitors (89,4%). Though there may be many phenomena and issues both parties may deal with, due to a couple of specifics or rather differences, each respondents' group is analyzed per se. The distribution of such groups in both of the predefined regions is the same.



Exhibiting Companies' Representatives

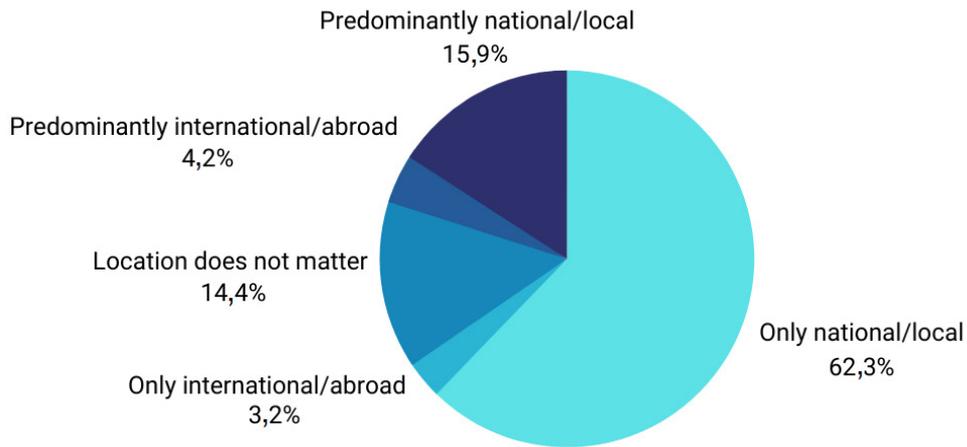
- 60 - 80% of exhibitors prefer to exhibit on national/local trade shows
- Until the traditional trade shows would not be allowed again, most exhibitors use virtual trade shows as an alternative
- About 5% of exhibitors do not use any alternative and wait until the pandemic ends
- During traditional trade shows cancellation, most exhibitors miss personal contact and face-to-face communication
- Though at the same time, they perceive online trade shows have even some advantages - mainly to save money and resources

Exhibitors carefully mind the trade shows location

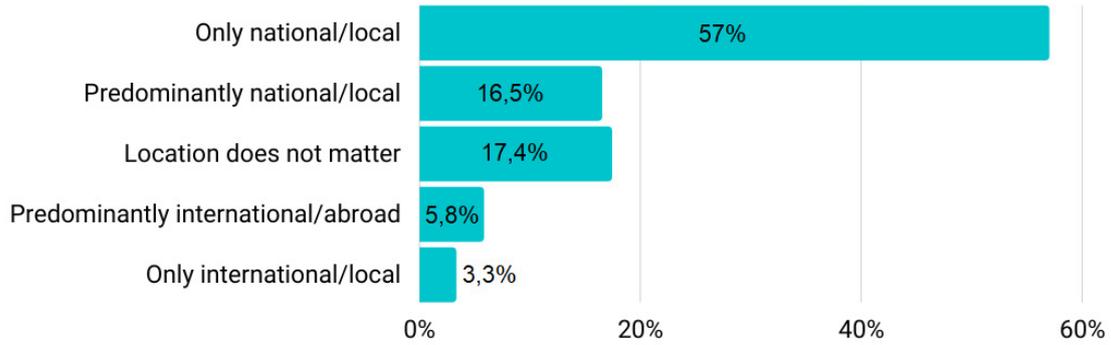
The first question aimed to inspect the preferences of trade shows depending on geographical locations. According to the results, most exhibitors (78,1% in total) prefer national trade shows. These results probably reflect that when exhibiting abroad, exhibitors may face issues like transport of materials for distributions, the equipment itself, etc. Thus, it is, of course, cheaper and easier to handle such issues in the case of just a single country. Anyway, 14,4% of exhibitors claim geographical location does not matter. Quite interestingly, about 7,4% of respondents would better go abroad or to international trade shows.

Considering regional differences, Iberian exhibitors appeared to be more willing to exhibit even in abroad or international trade shows (in total 9,1% compared to 6,1%), or, at least, they reported the location of the trade show does not matter. The explanation may be that Latin American countries are, in general, larger. Thus, transport and logistics costs may be higher there than in European countries (where also, the traveling between states is easier due to EU and EHS legislatures).

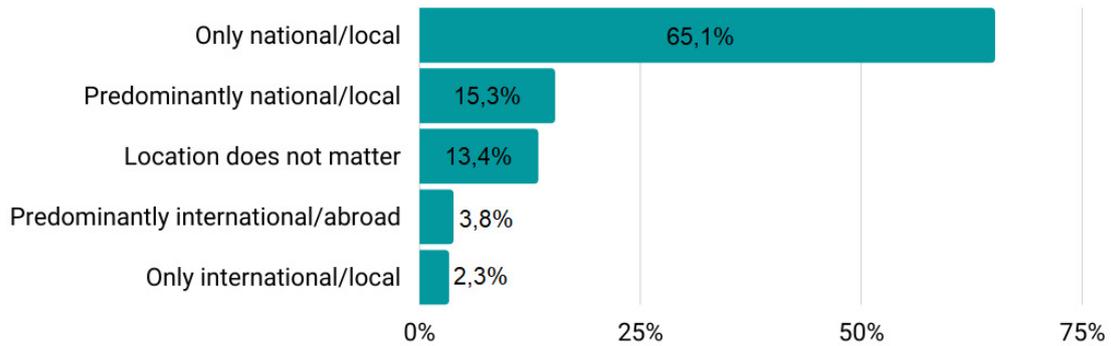
When considering the geographical location on which trade shows do you exhibit?



Iberia



Latin America



What are the consequences exhibitors hope for when deciding to join a trade show?

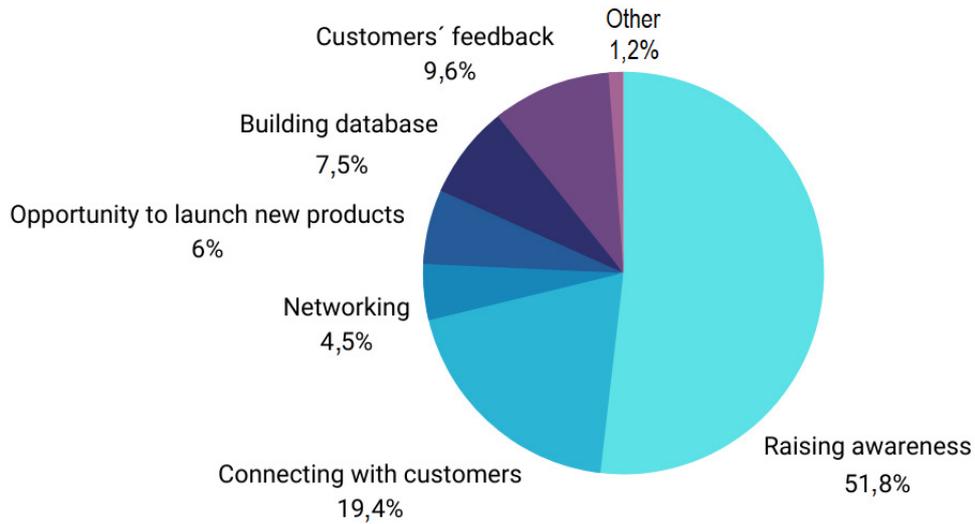
Though the geographical location and related factors matter in the decision process to exhibit in trade shows, there are more universal motives.

The results of the second question revealed 51,9% of respondents claimed they perceive this in the potential to raise awareness of their products and services (or even brand itself). Although many trade show cancellations during pandemics occurred, this function could be potentially reached by many alternatives (like previously mentioned web-based channels), as well.

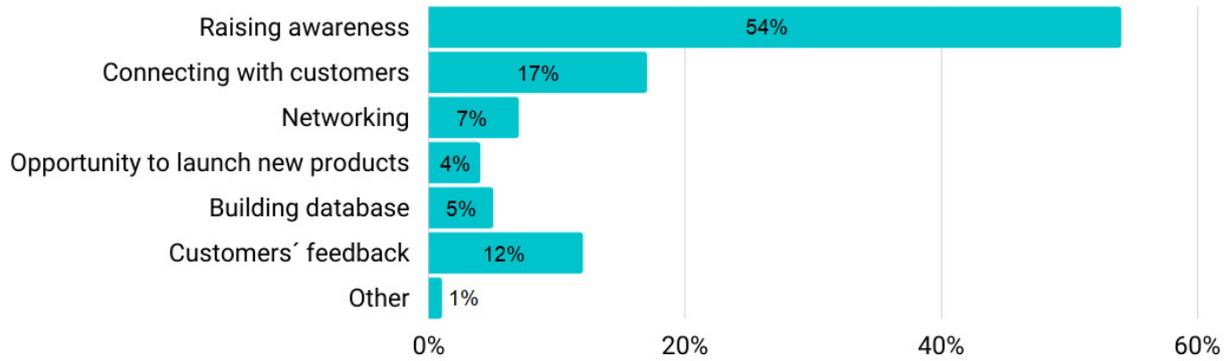
However, other advantages might be, actually, be a little bit difficult to replace. For example, 19,4% of respondents claim to connect with potential customers to be the best advantage of trades shows. Whereas the other replies, feedback from customers (9,6%), building database (7,5%), opportunity to launch new products (6,0%), and networking (4,5%), are in people's minds framed in the context of face-to-face/live interaction, that it may be a little bit difficult to reframe these.

When comparing the perception of trade shows advantages depending on the region of origin, only marginal differences appeared. Latin American respondents, for example, a little bit more frequently reported they appreciate connecting with potential customers and the ability to build and broaden their database. Iberians, on the other hand, benefit from the ability to receive direct feedback from customers.

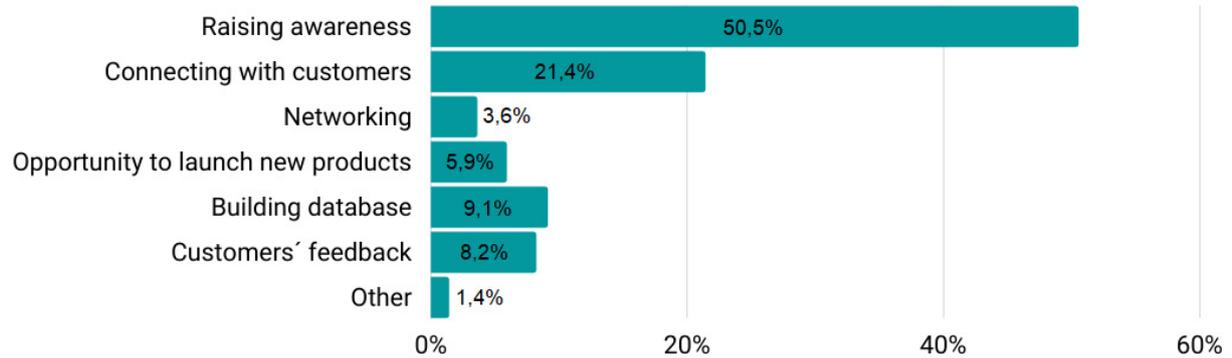
What do you consider the biggest advantage of trade shows?



Iberia



Latin America



Traditional trade shows alternatives during the pandemic

Knowing what advantages people perceive in traditional trade shows, and many of them are enticed by personal contact, though others not, the next question was about trade show alternatives.

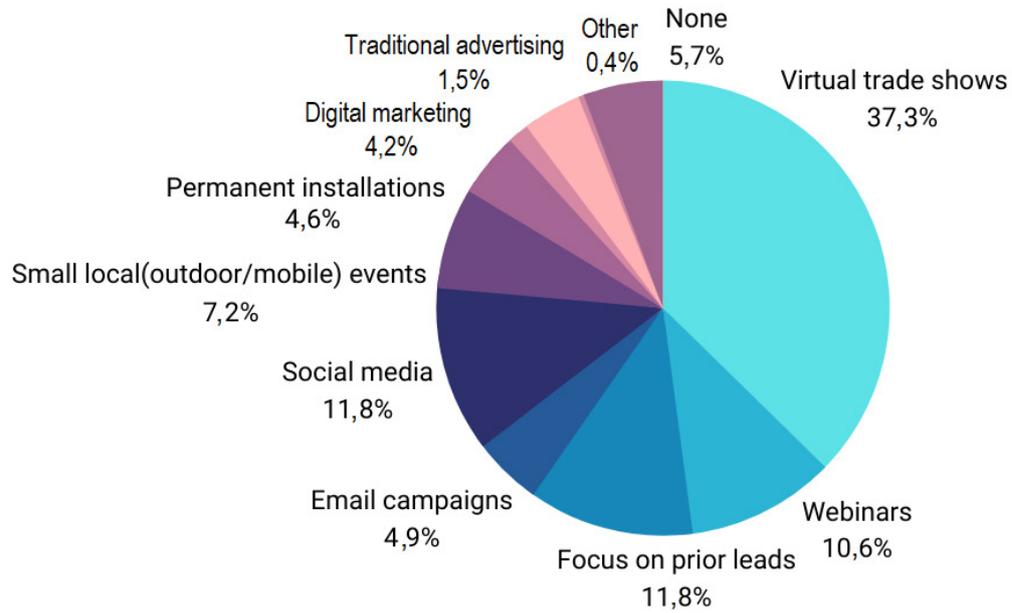
More than one-third of exhibitors stick to virtual trade shows (37,3%). Virtual trade shows usually aim to keep the format of traditional trade shows. Since the organizers focus on facilitating direct interactions between exhibitors and attendees with interactive features (such as live chat, chat rooms, 1 to 1 or group video calls, Q&A, Live webinars or on-demand webinars, webcasts, lucky draws, and more), virtual trade shows seem to be a satisfactory way of dealing with traditional trade shows cancellation. Also other web-based alternatives - like webinars (10,6%); social media (11,8%), digital marketing (4,2%) and email campaigns (4,9%) were quite popular.

The rest of the respondents, on the contrary, would rely on more traditional methods like focusing on prior leads (11,8%), small local events (7,2%), permanent installations (4,6%), and traditional advertising (1,5%). There are also about 5% of exhibitors (5,7%, respectively), who do not use any of the alternatives.

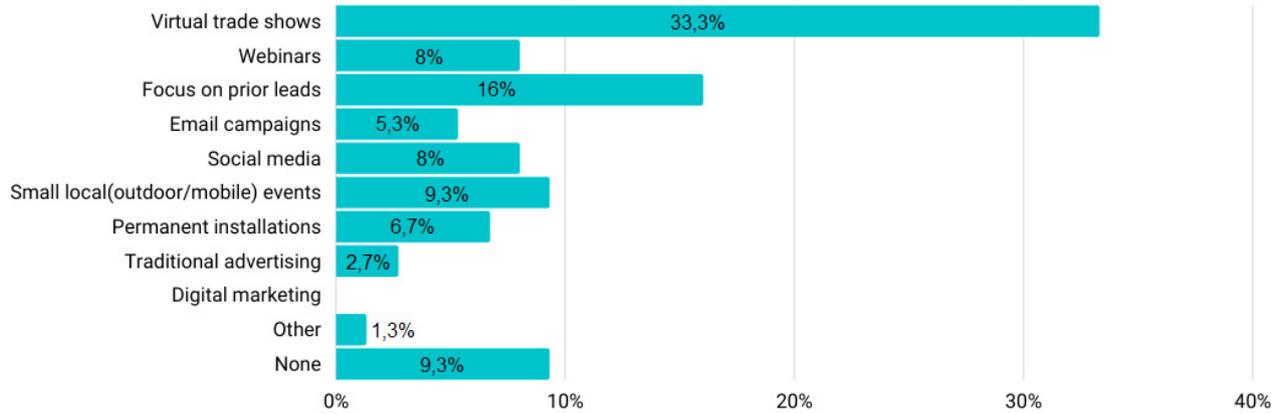
What is interesting, the preference of various alternatives seems to differ according to the region of origin. Exhibitors from Latin America are more open to more alternatives than Iberians. The Latin Americans more frequently than their Iberian counterparts rely on web-based alternatives, whereas about 16% of Iberians reported they prefer both small local events and permanent installation.

That could be affected also by the strictness of restrictions in different countries. On the other hand, let's say, the conservative nature of Iberians may also be demonstrated by their higher preference of focusing on prior leads.

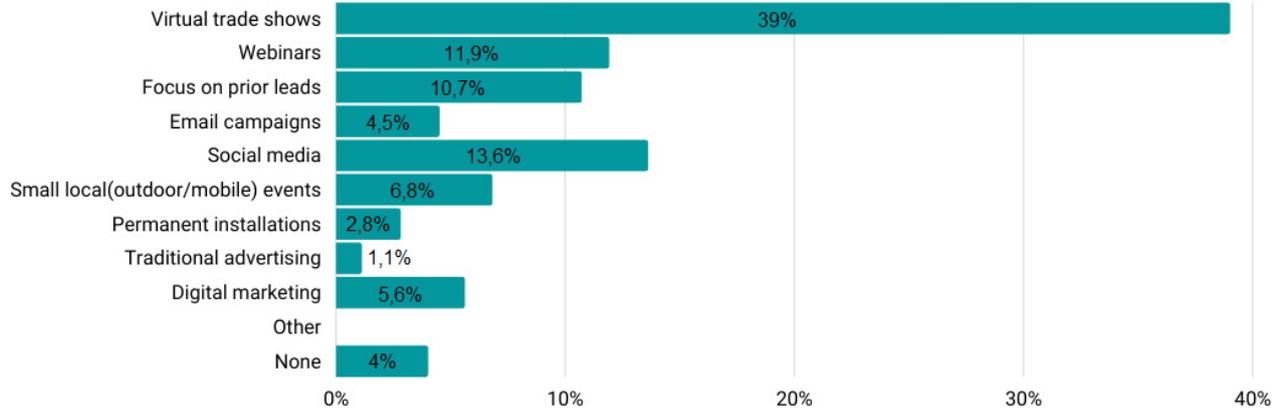
[...] which current solution do you use as an alternative most often?



Iberia



Latin America

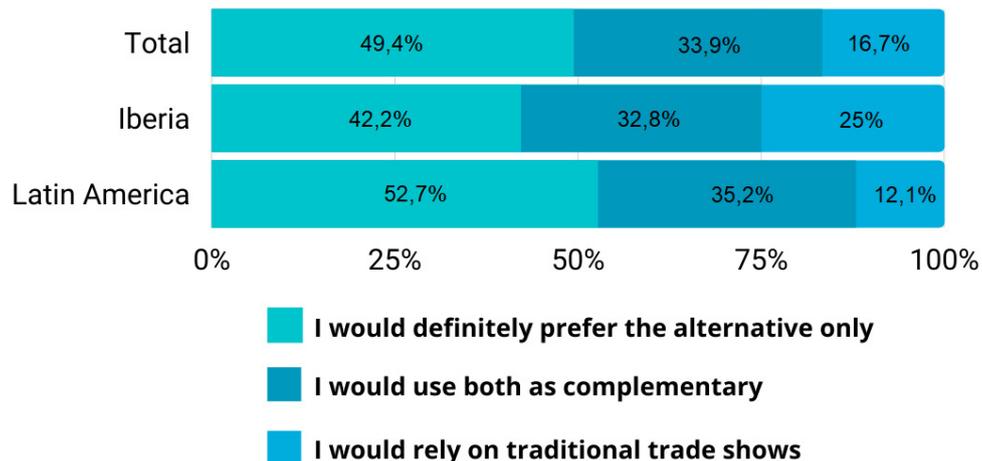


Do such alternatives have the potential to beat traditional trade shows?

Since, especially, web-based alternatives have become quite popular (and at the same time, it was found out some people better search for information elsewhere than on trade shows), the following question aimed to explore whether they would prefer the alternative over traditional trade shows even when these would be allowed again.

Surprisingly, 49,9% of exhibitors claim so - moreover, they are followed by those who will at least use both approaches as complementary (33,9%). Only 16,7% of respondents demonstrated reluctance toward alternatives.

Would you prefer this alternative over traditional trade shows?



When observing regional differences, the previously mentioned conservative nature of Iberians was probably demonstrated in this question, as well. Although more than half of Latin American respondents claimed they would definitely rely on the alternative only, and other 35,2% of these considers using both the traditional and the alternative complementary, in the case of Iberian respondents, only 42,2% would stick to the alternative, and what is more interesting, one-fourth of exhibitors wish if possible, go back only to traditional trade shows.

What differentiates exhibitors that are about to exhibit online only and those who would better go the traditional way?

An open-ended question leading exhibitors to share a few words about alternatives preference was set. Exhibitors that would better go for the alternative only, for example, frequently mentioned fear of the pandemic or necessity (probably, people began wondering about the future of traditional trade shows in general). However, the most frequently mentioned reasons stem from the potential of alternatives to spread information, thus also effectiveness, greater scope, and ability to inform more people about the products.

When focusing on the information provided by people who would prefer to use both - traditional and alternative approaches complementary, many replies were similar to those provided by respondents that would prefer alternatives only. Again, people emphasized the potential of spreading information among many people, the convenience of accessing many places just through the internet and getting in touch with people from all over the world. On the other hand, they also stress out that factors like face-to-face contact or organic experience are feasible only through personal contact.

Exhibitors that would better come back to the traditional approach emphasized they miss personal contact with the attendees. Specifically, they opened up about how face-to-face communication and informal atmosphere helps them in product presentation and sales activities. Many of them also referred to friends among other exhibitors and attendees.

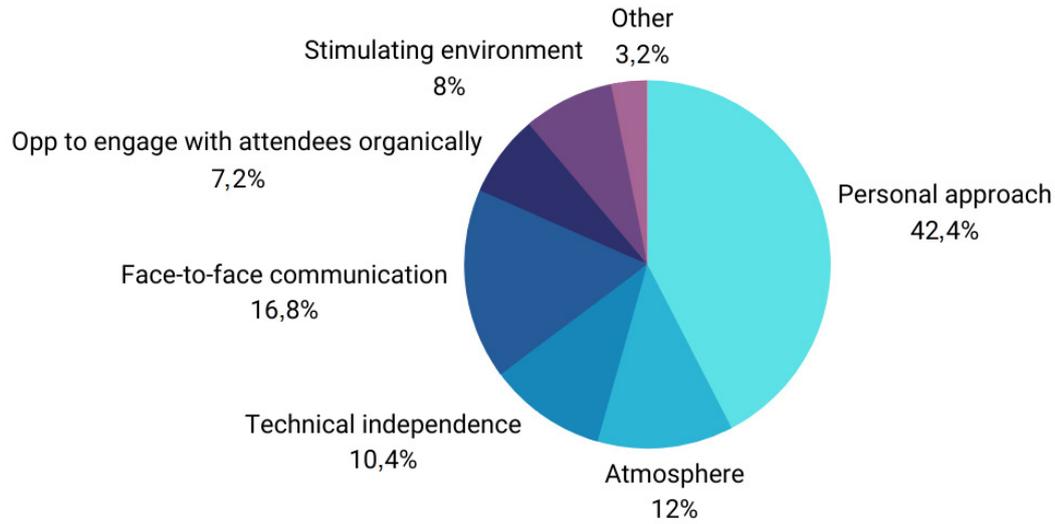
Which traditional trade shows alternatives exhibitors miss most?

Despite all so-far mentioned advantages of trade shows alternatives, it seems like a couple of factors are irreplaceable for exhibitors. From such, the most frequently mentioned was the personal approach (42,20% of respondents).

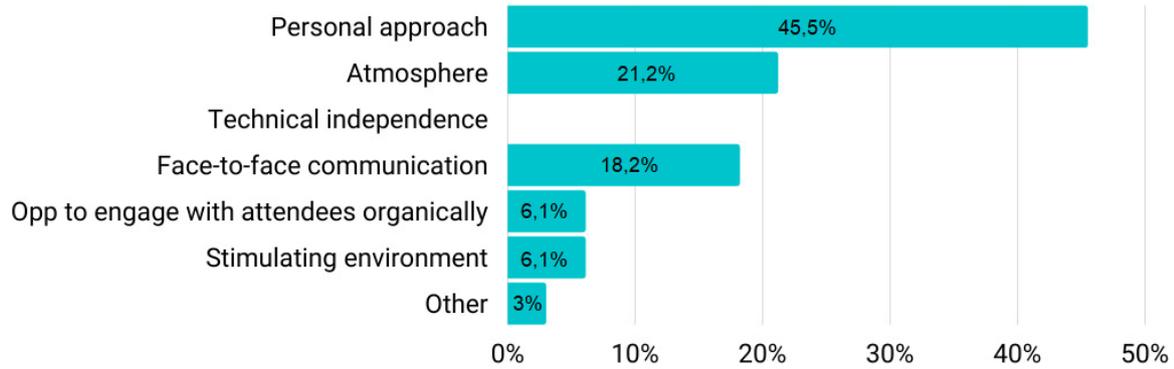
But not only personal factors per se, but also its specific dimensions like face-to-face communication (16,8%) and opportunity to engage with people organically (7,2%). Some of the replies went for factors that people usually judge rather more emotionally - thus, according to this, they miss stimulating environments (8%) and typical atmosphere (12,0%). Overall, it seems the preferences of traditional trade shows are driven by a positive emotional experience of "being there" or a sense of belonging.

The results were similar even when comparing the replies from respondents from Iberia and Latin America. Anyway, Spanish and Portuguese claimed they more often sense the lack of particular traditional trade shows atmosphere, whereas respondents from Latin America are bothered by lack of technical independence caused by the fact that when using online alternatives, one must manage requirements not only the hardware and software of their device, but mostly they have to mind also a stable internet connection.

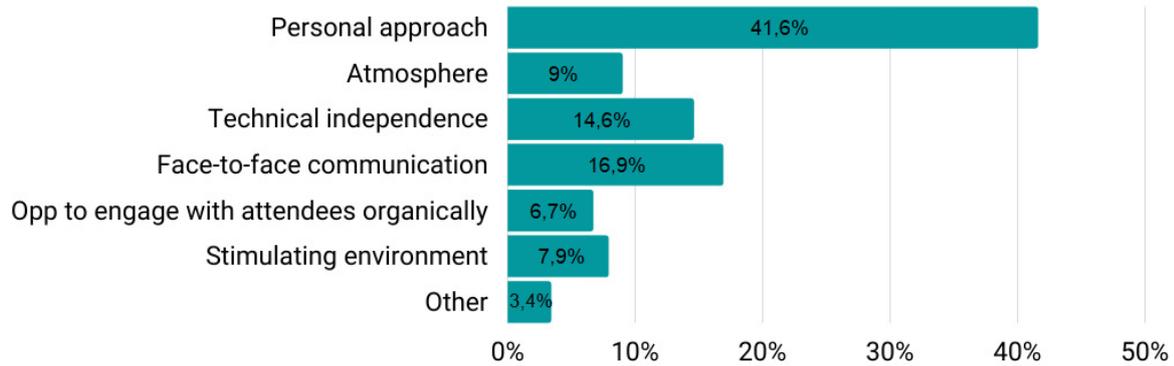
[...] what are you currently missing the most?



Iberia



Latin America

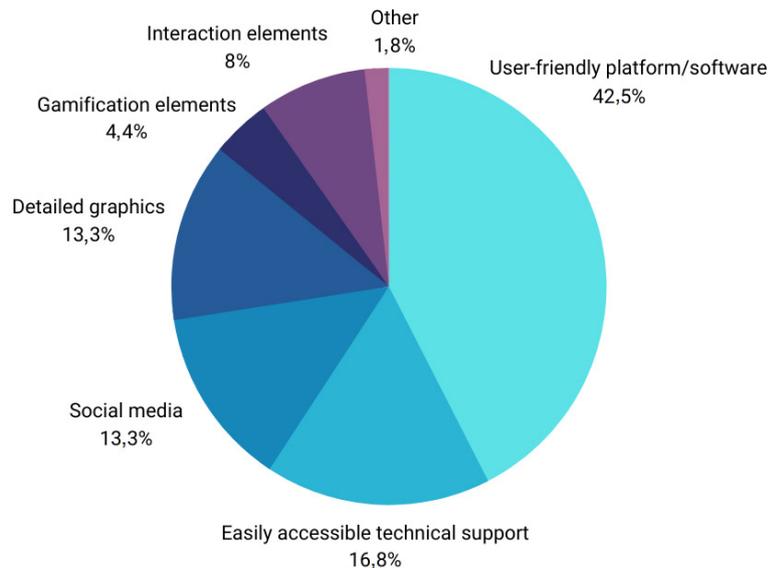


How to transfer such an experience into an online/alternative environment?

Thus mostly the sense of belonging to others, feeling the presence of people, and ability to interact organically are the factors that make people like and prefer traditional trade shows. The question is how to transfer their uniqueness (if at all possible) to an online environment. By moving to online space, it is possible to reduce costs significantly and allow exhibitors to target more people.

The worst disadvantage of so-far online events is, according to the respondents, mainly caused by missing user-friendly platforms or interfaces (42,5% of respondents) that would allow people to enjoy their experience in breadth and depth. 16,8% of respondents are even missing technical support (that may, in case of problems, disable them from participation in an online trade show). A few of the

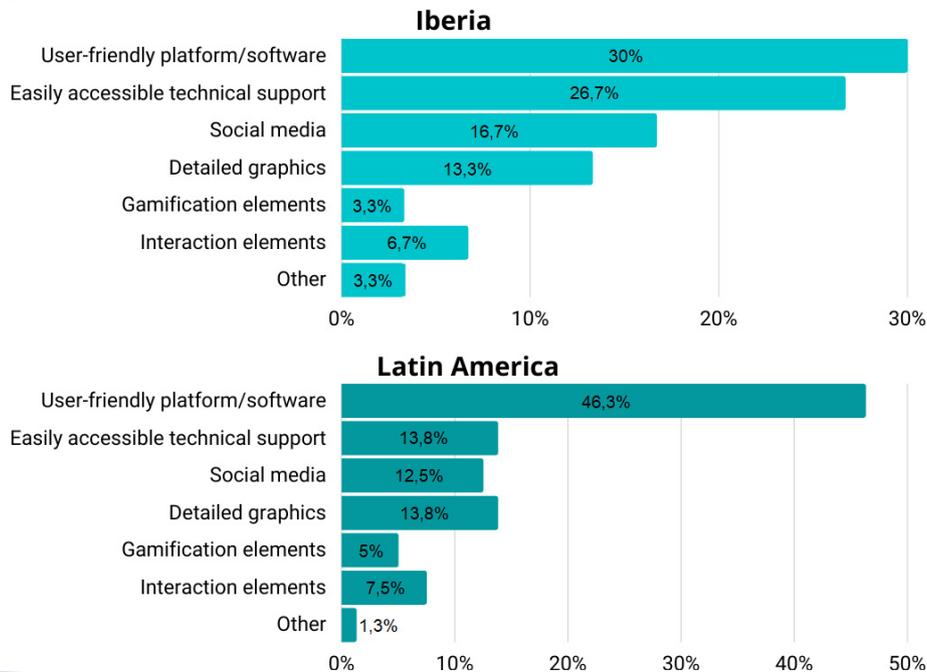
What would help you improve the experience of online alternatives?



respondents were also more specific in identifying the weaknesses of the current online space - thus, 13,3% mind undetailed graphics and about 12% of people miss gamification and interaction elements.

13,3% of respondents also think about the channels through which they could be informed about the online events and would appreciate more information to be spread through social media.

All of such factors are frequently represented in replies from people of both more in-depth examined regions. However, people from Latin America more frequently reported their need for user-friendly platforms (that probably corresponds with their previously mentioned need for technical independence). On the contrary, a larger proportion of Iberians think if there is easily accessible technical support, their experience of online alternatives will be better.



Advantages of online trade shows and events

Despite a couple of weaknesses that the organizers of online events have to deal with, according to the survey respondents, they already have a number of advantages.

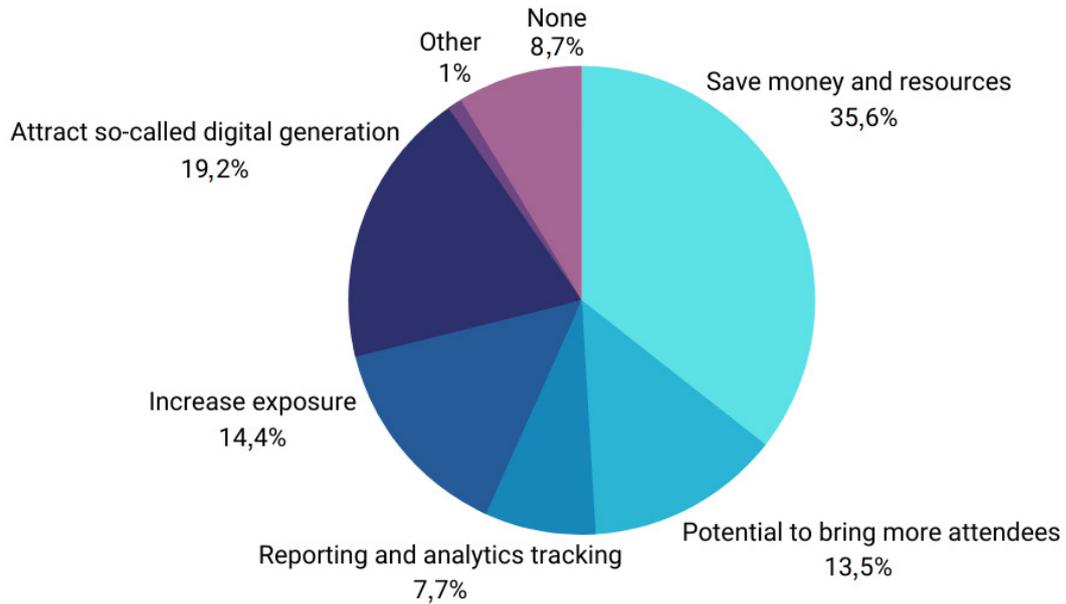
Indisputably, they allow people to save money and other resources - identified by 35,6% of the survey respondents. Moreover, 27,9% of respondents think online trade shows have the potential to bring more attendees and increase exposure - 19,2% of respondents, perceiving this issue from more of a demographic perspective, think they are especially great for attracting the so-called digital generation.

However, excluding these factors, about 8% of respondents believe the best potential of online events is in their ability to report and track attendance and sales statistics more precisely - within the platform, they can track every movement, click, and even action taken by attendees. Thus, getting a better insight on the demographics of the audience, which sessions and topics are engaging, etc.

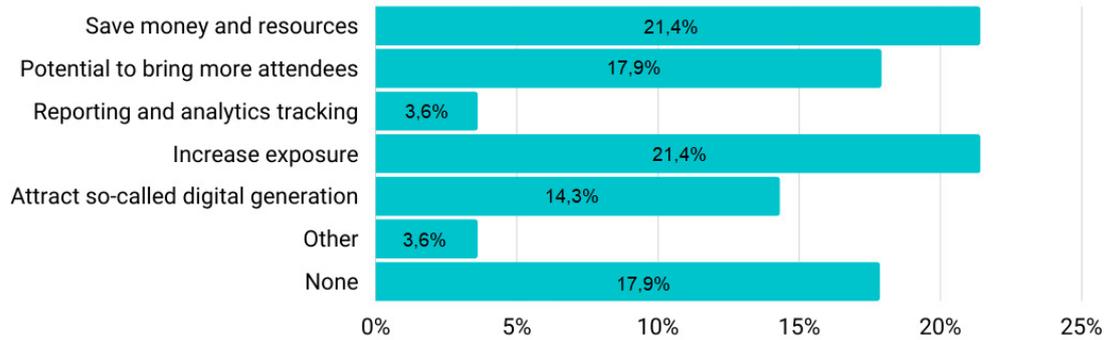
*A generation of people born in the digital era that has grown up with access to digital information and the ability to navigate the new communication technologies

Confirming the assumption that Latin American respondents probably more often deal with transportation costs, customs, and other traveling arrangements, the most frequently mentioned reply on their side was saving money and other costs. That is, however, also important for Iberians, together with the potential for exposure. Also, attracting the so-called digital generation was frequently mentioned by both Latin Americans and Iberians - though the former ones reported it more often.

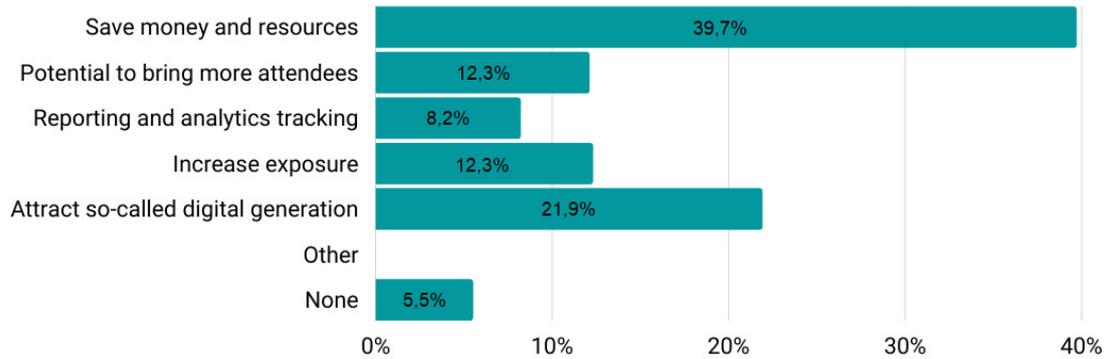
Do you think online trade shows have even some advantages [...] ?



Iberia



Latin America



After all, some features still won't be replaced

After all, although alternatives have a high potential to be a worthy substitute for traditional trade shows, some exhibitors demonstrated a sort of hesitation of going for the alternatives only. And since these two parties exist, it seems like there are a couple of characteristics of traditional trade shows that won't be replaced. That was the concern of the last question.

The replies of most of the exhibitors were about the fact they do not want to lose a connection with real people - or more specifically, they would probably miss face-to-face real-life communication. Surprisingly, the answers were quite personal, thus mentioning a specific informality and positive emotions related to such encounters. Also, many exhibitors feel quite reluctant toward the inability to present their products online since they are afraid they will lose their ability to touch and try the equipment (that may affect their purchase choice negatively).



Attendees

- About 60 - 80% of attendees prefer national trade shows over international ones.
- Most attendees see the best advantage of trade shows in becoming familiar with the latest products.
- About 60 - 80% of attendees will use the alternative solution even when the trade shows will be allowed again.
- Most attendees (30 - 40%) perceive saving money and other resources as the best advantage of trade shows.
- However, more than half of attendees would need a user-friendly platform/ software and easily accessible technical support to improve the experience of online trade shows.

Attendees' preferences of trade shows depending on trade show location

The main goals of the following sections are twofold: explore attendees' opinions and perception of trade shows and their alternatives features, advantages, and disadvantages, and confront these with the replies provided by the exhibitors.

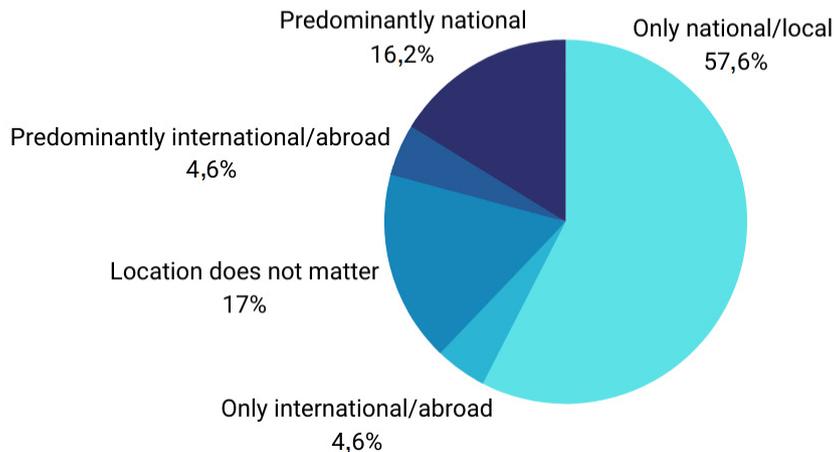
As exhibitors, attendees also mostly prefer national trade shows (57,5% of respondents only, 16,2% of respondents predominantly). On the contrary, about 9% of respondents do not hesitate to go abroad and visit international trade shows. Finally, 17,0% of the survey respondents claim geographical location does not affect their decision which trade shows attend - thus, indicating there may be other factors

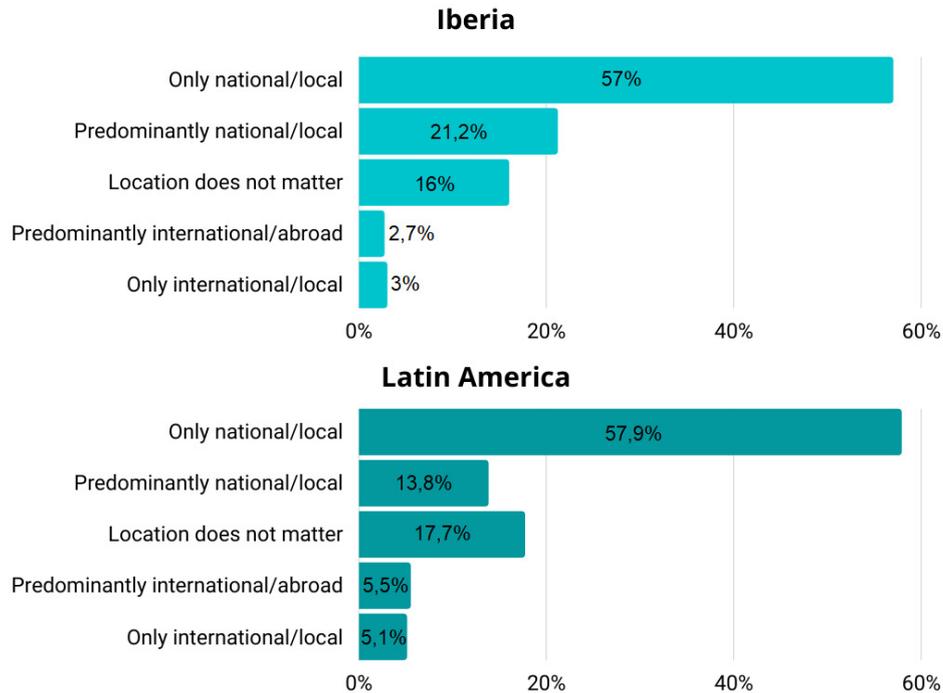
affecting such a decision.

Such numbers reflect the data received by exhibitors. Since the current survey does not aim to answer the question of how the behavior of one party affects the behavior of the other one (or whether any external factors are affecting both groups of respondents), it may open up the following discussion on such interconnections. By far, we can wonder about factors like travel costs, the need to process travel documents, etc.

Comparing the attendees' replies based on their region of origin, the majority demonstrated their willingness to attend only or predominantly local/national trade shows (Latin America: 71,7%; Iberia: 78,2% in total). What is, however, interesting, is the fact that, opposite to exhibitors, attendees from Latin America demonstrated a little higher openness to go visit trade shows abroad (10,6% compared to 5,7%)

When considering the geographical location, which trade shows do you attend?





What advantages attendees expect by visiting trade shows?

By far, the data revealed that attendees' presence on trade shows is done by the location of the event. However, such data does not explain attendees' inner motives to visit such events in general. Therefore, that was the aim of the following question.

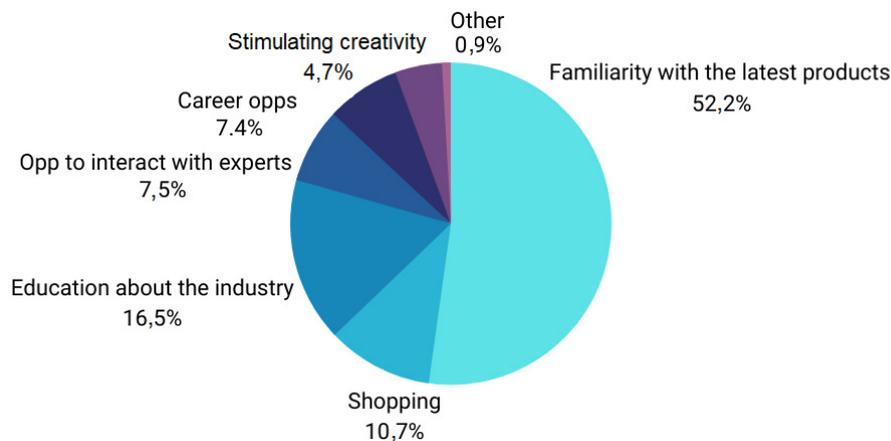
The most significant benefit of trade shows attendees (52,6%) perceive is the ability to become familiar with the latest product. Another 10,6% aim to visit trade shows

just in case of such products purchase. Almost one-fourth of people attend trade shows to learn something new about a particular topic - for 16,4% of respondents, the most significant advantage of trade shows is to be better educated, and 7,5% of survey respondents see the added value in the ability to interact with experts.

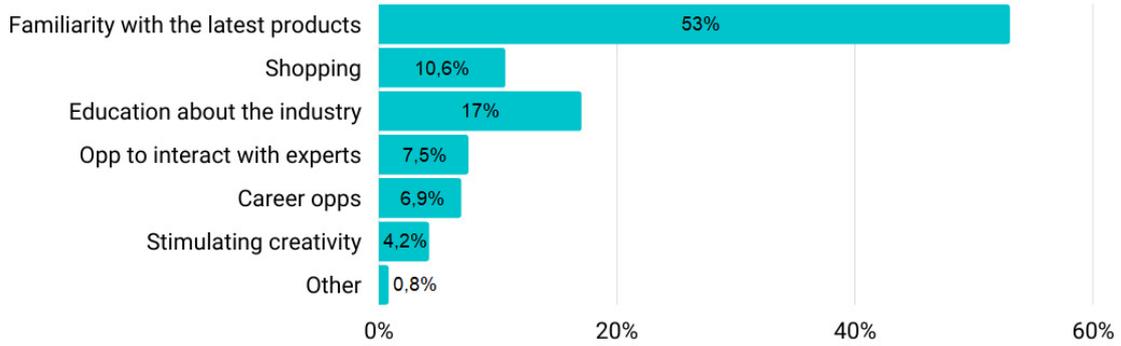
However, there are also often less pronounced factors leading attendees to trade shows. 7,4% of respondents admitted they are driven mostly by the wish to find new career opportunities, whereas 4,7% attend trade shows to stimulate their creativity and thoughts about business and equipment design.

Interestingly there are almost no differences in the distribution of such preferences between Iberian and Latin American respondents. Both Iberians (53,0%) and Latin Americans (52,7%) most benefit from becoming familiar with the latest products, followed by the ability to be educated about the industry (Iberia: 17,0%; Latin America: 16,0%) and the potential to get special "show prices" from exhibitors (10,6% both).

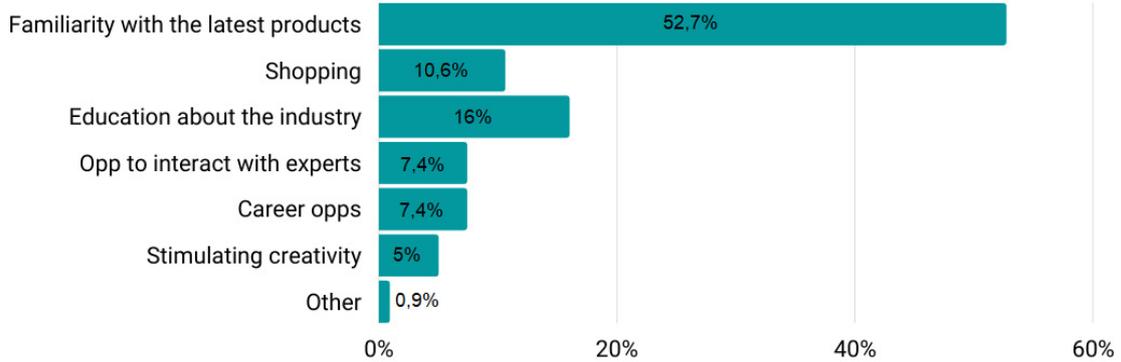
What do you consider the biggest advantage of trade shows?



Iberia



Latin America

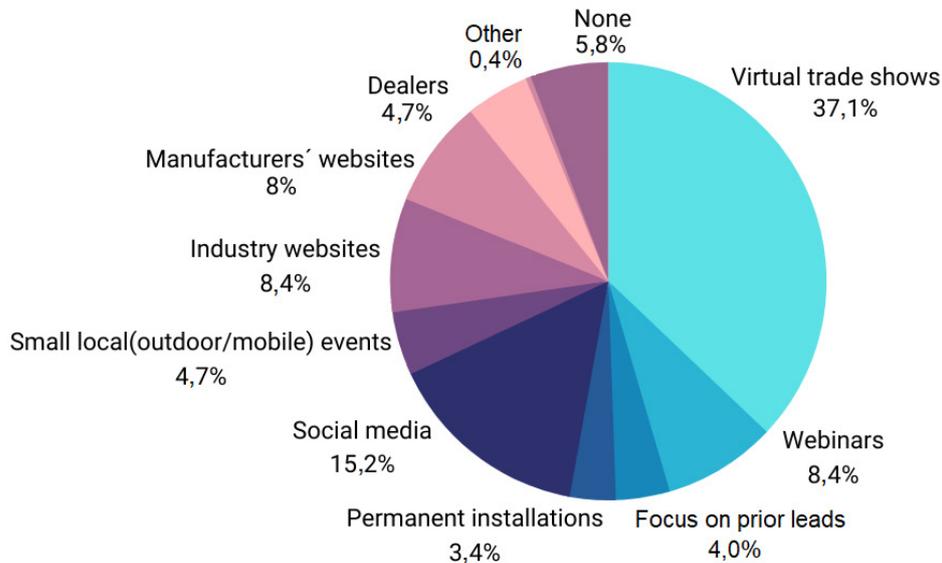


Which trade show alternatives have the potential to attract attendees?

Having all such advantages covered just by one event might be really beneficial. However, since the pandemic affected almost every form of personal interaction, trade shows were canceled or postponed, as well.

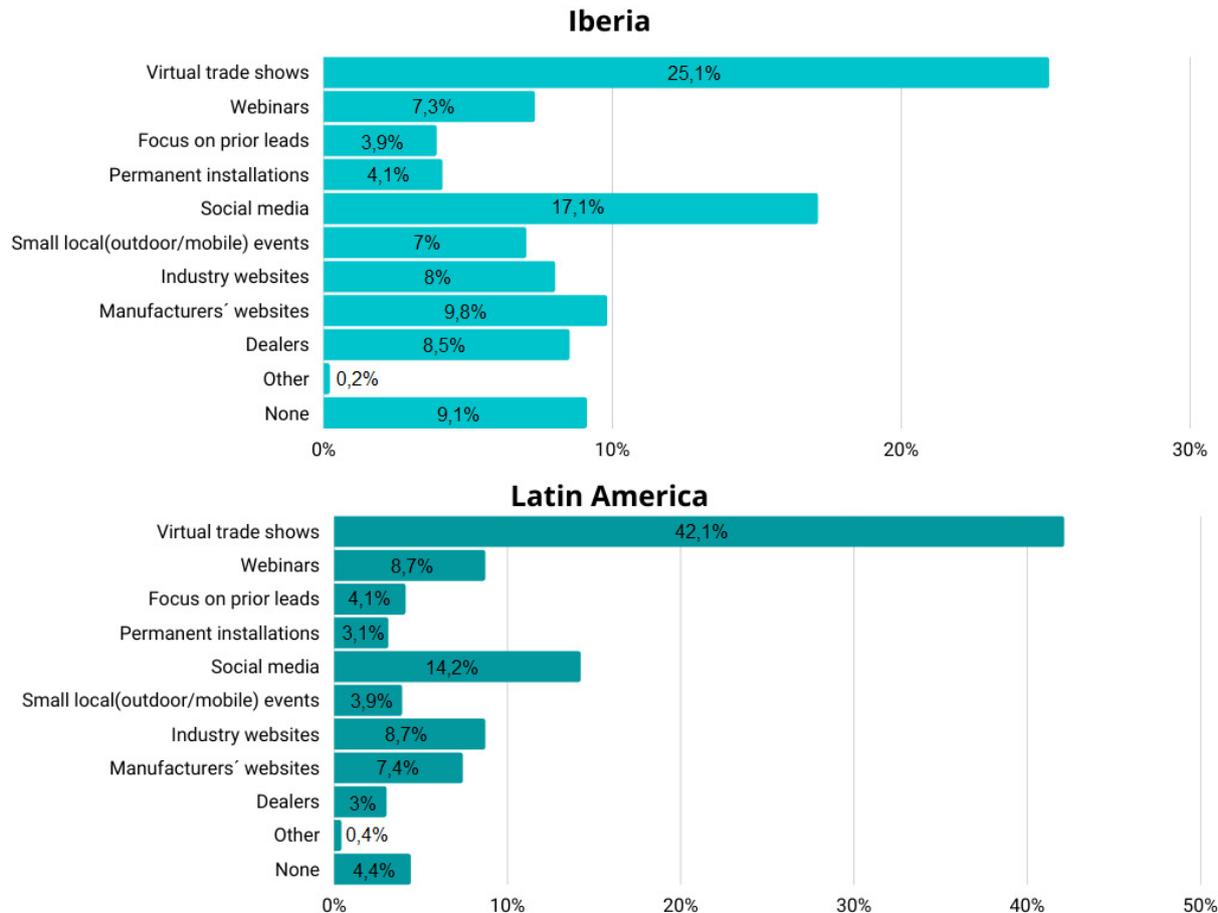
Anyway, it seems many attendees were able to adapt by going online - for example, 37,3% of respondents attend virtual trade shows, and 10,6% prefer webinars. Anyway, even other online solutions are fairly popular - 11,8% of respondents favor social media, whereas about 5% of respondents would subscribe to email campaigns or use digital marketing as an alternative.

[...] which current solution do you use as an alternative most often?



Yet, a couple of respondents looked for trade shows alternatives elsewhere. 11,8% decided to focus on prior leads, and 4,6% of respondents tried to search for permanent installations that were probably allowed to take place due to the smaller number of attendees.

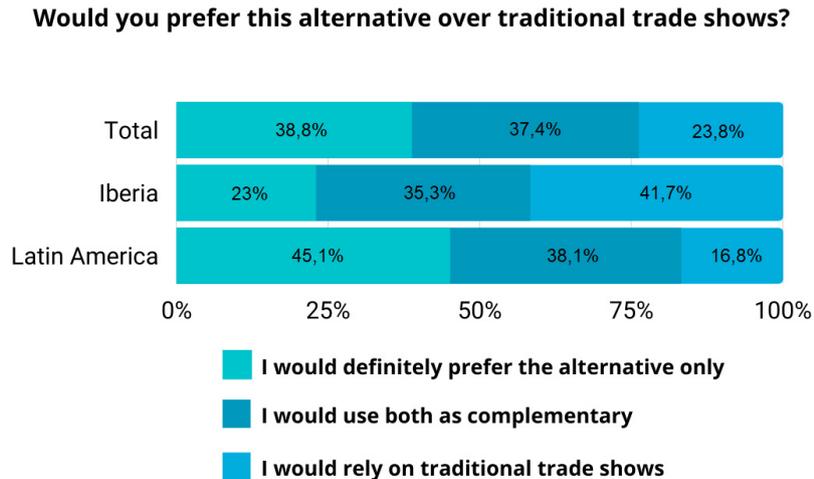
Again, as happened in the case of exhibitors, some attendees (5,7%) demonstrate some reluctance towards trade shows alternatives.



When taking into account the regional differences of trade shows alternative preferences, there is high variability. For example, Latin Americans strongly prefer virtual trade shows (42,1%), though the remaining are used only by up to 15% of people. On the other hand, in the case of Iberians, only one-fourth of them would go for virtual trade shows, however, the distribution of other alternatives is similar to Latin America - except social media favored by 17,1% of Iberian respondents. Compared to exhibitors, there are still more respondents from Iberia that do prefer small local events or permanent installations.

Do alternatives serve only as a substitute of trade shows during the pandemic or do they have a higher potential?

Though more than 90% of attendees could adapt to trade shows cancellation by finding any alternatives. The question is: what are their subsequent plans of dealing with such alternatives?



According to the survey results, 23,8% of attendees went for the alternatives only out of necessity. On the other hand, more than a third of attendees do not want to leave the alternatives anymore, the remaining third of respondents admitted they wish to combine both possibilities to get the best of both worlds.

That is also the possibility more than a third of attendees from both regions (Iberia: 35,3%; Latin America: 38,1%) would like to choose. On the other hand, speaking about the remaining scenarios, these are completely opposite for the two regions. Although Latin American attendees would appreciate the alternative only (45,1% compared to 23,0%), the Iberians, even though having the ability to choose the wide range of alternatives, would rather come back to the traditional approach only (41,7% compared to 16,8%).

What differentiates attendees that are about to rely on alternatives only and those who would better go the traditional way?

An open-ended question leading attendees to share a few words about alternatives preference was set, as well. Attendees that would better go for the alternative only, most frequently mentioned convenience, lower costs, and safety. Such replies reflect the fact that one may access the online event just with a few clicks and get in touch with exhibitors from all around the world. The latter (safety) was, however, mentioned with a higher frequency than in the case of exhibitors. That may probably refer to different conditions under which trade shows take place (ques in the aisles, a large number of people in one place, etc.)

In the case of attendees that prefer a combination of both, traditional approach and alternative, again, safety appeared as one of the main factors. In contrast to the

previous group of respondents, however, the advantages and disadvantages of both approaches were reflected. Thus, attendees, on the one hand, fancy the potential of the alternatives to receive more information in a shorter time, and from the convenience of their homes, on the other hand, they are aware of the fact that by that they lose the uniqueness or live-show atmosphere.

Again, similar to the replies provided by exhibitors, positive emotions and uniqueness of atmosphere were mentioned most frequently in the group of attendees that would better stick to the traditional approach. They refer to the feeling of the ability to walk around from one booth to the next and engage in constant, often unplanned interactions with both exhibitors and each other. Without unique and innovative experiences and novel booth activations, it can be difficult to recreate such value of a trade show online.

Specific trade shows characteristics attendees are missing even when using alternatives

Not only exhibiting company representatives, but also attendees suffer from the feeling of missing something when they have to go for trade show alternatives. To specify this issue was the aim of the next quest question.

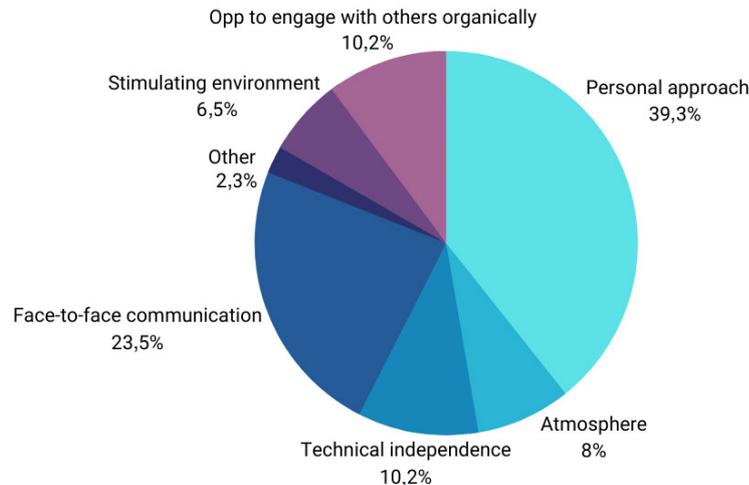
The results revealed almost 40% of respondents lack a personal approach - and the other 48,2% of respondents marked related characteristics like irreplaceable atmosphere (8%), stimulating environment (6,5%), opportunity to engage with others organically (10,2%), and face-to-face communication (23,5%).

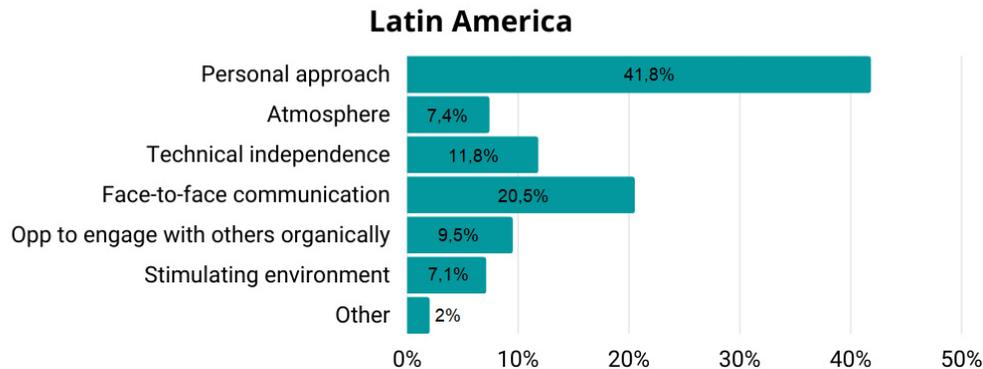
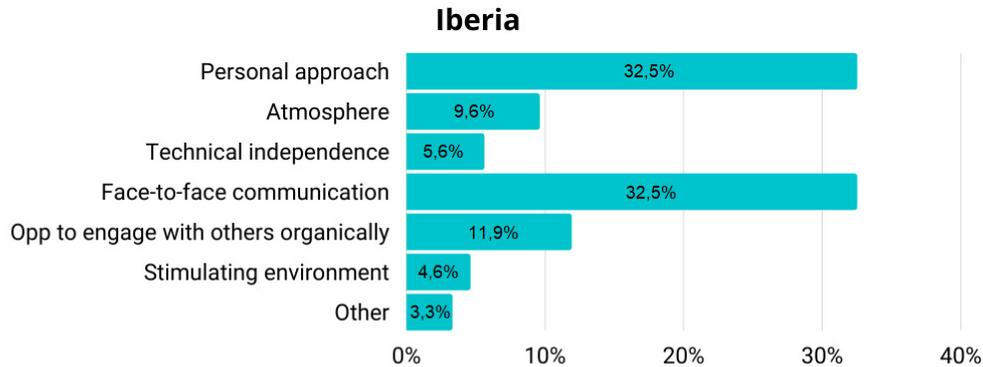
Yet, probably due to the gained experience with online alternatives, about 10% of respondents revealed they like the technical independence of live events - which

is meant no demands on internet access or device to run the alternative online session/webinar/etc.

With a closer look at the replies from different regions, the characteristics associated with personal contact are those most often chosen by both of the respondents' groups. However, in the case of Iberians, personal approach and face-to-face communication are both chosen by an equal proportion of respondents (32,5%), in case of Latinoamericana, the former, meaning a particular way of approaching or considering an issue lacks almost 42% of respondents, exceeding the latter (20,5%).

[...] what are you currently missing the most?





What characteristics do the alternatives have to meet to gain better popularity among attendees?

Thus yet the data show at least 10% of attendees need mastered technically related factors to enjoy traditional trade shows alternatives. To this point, the question, however, reveals more such factors.

According to survey responses, about one-third of attendees need the online events running on user-friendly platforms, followed by about one-third of respondents

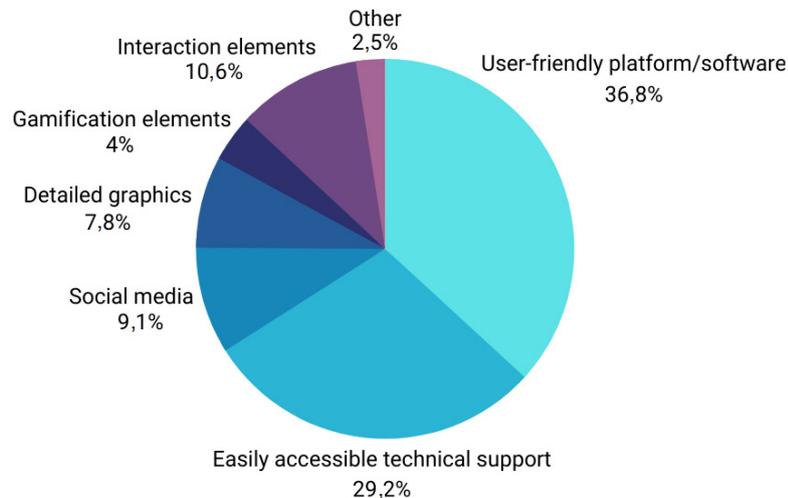
lacking easily accessible technical support services which they can use in case of any problems or questions.

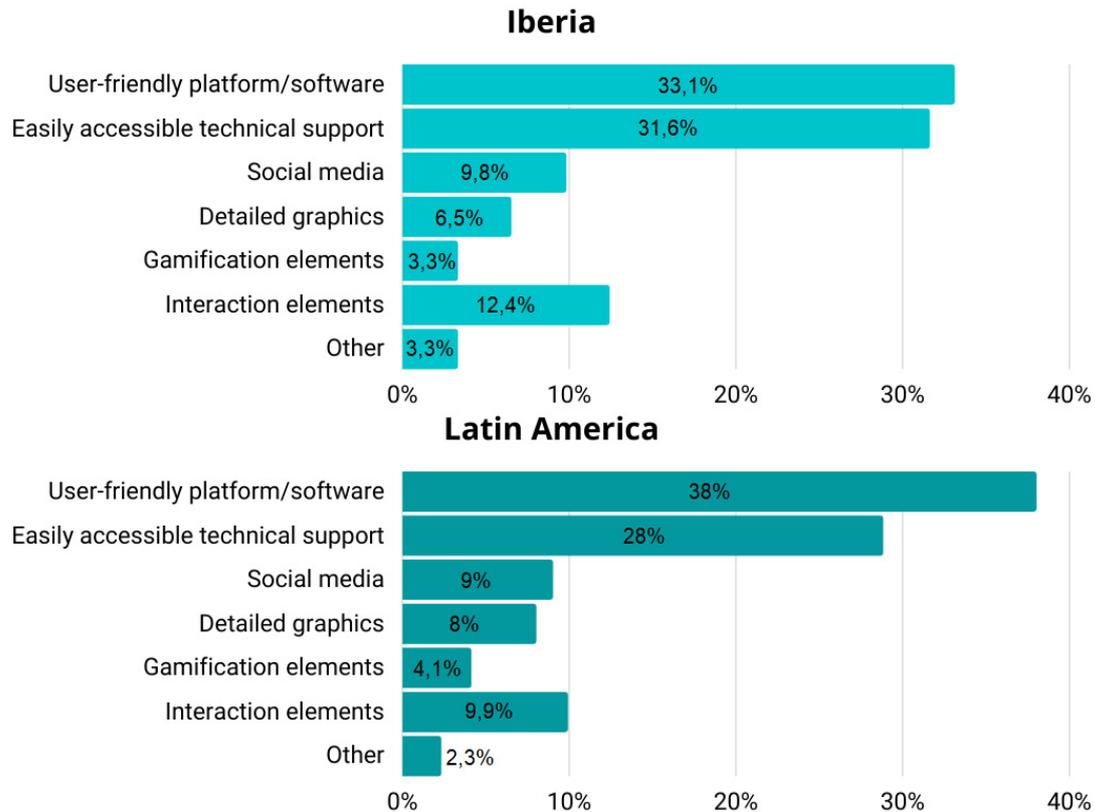
About 20% of respondents seem to be by far a little bit unsatisfied with current graphics conditions (7,8%) and lack of gamification (4%) or interactive elements (10,6%).

Also, about 10% of attendees need alternatives to traditional trade shows to be promoted via social media.

Considering regional differences, the results demonstrate that the differences in their perception are only marginal. In both, Iberia and Latin America attendees would most appreciate having user-friendly platforms (Iberia: 33,1%; Latin America: 38,0%) and easily accessible technical support (Iberia: 31,6%, Latin America: 28,8%). If these factors were handled, web-based alternatives would probably gain higher popularity and the potential to be used on more occasions.

What would help you improve the experience of online alternatives?





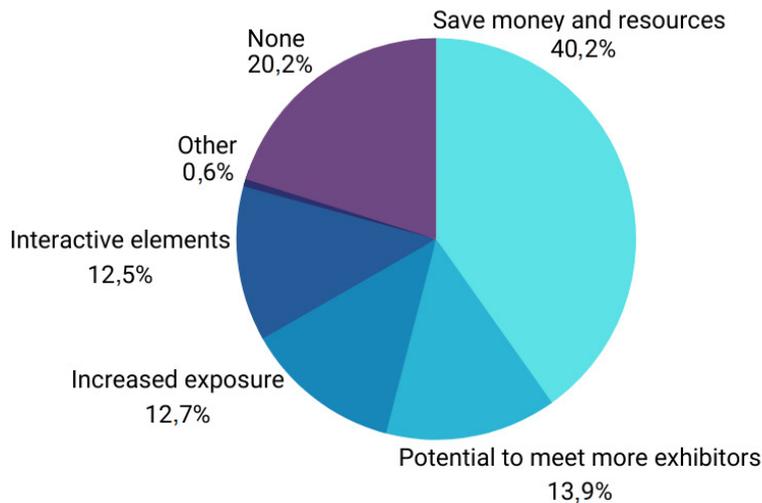
What are the advantages of online events for their attendees?

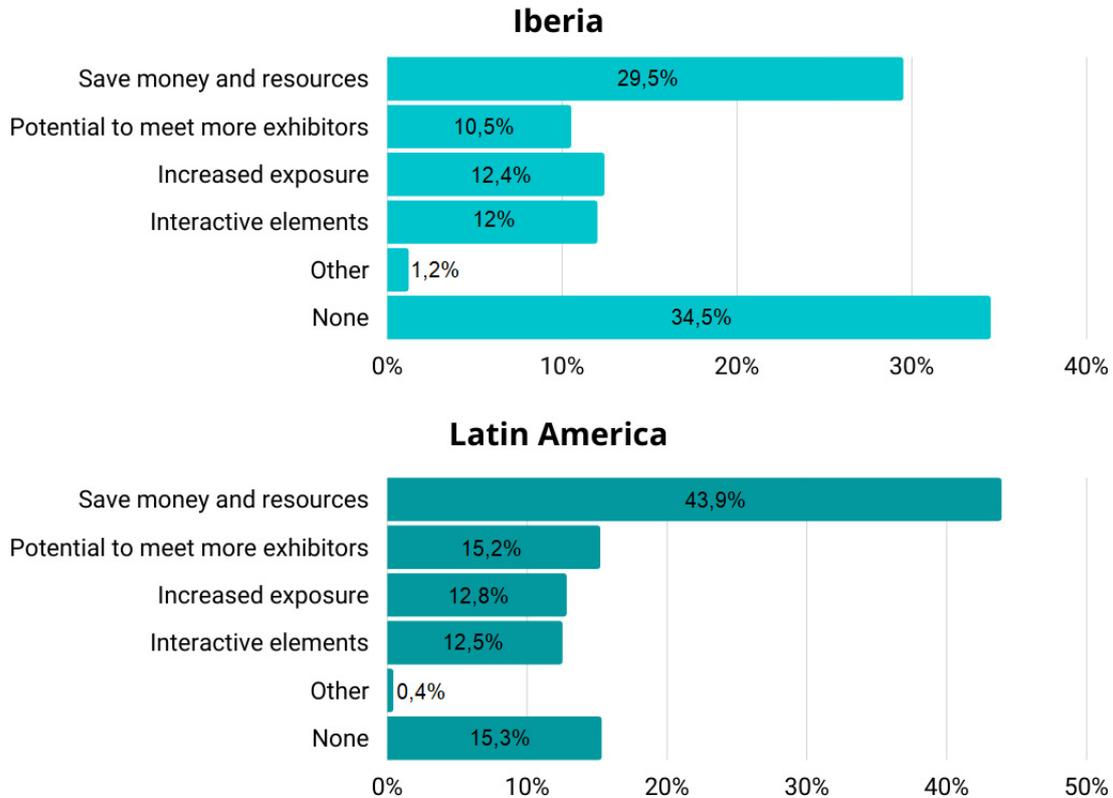
During almost a whole last year, attendees have, however, almost no opportunity to visit traditional trade shows - thus, they probably gained pieces of experience with alternatives making them competent to share both perceived weaknesses and advantages.

The utmost and indisputable benefit of online trade shows is lower costs, the potential to save money, and other resources (40,2% of respondents). However, attendees believe by moving online, the event has higher potential to bring more exhibitors in one place - and therefore, the broader scope of exhibitors and topics from which attendees can choose. That is similar to another advantage - increased exposure - actually mentioned by 12,9% of respondents. Similar numbers (12,5%) were received in the case of interactive elements.

The numbers are different when the replies of respondents from both of the specifically targeted regions are compared. More or less, respondents from Latin America are open to perceiving the advantages of alternatives - especially they favor alternatives´ potential to save money and resources (43,9% compared to 29,5%). What is, however, interesting is the fact that more than a third of Iberian attendees do not perceive any advantage of trade show alternatives (34,5% compared to 15,3%).

Do you think online trade shows have even some advantages [...] ?





Irreplaceable traditional trade shows alternatives from attendees' perspective

Compared to exhibitors, there is a higher proportion of attendees who think a couple of trade show characteristics won't be replaced even when using sophisticated alternatives. The replies for the very last question of the survey, the results revealed that similar to exhibitors, many attendees think the personal contact is the characteristics that matters. They would miss the ability to go through the aisles with

their colleagues and friends and discuss the exhibited products spontaneously. They are also afraid of losing the ability to have a chat with exhibitors about the products. Some attendees opened up about their so-far experience revealing they really enjoy receiving exhibitors' advice of how to separate the equipment and adjusting the purchase conditions towards their needs.

That leads to the second most often mentioned characteristic: The ability to test the products like operating the machine, discussing their abilities to operate under various conditions and equipped with various features.

"Going to manufacturers' fairs makes the picture much clearer and in my case, I know very well the companies in Guyana, in the iron and aluminium sector, see other alternatives to offer."



Conclusion

We believe that the survey and its results allow us to meet new scenarios in trade shows cancellations resulting from the Covid emergency. The high number of replies received shows the interest aroused in the questions raised.

Before the start of the pandemic, more than two-thirds of the respondents regularly visited the sectoral fairs to publicize their products and be up to date with the news and services offered by the exhibiting companies. The remaining respondents used other means, such as websites' associations, discussion forums, social networks, or the specialized press.

The data has been analysed from the exhibitors' and attendees' point of view. As for the exhibiting companies, a large majority prefer to exhibit at national or local trade shows. Until the traditional fairs do not resume their activity, they use virtual trade shows as an alternative during the pandemic.

We have found out that exhibitors consider increasing their brand visibility and also contacting new customers being the best advantage of traditional trade shows. Before the cancellations of the traditional trade shows, exhibitors have used virtual trade shows as their main alternative to continue attracting new customers. In terms of brand visibility, the exhibitors mainly focused on webinars, ways of increasing commercial campaigns, and visibility in social networks.

We discovered that the aspects that exhibitors miss the most when using virtual trade shows are, undoubtedly, personal contact, face-to-face relationships with attendees, and the atmosphere offered at trade shows in terms of shows and live demonstrations of the machinery on display.

On the contrary, the best advantage that exhibitors find in virtual trade shows is the ability to attract a higher number of international attendees. Many respondents experience a very significant reduction in costs of exhibiting since they do not have to move staff or send machinery to exhibit. Among exhibitors, it is also positively evaluated that with virtual trade shows, you can track more accurately the movements made by attendees in the virtual platform and what products they have been searching for.

There is no doubt that, from the exhibitors' point of view, most of the benefits offered by face-to-face fairs cannot be reached by virtual ones.

Regarding the extracted data from attendees, there is no doubt that they prefer to visit national trade shows more than international ones. The main advantage of regular trade shows is access to the latest developments offered in the market. The adaptation by attendees to virtual trade shows has been higher, and they consider that even though the activity of regular trade shows will start again, they will combine both modalities. That is mainly because they can have access to any virtual trade show from anywhere in the world, and thus they can be aware of any new developments in the sector.

However, they indeed believe virtual trade shows should use platforms with easier access to improve the experience.

When it comes to virtual trade shows, many attendees admitted they encountered technical issues in accessing the platform. That resulted in hinders while attempting to participate. That should be an issue the trade shows organizers should try to solve in the shortest possible time.

It is worth mentioning that the aspects that attendees appreciate the most at regular trade shows are the possibility to test the machinery, see its functionalities - and,

of course, the personal contact with exhibitors, which in virtual trade shows, is impossible to perceive.

To conclude, the Covid-19 pandemic has decimated the meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions space, with online and hybrid events enjoying mixed success across industries.

As the pandemic rolls on, safety will probably remain the top concern for event organizers, thus travel restrictions and distancing recommendations will still be in place. As our survey reveals, many of both attendees and exhibitors will appreciate the ability to return to the fairs in the traditional way. However, as some claimed they are concerned about alternatives, the number of, at least, attendees will be substantially smaller than in the past, and possibly for years to come.

Appendix

Find the elaborated data analyses and results [here](#).



Interested in your individual survey?

Whenever you want to improve and grow your business conducting a survey may help you. Despite the fact that there are plenty of research methods or strategies to understand your customers' behaviour, the easiest way to get information about people is to simply ask them. Understanding your customers' perspective and needs provides you with the most important information about the future development of your business and therefore determining priorities of its direction. Moreover, ongoing communication with your customers and demonstration of the interest in their needs helps maintain their loyalty.

LECTURA can get your survey in front of hundreds of thousands of industry professionals – your potential customers due to our large audience. More than 900,000 professionals research equipment on our ultimate buyer's guide LECTURA Specs every month. Moreover, they are actively engaging with our polls and surveys. More specifically, the engagement is about 4% which results in about 800 daily replies. We provided our clients already with surveys focused on e.g., telematics, EaaS models, spare parts or equipment rating, having collected tens of thousands of answers.

When wondering about the targeting, LECTURA can select your respondents' sample based on some predefined criteria: region/country of origin, industry and type of business. To reach the criteria we are able to target to place your survey on specific web pages only or provide you with 11 language versions – English, German, Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, Polish, Ukrainian, Czech, Turkish, and Russian (for English, German, Spanish, French, Czech and Polish with translation, too).

The survey questions are presented to respondents right immediately on the LECTURA Specs website. To make it more specific – the process of research collaboration with LECTURA is as follows.

At the beginning we discuss the objectives of the research – who is it for, why, what information do you want to obtain via your survey. When all previously mentioned is clear, you create the questions which we place on the webpages. After some time, the data are collected and it depends on you whether you want to analyse them by yourself (we are able to provide you the raw data in .xls, .sav or .csv format) or let the LECTURA Surveys to analyse them for you and provide you with a comprehensive report of results. More about LECTURA Surveys: <https://www.lectura.de/surveys/>.

OTHER SURVEYS BY LECTURA

- **COVID survey in cooperation with CECE and ERA**
- **Flash survey: Finance and Leasing**
- **Flash survey: Engines**
- **Flash survey: Tires**
- **Flash survey: Workwear**
- **The Perspective on the Use of Alternative Fuels in the Heavy Truck Industry**

You can find all published surveys on LECTURA Press in the [reports](#) section.

GET IN TOUCH FOR YOUR SURVEY DETAILS

Darja Kočárová
Market Research Analyst at LECTURA
survey@lectura.de