

The Promotion of Craft Business Events in Pernambuco: an analysis of the (in)congruences between buyer persona and digital marketing strategies adopted by FENEARTE



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ABSTRACT

Given that one of the most effective digital marketing strategies for attracting audiences to events is understanding customer needs, the use of buyer personas seems to be an important tool for achieving the ideal consumer profile. The aim of this study was therefore to analyse the congruences and incongruities between the digital marketing strategies adopted by the Pernambuco National Handicraft Business Fair and a buyer persona profile proposed for the event. This is therefore an exploratory-descriptive study with a mixed approach, based on the single case study method. In order to define FENEARTE's buyer persona, data was collected from 63 participants at the 22nd edition of the fair. The instrument used was a structured questionnaire made up of 15 questions, divided into 4 sections: demographic data; behavioural data; event-specific data; and transactional data. Data on the digital marketing strategies adopted to promote the event was obtained through documentary research. A total of seventy-seven posts were collected from



FENEARTE's official Instagram profile relating to the edition under investigation. Descriptive statistics and categorical content analysis were used for the analyses. The results showed that there is a certain congruence between the strategies for publicising the products and communicating/interacting with the public and the proposed persona. The same could not be seen with regard to publicising the artists, the cultural presentations and the values of the products. From a theoretical point of view, the research highlights the importance of understanding digital marketing concepts and their applications in various sectors, such as tourism, events, etc. For the management field, this study highlights the need to adopt appropriate promotional strategies aimed at greater assertiveness in virtual communication. It should be noted that this work was carried out with the support of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel - Brazil (CAPES) - Funding Code 001, and the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq). It was also awarded a grant from the Institutional Scientific Initiation Scholarship Programme (PIBIC) of PROPESQ/UFPE.

Keywords: Digital marketing, Buyer persona, Events, Crafts, FENEARTE.

INTRODUCTION

For the tourism industry, events are often major drivers of a wide range of economic activities. Oliveira, Gândara and Oliveira (2017) consider that, as well as generating flow, events are also strong allies in the fight against seasonality, since they allow demand to be managed, even in periods of low demand. According to Virginio et al. (2019), controlling the elasticity of demand caused by seasonality is fundamental to the survival of a tourist destination's commercial activities, ensuring that good performance is achieved on a perennial basis. Therefore, there is no denying the symbiotic relationship between tourism and the events sector.

According to data from the Brazilian Association of Event Companies (ABEOC), the sector in the state of São Paulo by itself had a turnover of approximately R\$305 billion in 2022 (ABEOC, 2022). This represented 4.6% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in that year. At a national level, it is estimated that the events sector generates around R\$1 trillion annually. According to the Brazilian Union of Trade Fairs and Business Events (UBRAFE), this segment is one of the main drivers of business tourism in the country



(UBRAFE, 2022). In other words, directly or indirectly, these trade fairs have an impact on at least fifty other economic sectors in Brazil, according to UBRAFE.

One of the reasons for the success of trade fairs in the country is probably the possibility of direct contact between the public and suppliers. Events like FENEARTE, for instance, allow consumers to negotiate directly with craftsmen. This creates relationships of close trust which, in many cases, are based on the principle of supporting handicraft production, encouraging artisanal producers and valuing local culture. According to Oliveira (2019), in this specific type of event, local producers are able to connect directly with other agents, both local and non-local, ranging from individual buyers to entrepreneurs and/or distributors, with the most diverse types of interest in their products.

In this context, it is worth noting that Pernambuco's National Handicraft Business Fair has stood out in the Brazilian market in recent years. According to Fonseca and Oliveira (2022), the 2022 edition had a total of five thousand exhibitors. Over the course of the eleven-day event, approximately thirty-eight million reais were generated, as well as around two thousand five hundred temporary jobs. It is worth noting that this performance was achieved in the first edition of the event after the pandemic, during which time FENEARTE had its activities suspended (FENEARTE, 2022).

It is known that results of this magnitude depend on strategic actions and decisions, starting with the planning of the event's operations and ending with the communication approach to be adopted (Zouni, Markogiannaki & Georgaki, 2021). This is because the main purpose of fairs like FENEARTE is to promote negotiations between producers, entrepreneurs, distributors and customers in general. In addition, of course, to the circulation of visitors which, in one way or another, helps to give visibility to the event and is therefore also essential to its success. Therefore, the strategy for publicising events like this needs to be designed in such a way as to meet the objectives and interests of all the players involved.

Over the last few years, there's no denying that the internet has become the main means of communication and sales for the events sector too (Rosa,



Casagranda & Spinelli, 2017). This is because, according to Voorveld (2019), digital platforms are increasingly present in people's daily lives. Whether it's to find out the latest news or to resolve everyday issues, there is always a tool available to make life easier for those looking for solutions in the virtual environment. It is precisely on this basis that a large part of today's marketing and communication strategies have been directed towards the digital sphere.

The basis of digital marketing communication lies in the process of creating so-called buyer personas. For Peçanha (2020), this is a kind of 'semi-fictitious' character who, in general, represents the ideal customer for an organisation. In other words, in the case of FENEARTE, the 'persona' would be an approximate projection of the public that is expected (or intended) to attend the event. Cruz and Karatzas (2020) argue that its creation is of paramount importance when developing effective tactics to reach the desired audience segment for an event.

Considering the above and the relevance of the topic, this study seeks to answer the following question: *How are the digital marketing communication strategies adopted by the FENEARTE organisation aligned with the event's proposed audience profile?* The aim is therefore to analyse points that indicate whether there are congruencies and/or incongruities between the approaches used to publicise the event and its persona. The latter, in turn, is considered to be a model - or idealisation - of the group of people you want to attract to the fair. The research initially includes a literature review aimed at contextualising and discussing the subject. Next, the methodological procedures adopted are described, followed by the analysis and discussion of the results. Finally, conclusions and recommendations for future research are presented.

DIGITAL MARKETING: GENERAL ASPECTS AND APPLICATION TO EVENTS

To reach consumers, understanding the profile of the target audience is just the first step. Communication strategies need to be aligned with the type of product or service that the user consumes, inserted into the appropriate



communication channels and in the most interesting format for them to enjoy. Voorveld (2019) emphasises this understanding of diversity as a personalised and humanised way of communicating, as it encompasses the trigger of empathy and affection, differentiation and brand identity, as well as reinforcing the creative potential for the strategies drawn up later. In this way, the internet offers an opportunity to expand the company's business through virtual communication, which needs to be adjusted in order to achieve a more direct and personal bond with the customer (Rosa, Casagrande & Spinelli, 2017).

Implementing digital marketing tactics is important if companies are to achieve a good audience reach, given that the use of the internet and social networks is part of most societies' lifestyles. Barbosa, Andrade-Matos and Perinotto (2020) emphasise that marketing must adapt to the changing nature of the consumer, explaining how, on the one hand, digital connections eliminate demographic and geographical barriers, and on the other, consumers end up adopting a more complex and social purchasing process, in which various opinions are analysed in the form of evaluations, advice and advertisements.

For Jacobson, Gruzd and Hernández-García (2020), targeted advertising is the most effective digital marketing strategy. This is because, according to the authors, consumers are more familiar with and more frequently exposed to this type of advertising on social networks. Furthermore, it should be emphasised that for digital marketing to be effective, the customer needs to be comfortable with the practices, especially in terms of ethics. In the view of Malesev and Cherry (2021), digital marketing tactics, if adopted and maintained correctly, can attract more customers, increase customer engagement and brand recognition.

This study by Dolega, Rowe and Branagan (2021) set out to analyse the impact of digital marketing on social networks on website traffic, orders and sales. With regard to the first item, it was found that the number of video reproductions of posts on social networks does not mean an increase in visits to



the site, nor in orders or sales. With regard to the other two aspects, it was found that digital marketing campaigns have little influence on increasing sales of less complex products. The main result of the research is that social media marketing is partially effective, as it increases traffic, but the effect on orders and sales is not as significant.

It is necessary to understand social networks and the role they play in marketing, since social networks have become relevant from a cultural point of view, as well as being a dominant form of communication and expression, and a major advertising method used by companies (Appel et al., 2020). According to the 'State of Marketing' report by Salesforce (2021), customer expectations of companies are becoming more demanding, with 84 per cent of the marketing professionals interviewed agreeing that digital strategies are changing in line with consumer expectations. In addition, 34 per cent of them said that they are trying to innovate their digital marketing tactics. The report also highlights that social networks, digital adverts and videos are the three most common ways of reaching customers.

The need to monitor and adapt to digital transformations and trends is essential and a major challenge for organisations. In this sense, the study by Perides, Vasconcellos and Vasconcellos (2020) highlighted some points that need to be reconfigured in order for the company to enter this digital reality. These include the engagement of professionals in all stages of the transformation process as one of the main concerns of senior management, as well as the decentralisation of decisions, effective communication and training and motivation programmes. Therefore, the internet uses social media to connect people, events or brands in order to reach a greater number of consumers, facilitating the development of buying and selling decisions (Nery et al., 2020).

The internet also acts as a driving tool for the evolution and transformation of marketing, becoming an essential resource for communication and sales (Silva, 2019). This has rapidly changed the way companies dialogue with their customers, resulting in one of the dominant



provisions in the market, which is the ability of consumers to evaluate the organisation's brand, products and services. A report published by Talkwalker (2022) revealed that 86 per cent of consumers hesitate to buy a product or service that has received negative comments on social media. This shows how opinions expressed in the virtual sphere influence customers' purchasing decisions.

According to Silva, Silva and Pereira (2020), digital marketing can be used in events in various ways, such as creating virtual invitations, design and interaction with participants. It can be applied from strategic assembly to the collection of the event's satisfaction survey. In addition, the authors highlight the use of social networks and websites to intensify the dissemination of event-related content and provide easy access to product or service information for the customer. From the same perspective, Boaria and Souza (2017) reinforce that digital marketing at events can be useful for finding information about the programme more quickly, as well as making communication more effective.

Harb et al.'s (2019) study highlights the role of social media as a marketing tool for events. The results showed that perceived enjoyment of social media had a positive impact on the attitudes of those interested in the event. In this way, the research highlights that event organisers, as well as marketing professionals, must understand how people's opinions and perceptions affect intention and behaviour formation by using social media to plan, promote and build events.

Bayne and Cianfrone (2013) argue that social networks increase awareness of the event, i.e. the knowledge that a certain event is taking place or will take place. It is therefore important to provide new and up-to-date content about the event so that this awareness is generated effectively through social media. In addition, Inversini and Sykes (2013) state that companies and brands in the events sector should use social media as a communication tool that increases their reach to customers. The authors also point out that event management must be committed to social media, which increases the exploitation of its potential.



Some studies on the national scenario have evaluated the application of digital marketing in events. The research by Leite, Câmara and Santos (2021) investigated how Instagram is used to promote events in São Luís, Maranhão. The results showed that posts are made via this social network to seek customer loyalty, given that online information is relevant to consumer decision-making. The study by Austregesilo et al. (2021) points out that, for the events segment, digital marketing strategies are advantageous because they have low operating costs and a long customer reach. They also make it possible to select a target audience and target campaigns. The research by Rangel et al. (2021) evaluated the digital marketing strategies used by the Rock in Rio event. It found that one of the main strategies was the use of hashtags, with the aim of spreading the promotion of the event and the experience of the participants.

Yet in the context of events, digital marketing becomes relevant for communicating with participants, as well as publicising them. To do this, you need to define your target audience and devise strategies that will help you reach them effectively. As well as establishing who your customers or prospects are, you need to know how to offer your product or service to fulfil their needs and desires. For this reason, all the tactics and content that make up the campaigns must be geared towards the interests of the target audience (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2021). Thus, the creation of buyer personas seems interesting for this purpose.

Building buyer personas for events

According to Peçanha (2020), a buyer persona is a character that represents the ideal customer of a business, serving as a market segmentation tool and as the basis of digital marketing. Thus, its creation helps companies plan more effective digital marketing strategies in line with consumer interests (Klepek, 2019). According to Revella (2015), it represents a real customer, helping marketing professionals to devise tactics to promote products and services that are more in line with this customer's profile. In this way, it is created



based on consumers' purchasing decisions, revealing their expectations and concerns.

Defining a persona for a business is the starting point for good and successful alignment of communication proposals with the consumer. With the increase in competitiveness in the markets, defining a target audience has come to be considered too broad to be effective, since when the audience is generalised, some details are left out, such as the customer's habits and desires (Molho, Sousa & Vilhena, 2020). Therefore, outlining a buyer persona helps define the type of content that should be invested in and the way it should be presented, reducing costs by making the investment more assertive.

Defining a buyer persona helps to reach the ideal customer for the business in the most effective way possible. Ekbote (2017) emphasises that identifying the ideal customer profile allows marketing communication to be more assertively focused and directed in different types of channels, according to the segment's needs. In addition, the author explains that outlining a buyer persona allows brands to define clear messages for specific customers, improving the consumer experience and, consequently, the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing.

According to Zhukova (2020), the effectiveness of creating a buyer persona can bring many benefits to the company: boosting page views on social networks by 100%; increasing browsing time on the site by 900%; and generating a ROI (return on investment) of 171%. However, important customer data must be taken into account, such as demographic and psychographic information, sources of employment, professional status and the purchasing process, in order to establish a more informed profile. In this way, creating buyer personas in marketing is essential for obtaining better deals, products, decisions and investments.

An analysis of the buyer persona of a music event in Amsterdam by Filipov (2019) showed that the profile of the participants had some characteristics. It showed that they were young (aged between 22 and 29); active communicators on social media before, during and after the event;



experiencing electronic music with friends, meeting people and expressing themselves were the main motivations for attending the event; and they are price sensitive. As a result, it was possible to obtain the buyer persona for this specific event.

Hallmann and Wicker's (2012) research investigated individuals who take part in marathon running events. The results showed three different profiles of participants: holidaymakers, socialisers and marathon runners. The first profile includes people who indicated holidays as the main reason for taking part in this type of event; they stay in private accommodation with friends or relatives; they spend an average of 75 dollars a day; and they don't travel by car to the race venue. The second profile stays in the city of the event to visit friends and family; lives close to the place of the event; and spends an average of 50 dollars a day. The third profile has the marathon itself as their main motivation for taking part in the event; they spend more than the other two groups; and they usually stay in a hostel. The study emphasises that such information is important for event organisers to be able to offer specific packages for each customer profile.

Likewise in the sporting events segment, research by Janssen et al. (2017) investigated the characteristics of participants who use running-related apps and wearable sports watches. The findings revealed that apps are used by younger, less experienced participants who are less involved with the event. On the other hand, athletic devices are used by older, more experienced individuals who are more involved with the event. The study highlights that this has made it possible to map out distinct consumer profiles so that manufacturers of electronic gadgets related to running can better meet the needs of participants.

A study by Talón-Ballesteros et al. (2018) in the tourism context, of which events are a part, showed that customer relationship systems can serve as a means of building a consumer profile. From the data in these systems, it is possible to gain a better understanding of the customer. The study highlights some information that can be useful for understanding the customer as a



whole, such as demographic data, behavioural data, transactional data and data specific to the tourism context. In this way, products and marketing actions can be adapted in a more appropriate way.

In view of the above, it can be seen that different digital marketing strategies can be used to promote events. It should also be noted that the ideal consumer audience for a given event can be defined by creating a buyer persona, which encompasses all the characteristics and information about the client. The next topic, which deals with the study's methodological procedures, shows how this issue was investigated at the FENEARTE event.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

This mixed method study was carried out using an exploratory-descriptive approach. According to Costa et al. (2018), the quest to understand complex phenomena, such as the one proposed in this research, tends to require a combination of methodological strategies. This is because it is understood that the use of a single framework may restrict the understanding of what is intended to be investigated. In view of this, Creswell (1999) argues that the concomitant use of quantitative and qualitative methods results in a broader and more accurate comprehension of the phenomenon being investigated.

The decision was also made to analyse a specific case. In other words, the research is a single case study, since FENEARTE, an event of great visibility and importance in Brazil, was selected as representative of the phenomenon under discussion. According to Eisenhardt (1989), the single case study focuses on understanding the dynamics that commonly tend to be observed in a given context, which is nevertheless unique.

FENEARTE is a trade fair designed to promote and facilitate connections between artisans (producers), entrepreneurs (intermediaries) and the general public (end customers). As it is an annual event, for the purposes of this study, a cross-sectional time frame was adopted (Malhotra, 2019), since the data obtained and analysed specifically portrays the 22nd edition of the event, which took place from 6 to 17 July 2022 at the Pernambuco Convention



Centre. Its relevance can be attested to by the results demonstrated by the event which, during the days it was held, had a turnover of around R\$40 million and welcomed more than 200,000 visitors (Moraes, 2022).

Data collection

All the data that led to the creation of the event's proposed buyer persona was collected using a questionnaire hosted on the Google Forms platform. The instrument was based on the study by Talón-Ballesteros et al. (2018), whose aim was to map the customer profile of an international hotel chain. Therefore, the items were adapted so that, in this study, they served to record the participants' information, as specified below.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first was aimed at obtaining demographic data, with the following variables: age group, marital status, gender and place of residence. From the second onwards, the aim was to collect a set of psychographic and behavioural data. These, in turn, contained questions related to the interviewees' motivation for visiting the event, their favourite attraction, whether they had attended the event unaccompanied or accompanied and, finally, how they had found out about FENEARTE.

Other questions to which the interviewees were also subjected concerned their frequency of participation in the event, product purchasing behaviour and participation in the fair's cultural activities. In addition, data was also collected on aspects considered to be transactional. In other words, respondents were asked to provide information on the process of registering for the event and the average total spend during the days they attended the 22nd edition. Finally, the instrument included an open question so that participants would feel free to indicate what had most caught their attention at FENEARTE.

The survey was publicised through social media, especially Instagram. The reason why is that Instagram allows for the recruitment of a diverse sample of participants (Moraes et al., 2021). The target audience for this stage of the



study was people who had attended the 22nd edition of the event, regardless of the number of days. The instrument was available online for 4 days, during which time a total of 63 valid responses to the survey were obtained.

According to Malhotra (2019), snowball sampling consists of arbitrarily selecting an initial group of participants who, subsequently, identify other people belonging to the same target population. As this is a non-probabilistic sampling procedure, its results are restricted exclusively to the opinion of the participants in this study. Therefore, it was not in the interest of this research to generalise the parameters of the sample studied to the entire population. Chart 1 summarises the questions in the questionnaire.

Chart 1
Research data collection instrument

Sections	Questions
Demographic data	What is your age range?
	What is your marital status?
	What is your gender?
	Where do you live?
Behavioral data	What is your main motivation for participating in FENEARTE?
	What is your favorite FENEARTE attraction?
	Who accompanied you to the event?
	How did you find out about the event?
Event-specific data	Is this your first time participating in the event or have you been there before?
	Did you buy any products sold on the stands?
	Did you participate in cultural presentations or workshops?
Transactional data	How did you register for the event?
	What is your main source of information about the event?
	What is your average expense at the event?



	Want to talk about something you liked or caught your attention during the event?
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Source: Research data (2023).

Furthermore, data on the digital marketing strategies adopted by FENEARTE was collected through documentary research. This, in turn, was carried out on FENEARTE's official Instagram profile. Kripka, Scheller and Bonotto (2015) suggest that this method of obtaining data should be carried out by gathering certain documents so that the information found in them can lead to an understanding of the phenomenon being investigated. For the purposes of this study, documents (or documentary material) were considered to be publications by the FENEARTE organisation. However, only those that referred directly to the 22nd edition of the event were considered. Once the data collection and processing stages had been finalised, we moved on to their assessment.

Data analysis procedures

Although the data obtained through the survey questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics techniques, it was not possible to use these techniques. According to Reis and Reis (2002), the use of descriptive statistics is indicated in the initial phases of a study, in order to preliminarily assess the data collected, so that it can be organised, summarised and the most important aspects described. At this stage, we sought to systematise the information obtained from the participants so that a buyer persona profile could be proposed for FENEARTE. To this end, the frequency of responses was analysed in order to identify the most recurrent alternatives for each of the questions in the instrument. Based on this, it was possible to draw up an average profile of the respondents which, consequently, served as the basis for creating the buyer persona (Chart 1).

The documentary data was analysed using content analysis (Bardin, 2011). Conceptually, content analysis consists of a set of techniques for analysing communications in order to obtain indicators that allow the



inference of knowledge regarding the conditions of production and reception of these messages (Bardin, 2011). In view of this, the material obtained was initially organised in such a way as to facilitate its appreciation. All the collected data was tabulated and coded, transforming the set of raw files into a systematic representation of the content obtained (Bardin, 2011). At this point, the themes used for coding were related to digital marketing and the buyer persona at events.

The quality criterion of objectivity (Bardin, 2011) was used to prioritise the data. In other words, the following categories were defined: 1) congruences between digital marketing strategies and FENEARTE's buyer persona and 2) incongruities between digital marketing strategies and FENEARTE's buyer persona. The findings of this stage were compared with the theory reviewed. To this end, a spreadsheet was created with all the studies presented in the theoretical framework and their main results. This made it possible to obtain a unified view of the theoretical framework that served to guide the rest of the analyses. This methodological approach led to the results discussed below.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

FENEARTE's buyer persona profile

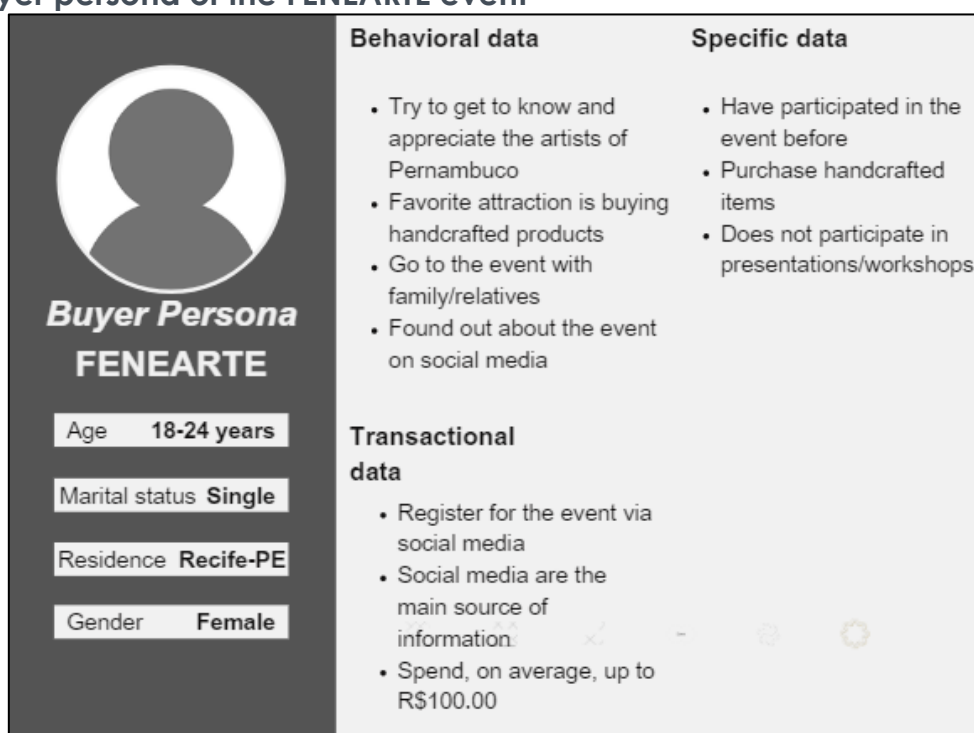
The survey of people who attended the 22nd edition of FENEARTE showed that, in terms of demographic data, most of the respondents were aged between 18 and 24 (44.4%); single (50.8%); predominantly female (66.7%); and living in the city of Recife-PE (49.2%). With regard to the visitor's behavioural profile, the biggest motivation mentioned for attending the event was to meet and appreciate the artists from the state of Pernambuco (42.9%); the sale of handicraft products was also the favourite attraction (55.6%). In addition, the majority said they went to FENEARTE with family/relatives (65.1%) and learnt about the event via social media (36.5%).

With regard to data specific to the event, the majority of respondents have taken part more than once (87.3%) and have bought some craft item



(79.4%), but have not attended any workshops or cultural presentations (57.1%). The transactional information indicates that the majority of participants signed up for the event via social networks (49.2%). Furthermore, social networks were the main source of information about the event (74.6%). Finally, it was found that the average spend by visitors at the event was up to R\$100.00 (58.7%). Figure 1 illustrates FENEARTE's buyer persona profile, based on the data obtained.

Figure 1
The buyer persona of the FENEARTE event



Source: Research data (2023).

Defining the buyer persona profile of the event investigated made it possible to visualise the characteristics and information regarding the ideal type of customer for the analysed case. From this, it is hoped that the professionals responsible for developing the event's digital marketing strategies will be able to target communication with the consumer more efficiently (Klepek, 2019). In addition, the profile illustrated in Figure 1 makes it possible to recognise the particularities present in the individual who becomes a real customer of the event, as pointed out by Revella (2015) and Ekbote (2017). The definition of the buyer persona presented here was used to make comparisons

with FENEARTE's digital marketing strategies, which are discussed in the following topics.

Congruences between FENEARTE's buyer persona and digital marketing strategies

A total of 77 posts published between March 2022 and March 2023 were collected from the event's official Instagram page, all referring to the 22nd edition of FENEARTE. After content analysis of the material obtained, these posts were categorised according to the corresponding digital marketing strategy. This resulted in the number of posts related to each category, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
FENEARTE digital marketing strategies

Category	Strategy adopted	Number of posts
Schedule	Countdown	6
	Schedule of the day	10
	Summary of the previous day	7
	Event summary	2
Exhibitors	Product disclosure	10
	Presentation of exhibitors	3
News	Informative post (accessibility)	2
	Promotion of services (FENEARTE Express)	2
	Event attractions (FENEARTE Kitchen)	3
	Event attractions (FENEARTE/MAPE Walkway)	7
Event theme	Informative post (structure)	9
	Publication of interviews	4
	Educational posts	3
Others	Event attractions (musical performances)	5
	Celebrity endorsement	2



Documentary	1
Awards	1

Source: Research data (2023).

Data presented in Table 1 was used to compare the results of the event's buyer persona. Thus, with regard to the demographic data of the participants, specifically their region of residence, it can be seen that the majority live in the city of Recife-PE and FENEARTE takes place in Olinda-PE. In order to transport visitors from one place to another, the event provided the FENEARTE Express, which acts as a kind of shuttle, facilitating the arrival of attendees. At this point, there is a congruence between the buyer persona profile and the event's digital marketing strategies, since there were publications about this transport. This action is relevant for informing customers about this type of service, according to arguments by Silva, Silva and Pereira (2020).

As far as the behavioural data of the event's buyer persona is concerned, the event's favourite attraction is buying handcrafted products. In this respect, another point of convergence between the participant's profile and FENEARTE's Instagram marketing approaches stands out, as a considerable number of posts were made publicising the products to be sold at the fair. In addition, a large proportion of visitors learnt about the event via social media. Therefore, there is consistency in this respect, given that the fair uses social media to communicate with customers (Inversini & Sykes, 2013). These observations corroborate the study by Harb et al. (2019), which highlights social media as a marketing tool for events; and are aligned with Bayne and Cianfrone (2013), who say that social media promotes awareness of an event.

As FENEARTE is a popular event, there are few posts about the event's purpose and explanations. For this reason, most of the information covers the latest news at the fair, such as FENEARTE Shuttle, FENEARTE Cuisine and Designer Fashion from Pernambuco (MAPE), which presents catwalks. In this sense, there is agreement with the event's buyer persona, given that this individual has attended the fair on other occasions (specific data), and therefore knows what the event is about and its main characteristics. With regard to this specific



aspect, it can be inferred that the digital marketing strategies in the case analysed are geared towards the needs of the buyer persona (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2021), focusing on visitors who have already attended the event at least once.

Finally, with regard to transactional data, it can be seen that most of the posts directed at visitors take place during the fair period and are about the event's programme, publicising the daily schedule of activities. From this perspective, there is another point of agreement between the buyer persona and FENEARTE's digital marketing strategies, as social networks are the main source of information about the event for the customer profile analysed. In line with this, a significant number of posts involving the event's programme can be seen. This result indicates that digital marketing was used to interact with participants (Silva, Silva & Pereira, 2020) and to promote the programme in a more agile way (Boaria & Souza, 2017).

Incongruities between FENEARTE's buyer persona and digital marketing strategies

An assessment of the publications obtained showed that those about the event's exhibitors only take place during the fair period and show the artworks for sale in a broad way. Since the event's buyer persona is interested in getting to know and appreciate artists from Pernambuco state (behavioural profile), it can be deduced that this is a great opportunity to attract customers, but one that is little exploited by FENEARTE's digital marketing strategies. This is because, according to the data in Table 1, there are few publications on this aspect. Therefore, it can be seen that there is an incongruous point in this regard. It is recommended that greater effort be made to apply digital marketing strategies that cater to the interests of the event participant, bearing in mind the importance of this for attracting customers (Malesev & Cherry, 2021). In this sense, it is suggested that the event's social networks publish information about the exhibiting artists before the event takes place, in order to arouse the curiosity of those interested and favour the attraction of participants.



With regard to the specific data set, it can be seen that the event's buyer persona does not attend cultural presentations or workshops. However, it was found that there are a reasonable number of posts related to such FENEARTE attractions, revealing another divergence between the consumer profile and the event's digital marketing approaches. In view of this, it is proposed that posts be geared towards attractions that are of greater interest to visitors, making communication with the buyer persona more efficient in the virtual sphere. As a result, publicity is more targeted, which is the most effective digital marketing strategy, as Jacobson, Gruzd and Hernández-García (2020) point out. From this standpoint, it is recommended to publicise activities that are actually consumed by the public, in order to save resources on promoting those that do not have significant customer participation.

When it comes to transactional data, there is an incongruous point regarding participant spending. The buyer persona's profile shows that on average the attendee spends up to R\$100 at the event. However, there were no posts that dealt with the average price of craft products sold at FENEARTE, so that the participant could visualise an estimate of how much money they would spend. It is believed that this information is important in order to fulfil the expectations of the buyer persona, since the customer's buying process must be taken into account, as Zhukova (2020) suggests. In addition, it is important to highlight consumption costs at the event, as there may be price-sensitive customers, as noted by Filipov (2019). Therefore, it is important that publications about the event highlight the prices of the products sold, as this strategy can help visitors organise themselves in financial terms, optimising their spending during the event and consuming more efficiently.

Information obtained from the study helps to fill an existing gap in the literature related to event and tourism marketing, as it points to interactions between what the event participant expects and what is offered on social networks in terms of event communication. This indicates that it is important to consider the customer's profile in order to outline the most appropriate digital marketing strategies, a discussion that is still little debated in tourism and events



research. At the same time, the research provides findings that can improve the work of professionals involved in digital marketing for events, aligning publications with the characteristics of the target audience. Table 2 shows the implications generated by the points of congruence assessed and suggestions for improving the inconsistency areas.

Table 2
Summary of research results

CONGRUENCE POINTS	IMPLICATIONS
Transport to the event	Facilitates customer mobility, facilitating their participation in the event
Promotion of artisanal products	Meets the customer's main desire, which is the purchase of handcrafted products
Communication on social media	Provides participant involvement with the event, as they are constantly interacting on social media
Basic information about the event	It makes communication with the customer more effective, as it does not reinforce information about the event that the participant already knows
Social media as a source of information	Improves attendee experience through easy access to event information
POINTS OF INCONGRUENCE	IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS
Artist information	Promote the artisans before the event takes place
Disclosure of activities	Promote activities that are consumed by the public
Pricing information	Create posts that highlight the prices of products sold

Source: Research data (2023).

This study sought to contribute to the scientific production on buyer persona and digital marketing strategies in events by categorising the findings in two approaches: the first assessing the congruences between the two constructs, in order to identify the points where there was coherence; and the second analysing the inconsistencies, with the aim of observing the divergent points. Some more detailed final considerations are made in the next section.

CONCLUSION



Highlighting the conclusive aspects that emerged from analysing the data makes it possible to revisit the aim of the study, which is to assess the congruences and inconsistencies between the buyer persona profile and the digital marketing strategies adopted by FENEARTE. In view of the discussions held in the study, it can be said that the purpose was achieved, since the data obtained provided information that enabled the phenomenon investigated to be analysed. In other words, it was possible to assess commonalities and differences between the characteristics of the "ideal customer" for the event and the digital communication strategies used in the analysed event.

In view of the findings of the study, it should be noted that FENEARTE manages to communicate on social media in a way that is consistent with the event's buyer persona. Aspects such as transporting visitors, publicising products, effectively using social networks to find out about the event and interacting with participants are the main elements that are congruent between the buyer persona and the digital marketing strategies implemented by the fair. On the other hand, some aspects are inconsistent, especially with regard to publicising artists, cultural presentations and product costs.

From a theoretical point of view, the study contributes by developing and evaluating a buyer persona inherent to the tourism context, which is not very common in the area's research, given that this subject is dealt with more extensively in marketing studies. It also contributes to the field by highlighting how communication strategies published on social networks to promote events interact with the profile of the ideal client. In this way, the research shows that the two constructs analysed, to a certain extent, work together in the tourism scenario, specifically with regard to craft events.

In managerial terms, the research provides information that can be used to optimise digital marketing strategies related to event promotion. Thus, professional event marketers can use the information emerging from the study to more effectively target communication with the most appropriate client for the event. It should also be noted that the blocks of data considered in this



research (demographic, behavioural, specific and transactional) can be applied to define the buyer persona for other events.

As for the study's limitations, it is worth highlighting the need for a larger sample of respondents in the quantitative phase of the research. Despite having provided sufficient information to achieve the proposed objective, the study's findings could have been more robust if there had been a more significant number of participants in the event investigated. Secondly, the lack of interviews with the organiser of the event under investigation is also considered a weakness. It is believed that this could provide greater support for the analyses, strengthening the understanding of the problem studied here.

It is recommended that future studies use the analyses of this study to investigate more editions of FENEARTE as well as other similar events. Additional research related to the topic discussed could favour comparisons between the cases, helping to see if there are any new results, similar or different to those found in this investigation. With this, it is hoped that future studies can make progress in relation to the single case study method applied in this work. By analysing multiple cases, it is believed that the results will provide a more comprehensive overview of the central discussion of this research. It is also suggested that quantitative research be carried out to determine the relationship between the observed constructs and their impact on visits to events.

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