Virtual events have taken off in a big way, with no signs of slowing.

Rewind to 2020. The onset of the pandemic left the business community with little choice — it was virtual events or no events at all.

In India, brands tried to pivot as quickly as they could, using virtual events in one form or another to stay connected in a socially-distanced world. This required entire teams, regardless of functional expertise, to take on the additional responsibility of organising events.

Few of us were truly prepared, whether in terms of skills, resources or equipment, but we gave it our best shot anyway. Despite our sudden introduction to virtual events, we have ridden the wave of change well.

In this report, we turn back the clock to understand how event organisers in India responded to virtual events, the challenges they faced, and the progress they've made.

These insights are informed by the India market results of a global virtual events study commissioned by LinkedIn and undertaken by Savanta.

We believe that, by looking back, we will gain a deeper appreciation of how far we have come and where we are headed. For that reason, this report is a companion to the LinkedIn Event Framework, which is our detailed guide to planning, promoting and measuring the success of any event — virtual, or otherwise.

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The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 turned us, regardless of industry or function, into virtual event organisers almost overnight. Navigating these unchartered waters wasn't easy, especially in a time characterised by change and uncertainty.

Top challenges faced by virtual event organisers in India

1 Finding new ways to work and adapt to change; high-level of uncertainty

2 Moving from in-person to virtual events

3 Technology

4 Inability to meet people

While it wasn't easy, we remained optimistic and recognised that the challenges also brought new growth opportunities for ourselves, as professionals, and our companies, as brands.
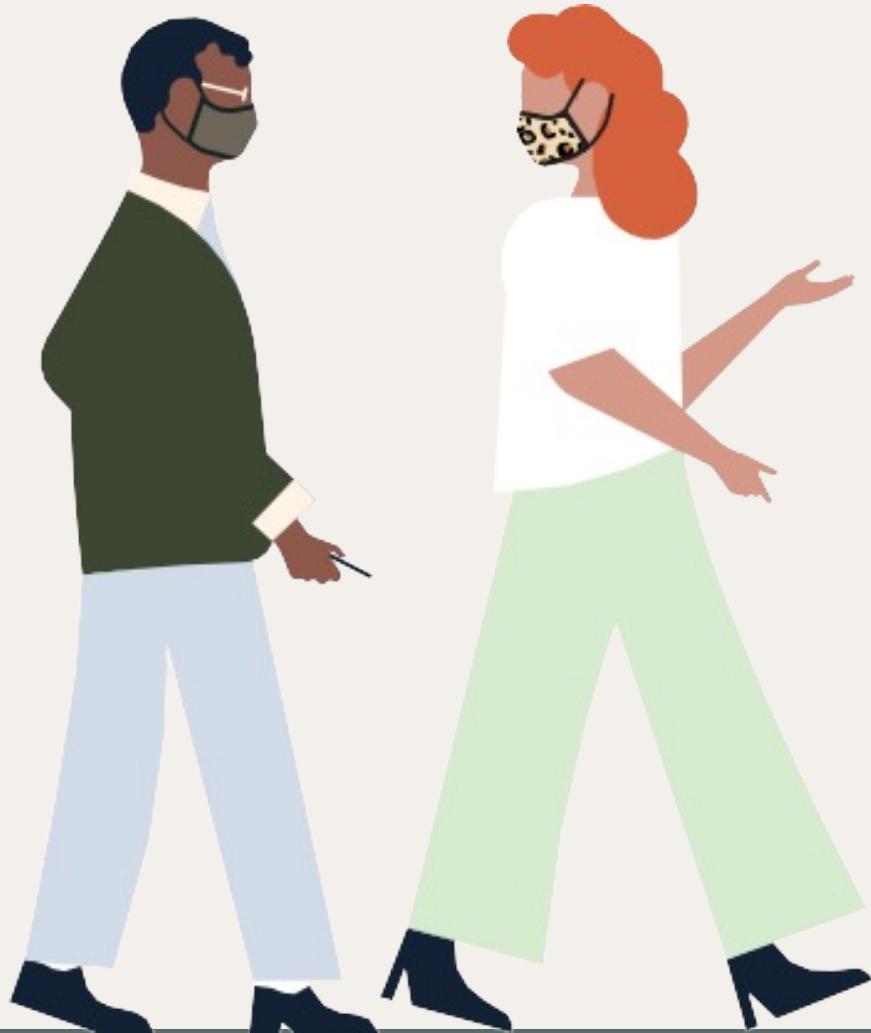
# 79% of virtual event organisers in India believed that virtual events brought new opportunities

- ✓ Individual growth and earning
- ✓ Moving to working online
- ✓ Grow the business
- ✓ Innovation and new ways of work
- ✓ New technologies

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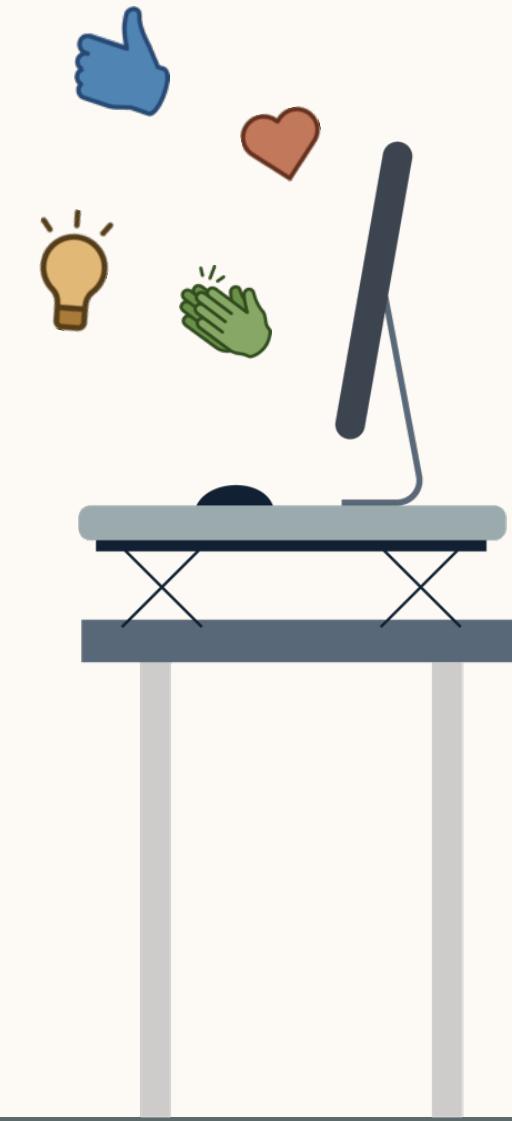
The learning curve was undeniably steep as we acquired new skills and honed them in the field. In the beginning, only a fraction of us were confident about virtual events but with time, most are now able to claim confidence.

It took time but 97% of virtual event organisers in India are now confident about organising virtual events

We started out confident
28%

It took us up to 1 month
21%

It took us up to 2 months
26%

It took us up to 3 months
13%

We are still not confident
3%

Length of time needed to develop confidence in organising virtual events ▲

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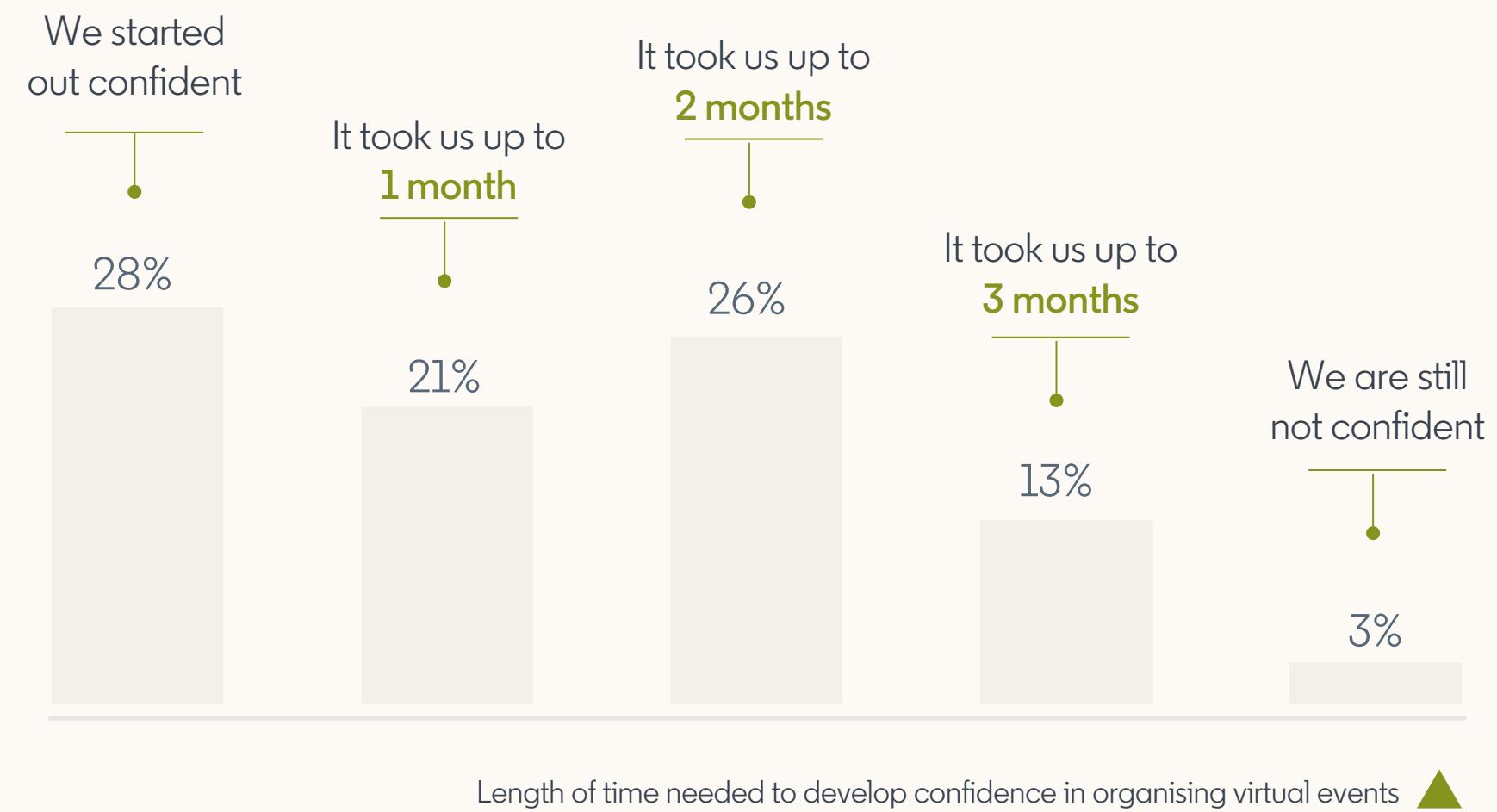
As we become more comfortable with virtual events, we are also gaining greater clarity about our event objectives. To reach our goals, we understand that a virtual event is essentially a value exchange between us and our audiences.

Top 5 priorities of virtual event organisers in India

01   **Create opportunities for sales team to network with attendees** (29%)

02   **Being able to connect with attendees before, during and after event** (28%)

03   **Get as many leads as possible** (23%)

04   **Provide a service or benefit to clients** (22%)

05   **Establish my organisation's credibility and expertise** (20%)

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Focused on extracting maximum value from our virtual events budget, most of us are splitting our expenditure across three key pillars: content, marketing and technology.
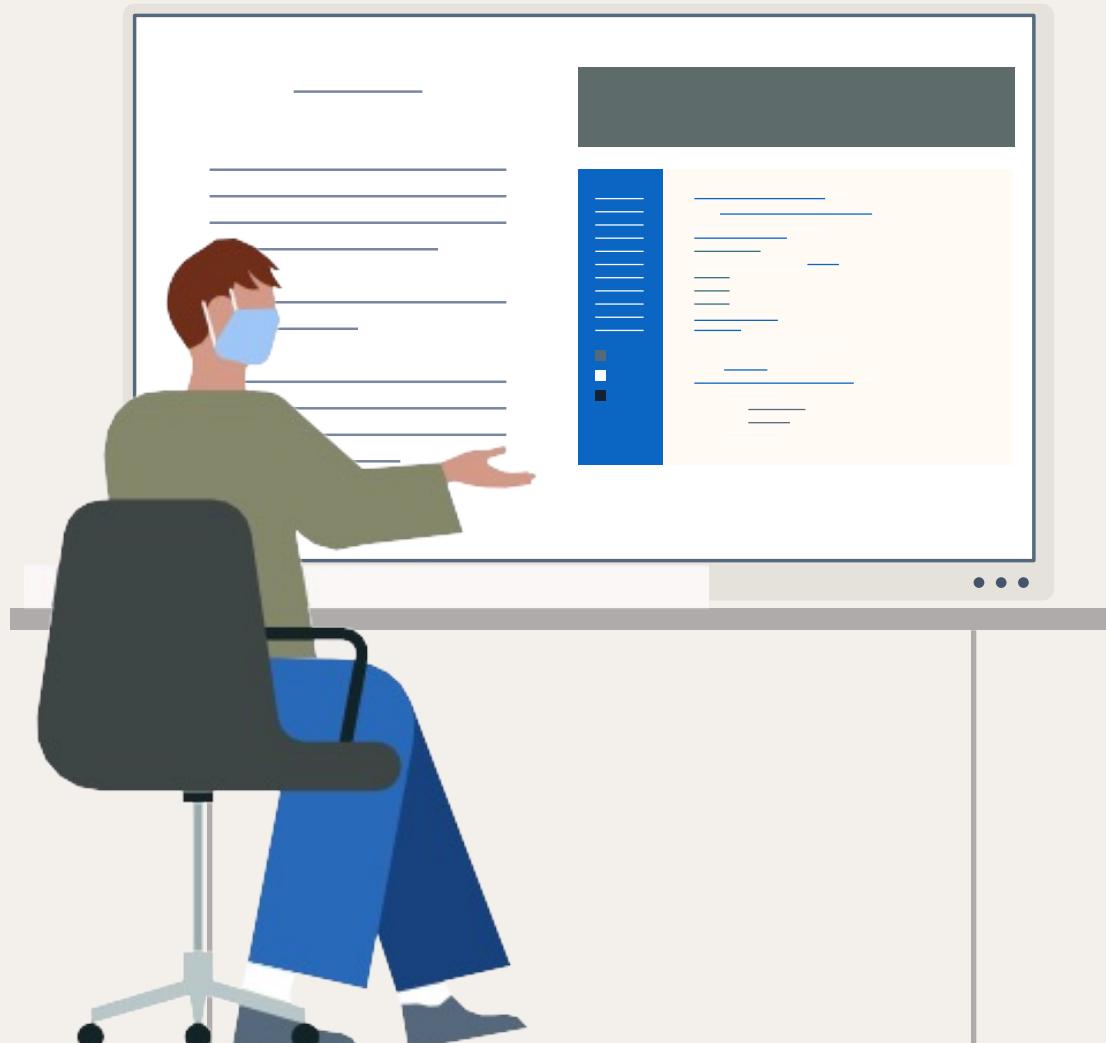
Virtual event organisers in India tend to prioritise their budget spends on technology and marketing

Technical team	44%
Event marketing	40%
Content development	33%
Following up with attendees	33%
Platform provider	31%
Registration systems	28%
Equipment for home studios	23%
Paying for event speakers	20%

▲ What virtual event organisers spend on ■ **Technology** ■ **Marketing** ■ **Content**

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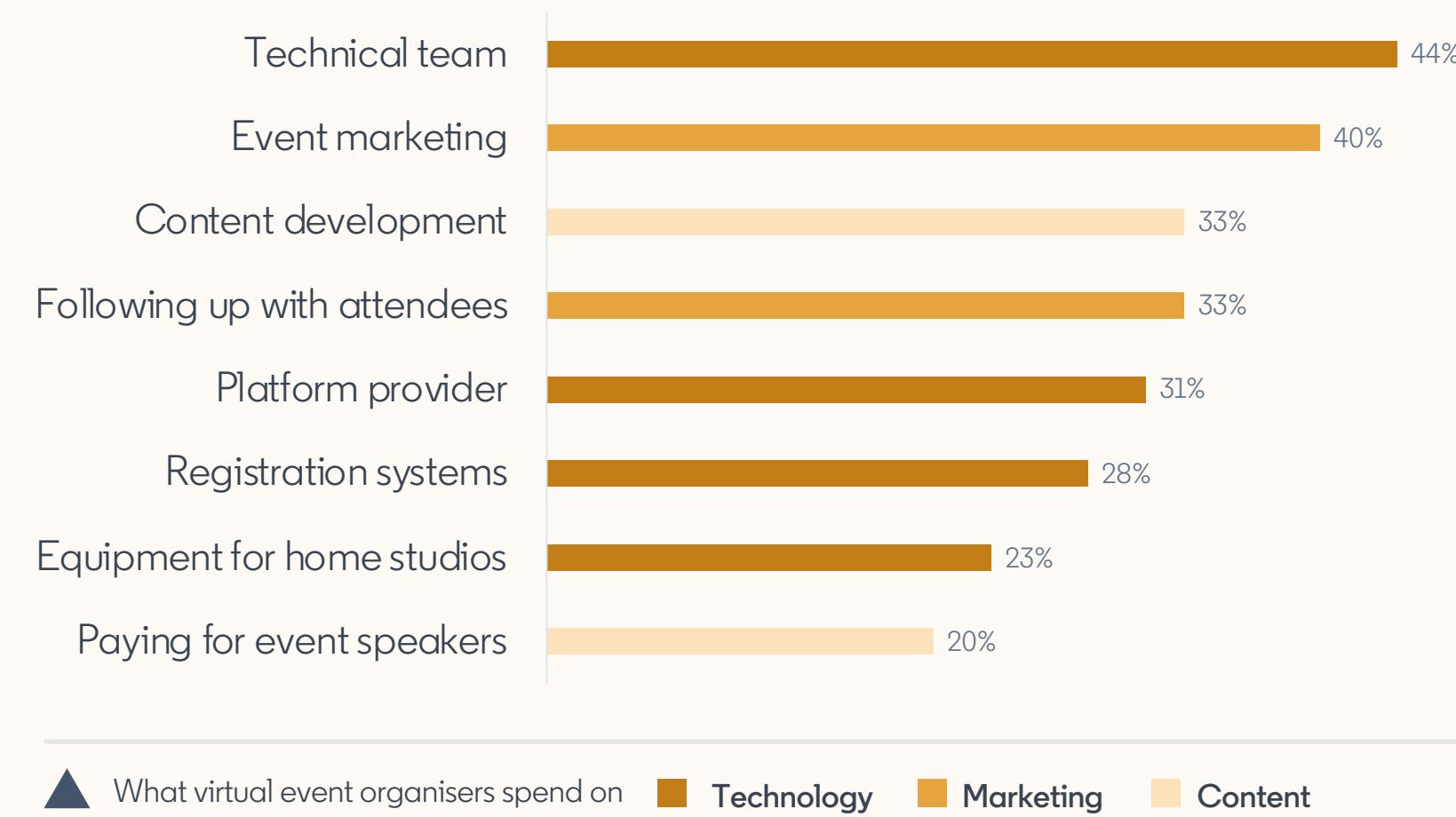
Depending on our virtual event objectives, we are also learning to better qualify our success in three main ways: through registration diagnostics, viewer engagement and post-event opportunities.

How virtual event organisers in India define success

Registration diagnostics

1 **Quality of attendees** (54%)

2 **Number of registrations** (47%)

3 **Number of attendees** (38%)

4 **Marketing channel attribution** (42%)

5 **Attendance rate** (39%)

Viewer engagement

1 **Engagement level** (40%)

2 **Peak viewership** (35%)

Post-event opportunities

1 **Sales leads** (45%)

2 **Sales networking** (44%)

2 **Post-event actions by attendees** (44%)

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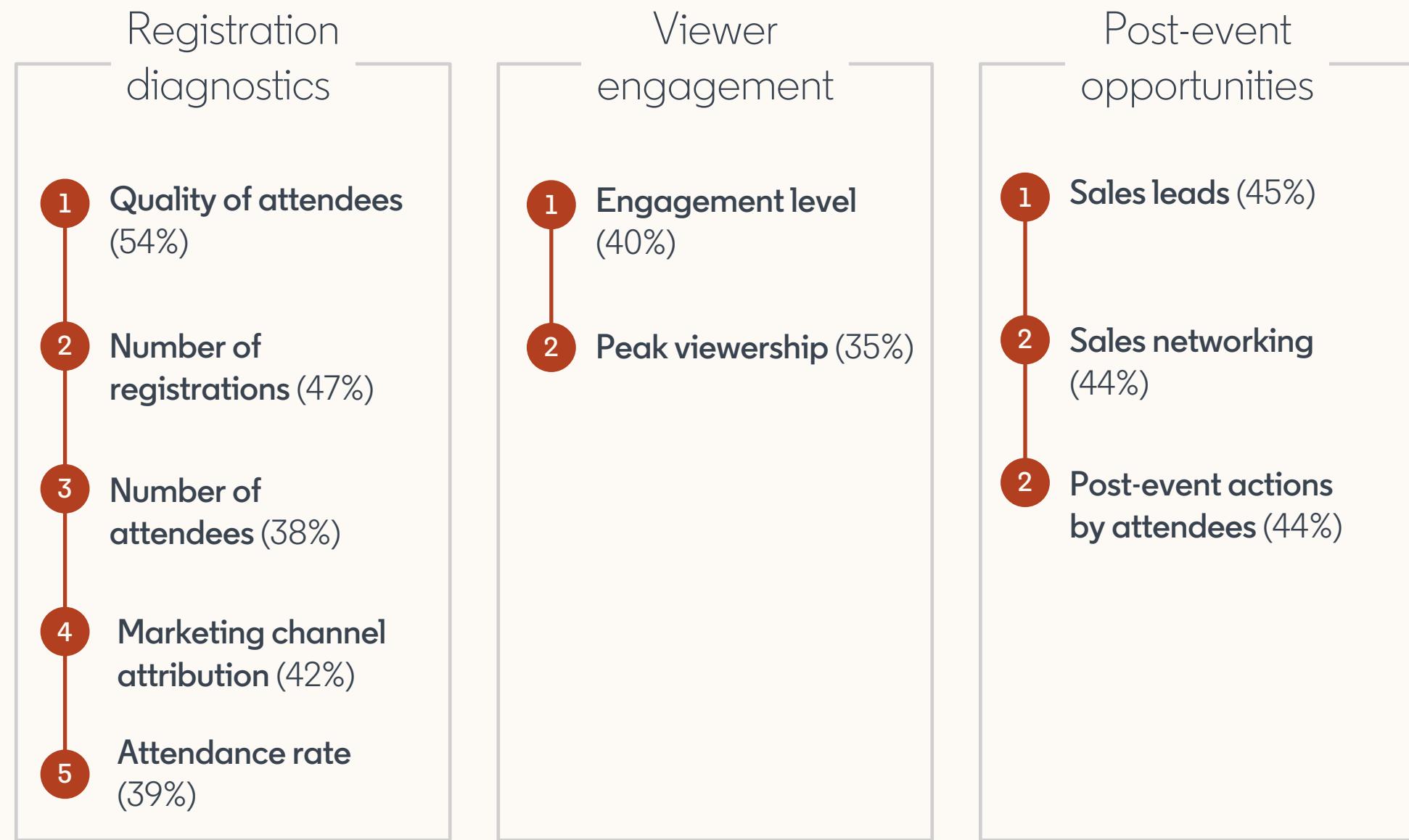
As we become more comfortable and confident with virtual events, there is optimism that the momentum will continue post-pandemic. Most virtual event organisers expect to see virtual events in their future for numerous reasons.

78% of virtual event organisers in India expect to continue running virtual events in the long-term because….

01 They are more environmentally friendly (57%)

02 They offer an opportunity to attend events globally without travelling (55%)

03 They are 'pandemic proof' (53%)

04 They provide an improved attendee experience (50%)

05 They are an essential part of my industry's future (48%)

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In summary

Virtual events create new opportunities

Despite the initial challenges and uncertainty, virtual event organisers recognise that virtual events offer growth opportunities for themselves and their companies.

Confidence grows over time

Given the steep learning curve, many virtual event organisers had to learn as they go. Over time, however, they've grown more confident in their virtual event skills.

Event budgets are being split three ways

To extract maximum value from virtual events, organisers are largely splitting their expenditure across event content, marketing and technology.

Success is measured before, during and after the event

Virtual event organisers largely measure event success in terms of registrations before the event, engagement during the event, and opportunities created after the event.

Virtual events are here to stay

With a compelling business case behind them, most virtual event organisers expect to continue organising virtual events in the long term.

From starting out to scaling up, get ready to move forward with the LinkedIn Event Framework

It's clear that, in Singapore, we have learnt a lot from our early experience with virtual events. Most of all, perhaps, we've learnt that virtual events are no longer a Plan B. They are the future and it's a very exciting one that we're ready to navigate together.

The LinkedIn Event Framework was developed to guide event organisers on this journey. The framework was built on universal principles that are equally applicable to virtual, hybrid and in-person events. It includes detailed walkthroughs of how you can plan, promote and measure the success of your next event.

Download the LinkedIn Event Framework

Introducing the LinkedIn Event Framework

Whether or not you are organising a virtual event on LinkedIn, this framework is built on universal principles that you can apply to your next event.

Before the event

Plan — Event objectives, format & type, team roles & responsibilities

Set up — Platform selection, training & rehearsals

Promote — Event marketing

Success metrics

Registration diagnostics

Number of registrations, registration rate, quality of registrations

During the event

Engage — Engagement strategies

Survey — Attendee survey

Success metrics

Viewer engagement

Number of viewers, viewer rate, quality of viewers, peak viewership, engagement levels

After the event

Follow-up — Marketing actions & sales actions

Measure — Marketing impact

Learn — Debrief & learnings

Success metrics

Post-event opportunities

Sales leads, sales opportunities to network, post-event actions by attendees

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