

E-commerce in Colombia during the Covid-19 pandemic¹

Comercio electrónico en Colombia durante la pandemia Covid-19

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Abstract

E-commerce is a trend that is currently growing exponentially in recent decades especially in Colombia, this is not only to acquire a service or product online, it also refers to the use of electronic media such as computers or mobile devices to facilitate business operations and online transactional processes, in this business model there are mainly three categories B2B, B2C and C2C. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic many companies had drastic reductions in their sales; E-commerce was seen by companies as one of the best tools to not lose customers and not have decreases in their sales so many companies decided to migrate to this business model, some implemented their sites for the first time and others improved them, this whole situation was forced by the absence of customers in their physical premises, which for fear of contracting the virus preferred not to go out, and make their purchases virtually. The Covid-19 pandemic was a great opportunity for companies that decided to migrate to digital platforms, this was not only reflected in the volumes of online transactions which increased, but it was also a stage that forced companies to innovate and improve their processes.

Keywords: E-commerce, pandemic, Pyme, commerce, company, web consumer.

Resumen

El Comercio electrónico es una tendencia que actualmente viene creciendo de manera exponencial en las últimas décadas especialmente en Colombia, éste no solo consiste en adquirir un servicio o producto de manera online, también hace referencia al uso de los medios electrónicos como computadoras o dispositivos móviles que faciliten las operaciones de las empresas y los procesos transaccionales en línea, en este modelo de negocio existen principalmente tres categorías B2B, B2C y C2C. Debido a la pandemia Covid-19 muchas empresas tuvieron reducciones drásticas en sus ventas; el comercio electrónico fue visto por las empresas como una de las mejores herramientas para no perder clientes y no tener disminuciones en sus ventas por lo que muchas empresas decidieron migrar a este modelo de negocio, algunas implementaron sus sitios por primera vez y otras los mejoraron, toda esta situación fue forzada por la ausencia de clientes en sus locales físicos, los cuales por miedo a contraer el virus prefirieron hacer sus compras de manera virtual. La pandemia Covid-19 ha sido una gran oportunidad para las empresas que decidieron migrar hacia plataformas digitales, esto no solo se vio reflejado en los volúmenes de transacciones online los cuales aumentaron, sino también en la medida en que forzó a las empresas transformar sus procesos digitales.

Palabras clave: Comercio electrónico, pandemia, pyme, comercio, empresa, consumidor web.

Clasificación JEL: D21, F14, L81, L86, O14

Introduction

The evolution of traditional commerce to electronic commerce or e-commerce allowed new marketing opportunities based on connectivity with the development of the internet and the emergence of the web, this establishing a new dynamic oriented towards a market without limits in which it can reach many places even the most remote.

The world sanitary and socioeconomic crisis due to the pandemic of the new coronavirus or covid-19, caused companies in the country to modify their strategies of contact and communication with the client, due to the economic deceleration as a result of the quarantine strategy implemented both nationally and internationally.

In Colombia, the legislation has tried to adapt electronic commerce with the international standards of the UNCITRAL - United Nations Commission on International Trade Law. Gómez Pérez (2004) explains how this legislation influenced as an initiative to create Law 527 of 1999 on electronic commerce. In general terms, in this publication the author exposes the legal scope of the regulatory norms in addition to the adequacy in the legislation in international terms and the panorama and importance of the consumer.

The continuous relations between companies and customers are essential for the proper development of the different commercial activities, and it is here where challenges arise as a result of the dynamics of the advances in communication and technology, as stated by Silva Murillo (2009) who exposes the importance of the Internet and the facilities for the exchange of information in the different business models in electronic commerce and the operational advantages of using it.

Soler Patiño (2014) mentions how the Internet audience has grown in Colombia, in congruence with the access to it and the increase in sales of tablets and smartphones, in addition to the growth in sales through e-commerce platforms in retail businesses, highlighting in first place the website www.exito.com that receives 767,000 visits per month, and the new 100% digital businesses that have had great acceptance in Colombia as: Dafiti and Linio ranking second and fourth place in terms of audience. It also exposes the increase in the use of e-commerce in the country and the importance of promoting this new business modality.

García Mogollón (2020) in his study aims to show the problems that organizations have in the context of digital business both nationally and internationally in a scenario where there is still no historical background, emphasizing how because of the pandemic many Colombian companies need to transform and generate changes in the business model to avoid closing and this have an approach to the consumer.

In Colombia, the business sector, mainly SMEs have been the most affected by the covid-19 pandemic, as a result of a delayed transition process to digital business and the lack of

business development strategies for proper decision making in small and medium enterprises, according to research by García Mogollón, Garzón Morales and Hoyos Estrada & Sastoque Gómez conducted during the year 2020. Likewise, according to the report of the observatory of the Chamber of Commerce of Bogota 95% of entrepreneurs consider that the covid-19 crisis is affecting them negatively in their business activities (CCB, 2020). However, according to the second report made during the first period of the year 2020 by the Colombian Chamber of Electronic Commerce, a sustained growth of 12% in e-commerce was presented in April and May, evidencing the change in consumption habits (CCCE, 2020).

This has been caused by the current global situation, since, as stated by Garzón Morales (2020), "people prefer to buy online to avoid contact with possible infected people", this has generated not only a social isolation on the part of people, but also as a result of the mandatory social isolation the economy went into crisis because of the closure of premises and establishments such as recreation: The closing of pubs, restaurants and the tourism sector affected the economy, generating a direct impact on the unemployment rate, which in February was 12.2% (2020) and in July 20.2% (2020).

These elements mentioned above show the critical situation for the economy, but also a scenario of potential development for e-commerce, so much so that there is evidence of an increase in the use of electronic platforms to facilitate trade by the different industries, trying to reactivate their economic processes and the national economy, which has a declining projection of -3% according to the CCB (2020) at the end of 2020.

The covid-19 pandemic has generated a change in the traditional business models and a re-evaluation of business strategies in response to the new market dynamics and the new habits of the digital consumer, this, knowing the use of e-commerce in Colombia derived from the covid-19 pandemic is important due to the value of this information, is important due to the value of this crisis in the challenges and opportunities faced by companies and their transformation in e-commerce, highlighting that the pandemic has generated a change in traditional business models and reevaluate business strategies in the current environment, addressing the new market dynamics and new consumer habits in an increasingly digital environment.

In order to meet the proposed general objective, this article is organized under several headings: in the first part, the frame of reference is presented with the history and evolution of e-commerce, the definition of e-commerce, the main typographies of this commerce, and, finally, the growth of e-commerce during the pandemic is addressed. Then, the methodology used to answer the research question is presented, followed by the results and findings of the study. And finally, the conclusions of the research are presented.

1. Frame of reference

Trade has evolved progressively, starting from the exchange of goods and services, also known as "barter", to the phase known today as e-commerce. It could be said that one of the

aspects that had more relevance and that gave rise to what is known today as e-commerce occurred in 1920 in the United States with the first catalog sales, since this was a disruptive change of the traditional trade that was being handled at that time, allowing to expand trade to rural areas where it was difficult to access, showing the product in an illustrative way without the need to have it physically (Ferrari Zamora, 2017).

But the real history of electronic commerce begins in 1960 in the United States with the Electronic Data Interchange or EDI, where it was possible to carry out exchanges of commercial electronic transactions between companies, giving way to the creation in the year 1970 of the Arpanet project, this is where the computer begins to be used as a communication network to carry out commercial relations between institutions. But it was only in 1980 when the first television sales or telesales took place, which provided a better experience of realism to the consumer, showing the most important features of the product and its use, this sale by television was paid through credit cards and was made by telephone calls.

In 1989 the World Wide Web or WWW appeared, facilitating the exchange of information and recognition between computers at a higher speed in the transaction and communication processes. In the 1990s, e-commerce grew in giant steps, thanks to the implementation of the Internet and the creation of different e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and eBay, which have revolutionized the way of buying and selling products and services, (Rey López).

In Colombia the use of the network became increasingly important and essential as a channel of communication and competitiveness between companies, it allowed to join or combine the physical stores with the virtual ones and provide a better experience to the consumer, in addition to the access in an easier and faster way to the products or services they wish to acquire.

To understand the concept of electronic commerce it is important to know the definition in the legal regulations and some authors and institutions on the subject; for example, according to law 527 of 1999 Art. 20 paragraph 2 "Electronic commerce covers the issues raised by any commercial relationship, whether contractual or not, structured from the use of one or more data messages" (Mintic) in short, any act that involves a commercial exchange or supply through information or electronic media is considered electronic commerce.

As mentioned by Malca (2001) in his study notes, E-Commerce is any electronic transaction that is carried out between companies, individuals or the state electronically instead of direct physical contact, the spirit of e-commerce was born after the technological evolution and the internet which are revolutionizing, changing the industry and the way of doing business; on the other hand, as shown in **Table 1**, e-commerce has lowered transaction costs incredibly between supplier and customer.

Table 1 E-Commerce impact of different distribution costs (U\$ per transaction)

	Pasajes aéreos	Transacciones bancarias	Pago de cuentas	Distribución de software
Sistema tradicional	8	1.08	2.22	15
Sistema telefónico		0.54		5
Sistema electrónico	1	0.13	0.65 a 1.1	0.2 a 0.5
Ahorro (en %)	87	89	67 a 71	97 a 99

Source: Malca G (2001).

Roxana Silva (2009) also agrees with the previous concepts in which it is mentioned that e-commerce is any transaction carried out electronically either by social networks or web pages but in addition to this concept she also exposes a definition where e-commerce is not only selling a product electronically but also defines it as "or the use of computers to facilitate all operations of the company" since many of the electronic operations are internal between different areas or departments and the objective of these ends up being the same to sell or contribute in the sale of a product or service (Silva Murillo, 2009).

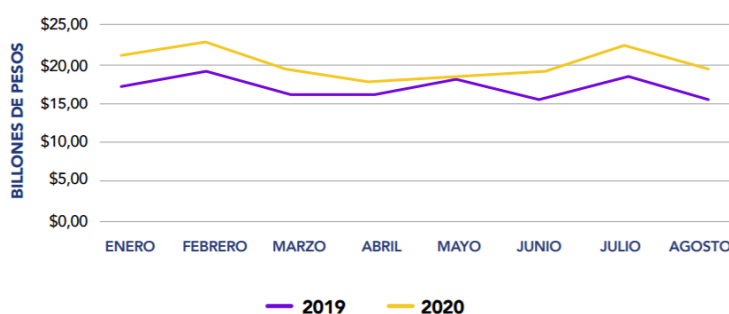
E-Commerce presents different models or typologies according to the purpose, the object, the platform and the recipient, the latter is the most common and presents three basic categories, the first is B2B (Business to Business), it consists of doing business between organizations, as is well known, the traditional transactions between companies and organizations, such as inventories, purchases and payments need a dynamism and efficiency increasingly faster to make companies, more profitable entities. This is how (Torres Castañeda & Guerra Zavala, 2012) mention that this modality represents about 80% of e-commerce in recent years. Another example of this type of e-commerce is when companies put on their websites a direct access for corporate clients.

The second is B2C (Business to Consumer); it is the sale of products from the company to the end consumer; this type of commerce is the most common and the one has had the greatest development. According to (Torres Castañeda & Guerra Zavala, 2012), the success of this new model consists of the low costs given that previously the company or seller had to offer the products through catalogs and spent a lot of money in printing and distributing them, whereas, now having the virtual catalog has saved all these costs and besides any person or end customer wishing to purchase a product only needs an internet connection.

The third is C2C (Consumer to Consumer), which is trade between consumers without the intervention of any company. In this type of trade, consumers offer products online to other consumers on e-commerce platforms. For example: free market or eBay (Bojórquez López & Valdez Palazuelos, 2017).

Thanks to the transformation of the economy and the use of technology as a result of the pandemic, commerce has experienced positive changes, where the growth in the commercialization of online products presents a new environment in which the competitiveness of businesses that use it is improved with respect to those that do not. It is worth noting that e-commerce has grown significantly in Colombia. In Illustration 1, it can be observed how digital transactions between February and April 2020 presented a decrease of 23%, but presented a recovery in the period of May and June of 4% compared to 2019 (CCCE, 2020).

Illustration 1 Total value of digital transactions between January and August 2019 and 2020



Source: CCCE (2020)

Finally, and analyzing the information presented, it could be indicated that e-commerce in Colombia presented an accelerated growth as a result of the pandemic covid-19, at the same time it has become an important tool for companies. On the other hand, the trend in the use of this medium is helping to overcome and alleviate the burden of SMEs from the crisis caused by the pandemic (González, 2020).

Through the various advances in ICTs, it has been understood that electronic commerce or e-commerce includes deeper issues than the simple use of the network or internet to make purchases and sales of goods, since e-commerce includes all commercial transactions through the internet as the sale and purchase of goods and services in addition to the use of this medium to facilitate operations within companies. This provides that it becomes a concept that stimulates the business sector to the use of ICTs, the transformation of traditional models of trade to digital and the adequacy of legal standards and government controls that allow a safe use of this medium.

2. Methodology

The present research used a qualitative approach in which an analysis of different bibliographic sources related to the topic of electronic commerce in Colombia was carried

out, with an exploratory research scope insofar as it is about investigating a current event, in this case, related to the pandemic, specifically, the use of electronic commerce by Colombian SMEs derived from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The data collection technique used during the research process was the documentary one, since information has been collected, used and filtered from different online sources and repositories such as: research articles about e-commerce, Minicit reports, in addition to the reports of the Colombian Chamber of Electronic Commerce and newspaper articles from "La República". By searching for keywords related to the research topic (e-commerce, SMEs, covid-19 pandemic), allowing to analyze and select research that served as bibliographic support for the development of the research.

The information was obtained through secondary sources as mentioned, additionally, data from the different models or typologies of e-commerce were used, where the main typologies used in e-commerce were selected, which are B2B, B2C and C2C. Moreover, being an exploratory research, the use of statistics about the growth or decrease in this type of commerce during the Covid-19 pandemic, allowed understanding the importance of the digital transformation and the new commercial dynamics within the country. With this, answering the question posed in the development of the work about how has been the development of electronic commerce in Colombia during the pandemic. Through the analysis carried out by means of the different sources, it was possible to understand the methodology used, as shown in *Table 2*.

Table 2 Research methodology

Objetivo específico	Aspecto para resaltar	Técnica	Fuente específica
Identificar los volúmenes de transacciones en el comercio electrónico antes de la pandemia (2009-2019).	Comercio Electrónico antes de la pandemia	Documental	Páginas web oficiales (Minicit). Informe de la Cámara Colombiana de Comercio Electrónico.
Analizar los efectos del comercio electrónico de Colombia durante la pandemia Covid-19.	Impactos en el comercio electrónico durante la pandemia.	Documental	Páginas oficiales (Dane, Minicit, CCCE)
Determinar los retos y oportunidades de las empresas en relación con el comercio electrónico.	Retos y oportunidades en el sector empresarial.	Documental	Informes y tesis acerca del tema.

Source: Own elaboration

3. Results and/or Findings

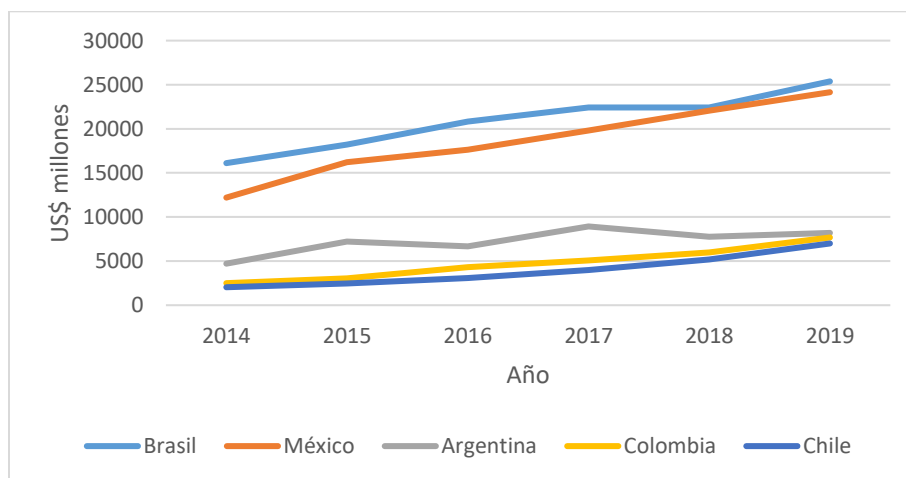
E-commerce plays an increasingly important role in the commercial dynamics in Colombia and in many Latin American countries, the use of technologies such as cell phones, computers, tablets and the internet has caused the economic sectors to find themselves in the obligation to offer consumers new ways of purchasing. This type of digital service has allowed a re-evaluation of traditional models and an opportunity for business expansion.

In recent years, e-commerce and the use of ICTs have become more open and accessible worldwide. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, 2021), it ranks 152 countries in relation to their readiness for online commerce. In the world; for the first time Switzerland ranks first in the e-commerce index for business-to-consumer transactions - B2C 2020, replacing the Netherlands in second place and Denmark in third place.

In Latin America, Costa Rica, Chile, Brazil, Dominican Republic and Colombia occupy the top five places respectively in this same e-commerce index ranking. Consumers in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Colombia accounted for 92% of online purchases in the region, and made sales of USD 71 billion, representing an increase of 1.4% during 2020 (UNCTAD, 2020).

E-commerce in Latin America has made great strides in the last 10 years. During 2009, sales reached USD 18,000 million and increased to USD 52,200 billion by 2018. Likewise, the countries with the highest growth during 2018 (*Graphic 1*) were Brazil with a B2C e-commerce volume of USD 25,370 million, Mexico with USD 22,050 million, Argentina with USD 7,764 million, Colombia with USD 6,000 million and Chile with USD 5,200 million (Observatorio Ecommerce, 2019).

Graphic 1 Evolution of e-commerce in Latin America



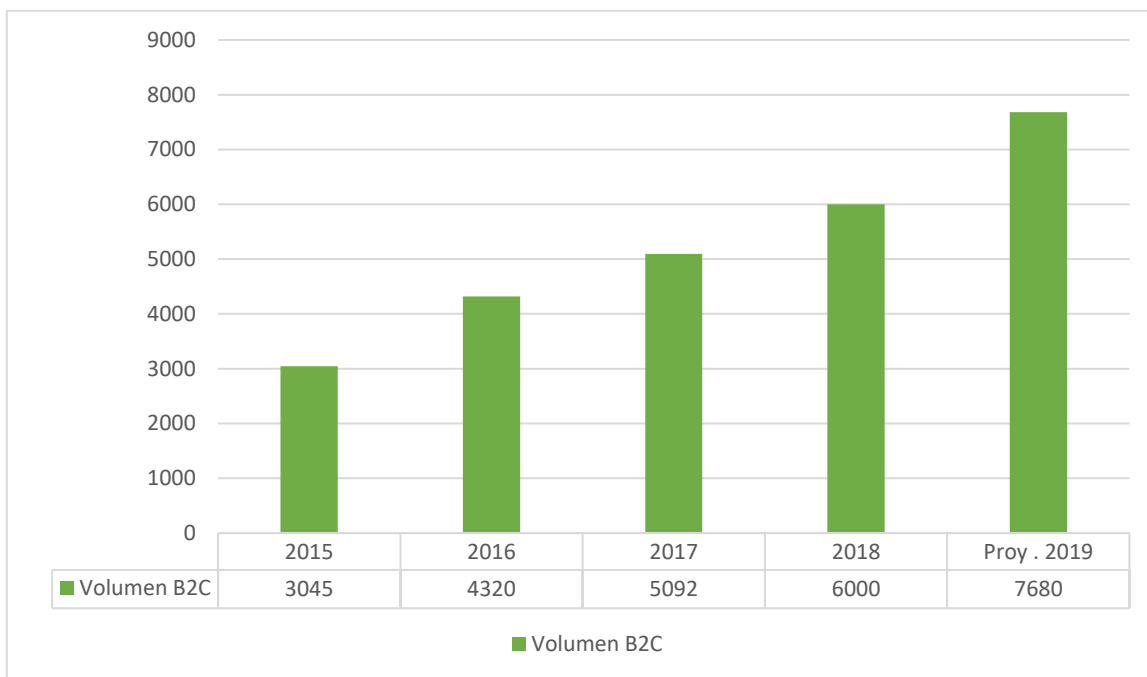
Source: Own elaboration with data obtained from: (Observatorio Ecommerce, 2019)

Graphic 1 shows how e-commerce is growing steadily and strongly in the region. Commercial dynamics have evolved, and digitalization is impacting consumption patterns in the global economy. According to the report presented in 2021 by We Are Social, during 2020 there was an increase to 1.3 million users who use social networks every day, representing more than 53% of the population worldwide (Álvarez, 2021).

Social networks allow Colombian SMEs to disseminate information, communicate with distributors in foreign markets and help companies to support international partners in marketing strategies, although there are other main media such as digital platforms, so that SMEs can now better disseminate information and reach a wider audience, even internationally. It should be noted that some companies have grown thanks to social networks, while others have found in them an interesting source of information that can be used to identify new market opportunities, analysis of product acceptance or market segmentation (Tapias Restrepo, 2013).

The volume of B2C transactions in Colombia (**Graphic 2**), from 2015 to 2018, presented an increase, this is due to the increase of the internet and smartphones, representing 70% penetration in the country by 2018 (Observatorio Ecommerce, 2019).

Graphic 2 B2C e-commerce volume (USD million)



Source: Own elaboration with data obtained from:(Observatorio Ecommerce, 2019)

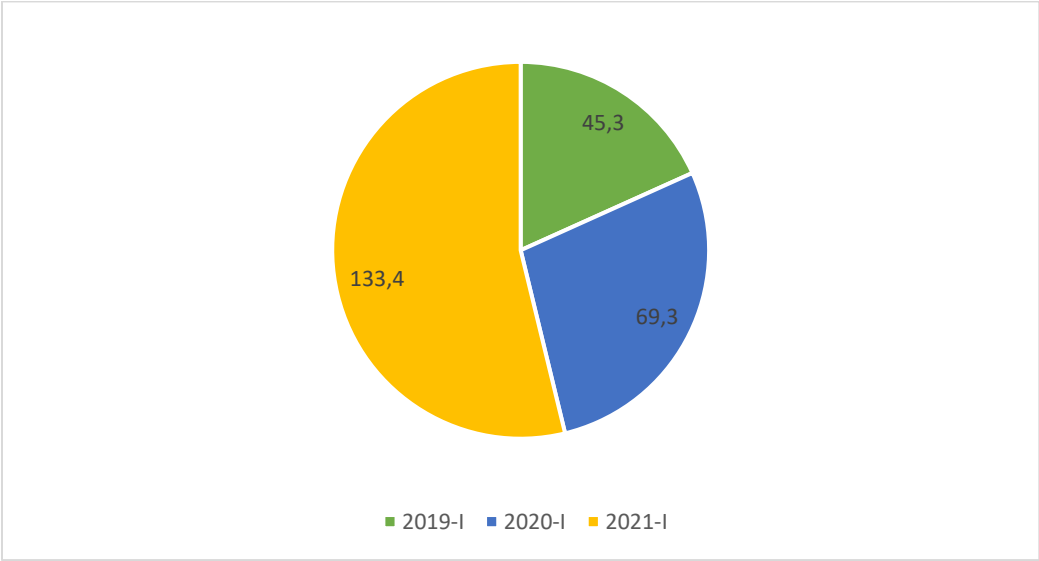
In 2018, the country ranked fourth in the ranking of the best e-commerce markets in Latin America with an increase of 33% in visits to e-commerce pages. 91% of users perform e-commerce activities such as buying and selling goods and services through the web and 14%

of international purchases were made by digital means and represented 2% of sales in this modality (Carmona Ochoa & Calle Arango, 2019), about 30% of digital transactions correspond to sales of e-commerce products and services, while 70% are collections in which taxes and invoices are found, these represent annual transactions of 61.6 and 26.4 million respectively (Montes, 2019).

Before the health crisis, e-commerce in the country presented growth figures during each year, but this figure increased exponentially due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which meant big changes in national trade and challenges in SMEs in terms of transformation and migration to digital media in their daily operations mainly focused on the sale of their products, thus adapting to the new mode of "virtual" consumption.

The pandemic caused that digital transactions during the first quarter of 2021 obtained an increase of 92.4% which means a number of 133.4 million transactions compared to the first quarter of 2020 and a growth of 194.4% compared to the same quarter of 2019 (CCCE, 2021). It is worth mentioning that digital transactions are composed of: online sales and transactions that are paid digitally but their purchase is agreed outside the network, such as taxes.

Graphic 3 Digital transactions during the first quarter 2019-2021 (Millions of transactions)



Source: Own elaboration with data obtained from: (CCCE, 2021)

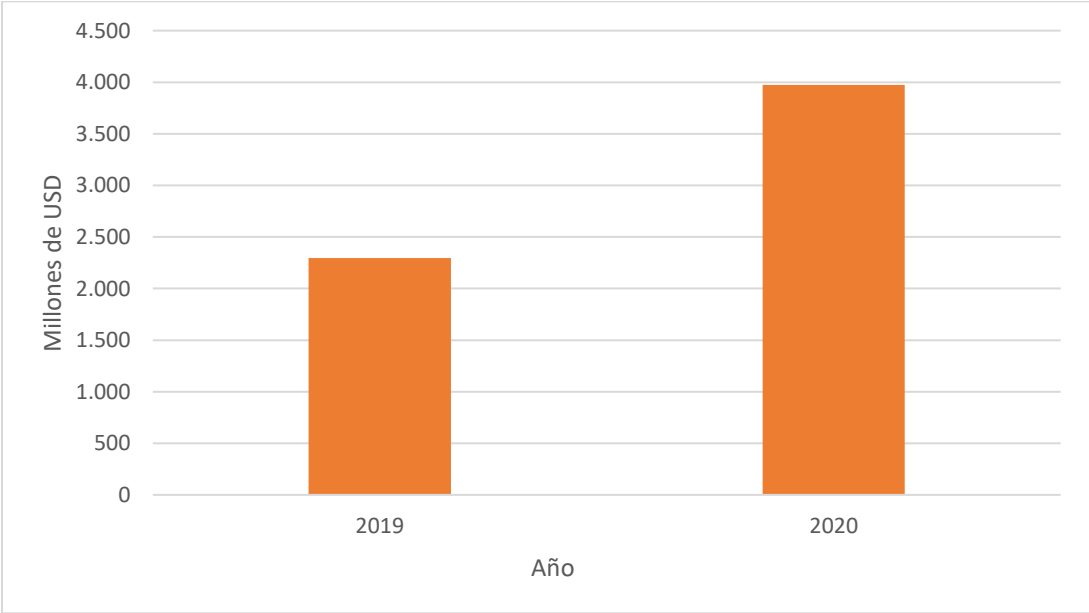
Colombia is characterized as one of the countries in the region which has taken a strong momentum in e-commerce, this is supported by B2B and B2C companies such as Platzi, which is a Colombian company that offers educational services online not only to individuals or in this case consumers, but also offers business services in which it trains organizations, as well as B2C and as a clear example is Rappi which has driven consumption through online

platforms in the country. In the case of Rappi, it has presence in several countries in the Latin American region and has become an icon for its ability to diversify and offer different products and services in its portfolio, among which is Rappi cash; service that brings money to the customer in less than 15 minutes to wherever they need it, also, others such as: carwash, manicurists, expert plumbers, fashion and since 2017 allows buying in virtual stores in the United States through an alliance with "Colocar" (Bolaños R, 2017).

Colombia currently has an average expenditure of 140USD, and a B2C e-commerce of 7.6 billion by the end of 2019 (Bravo Tejada, 2020), which has been increasing consecutively, since according to Bravo Tejada it "could become the third largest e-commerce market by 2021, displacing Argentina".

In the C2C typology there are companies such as OLX, Ebay, Linio and Mercado Libre, the decision was made to choose one of these to deepen and explain more clearly the C2C typology, since Colombia currently does not have a large trading platform that can be taken as an example. Mercado Libre is an Argentine company that provides its services in the country, it allows doing business and transactions between consumers, the following graph shows how the pandemic helped to exponentially increase the profits of this company comparing 2020 with 2019 where a net growth of more than 70% in sales was evidenced (*Graphic 4*).

Graphic 4 C2C free market net income (USD million)



Source: Own elaboration with data obtained from: (Forbes Staff, 2021)

Definitely "the pandemic was an accelerator for the company" as mentioned by the CEO of Mercado Libre who says that these figures reached in one year were figures that were expected in 3 or 4 years, Mercado Libre went from having a market capitalization of 50,000

million dollars in July 2020 to exceed 70,000 million USD in December of the same year, all this because of the great demand that this platform had during the time elapsed of the pandemic (Cullell, 2020).

B2B e-commerce in Colombia has had a 73% reduction in sales (Blacksip,2021) between the last week of February and the first week of May 2020 due to Covid-19, which as a consequence brought closures of public and commercial establishments due to curfews, this caused uncertainty in the market which generated a situation of stillness by some companies who did not know how to react to this new economic scenario, which was reflected in the decrease in sales while adapting to this new digital reality.

Below, we observe the behavior of sales through digital platforms in different industries including B2B commerce.

Table 3 Sales by category between February and May 2020

Industrias	Porcentaje
Retail	209%
Deportes	187%
Servicios	127%
Tecnología	96%
Vehículos	33%
Entretenimiento	23%
Transporte	-60%
B2B	-73%
Turismo	-91%

Source: Own elaboration with data obtained from: (BlackSip, 2020)

Another effect that is evident in e-commerce during the pandemic is the increase of families that were not consuming or buying products through digital platforms and because of the pandemic began to do so, registering the highest % of consumption in the 19th and 20th week of 2020.

Table 4 Percentage of Households Who Made Purchases Online and Not Before, During the First Quarter of the Covid-19 Pandemic

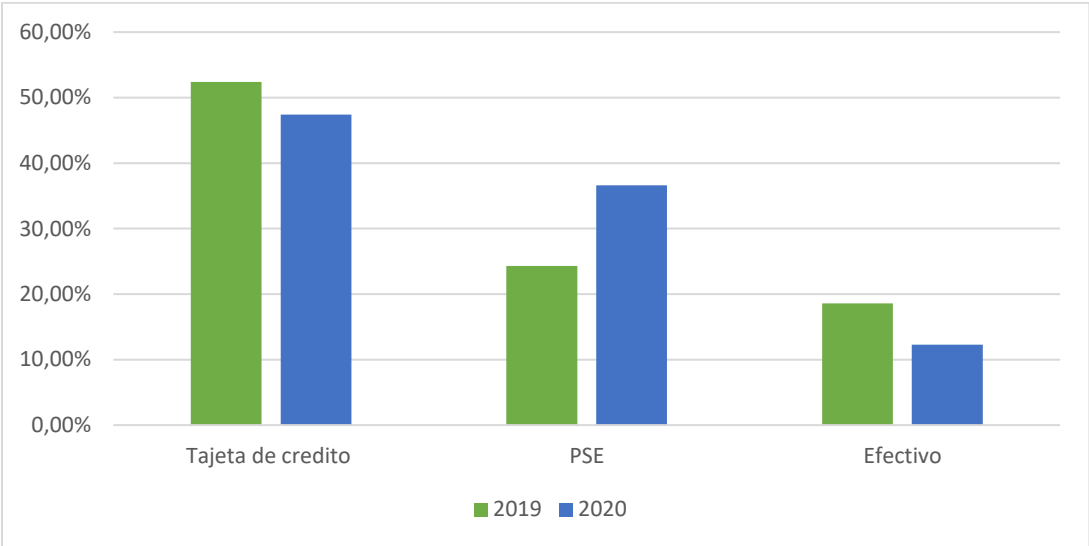
Semana (2020)	Porcentaje
13-14	6%
15-16	12%
17-18	14%
19-20	18%
21- 22	15%

Source: Own elaboration with data obtained from: (BlackSip, 2020)

The table above shows that the week in which families consumed the most through digital platforms was between 19-20 weeks. This is a relevant data given that families had never made purchases online before and when experiencing the ease and agility with which such purchases can be made, it is likely that a high percentage of these families will continue to make frequent purchases through these online platforms.

On the other hand, **Graph 5** shows how payments by digital means increased payments through payment gateways such as PSE, exponentially in 2020 compared to 2019 especially.

Graphic 5 Methods of payment



Source: Own elaboration with data obtained from: (BlackSip, 2020)

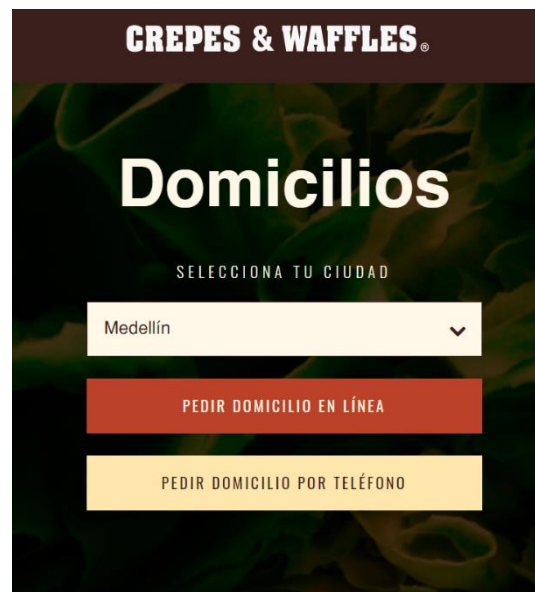
All these results and the decrease in the use of cash were driven by the pandemic, this could represent an opportunity for businesses considering that they could more efficiently keep track of the transactional operations that take place in a company by reducing the use of cash and considering that all the information would be recorded, as well as reducing the risk of losses or shortages at the end of the working day.

Another effect of the pandemic was the opening of new direct distribution channels in some companies such as Crepes & Waffles, a Colombian company which before the pandemic outsourced home deliveries through platforms such as Rappi, due to the pandemic, the company decided to create its own fleet of home deliveries, which comply with all biosecurity protocols and reduce the carbon footprint since they make deliveries on electric motorcycles (Pérez Díaz , 2020).

To comply with all the addresses the company added an "addresses" tab on its website which gives you the option to choose your city, then shows all the stores that are close to the customer's location and right there you can see the phone number where the customer can

contact to place the order, You can also choose the option to order online (*illustration 2*) and the customer only has to choose the city, what they're going to consume, payment method, the above is an example of how the pandemic had a positive effect on this company, thanks to this innovation the company was able to keep all its employees on the payroll, and not lay off human resources, constant effect that has caused the pandemic in other Colombian companies.

Illustration 2 Crepes & Waffles Home Delivery



Source: (Crepes & Waffles, 2020)

The pandemic has caused an acceleration in the digitization of business, especially small and medium enterprises to continue operating have used other ways to do the work as teleworking, since to offer products and services were adapted to e-commerce as a new marketing method. In this new method, businesses found an opportunity to automate and have direct contact with suppliers and consumers, allowing companies to customize their services to the needs of their customers and have a more immediate contact with their suppliers.

The different restrictions and the fear of contagion in the population have caused consumers to enter the electronic channel. Companies increased the use of electronic commerce in times of pandemic as an important tool to give way to these new commercial dynamics that for 3 years have been strengthening and working in the commerce in Colombia, through the massive use of technologies.

4. Conclusions and/or recommendations

The health crisis has generated uncertainty in the Colombian economy due to measures to control the spread of the virus such as quarantines and curfews, in this sense e-commerce became a survival opportunity for SMEs, which is why the Covid-19 pandemic has allowed to diversify and accelerate technological and innovation processes in the country, mainly within companies.

E-commerce has made companies much more efficient in their services and more flexible in their commercial dynamics such as the sale of products and/or services, marketing and connections with suppliers, in addition to allowing more direct contact with different suppliers regardless of their geographic location or distance.

In Colombia during the last 3 years there have been enormous changes in terms of connectivity in the territories, where, by the end of 2020 according to Mintic, there was an increase in fixed internet connections and internet speed. It is worth mentioning that, despite the efforts made by the national government, one of the biggest problems is the connectivity deficiencies in the different regions, mainly in rural areas where the largest business component is in the primary industry. Although Colombia has stood out for being one of the first countries with greater traceability in electronic commerce at the regional level, greater efforts are still needed to achieve fast and effective connectivity throughout the nation. It is therefore that government support for SMEs is essential for these companies to grow in this new environment and thus keep the economy afloat.

According to the above figures, e-commerce has allowed SMEs to remain in the market and be in constant communication with their buyers through different alternative media, digital platforms such as Rappi, domicilios.com, mercado libre, etc. and web pages, and it is also important to highlight the commitment to this type of trade by the various companies and the new commercial dynamics of sales and consumption by the Colombian population. It is important to recognize the role that e-commerce has played in the new forms of commercialization and how it has allowed the sustainability of many companies that are still in operation today.

E-commerce has become more than a trend and it could be said that today it is and will continue to be one of the best alternatives to reach an increasingly competitive market both nationally and internationally. That is why SMEs have not only used or created their own website but have also implemented different methods of communication through different social networks in order to create an omnichannel that manages to meet the new dynamics of consumers. For this reason, it is important to mention that commercial competitiveness and e-commerce are closely related, as it allows SMEs to generate a development in their business bets that manages to compete in different environments inside and outside the country.

5. References

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