RETAILERS, SAY HELLO TO METAVERSE!

SPECTRUM OF DIGITALLY ENHANCED WORLDS, RESHAPING RETAIL

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Metaverse

In Brief

The Metaverse is a digital realm within a simulated universe where individuals can create representations of themselves to engage, play, and work. The Metaverse is built on the concept of immersive technologies, which provide realistic 3D environments and objects that users can experience as a comprehensive world. Although virtual worlds were once dismissed, they are now gaining widespread attention, and businesses and individuals are beginning to recognize the potential of the Metaverse as a tool for marketing and audience engagement.

Shopping will never be the same!

By bridging the gap in immersive experiences, retailers can provide customers with improved interaction and a 3D visual experience through the Metaverse. With this technology, customers can try products from the comfort of their homes without the hassle of physically going to a store. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift towards digital consumption, changing both customer experiences and expectations. Many companies that have adopted the Metaverse concept have created virtual shopping experiences for their customers.

This allows consumers to explore store shelves, try on items, and make purchases without leaving their homes. This role is expected to grow as retailers strive to merge online experiences with physical ones, resulting in a seamless "phygital" blend of both worlds. For instance, a well-known clothing retailer has opened its first virtual store, offering a 3D shopping experience, while a major cosmetics company has incorporated AR and VR into a makeup app that uses face recognition to allow customers to try on products remotely.

Few of our Technological Trends

Trend 01

Shopping with Avatars

The creation of personalized digital avatars is crucial for the Metaverse. It provides brands with real-time insights into customer preferences, enabling them to improve offerings and build customer loyalty. Luxury retailers are offering digital bags and accessories for avatars, enhancing brand positioning. As the Metaverse evolves, virtual fashion items may increase in price, leading to more high-end retailers offering virtual clothing and accessories.

What it means for Retailers

In the pandemic period, digital businesses exploded!

It's easy for merchants to dismiss the Metaverse trend as too futuristic, specialized, or fragmented, as the business potential can be hard to grasp. However, there are growing signs that retailers are beginning to recognize its potential. Engaging with the Metaverse can transform not only customer interactions and relationships but also the size of the target market and revenue streams.

Retailers are exploring ways to enter the Metaverse. In 2021, Nike introduced Nikeland on Roblox, where players can dress their avatars in Nike apparel, attend events, and visit the showroom. LeBron James is teaching basketball basics through interactive games at Nikeland, and the Nike LeBron 19 shoe will be introduced in the virtual showroom for the first time. Charlotte Tilbury added a video chat feature to its online store for friends to discuss their virtual shopping experiences. Balenciaga has created a whole section dedicated to its Metaverse strategy.

Trend 02

Immersive Shopping Experience with Hyper-realistic Try-ons

Retail establishments can enhance customer interaction and provide a 3D visual experience in the Metaverse, bridging the immersive gap. Currently, customers typically try products in physical stores and then make purchases online due to the lack of a similar experience in online platforms. However, in the Metaverse, customers can conveniently test and experience a wide range of products from home, eliminating the inconvenience of physical shopping. Customers can pick their desired shoes and try them on virtually in real-time using AR technology, which provides a 360-degree, 3D view that closely resembles in-person shopping. This not only enhances the customer experience but also reduces the cost of returns and increases the likelihood of repeat purchases.

What it means for Retailers

This novel technology offers retailers a global reach, enabling them to expand their customer base and improve their brand visibility using retail data analytics. Advertisers and brands can leverage the Metaverse by placing advertisements and creating virtual spaces within online games where users can interact. Adidas partnered with the virtual reality platform High Fidelity to create an immersive shopping experience where customers can browse, try on, and purchase virtual Adidas products. The experience allowed customers to customize their avatars, try on different clothes, and even play virtual basketball.

Trend 03

Personalized Planet

Retailers are focused on upgrading their physical shopping experiences. They are implementing technologies such as smart carts, self-checkout, interactive mirrors, and checkout-free stores like Amazon Go to enhance the shopping experience. The pandemic has also accelerated the use of virtual technologies such as virtual meetings, live stream events, and contactless pick-up options to meet customer needs in the digital world.

What it means for Retailers

The use of AR try-on features can reduce consumer doubt when making a purchase. Companies like Pinterest and Snapchat have already implemented these features in their platforms and have seen an increase in sales as a result. For example, Snapchat's AR shopping experience generated an additional $6 million in transactions and over 30 million product tries in just two weeks. Brands can tailor the shopping experience based on customer preferences in the Metaverse. With the help of AI, the creators of the Metaverse will enable users to personalize their virtual wardrobe. The virtual closet enables users to store their old clothing and receive personalized outfit suggestions based on previous purchases. AI store assistants will analyze the user's existing virtual wardrobe and provide personalized fashion advice. In the Metaverse, luxury fashion brands like Gucci and Balenciaga are already taking the lead in creating and selling virtual clothing designs that are not possible in the physical world.

Competitive Landscape

The Metaverse landscape is highly diverse and is made up of a mix of established tech giants, gaming companies, startups, and blockchain-based platforms.

Tech Giants

Companies like Facebook, Tencent, Amazon, and Google are heavily invested in the Metaverse and are leveraging their existing technology and user bases to establish a strong presence in the virtual world. Facebook, for example, has its Oculus platform, which offers a range of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) devices and experiences, while Tencent is a major player in the gaming industry and has invested in various virtual worlds and gaming startups.

Gaming Companies

The gaming industry is well positioned to take advantage of the growing Metaverse market, with companies like Roblox, Epic Games (with Fortnite), and Activision Blizzard offering highly popular and immersive virtual experiences. These companies have a large and engaged user base and a proven track record in creating high-quality virtual experiences.

Startups

There is a growing number of startups entering the Metaverse space, offering a range of innovative solutions and perspectives on virtual experiences. These companies are often focused on niche areas of the market, such as virtual real estate, blockchain-based virtual experiences, or gamified education and training. Obsess is a startup that helps retailers create virtual stores and showrooms using 3D and augmented reality technology.

Blockchain-based platforms

Decentraland and The Sandbox are two examples of blockchain-based platforms looking to offer decentralized and ownership-driven virtual experiences. These platforms allow users to buy, sell, and create virtual experiences and assets fully owned and controlled by the users.
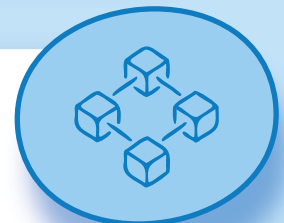
Infosys Metaverse Foundry

Infosys Metaverse foundry is an integral part of Infosys Living Labs that is helping enterprises to grow and adapt emerging priorities and market trends. The Foundry provides a chance for their partners to gain knowledge over offerings by Metaverse. Moreover, Metaverse Foundry provides a bridge between the end users and Metaverse platform providers to make it easy for their partners to have access to the technology and for startups to have big clients.

Case Studies

Digital Twin: The interactive VR model of the vaccine lab enabled quality engineers to access critical vaccine culture data to make predictions and decisions via an iPad-based VR app and monitor the vaccine progress at various stages. Detailed and interactive 3D models, real-time charts, and visuals on Educational Gamification were available for training plant personnel.

Facility Planning Simulation: Kaleidoscope Innovation partnered with Canon Medical Systems USA to create EnVision 360, an application that allows users to plan a room in 2D, drop in medical equipment, and interact with it in 3D. This enabled individuals to visualize it better. Canon Medical's equipment in the room was important because of both the sheer size of many of the devices and the need for careful room planning for safety reasons.

XR Collaboration Platform: Built an immersive visualization and collaboration platform supported through multiple devices - XR Glasses/HMDs, mobiles, and tablets for the client. The solution works by integrating multiple data and information sources, including the client's existing 3rd party backend systems delivery tool, with minimal setup time and domain expertise required.

Virtual UX/UI for a leading US Telco provider: Designed an original and immersive experience for the client's 'One App' wherein they could both craft and enable their own digital twin as a virtual assistant to walk through the in-app experience. Globally known characters were drawn from across the holding group's entertainment IP to enable the personalization of the digital twin.

Infosys Innovation Network (IIN)

The Infosys Innovation Network (IIN) ecosystem is a network of partnerships, collaborations, and relationships that drive innovation and growth for Infosys and its customers. It enables Infosys to stay ahead in technology, identify business opportunities, and deliver innovative solutions. Through this ecosystem, Infosys accesses knowledge, expertise, and emerging technologies to solve client problems and seize new opportunities.

Let`s hear from one of our Startup Partner

KiksAR Technologies Pvt. Ltd.

KiksAR is a trailblazer in the digital supply chain industry, exuding unwavering confidence as they revolutionize customer experiences. With expertise in AR/VR and Metaverse technologies, they redefine how businesses engage across online, social, in-store, and the Metaverse realms. Their market-leading SaaS platform, "Try before you buy," empowers customers with the assurance they need to make informed purchases. Innovation drives our passion, evident in our Virtual Try-On solutions spanning nine categories. Through cutting-edge 3D configurators for jewellery and automobiles, they enable customers to visualize and personalize their dream products like never before.

Mastery of AI, 3D, gaming, and full-stack development fuels our captivating experiences. By providing personalized styling and fitment recommendations through AI and image analysis, they foster trust and loyalty with our valued customers.

Embracing the transformative power of Generative AI, they dynamically create unique and customizable content at scale, streamlining workflows and elevating creativity. Pioneering the Metaverse, they transcend conventional boundaries, ushering in a new era of immersive interactions.

With a global presence and collaborative partnerships, KiksAR leaves an indelible impact on industries worldwide. They approach the future with unyielding confidence, confidently shaping immersive experiences that redefine possibilities, one bold stride at a time.

How they are overcoming some of the challenges.

There is a perception in the minds of the users that Metaverse needs to have HMDs, and an expensive setup is required. They have broken the technology to an extent where it can be accessed by multi-channel like web applications on the laptop and on HMD devices where users can experience an immersive experience to the users with themed environments for retail, manufacturing plants, ports, etc., for marketing, training, and educational purposes. KiksAR made sure that the technology is infrastructure friendly, and businesses can make sure their users can access the technology with the KiksAR platform.

Road Ahead

With the Metaverse platform available across the client channels – web, mobile, and desktop agents, the plan is to create a platform open for the users to create their own environments dynamically with the help of the KiksAR 3D catalog cloud.

Metaverse is waiting for you!

Retailers currently find themselves at a critical moment in time, not just because they need to adapt to new technologies but because success in the next decade will demand more than just technical and innovative capabilities. To compete, retailers must have a clear vision for the future of retail, considering both what consumers will want from these virtual retail environments and what the business needs to thrive in them.

While technology provides direction, it is up to retailers to shape the future of retail.
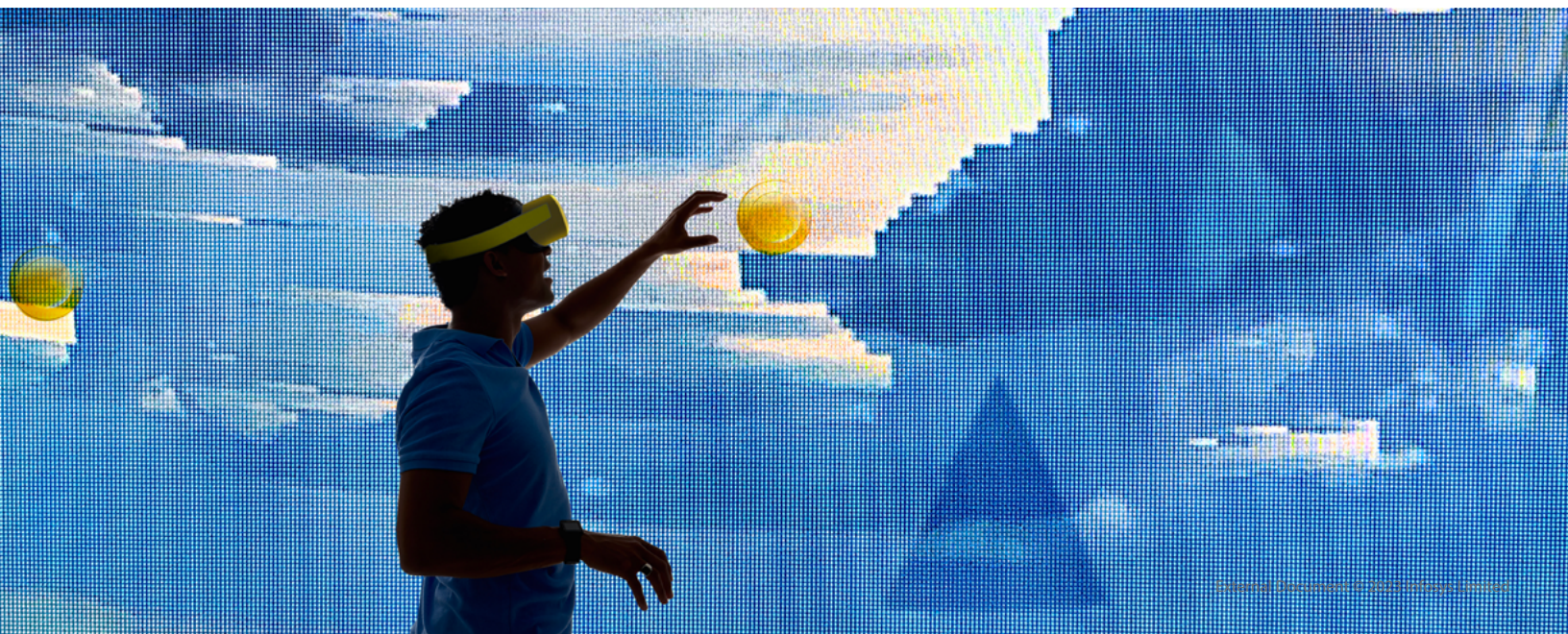
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