



Sri Lanka Marketer[®]

 **SLIM**
Sri Lanka Institute of Marketing



A PUBLICATION OF SRI LANKA INSTITUTE OF MARKETING

17TH VOL | ISSUE 1 | JAN 2024



The **Metaverse** as a Future Promising Business Model

In the distant future, marketing platforms will adopt technological innovations such as the metaverse to create a wider range of brands within a three-dimensional interactive digital environment. Fundamentally, the Metaverse serves as a digital emulation of the physical world, integrating seamlessly into our daily lives. Within this 3D virtual realm, users will have the capability to engage with one another through customisable avatars that resemble their real-life appearances. This evolution in marketing strategies and communication methods will profoundly influence the way companies utilise marketing functions. It's important to note that the concept of the "metaverse" was originally introduced in Neal Stephenson's dystopian and cyberpunk novel *SnowCrash*, published in 1992. Notably, the metaverse is no longer confined to the realm of science fiction. In 2003, as a result of *Snow Crash*'s inspiration, software engineers developed the online platform known as "Second Life". This platform allowed users to create animated representations of themselves, connect with others in various virtual environments, and engage in communication. Metaverse business models that can be applied to marketing are explored in this article.

Overview of the metaverse as a business model

A "business model" is a collection of descriptions that emphasise the most important aspects of a company. The metaverse, as its name implies, is already a plausible reality. It is a digital universe accessible through various technologies, such as virtual and augmented reality, where people can communicate and collaborate. Several businesses are attempting to capitalise on this trend, as it is believed that the metaverse will become more decentralised shortly as a result of the excellent opportunities it will present for expanding business operations. The term "Metaverse" has grown in popularity over the past few years to characterise a realm that is rapidly evolving and already has the potential to revolutionise how we work, live, and play in the future. The term "metaverse" is commonly used to describe the integration of virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MR) into our daily existence.

According to a number of the software's earliest adopters, it will bring about revolutionary changes in numerous industries, including but not limited to retail, sales, marketing, training, education, and healthcare. The public became aware of the metaverse for the first time when Facebook altered its name to Meta. People have traditionally believed that the metaverse was intended for a variety of purposes, including gaming, entertainment, and social interaction. As a platform business model, the incorporation of various types of technology, such as NFT, cryptocurrencies, blockchains, IoT, artificial intelligence, and machine learning, will be advantageous for the metaverse.

Benefits of the metaverse as an innovative business model

The Metaverse is evolving rapidly as virtual worlds and digital environments become more integrated into our everyday lives, and the business models in the metaverse are evolving rapidly along with them. As more companies move into the metaverse, they are looking for new ways to engage their customers and build loyalty. They are also exploring how they can monetise their products and services, such as through virtual goods, NFTs, and blockchain technology. For instance, Nike recently launched a virtual shoe store in Decentraland, allowing users to purchase digital versions of their shoes for cryptocurrency. As in the physical world, virtual land and properties are bought and sold within the metaverse, companies, and individuals can purchase virtual real estate to build stores, venues, or experiences. These investments can then be monetised by charging admission fees, selling virtual goods, or hosting events. This type of virtual property has the potential to generate significant returns for investors. Additionally, virtual real estate can be used to build relationships and brand visibility.

In the metaverse, businesses can create and sell virtual products and services. Among them are digital clothing, accessories, avatar customisations, virtual real estate development, and even virtual experiences such as concerts, art exhibitions, and educational workshops. There are many ways in which companies can advertise their products and services within virtual worlds. These methods include traditional advertising methods as well as the creation of immersive brand experiences. Companies can create

virtual stores, sponsor virtual events, or even create virtual influencers to promote their products and services. They can also leverage social media platforms to reach potential customers and create engaging content. It is possible for a virtual store within a game to sell real-world merchandise, or for a company to sponsor events and locations within a game.

From a business perspective, one of the primary purposes of the metaverse is to enhance communication between people and businesses within the metaverse. As a result of the metaverse, users will be able to construct their avatars and explore a variety of environments while interacting with people in their immediate vicinity. A person with the ability to create an avatar will feel more immersed in their experience than if they were simply viewing a movie or television show on their computer screen. Consequently, they will experience the event as if they were present. In addition, it creates new opportunities for businesses, as they can now communicate directly with their customers through their personas, rather than relying on traditional marketing strategies such as print ads or television commercials. Compared to the preceding circumstance, this represents a significant improvement.

Finally, a growing number of businesses are looking for consultants, designers, and developers who can assist them with the process of developing virtual experiences and navigating the metaverse. In addition to metaverse development, 3D modelling, coding, and user experience design, companies can also offer services related to metaverse development.



Dr. Nirma Sadamali Jayawardena
Assistant Professor, O.P.J.S. Global University, India



Dr. Abhishek Behl
Assistant Professor, Management Development Institute, India