

Why Remote Work Will Fully Embody the Metaverse

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There lies a space, essentially under constant development and change these days, that we are calling the metaverse. While not universal in nature, it is more like a vast network of potential realities that users can experience. The metaverse is, in my opinion, here to stay and evolve alongside us human beings in our physical world. It is a space that seems to be growing at an exponential rate. It will never be able to fully replace our physical world. But it will become a place of immense importance in the future, including in the way we work and earn a living.

Over a decade working remotely has me ready to embrace working in virtual worlds

I've spent the last 11 years working remotely as a consultant and now executive for software and technology companies in the U.S., Singapore, Thailand, Dubai, Brazil and Israel. I'm uniquely positioned to talk about remote work, given that I've been fully immersed in it well before its mainstream prominence now in many of our daily lives. Here is what I'm excited about most though. I think that the metaverse is the next logical place for businesses and employees to begin a mass migration or transition to. I just recently joined a metaverse called eXp World through eXp Realty, where I'm a licensed real estate agent. The entirety of the business ecosystem is contained within eXp World – for team members and

clients to collaborate and work together globally.

What does the term metaverse really mean? What does it stand for?

The term metaverse was coined by programmer Markus Persson in 1994, according to some sources.

Using multiple elements of technology, such as virtual reality, augmented reality, graphical gameplay and video, users can live in a digital world. The metaverse will allow its users to work, play and stay connected with friends through everything from concerts and conferences to virtual trips across the globe. Some metaverse applications provide a combination of virtual and physical spaces and virtual economies, sometimes with a focus on advancing virtual reality technology. In an essay on his website in February 2021, Matthew Ball, managing partner of venture capital firm Epyllion Industries, said we are on the cusp of the next internet. The metaverse encompasses the Web 3.0 ecosystem being built today.

Try this exercise to get an idea of how vague the term metaverse can be: Replace the phrase metaverse in a sentence with cyberspace. Ninety percent of the time, the meaning won't change much. Rather, the term refers to a broad shift in how people interact with technology, not any one specific type of technology. As the specific technology it once described becomes commonplace, the term itself may become just as antiquated.

A more idealistic vision of the metaverse would make it interoperable, allowing you to take virtual items like clothes or cars from one platform to another. You can buy a shirt from the mall and wear it to the movie theater in the real world. A metaverse might allow you to create a persona that you can switch from one platform to another as easily as copying your

profile picture from one social network to another. At present, most platforms offer virtual identities, avatars and inventories that are tied to just one platform.

The metaverse and remote work

Now that I've helped you envision what the metaverse is in a few different potential forms, I want you to think about it in terms of work.

I'm assuming you've heard or seen the term remote work in some form or another and perhaps have even participated in it these days. If you haven't, that's fine as well. Remote work generally refers to the practice of employees working from a location other than their employer's centralized office(s). It could be an employee's home, a co-working space, a private office or any other place other than a traditional corporate office building.

Imagine being able to show up to your company's corporate offices in New York City to put on a presentation for your team while sitting on a beach in Barcelona. A metaverse enables this exact scenario to play out albeit in digital form through an avatar you create for yourself. How about having to participate in a company wide retreat where you have team members geographically dispersed across continents? I can say that I've now participated in these exact activities and it's quite a surreal experience! The metaverse allows you to join these immersive digital worlds that are created for these specific purposes and more that have yet to fully emerge. In short, the metaverse and remote work were made for one another.

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Here are five ways the metaverse will influence and enhance remote work

There is a distinction between remote work and telecommuting, which is the practice of working from home. Remote work is a workplace practice that involves employees working from a location other than the employer's centralized office. As the metaverse becomes more popular, we will begin to see a significant increase in virtual teams.

Virtual teams are essentially groups of employees who work together virtually. This includes virtual meetings, virtual team members and virtual task assignments. Virtual teams allow remote workers to be more productive by removing many of the time-consuming distractions that come with physical proximity. In the future, virtual teams may be more prevalent than traditional work environments. This is due to both increased time and cost savings that come with virtual team collaboration, as well as a decrease in employee burnout.

1. Encourage team cohesion

A company's metaverse should in theory ensure that the team remains united while working together to achieve common goals. This technology will also allow team members to feel like they've contributed to the overall success of the group. Or more than likely the business itself, by being fully immersed in its digital universe. The metaverse of a company should go a long way in solving remote work disadvantages. Because, in my experience, individuals that are part of a cohesive team tend to focus more on the entire group rather than themselves. And, they are more motivated to work towards team goals.

2. Improve team collaboration

The metaverse is going to allow remote workers to improve their communication and place a significant emphasis on teamwork. These digital environments should enhance a team's ability to innovate and achieve objectives in a more succinct way.

Working in the metaverse should help to give team members a sense of accomplishment as being part of a team, a problem currently plaguing many remote workers today.

3. Allow remote workers to interact with all their customers

Imagine being able to invite your customers from around the world to your metaverse and interact with them virtually? Talk about breaking down major barriers that employees sometimes have to overcome when dealing with their customers. With the advent of virtual reality, it will be possible for remote employees to virtually meet their customers in ways they never could before.

4. Enable virtual office environments and custom built ecosystems

The metaverse, with the aid of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR), will make working from home easier for both employers and remote workers. A virtual office can be created that can be used to mimic the real world or the existing real world office settings of the company. Employees and employers can work to complete tasks and jobs, albeit in a digital form. Artificial world environments, tailor-made to the company, can be created for companies' workers. If workers

want to be able to work remotely and on-the-go, the metaverse setup can be optimized to fit these needs.

5. Allow for the creation of virtual conferences, exhibits and expos

Virtual trade shows will be used to eventually replace in-person conferences and expositions, due to its effectiveness and for the fact that it will enable more engagement. No matter where they are located, remote participants can access live, interactive networking opportunities and content on their computers or smart devices. Virtual conferences are hosted entirely online and presumably in metaverse ecosystems. There is no need to travel, book hotels or order catering. Just log on through the conference portal and you're good to go wherever you may be in the world.

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Parting thoughts

The evolution of what we consider metaverses today is absolutely exciting. It's an emerging space with high potential for growth and expansion on every part of the planet. The only limitations on the metaverse from my perspective are our collective minds and imaginations. They're going to continue to be built and evolve from ideas that are shared and developed collaboratively by all of us who interact and use them.

I think that the most exciting piece in all of this for me though, is really figuring out how we can use the metaverse to our advantage to improve our own personal and professional lives. While I don't have the exact answers to these

questions, I have some general ideas that'll I'll save for another time as we witness another milestone in this technological revolution.

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