

Marketing opportunities in the metaverse

Article

The metaverse promises to be transformative for the digital marketing landscape—at least, as soon as tech platforms figure out how it will actually work. For now, video games and AR/VR are two precursors of the metaverse that offer marketers a chance to experiment. But as hardware developers like Meta, Snap, and Samsung release better and cheaper VR headsets, and games like Fortnite debut new virtual spaces that aren't focused solely on gameplay, there will be even more ways for marketers to take advantage of the social and technological aspects of the metaverse.

Video games give marketers a chance to test the social aspects of the metaverse without worrying too much about tech requirements. Not all video games can be considered metaverses, but some do exhibit metaverse-ready qualities such as personalized avatars, the ability to interact with the world around you, and a multiplayer mode.

Roblox, Animal Crossing, and Fortnite are just a few that fit the bill: They let users design outfits, host other players on their custom-made islands or universes, and hang out without the expectation of traditional gameplay. That's made them attractive experimenting grounds for brands, for both paid and organic activations.

Key stat: Gamers are open to seeing brands in games, but it's important to consider how the brand's products mesh with the game environment. In a June 2021 Comscore survey, 42% of respondents said they expect product placement will be relevant to the game.

US Gamers' Opinions About Brands in Video Games, June 2021

% of respondents

Expect that product placement in games will be relevant to the games I'm playing



Expect that product placement in games will be relevant to me



Would rather fake brands be used in video games than real brands



■ Strongly agree/agree ■ Disagree/strongly disagree

Note: ages 18-65; excludes responses
Source: Comscore, "State of Gaming 2021," Oct 13, 2021

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Paid partnerships, like the Gucci Garden experience on Roblox where users could explore a dreamy landscape and purchase or win virtual Gucci bags for their avatars, have achieved stellar results. According to the developer, more than 4.5 million items were won in the two weeks the campaign was active, per USA Today.

Meanwhile, the ability to host organic customized spaces for free has allowed brands to take up residence in the metaverse, building a persistent presence that would be impossible to maintain in person. For example, Vans' skateboarding-themed Roblox world has brought in more than 61.3 million visits since its launch in April 2021, per its landing page.

Events within games also have a lot of draw: A November 2020 Lil Nas X concert series in Roblox was viewed more than 33 million times, for example.

Read the full report.

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The Metaverse

