

3 new things in NFTs: Mastercard, retail, and regulations in China

Article

1. What Mastercard's trademark applications mean for its metaverse ambitions

Mastercard filed 15 trademark applications for its brand name, its “Priceless” slogan, and its circles logo that point to nonfungible token (NFTs) and metaverse ambitions.

Applications filed to the US Patent and Trademark Office earlier this month outlined plans to process virtual cards, hold entertainment and educational services in the metaverse, and create an online marketplace for digital assets authenticated by NFTs, among other things.

Mastercard wants to establish itself in the metaverse and NFTs before the hype reaches a fever pitch.

[Read more about Mastercard in the metaverse here.](#)

2. Brands tap into the power of NFTs to explore new markets

The past year has witnessed explosive growth in hype and money pouring into NFTs. NFT sales spiked to **\$25 billion** in 2021 from less than **\$100 million** the previous year, according to DappRadar, driven largely by sales of digital art and collectibles. Brands across the consumer spectrum—from luxury fashion houses like **Gucci** to fast-food chains such as **McDonald's**—have jumped into the fray with their own NFT projects, to varying degrees of success.

But as some of the dust settles and the market cools, **many are wondering about NFTs' longer-term potential and their place in the nascent metaverse and web3**, the anticipated evolution of the internet from a centralized, server-based model to a decentralized, blockchain-based system.

[See how brands are incorporating NFTs here.](#)

3. NFT interest is strong in China, but regulations complicate the market

Interest in **NFTs** is catching on in China, but the country's regulatory restrictions, which differ from the West, could complicate efforts to engage with them.

In China, NFTs are typically marketed as unique collectibles that can be held forever. In the US, by contrast, brands see virtual goods not just as experimental marketing tools, but also as potential revenue streams.

[Read about China's state of NFT regulations here.](#)