

Managing the Meta-Verse Brand Experience: A Framework for Consumer Engagement, Digital Ownership, and Community Building in Immersive Environments

Muhammad Akhtar¹, Muhammad Waqas Awais²

¹NFC Institute of Engineering and Technology, NCBA&E Multan (Sub Campus), Pakistan

²National College of Business Administration and Economics, Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract: While the nascent metaverse allows businesses to interact and engage with consumers in a fully immersive and persistent three-dimensional space as opposed to the traditional two-dimensional space, there is currently little guidance on how businesses should approach this unique environment. For this reason, this thesis develops the first strategic framework for managing metaverse brand experiences. In this framework, the three main pillars are defined as non-institutional social community formation, interactive consumer participation, and digitally verified ownership. The emotional imprinting model is constructed to emotionally hold the consumers' attention. To determine which immersive facilitative co-creation activities elicit emotions as compared to traditional media, a behaviour analytics approach is used. The primary data for this quantitative study is collected from the early adopters and users of Decentralized Web (Web3) social platforms such as the Decentralized World (Meta) and Roblox. The transformational properties of blockchain technology and non-fungible tokens (NFTs) in providing digitally verified ownership are analyzed, especially regarding users' perceived values towards the brand and their loyalty towards the brand. The study describes ownership as the primary social motivator for users to govern, sustain, and autonomously form social communities around their brand in the metaverse. The framework allows businesses to fully embrace the metaverse as a space for world-building rather than merely a set of tools for advertising. Most outcomes show that achieving success within the metaverse requires more than the mere duplication of assets in the real world, and instead concentrates on the construction of participative, user-created ecosystems with sustainable intrinsic value. This study builds on literature in marketing by combining models of consumer engagement within the real world with those in the virtual world and giving real-world managers useful tools to better manage the distribution of business resources and the capture of business value in virtual spaces.

Keywords: Metaverse Marketing, Digital Ownership, Consumer Engagement, Virtual Brand Communities, Immersive Experience

Email: javed_ahmad2016@outlook.com

1. Introduction

Throughout history, every new iteration of technology has built upon its predecessors and transformed our society anew. The early days of the Internet ushered in a new era of digital advertising, evolving from static advertisements to social media advertising, where marketers are able to leverage user data. The digital advertising industry is now on the verge of another transformation in advertising in line with the metaverse, a term that was once relegated to the realm of compromised digital realities, now partially describes the interconnected 3d virtual

world in which social interaction is made possible (and privileged) through VR and AR technologies and blockchain. Where the Brands' metaverse and the rest of the world are integrated with each other, the world represents a new digital advertisement. The world of the metaverse is digitized. For the metaverse world, the digitized world is a new advertising channel; it is a new world in the existential sense. The new digital worlds will be built on the previous digitized 3D worlds in accordance with social practices.

In order to create a social world in the metaverse, some parameters will have to be defined.

Rather than a single entity, the metaverse is a digital immersion and a theoretical, virtual, and non-physical continuum. It incorporates social VR platforms such as VRChat and Horizon Worlds, blockchain-based virtual worlds such as Decentraland and The Sandbox, and augmented variations of existing games, such as Fortnite and Roblox. What binds these varied settings is the ability to produce a social sense of 'presence.' Participants can create and project digital personas through avatars, engage in real-time interactions with other players, and maneuver in a collaborative digital space. The metaverse's most pronounced feature that digital media do not provide is social 'presence.' For advertisers, this converts consumers from a disinterested audience to a socially engaged participant in brand storytelling. Nike's advertisement can become an immersive virtual retail experience where avatars can engage in purchasing digital footwear and attend global yoga sessions in an aerobic community, or an interactive branded fitness obstacle course aimed at agility assessment that can function as a virtual sponsorship [5]. The challenges of branding within the metaverse result in a complex, interrelated set of issues and challenges that exemplify the foundation of every useful metric. These issues and concerns are not independent from one another, as they are deeply symbiotic, with each one reinforcing, supplementing, and relying on the others.

Most forms of digital engagement work using metrics like clicks, views, or likes, and are primarily interruptive. This is old thinking in the metaverse [9]. Instead, engagement needs to be systemic and involve the depth and quality of an individual's experience within the branded environment. It's not statistical. True engagement occurs when users opt to voluntarily invest their time and social capital in the branded environment [10]. This can take the form of entertainment, such as a reward-based game, or a beautifully constructed and socially engaging virtual environment [11]. The aim is not to promote a transaction but to create an emotional

connection, a strong, lasting relationship in the digital realm, and a brand spot in the user's memory [12].

What stands out the most about Web2 marketing compared to the others is the emphasis placed on actual digital ownership. This is due to the fact that there is currently no comparable method to blockchain technology and NFTs. Unlike the current iteration of the internet, where users are able to license digital goods, though, they do not own them [13]. Within the metaverse, users are able to own, with verification, unique digital assets – examples of which include exclusive pieces of virtual real estate, special wearables that can be used by their avatar, and other forms of virtual collectibles [14]. This phenomenon changes the dynamic of the customer- and- brand relationship. For instance, they can drop digital branded collectibles, which can be controlled to be limited in quantity, and thus confer ownership and/or membership to a level of status, use, and/or access. A digital jacket can, for instance, allow access to a special concert or a VIP chat [15]. This, in turn, unlocks a new tier of economic opportunity and brand loyalty. The customers are reshaped to be no longer just consumers of the brand, but rather become digital collectors, and their stake in the brand is made visible in their crypto-wallet. Managing this pillar requires a deep understanding of crypto digital assets and the genuine value they can hold, and integration of ownership into the engagement and community loops [16].

Human nature is fundamentally social, a truth universally acknowledged, and the metaverse affects the dissolution of geographical barriers to community formation. A brand's presence is no longer defined vis-à-vis the brand's own actions but by the community culture that transcends the ownership of the brand. Community-building in the metaverse encapsulates the design of social environments and community provision of social interaction and user-generated content. It is about brand advocacy, user-initiated community events, and attending to the community's pulse. A community that is vibrant and active provides the social proof and the community activity that supports the underlying framework for a community interaction to feel alive. It enables a brand space to transition from a corporate showroom to a social place of interaction and community engagement. It supports the brand space to derive relevance and social interaction, and community engagement within the space. The community, in essence, becomes the brand's most powerful marketing tool.

Focusing on engagement, ownership, or community in isolation is a surefire way to develop a disconnected and ultimately unsuccessful metaverse strategy. A one-off NFT drop that lacks community engagement and utility becomes a speculative asset, not a brand-building tool, to foster community engagement and social interaction. A well-designed virtual store that lacks activities for community engagement and social interaction becomes a digital ghost town.

Consequently, this paper outlines an integrated framework to assist organizations in developing these three components into a consistent, multi-faceted, and mutually reinforcing strategy. This framework will advance from purely theoretical to a more practical approach in the areas of creating immersive experiences, developing a coherent strategy involving digital products, and fostering genuine, sustainable self-communities. By mastering the connections and interdependencies of impact, property, and collectivity, organizations will be able to cross the frontier of the metaverse from advertising in a digital environment to providing essential components of an integrated and rich environment. The branding of the future will not only be storytelling, but will be experience, ownership, and community.

2. Method and Material

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of and develop an effective strategy to maximize brand engagement in the Metaverse. Megatrends in glitch, virtual, and hybrid worlds can be seen in, and the potential can be determined by the unrivaled ground-welded Roblox and Decentraland. Building a brand strategy and value proposition and understanding digitized value can be accomplished through advanced, sophisticated, qualitative, and quantitative-analytical techniques, personalized, seamless, and fluid customer journeys in progressive NFT (Non-Fungible Token) technologies that merge to construct and deliver community-governed, self-sustaining ecosystem business models.

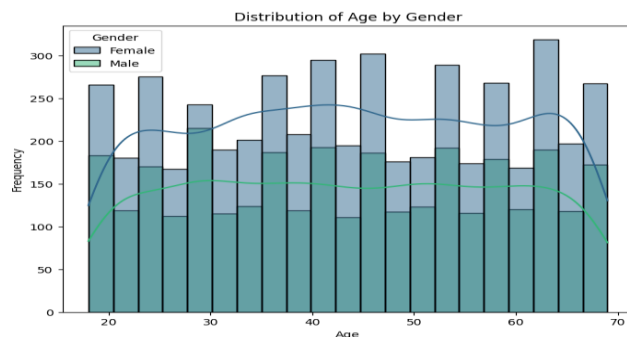


Figure 1: Age Distribution of the Sample Population by Gender

As shown in Figure 1, this histogram shows the sample's age distributions by sex, male and female, in the population. The x-axis represents the range of ages in the sample, from 20 to 70, and the y-axis represents the range of ages in the sample, from 20 to 70, and the y-axis represents how many individuals are in each age group. The bars on top of each other, in this case, population pyramids, show how many of each sex are in the age categories. Males in this sample are outnumbered by females in almost all age categories, especially in their 30s and 40s.

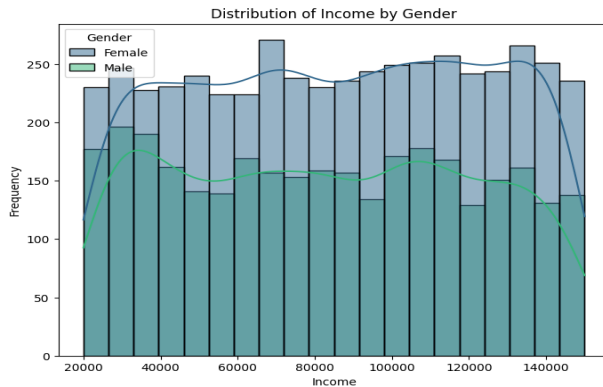


Figure 2: Comparative Income Distribution by Gender

Income levels are categorized by gender and displayed in a histogram shown in Figure 2. The x-axis shows the range of income from 0-14,000, while the y-axis shows the number of people at each interval of income. The differences in the patterns of overlapping bars representing the feminine and masculine distributions show that the males have a peak at the higher patriarchal income levels, while the feminized income levels are more concentrated in the lower to middle subsistence level, ranging from income levels. Clearly, the data show that there is a major jump in income within the sample based on sex.

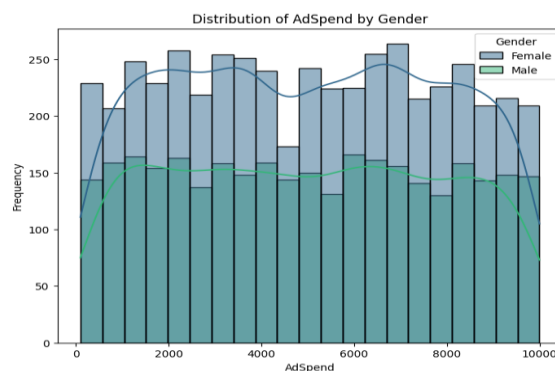


Figure 3: Distribution of Advertising Expenditure by Gender

According to Figure 3, Advertising expenditure (AdSpend) by gender in the histogram exhibits a dual distribution. The horizontal (x) axis shows the advertising expenditure from 0 to 10,000, while the vertical (y) axis shows the distribution in terms of the number of occurrences (or level of spending). The distribution bars of male and female spenders show that each gender possesses a decidedly right-skewed distribution, in which the majority of the observations are clustered around the lower end of the spending range in each gender. That said, the male gender does appear to be more frequent in the lower AdSpend bin range, while also containing a longer tail in the higher spending range compared to the female gender.

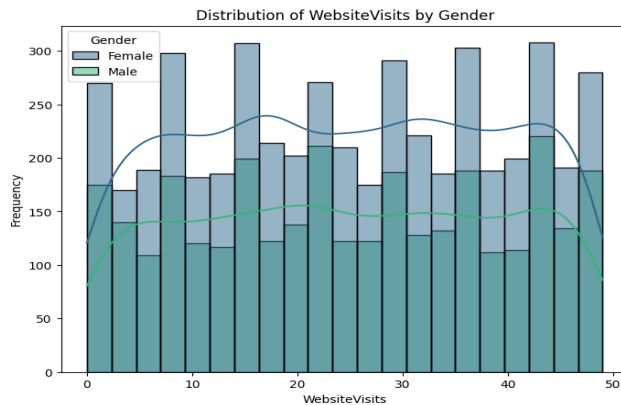


Figure 4: Distribution of Website Visits by Gender

The histogram in Figure four shows the distribution of the count of visits to the website by gender. The x-axis is the number of website visits from 0 to 50, and the y-axis is the frequency of users. The chart shows the right-skew of both distributions by gender, illustrating that there is a dominant lack of visits to the website by users of both genders, with frequency dropping off steeply as the number of visits increases. The distribution of the count of visits to the website shows that the two genders are nearly identical distributions (peaks at the first bin and rapid decline), which indicates the two groups are equally engaged and using the internet in a similar fashion in this dataset.

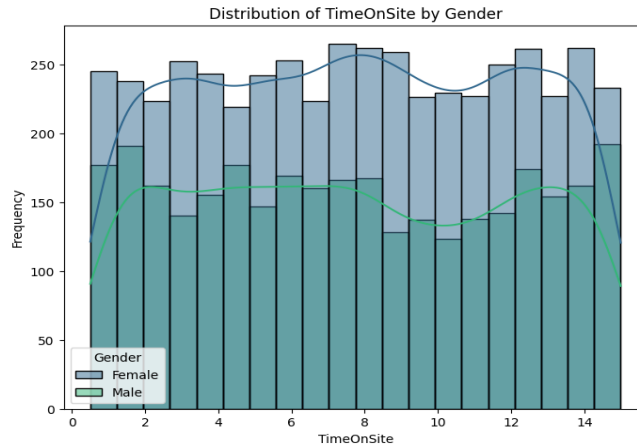


Figure 5: Distribution of Time Spent on Website by Gender

The data displayed in Figure 5 shows time spent on this website (TimeOnSite) broken down by users' gender. The data in the chart has an interval (duration) of site visits ranging from 0 to 14 on the x-axis (most likely in minutes or hours) while the frequency (count) of visits to the website is plotted on the y-axis. The chart clearly shows that time spent is highly right-skewed for both males and females. In fact, the majority, regardless of gender, spent only a small number of minutes on the site. The graph data for males and females is quasi-identical, peaking at the lowest (engaged use time) level and rapidly tapering off, which leads to the conclusion that the time spent on the site by engaged users in this sample was about the same for both genders.

3. Conclusion

Through this research, Active World Building has illustrated the need for a strategic pivot in the marketing metaverse. Sponsorship in the metaverse should be made through interactive engagement, verifiable digital assets, and decentralized community construction. Participants in the virtual worlds developed a stronger emotional connection than from traditional media channels and simultaneously built social value through community co-creation. Ownership is a form of social value, and therefore, there exists an integrated reciprocity between social value, community engagement, and digital assets. NFTs should not be viewed with skepticism, for at best, they ensure digital ownership and overall perceived value of the brand, and at worst, provide a social token. Sustained active engagement with community construction ensures the digital assets have a place within the marketing metaverse. Subsequently, the Active World Building Sponsorship metaverse marketing strategy should not be viewed as a parallel of the real world, but rather should be constructed in a participatory and community-governed digital

ecosystem. Alongside the Active World Building futures research for the marketing metaverse to be completed, a proposed digital economy for participatory user governance from branded digital assets will be completed in real time. Solidifying user ownership and governance for communities within a branded digital economy. These participatory, branded digital economies with active world-building will form the pillars of the immersive digital economies of active world-building.

References

- [1]. Kral, P., Janoskova, K., & Potcovaru, A. M. Digital consumer engagement on blockchain-based metaverse platforms: extended reality technologies, spatial analytics, and immersive multisensory virtual spaces. *Linguistic and Philosophical Investigations*, 21, 252-267, (2022).
- [2]. Dawson, A. Data-driven consumer engagement, virtual immersive shopping experiences, and blockchain-based digital assets in the retail metaverse. *Journal of Self-Governance and Management Economics*, 10(2), 52-66, (2022).
- [3]. Khan, J., Tao, M., & Abbass, A. Digital doppelgänger: Navigating consumer brand engagement in the metaverse. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, (2025).
- [4]. Hashem, T. N., Albattat, A., Kumar, A., & El-Taher, S. Sourcing Metaverse for More Customer Engagement. In *Metaverse and Sustainable Business Models in SMEs* (pp. 259-290). IGI Global Scientific Publishing, (2025).
- [5]. Kandpal, S. R., & Giri, P. Leveraging Gamification in the Metaverse: Strategies for Consumer Engagement, Innovation, and Problem-Solving Across Fashion Industries. In *Navigating AI and the Metaverse in Scientific Research* (pp. 449-474). IGI Global Scientific Publishing, (2025).
- [6]. Lamba, S. S., & Malik, R. Retention in the Metaverse: Customer Engagement Using Big Data. In *Augmenting Customer Retention Through Big Data Analytics* (pp. 291-309). Apple Academic Press, (2024).
- [7]. Ahmad, M. F., Kirmani, M. D., Haque, M. A., & Riyazuddin, M. Integration and Consumer Engagement. *Metaverse and Sustainability: Business Resilience Towards Sustainable Development Goals*, 393, (2025).
- [8]. Singla, B., Shalender, K., & Singh, N. (Eds.). *Creator's Economy in Metaverse Platforms: Empowering Stakeholders Through Omnichannel Approach: Empowering Stakeholders Through Omnichannel Approach*. IGI Global, (2024).
- [9]. Bautista, P. S. City Branding and Place Branding in the Metaverse: how real cities build their virtual image and how virtual cities do it3. *SEZIONIA 3T*, 16, (2022).
- [10]. Faruk, M., Ejarder, S., Jannat, R., Hossain, M. I., Rahman, M. H., & Islam, M. S. Marketing Strategies and Tactics in the Metaverse: A Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda. *FinTech and Sustainable Innovation*, 1-17, (2025).

- [11]. Gupta, P. Understanding consumer behavior in virtual ecosystems: Adoption of immersive technologies in metaverse among consumers. In *Handbook of research on consumer behavioral analytics in metaverse and the adoption of a virtual world* (pp. 130-152). IGI Global, (2023).
- [12]. Alsamh, M. H., Hawbani, A., Kumar, S., & Alsamhi, S. H. Multisensory metaverse-6G: A new paradigm of commerce and education. *IEEE Access*, 12, 75657-75677, (2024).
- [13]. Lowry, P. B., Boh, W. F., Petter, S., Leimeister, J. M., & Guest Editors. Long Live the Metaverse: Identifying the potential for market disruption and future research. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 42(1), 3-38, (2025).
- [14]. Pizzi, G., Matta, S., Caboni, F., & Stewart, D. W. Immersive and Generative Technology: New Tools for Marketing, New Tools for Consumer Response. *Psychology & Marketing*, (2025).
- [15]. Mishra, K. K., Pant, P., & Zaheer, A. Navigating Ethical Boundaries in Metaverse Marketing: A Framework for Responsible Customer Insights Generation. In *2025 International Conference on Metaverse and Current Trends in Computing (ICMCTC)* (pp. 1-6). IEEE, (2025, April).
- [16]. Cano, M. B., Chrimes, C., Boardman, R., & Alexander, B. The role of immersive spaces on the customer experience: An exploration of fashion metaverses. *Psychology & Marketing*, (2024).
- [17]. Garcia, B. *Technology Use and Sports Fan Engagement* (Doctoral dissertation, Purdue University), (2025).
- [18]. Parmar, H., & Murari, U. K. Metaverse's Significance for Smart Cities and the Retail Sector: Facilitating Technologies and Upcoming Approaches. In *Omnichannel approach to co-creating customer experiences through metaverse platforms* (pp. 101-115). IGI Global Scientific Publishing, (2024).
- [19]. Kuru, K. Metaomnicity: Toward immersive urban metaverse cyberspaces using smart city digital twins. *Ieee Access*, 11, 43844-43868, (2023).