
# What is the Metaverse?

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One of the most popular topics in technology right now is the concept of the “metaverse”. This term has been popularized most recently by Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of the company formerly known as Facebook, now named Meta Platforms Inc.

The term “metaverse” was first used in the novel Snow Crash by Neal Stephenson, and it described a virtual reality which had grown so popular that in many aspects it had replaced the real world. There have been many other books and films which have explored similar concepts (Ready Player One, The Matrix, etc.), but the concept has always seemed very futuristic – not something that present day society was anywhere near experiencing.

While we are likely still many years away from reaching anything close to the pop culture representations of this concept (thankfully so – as more often than not these present very dystopian views of the future), we believe that the concept of a blurring line between reality, virtual reality, augmented reality, and the internet is something that we are all going to be living firsthand in the near future.

We wanted to use this blog as an opportunity to outline some of the ways in which this evolution will influence our day-to-day lives.

**Education**

One of the more underappreciated areas the metaverse could impact is education. The ability to visualize many of the concepts or lessons traditionally delivered by pages in textbooks will make them not only more engaging, but more effective as well. One example we like to use is that of a history class: Imagine students learning about ancient Rome, or other great civilizations of the past, and being able to simulate standing within the cities, or in front of the monuments that are associated with them, “seeing” these things with their own eyes. This is a fairly simple and easy to explain example, but the applications can go far beyond this into areas like chemistry, medicine, engineering, and many others.

## Work

Many of us have already become accustomed to working from home. Though overall opinions can vary when it comes to overall preference between working from home or working from the office, one thing that can generally be agreed upon is that both options have benefits and drawbacks. The perfect example of this is a kind of “halfway point” between a Zoom call and an in-person meeting, where participants are in a shared virtual space. This retains the flexibility offered by remote meetings, while bridging some of the gap created by their impersonal nature.

## Entertainment

The obvious connection between entertainment and the metaverse is the already fairly well-developed area of gaming. VR and AR gaming are already fairly prevalent today, and their level of sophistication is increasing rapidly. However, what is emerging now is the concept of consuming other forms of entertainment virtually (ex. concerts, sporting events, movies, etc.). Things like capacity limitations, accessibility issues, and even restrictive costs are all issues that can be addressed by a changing concept of what “live” really is. Current technology is still not at a level where it can replace in-person events, but we think we are headed towards a world where there are unlimited “front-row seats”.

## Investing

Finally, tying everything back to our industry, what does the metaverse mean from an investment standpoint? We are excited about the opportunities that are starting to emerge from this concept – these range from things like the components and hardware that will be necessary to gain access, to the software and content creators that will populate this “next generation” connectivity.

The metaverse is not going to be owned or operated by any single company. Though Facebook may have changed their name to reflect their ambitions in the space, more than anything else it is simply the next step in the evolution of the internet.

As always, if you have any questions – or want to learn more about how we are approaching investing in this emerging trend, feel free to contact us anytime.

Sincerely,
Di Iorio Family Wealth