

# The Metaverse And The Future Of Travel

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Five Things To Consider About  
Travel In The Metaverse

October 2023

GAME CHANGERS



# Introduction

Metaverse is a term used to describe an immersive environment that bears witness to the digital acceleration the world is going through at this time. This technology allows for genuine interactions between people and other digital objects enabled by technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and the Internet. Despite its association with gaming, it is quickly becoming known for diverse applications in communication, creative expression, and collaboration, and is already influencing how we play, work and even learn.

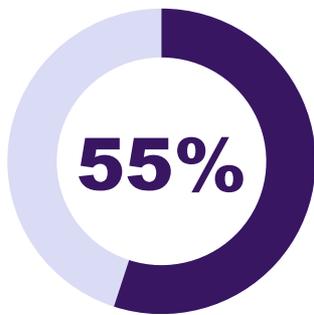
Already recognized as a disruptive force, the Metaverse has already grown beyond entertainment and made its way into travel and tourism. To understand the extent to which Metaverse has infiltrated this sector, Ipsos has conducted research to understand travelers' familiarity with this technology and explore potential interactions with its uses in the travel industry across 5 markets: **KSA, UAE, UK, USA** and **China**.

Our research presents how travelers truly show enthusiasm towards the Metaverse and understand how far this technology can go and the unique experiences it can bring them. From planning a normal trip to reaching destinations beyond reach like the moon, this report highlights **5 things you need to know about the Metaverse in the context of travel and tourism**.



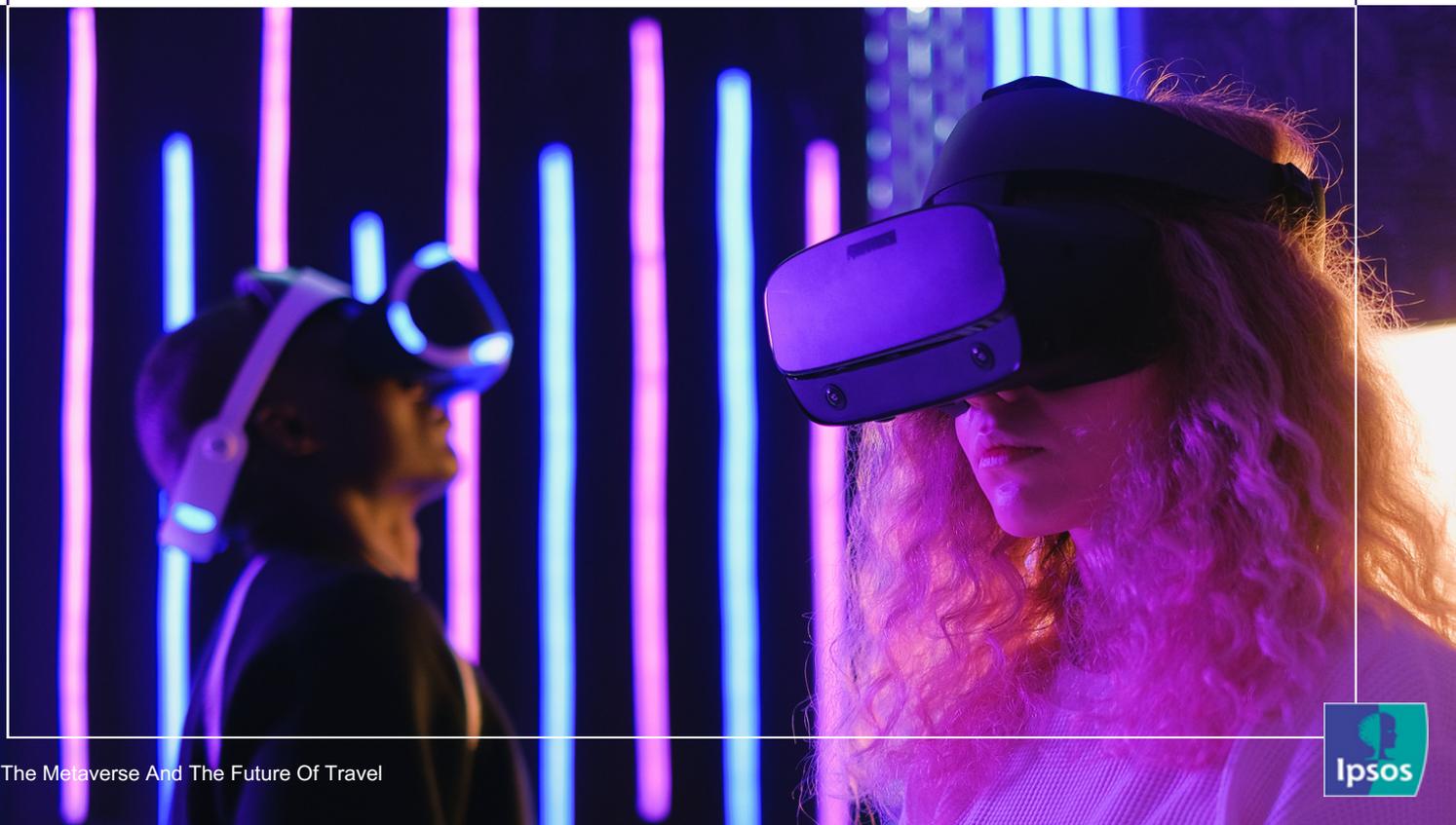
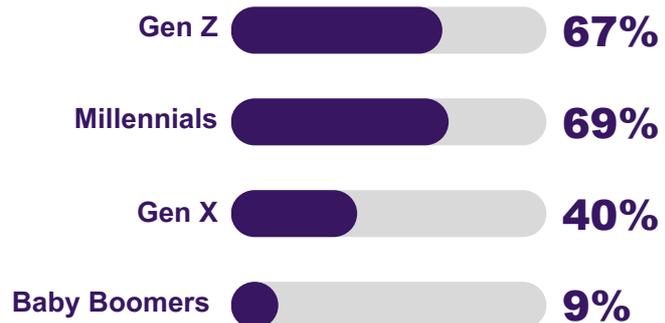
# #1 Tourism Through The Metaverse Enjoys Wider Familiarity Than One Might Think

As the Metaverse is quickly becoming known for its diversity within the vast landscape of its applications, virtual tourism through the Metaverse is capturing the attention of a significant number of travelers; 16% report a deep familiarity with virtual tourism while 39% express a moderate level of familiarity - 55% as a combined total. This growing familiarity is primarily driven by the younger tech-savvy travelers, indicating a major shift in how travel is seen globally across generations while highlighting the potential progression of how it will be engaged with in the future.



**Of Travelers Are Familiar With Metaverse Tourism**

## Familiarity By Generation:



## #2 The Metaverse Has Already Made Its Way Into The Realm Of Travel

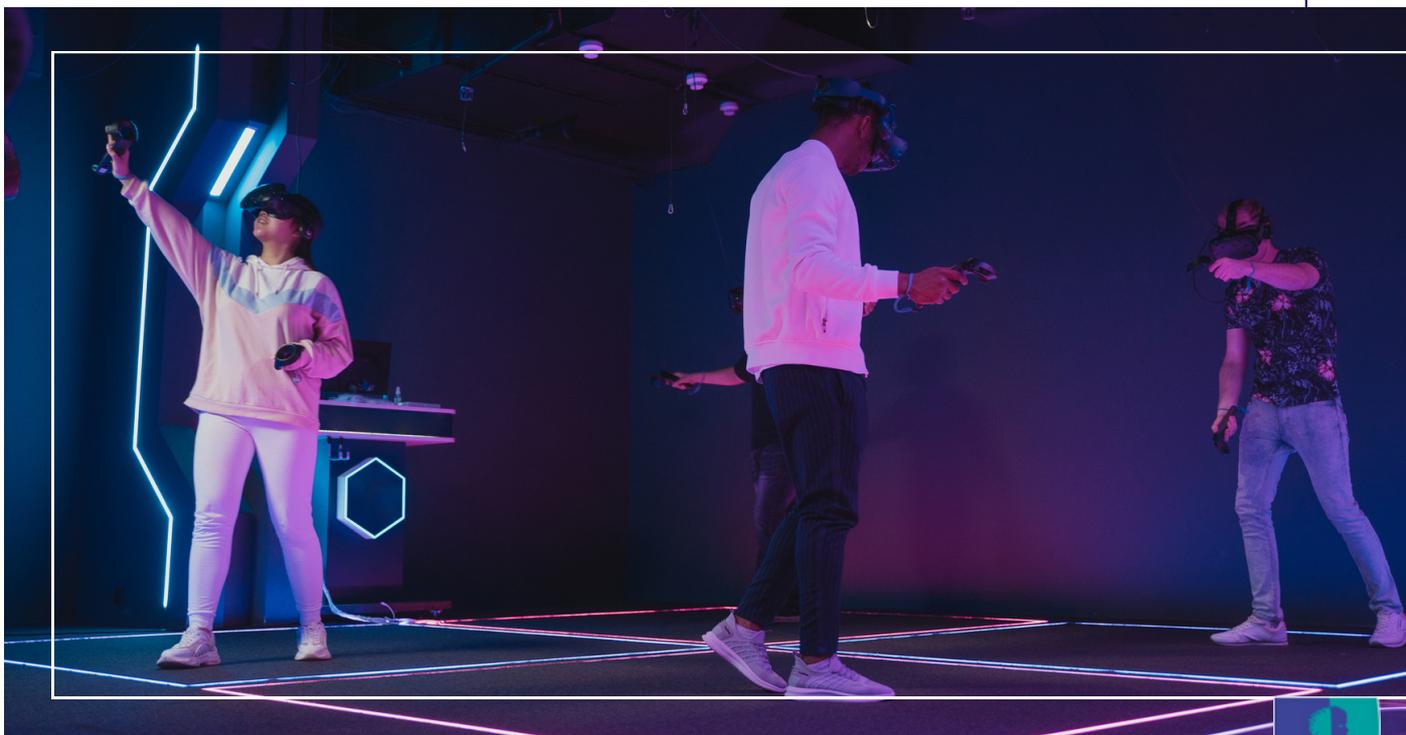
The Metaverse has expanded over various spaces, providing a scope of experiences for today's curious explorer, ranging from immersive entertainment such as socializing, shopping and concerts to education and professional training. Therefore, it comes to no surprise how quickly travelers embraced this virtual space for tourism. Notably, 32% of travelers have already engaged in Metaverse travel, where it seems to be particularly popular amongst Millennials. Yet, what truly affirms this growing trend is their eagerness to try this experience in the near future to visit their dream destinations; half of travelers share this desire.



**Of Travelers Have Already Experienced Metaverse Tourism**

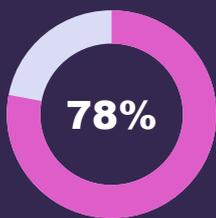


**Travelers Are Interested In Traveling Through Metaverse**

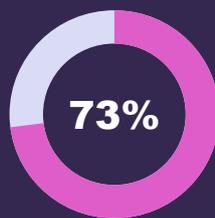


# #3 The Metaverse Is Revolutionizing Travel Planning

The Metaverse is emerging as a thorough tool in all travel stages, most importantly in planning with 8 in 10 travelers seeing it as a valuable 'try-before-you-buy' service and 7 in 10 recognizing its ability to provide additional information about their desired destinations.



See The Metaverse As A 'Try Before You Buy' For Destinations



See The Metaverse As An Informational Tool For Destinations

Travel through the Metaverse also allows for a better comparison of potential touristic destinations, finding accommodations, discovering attractions and activities, and even gauging cultural values and neighborhood safety levels for accommodations before embarking on trips. This creates a more accurate understanding and expectation of any travel experience beforehand. In fact, when asked about tourism through the Metaverse for the purpose of travel planning, travelers found features such as obtaining more information about a destination's main attractions, viewing accommodation facilities, and finding interesting places to include in their itinerary the most useful.

## Top Most Useful Planning Features For Metaverse Tourism

 Get Information On Main Attractions **1**

 View The Accommodation Facilities **2**

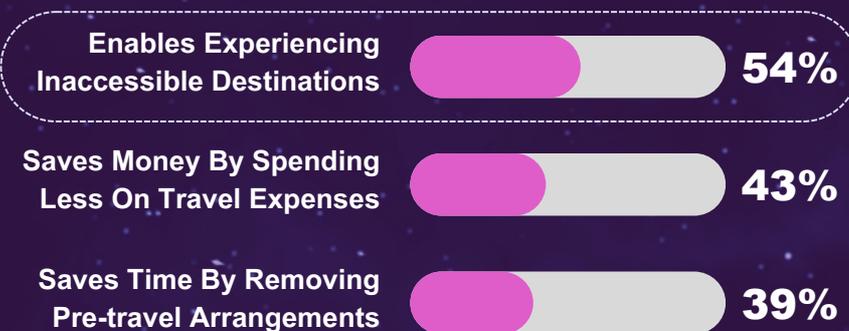
 Search For Interesting Places To Be Added To Itinerary **3**



## #4 The Metaverse Is Opening Doors To Inaccessible Destinations

The most intriguing aspect of the Metaverse is its ability to satisfy the appetite of potential tourists by offering access to otherwise far-fetched destinations. More than half of travelers indicate that their primary motivation for virtually travelling through the Metaverse is the opportunity to actually visit places like the top of Mount Everest or the South Pole. Making this trigger one that outweighs considerations to save money and time.

### Top Triggers To Travel Virtually Through The Metaverse



“  
**I can use Metaverse to go somewhere that I cannot ever reach – like the top of Mount Everest.**  
”

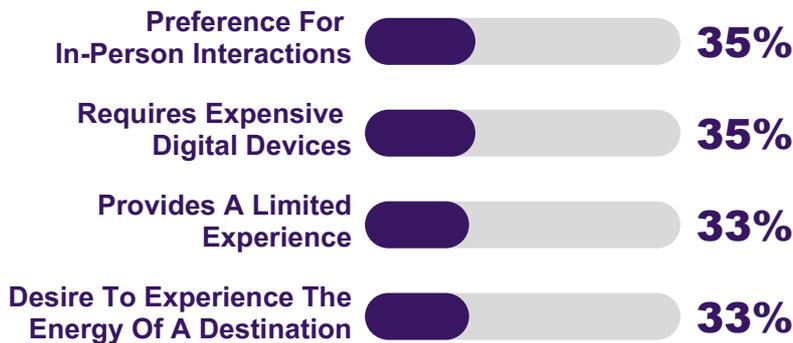
“  
**I am expecting to have a two-day experience of South Pole in the Metaverse, where I could stand on a tour boat to visit and explore the whole scene of South Pole, and watch aurora at night.**  
”

Going even beyond that, travelers see the potential of the Metaverse for traveling to outer space, which is linked to their exposure to the idea of space tourism through social media and the bold initiatives of institutions like NASA and SpaceX. The Metaverse gives people a safe platform for immersive space travel experiences by allowing them to explore outer space without having to deal with the physical difficulties and potential risks associated with actual space missions.

# #5 Despite The Potential Of Tourism Through The Metaverse, People Still Want The Real Deal

In the era of immersive digital experiences and virtual tourism, a common sentiment emphasizes that these technologies, while definitely influential, will not stop people from embarking on actual travel adventures. While tourism through the Metaverse has great promise, it coexists with a strong need for true real-life interactions. In fact, the desire to meet and interact with other people (35%) and the need to feel the energy of a place (33%), point to the importance of authentic real-life experiences. Additionally, the acknowledgement that the Metaverse does not provide the full experience (33%) reaffirms that although it can be used to manage expectations and enhance journeys, it cannot fully replace them.

## Top Barriers To Travel Virtually Through The Metaverse



“ I would personally actually want to visit a place instead of touring a virtual one, to enjoy the experiences. ”



# Conclusion: What's Next?

As travelers begin to immerse themselves in the Metaverse, we are able to envision what the future of travel and tourism looks like - from planning a trip through the Metaverse and getting a glimpse of what a potential destination and its culture look like to completely experiencing a journey virtually and even reaching unimaginable destinations.

Although the emerging trend shows travelers embracing virtual exploration and an openness to trying out new experiences, an appetite for genuine adventures and travel in its traditional sense remains. Therefore, **the key to leveraging this technology lies in enhancing and not replacing authentic travel experiences.**

Metaverse shows the possibility of **the digital and physical world merging seamlessly in the travel and tourism sector**, where travelers are free to navigate a hybrid world utilizing the Metaverse to enrich their multidimensional adventures.



# Methodology

These are the results of a study carried out by Ipsos.

The study was conducted through a dual methodology: Quantitative online surveys and qualitative online focus group sessions in Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA, China, and the UK.

Our target sample was international travelers aged 20+.

Data collection took place between Q4 2022 and Q1 2023.



## About The Authors



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## About Ipsos

At Ipsos we are passionately curious about people, markets, brands, and society. We deliver information and analysis that makes our complex world easier and faster to navigate and inspires our clients to make smarter decisions. With a strong presence in 90 countries, Ipsos employs more than 18,000 people and conducts research programs in more than 100 countries. Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is controlled and managed by research professionals.

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