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[Fawzi Cheriti](#) *

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Article

The Future of Media in the Metaverse: Capturing Attention and Creating Value in the Digital Economy

Fawzi Cheriti

Department of Information and Communication Sciences, University of Ghardaia, Algeria; cheriti.fawzi@univ-ghardaia.edu.dz

Abstract

The metaverse is often presented as a technological breakthrough driven by developments in virtual reality, blockchain, and artificial intelligence. While these technologies are essential, they do not by themselves generate sustainable economic value. This article argues that media content is the true engine of value creation in the metaverse economy. It is media that attracts users, sustains their engagement, and enables monetization within immersive virtual environments. Drawing on the concept of the attention economy, the metaverse can be understood as a media-centered economic system in which value emerges from users' time, interaction, and participation rather than from technical infrastructure alone. Economic activity in virtual worlds depends on how long users stay, how deeply they engage, and how actively they participate. Media content—such as games, virtual concerts, immersive storytelling, social spaces, and user-generated experiences—plays a central role in this process. These forms of content function simultaneously as cultural expressions and as economic inputs. By capturing attention and encouraging prolonged engagement, media content creates demand for virtual goods, digital ownership, advertising, and platform-based services. The more compelling the content, the greater the opportunities for economic exchange. In addition, participatory media transforms users from passive consumers into active contributors who create content, build communities, and exchange digital assets. Based on a conceptual review of existing literature, this article demonstrates that media content serves as the foundational infrastructure of value creation in the metaverse. Understanding this role is essential for assessing the metaverse's long-term economic sustainability and potential.

Keywords: metaverse economy; media content; attention economy; digital ownership; immersive media; value creation

I. Introduction

What brings humans to the metaverse? For most customers, it is not the technology itself, but the joy that makes it feasible, the capability to look at, play, socialize and engage with media beyond the flat display. The metaverse marks a new segment of digital interaction, built around continual and immersive environments in which social, recreational and monetary activities merge. While technologies consisting of virtual reality (VR), blockchain and synthetic intelligence (AI) shape the technological backbone of these regions, growing research shows that generation on my own does not create monetary cost. Instead, media content, along with leisure, social studies and user-generated interactions, power engagement and constitute the principle supply of price for digital groups within metaverse economies.

In this context, pupils have begun to conceptualize the metaverse now not simply as an advanced technological platform however as a complicated attention economy, where fee is created thru the cultivation of person engagement and interaction. Business analysts describe those

environments as “interest economies,” wherein economic actors - including companies, brands, and content creators - compete to attract and maintain users’ interest through immersive, interactive scenes that move a long way beyond passive viewing Goldberg (2022). This angle places media content material at the vanguard of monetary value advent. Without compelling media - whether virtual concerts, gamified social spaces, or interactive storytelling - there would be no reason for users to spend time in these environments, and no basis for firms to monetize virtual interactions.

Moreover, educational studies in metaverse research confirms that structures derive economic importance with the aid of permitting engagement and interaction - core functions of media content material. For instance, the latest literature on metaverse characteristics and effects identifies immersive technology and social interaction as drivers of consumer engagement and economic participation throughout sectors which include retail, enjoyment, and social networking (Singh et al., 2025). In those immersive digital worlds, media content material will become the mechanism via which individuals connect, participate, and transact. Users do now not clearly observe media; they enjoy it thru avatars and social presence, making content material both participatory and economically valuable.

Thus, this newsletter argues that media content material is the primary driver of cost introduction in the metaverse economic system. The metaverse can be enabled via modern-day technology, but its financial potential depends on compelling media experiences that attract users, preserve engagement, and allow new markets and monetization fashions. Without media content to seize attention, the metaverse stays technically interesting however economically inert.

II. Conceptual Framework

a. What Is the Metaverse?

The metaverse refers to a shared, chronic digital area that blends virtual environments with elements of real social and monetary lifestyles. It is not a unmarried platform, however a network of interconnected virtual worlds in which users can meet, talk, and collaborate in real-time. Within the metaverse, people have interaction thru virtual representations called avatars, which allow them to explicit identification, presence, and social roles past the physical world. These interactions can encompass socializing, studying, enjoyment, and expert activities, making the metaverse an extension of regular human revel in instead of a separate virtual novelty.

A defining function of the metaverse is the life of a functioning digital financial system. Users should purchase, sell, and exchange virtual goods and services, together with digital land, avatar garb, artistic endeavors, and get entry to to occasions. In a few instances, customers can also work and generate income completely within these digital environments, supported via technologies like blockchain, virtual currencies, and non-fungible tokens (NFTs). This financial layer offers the metaverse durability and price, encouraging lengthy-time period participation and funding. As a end result, the metaverse is increasingly more viewed as a new socio-virtual environment that reshapes how individuals interact, create value, and enjoy community in immersive virtual spaces (Dionisio et al., 2013).

b. What Is Media Content in the Metaverse?

Media content inside the metaverse incorporates a huge range of immersive virtual reviews that extend traditional media codecs into interactive virtual environments. This content consists of video games that allow customers to actively participate in narrative worlds, in addition to films and storytelling experiences that use virtual truth and 3D spaces to decorate target audience engagement. Music and digital concerts represent some other important class, in which artists perform live in virtual venues attended by means of global audiences via avatars. In addition, the metaverse hosts information dissemination and stay occasions, consisting of conferences, exhibitions, and cultural gatherings, allowing actual-time participation without physical constraints. Influencers and user-generated content creators additionally play a significant function, generating customized virtual

experiences, branded environments, and digital items that form developments and network lifestyle. Unlike traditional media, content material inside the metaverse isn't merely fed on but co-created, as users engage with, alter, or even monetize their contributions. This interactive and participatory nature transforms media content into a dynamic social and economic force inside digital worlds, blurring the boundaries among manufacturers and audiences (Dwivedi et al., 2022).

III. Ways Media Creates Value

a. Media Attracts Users (Demand Creation)

Media content material plays a imperative function in creating economic fee within the metaverse by means of attracting users and producing demand. Without attractive content, digital worlds warfare to advantage interest or preserve participation. Popular media stories-along with immersive video games, digital concert events, interactive storytelling, and influencer-pushed activities- function key access points that draw customers into metaverse platforms. As extra users join and stay energetic, the perceived fee of the platform increases due to network consequences, wherein every additional player complements the general enjoy for others. This growing person base translates into better visitors, longer engagement instances, and extra visibility, all of which create monetization opportunities for platform proprietors and content creators alike. These opportunities consist of marketing, digital items sales, event ticketing, subscriptions, and emblem partnerships. From an financial perspective, media content material initiates a price chain in which call for ends in user traffic, and site visitors enables revenue era. In this way, media does no longer simply entertain customers but features as a strategic monetary driving force that sustains growth and profitability within metaverse ecosystems (Parker et al., 2016).

The Synergy of Attention and Monetization in Digital Media

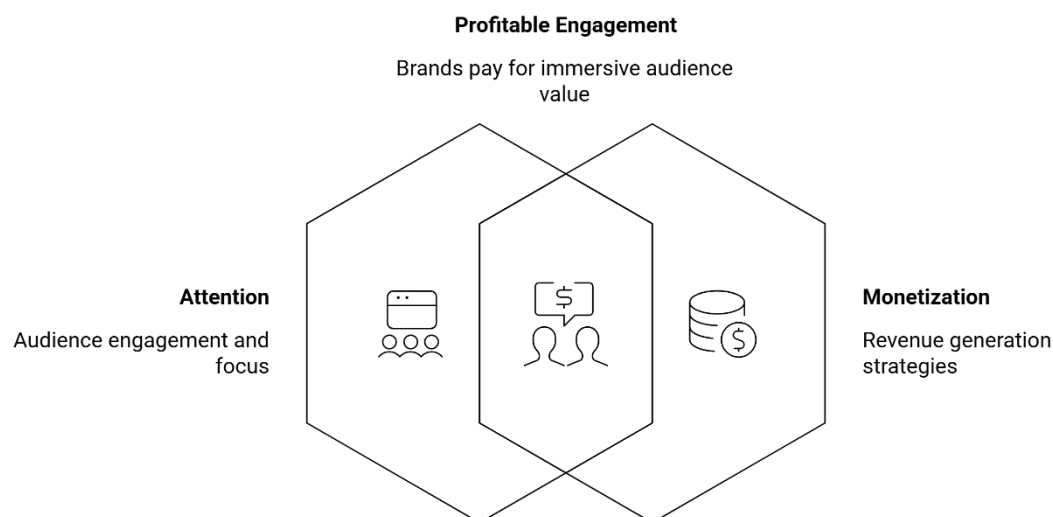


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Media Value Creation in the Metaverse Within the Digital Attention Economy.

b. Media Increases Time Spent (The Attention Economy)

Media content material inside the metaverse primarily creates financial cost via retaining customers engaged for lengthy periods of time, making this one of the most crucial assets of interest in virtual areas. Experiences such as interactive movies, immersive video games, and digital live shows are intentionally designed to be participatory as opposed to passive, encouraging users to live

worried rather than briefly choose up content and leave. As users spend more time in these environments, the platform collects richer statistics approximately their options, behaviors and interactions, supporting to enhance personalization and optimize the overall enjoy.

From an economic factor of view, longer engagement directly provides price. Advertisers are inclined to pay better fees to reach deeply engaged audiences, at the same time as systems gain from higher revenue according to person thru ads, subscriptions and in-international purchases. Content creators additionally advantage from this version through building dependable groups, strengthening their personal brands, and monetizing their paintings thru sponsorships, digital merchandise, and different virtual reports. In this interest-driven financial system, fulfillment is measured less through what number of users a platform attracts and extra by way of how deeply and continually those users engage. Consequently, media content material performs a important position in taking pictures and maintaining interest, which has grow to be a primary supply of economic cost in virtual and metaverse-based totally ecosystems(Davenport and Beck, 2001).

c. Media Enables Monetization

Media content inside the metaverse permits direct monetization by way of transforming digital environments into economically productive spaces. Through media-driven reports inclusive of virtual concert events, film premieres, and unique occasions, systems can promote digital tickets that offer get admission to to constrained-time or top class content material. In addition, digital goods, inclusive of avatar skins, costumes, accessories, and collectibles, represent a first-rate source of revenue, as users are inclined to pay for personalisation, positioning, and self-expression in virtual worlds. Subscription fashions and subscriptions help recurring sales with the aid of providing different content, early access or advanced social capabilities. Branded media reviews also play an critical role, as corporations collaborate with creators and systems to design vast marketing campaigns, sponsored events or virtual storefronts that seamlessly combine advertising into amusement. These monetization strategies display that media content material isn't always merely symbolic or experiential, however capabilities as an monetary infrastructure. By embedding industrial transactions in attractive narratives and social interactions, media rework virtual area right into a dynamic marketplace where interest, creativity, and reputation are transformed into financial cost (Neiborg and Poel, 2018).

d. Media Creates Digital Ownership and New Assets

Media content within the metaverse creates economic fee by allowing virtual ownership and the emergence of recent asset classes. Through technologies including blockchain and non-fungible tokens (NFTs), media objects-inclusive of artworks, music, motion pictures, virtual land, and in-sport objects-can grow to be scarce, tradable belongings with verifiable possession. This shift transforms media from a in simple terms consumable product into an investment possibility. Fans are no longer passive audiences however can become owners and stakeholders via shopping, buying and selling, or maintaining virtual assets linked to creators and digital worlds. For creators, virtual possession permits new income fashions, consisting of automatic royalty bills embedded in clever contracts, making sure they acquire repayment every time an asset is resold. Economically, this system helps decentralized income technology and decreases reliance on traditional intermediaries. The result is a global creator financial system wherein individuals can monetize creativity across borders, attaining audiences and markets without centralized gatekeepers. By turning media into ownable and exchangeable virtual belongings, the metaverse introduces new types of cost introduction that reshape manufacturing, distribution, and participation in the virtual economic system (Taherdoost, 2023).

IV. Real Examples of the Relationship Between the Media Field and the Metaverse Economy

Example 1: Virtual Concert in the Metaverse - Fortnite Marshmello Event

One of the maximum vivid examples of ways media content material drives cost inside the metaverse financial system is digital live shows, together with the Marshmello occasion hosted inner Fortnite. In February 2019, Epic Games created a special in-recreation live performance wherein gamers' avatars collected in a virtual stadium to observe a stay performance with the aid of DJ Marshmello, attracting more than 10.7 million concurrent players - a new record for the game at the time (AltPress, 2019; Hypebeast, 2019).

In this metaverse event, users could buy digital tickets, even though attendance was free in this case — the record attendance itself translated into attention and data value for Epic Games and partners. Brands and sponsors also supported these kinds of events to reach large audiences in immersive environments. Additionally, fans purchased digital merchandise such as avatar outfits and branded skins tied to the artist and event, creating multiple revenue streams from a single media experience. This is a clear example of how media content in the metaverse captures user engagement and converts it into economic value - through ticketing, sponsorship, and merchandise - within an attention-driven virtual ecosystem (BBC News, 2019; Dexerto, 2019) .





Figure 2. Live Virtual Event in the Metaverse: Fortnite Marshmello Concert Case Study.

Example 2: Media Brands in Virtual Worlds (Immersive News and Storytelling)

In the metaverse, traditional media manufacturers are reinventing how they deliver content via the use of digital fact (VR) and augmented fact (AR) to interact with audiences in immersive ways. One putting example is CBS Atlanta's AR/VR newsroom, which launched a fully-immersive news studio where anchors present neighborhood newscasts the use of digital environments and interactive pictures to provide an explanation for climate systems, civic statistics, and network tales. This method enhances viewer engagement and comprehension at the same time as blending relied on journalism with next-generation technology (CBS Atlanta AR/VR newsroom, 2025).

Beyond live news, immersive journalism producers like Emblematic Group, founded by Nonny de la Peña, are creating VR experiences that let users virtually step inside news stories. This form of storytelling goes far beyond traditional text or video by placing audiences in the middle of the narrative, which can heighten empathy and deepen understanding of events ranging from disaster zones to historical moments (Nonny de la Peña's work in immersive journalism, n.d.).

On the entertainment and documentary side, studios such as Felix & Paul Studios partner with media brands like TIME to produce cinematic VR series, including Space Explorers: The ISS Experience, which immerses audiences in life aboard the International Space Station through virtual reality. These projects attract global attention, open new monetization avenues (e.g., ticketed VR experiences, brand collaborations), and show how legacy media can thrive in the metaverse by adapting to spatial storytelling and immersive content models.



Figure 3. TV technology, CBS Atlanta to Launch New AR/VR News Operation | TV Tech.



Figure 4. Virtual reality technology offers new avenues for immersive reporting, International Journalists' Network.

Table 1. Metaverse Economy & Media-Related Revenue Statistics (2025, USD).

Category / Sector	Statistic / Revenue	Source
	(USD)	
Global Metaverse Market	~\$316.34 billion	SQ Magazine, 2025
Entertainment & Live Events	~\$25 billion	SQ Magazine, 2025
Virtual Concerts Ticket Sales & Sponsorships	~\$7.2 billion	CredBit, 2024
NFTs in Metaverse	~\$42 billion	SQ Magazine, 2025

Virtual Goods Sales	~\$128 billion	CredBit, 2024
Metaverse Advertising Spend	~\$79 billion	Coolest-Gadgets, 2025
User Spend (Avg per Metaverse User)	~\$250 annually	CredBit, 2024
Metaverse Virtual Land Value	>\$1.2 billion	CredBit, 2024
VR Hardware Market	~\$9.3 billion	Coolest-Gadgets, 2025

Note. Data compiled and adapted from SQ Magazine (2025), CredBit (2024), and Coolest-Gadgets (2025).

V. Future Economic Implications of Media in the Metaverse

Looking beforehand, the metaverse alerts a structural shift in how media value is created, distributed, and captured. First, media organizations are evolving into platform developers as opposed to mere content distributors. Instead of relying totally on advertising and marketing or subscriptions, media manufacturers layout immersive environments—virtual studios, interactive worlds, and branded studies—wherein users spend time, socialize, and co-create that means. In this model, fee comes no longer just from content consumption but from owning the digital space where attention is organized.

Second, audiences are not passive visitors however active contributors. Users attend virtual events, customise avatars, remix media property, and contribute consumer-generated content that enhances the general enjoy. Their time, creativity, and social interaction become economic inputs, remodeling engagement into measurable cost through records, micro-transactions, and network increase.

Finally, the middle of cost shifts from centralized platforms to creators and communities. While systems still provide infrastructure, creators more and more monetize without delay through NFTs, virtual items, memberships, and shared ownership fashions. Communities -fan corporations, virtual fandoms, and creator collectives- grow to be financial actors themselves, co-producing and co-owning media cost. This transition marks a pass towards a participatory, network-driven media economic system, in which attention, creativity, and belonging are the number one assets of cost within the metaverse.

Conclusion

The metaverse economic system is essentially pushed with the aid of media content material. Media attracts users, captures attention, allows monetization, and creates digital belongings that sustain virtual economies. Rather than serving as a secondary component, media features as the economic foundation of the metaverse. Understanding this courting is critical for policymakers, economists, and media experts seeking to interact with the destiny of virtual economies.

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