The Good Metaverse

A playbook for building a responsible future.

Introduction

The Metaverse, with all its possibilities, will reshape society, change markets and affect our environment. It will also, just like the Internet, be subject to global discussions and worldwide legal regulation. To promote a responsible and ethical Metaverse, we have created these 42 statements. We want to participate in an open dialogue to help to place the Metaverse in the context of society as a whole. This first version of our Playbook lists some important aspects for the upcoming discussions, meant as a first step in shaping a responsible approach to the Metaverse, to be complemented by practical guidance and advice in the near future.

1 – Preamble
"Starting a Dialogue."

Together, we are now expanding the physical boundaries of our reality to include a persistent and immersive digital space. It is our goal to use the Metaverse to support people in their striving to lead successful lives whilst at the same time ensuring a sustainable future for our planet. We plan to devote all our efforts to achieving this common goal. These statements describe what we feel is important - and are simultaneously an offer to anyone currently involved in this topic to join the dialogue. They form a bedrock which we want to actively build on in collaboration with all the stakeholders concerned.

Because the Metaverse should be a project designed by people for people.

#2 - Ethics
"Securing Values."

The Metaverse is a new social space where many areas currently lack a regulatory framework. However, the Metaverse is not a spiritual vacuum – neither is it a space without values. Whatever we do or do not do in this space is directly associated with the known physical world. It influences our society, our economy and our culture. Therefore, the rules of the Metaverse must also observe the ethical principles that we have all come to regard as being totally indispensable.

The Metaverse must have ethical core values.

#3 - Economy
"Enabling Prosperity."

The Metaverse is an economic space with enormous capacity. Creative ideas aimed at adding value are more or less infinitely scalable. Whether we are talking about the service economy, creative industries, traditional industry or completely new forms of doing business - everyone stands to benefit. We can make this succeed, if we incorporate the lessons learned from Web 2.0. We must aim to guarantee decentralised economic opportunities for everyone.

The Metaverse must drive the prosperity of everyone involved.

#4 - Innovation
"Accepting responsibility."

The Metaverse is a technological space with great innovative power. Companies, start-ups and individuals are developing new ideas and products every single second. New access devices, software solutions, platforms and marketing concepts are currently emerging almost unchecked. However, not everything that is technically feasible is also socially and ecologically sustainable and socially acceptable. Our planet is balancing on the verge of a range of different social and natural catastrophes so that its resources must be used in a targeted manner.

The Metaverse must prioritise responsible innovations.

#5 - Diversity
"Fostering diversity."

The Metaverse is a cultural space that provides many new opportunities for individual and collective self-determination. It bridges the physical and psychological gaps between cultures, genders and values to create spaces with new meaning. However, it also creates more potential for conflict as the creative power of the Metaverse is derived from the freedom to reinvent ourselves. It is our chance to find new and better solutions to our old problems. That is why we must promote and protect this freedom.

The Metaverse must promote diversity.

#6 - Participation
"Ensuring access."

The Metaverse is a social space with great opportunities for allowing the disadvantaged to participate. It removes physical boundaries and enables people to connect across all types of barriers. Every user of the Metaverse becomes a unique digital entity with an individual background. However, the possibilities associated with this will remain purely theoretical, if technology only serves the mainstream and the software developers of the Metaverse worlds and spaces do not give ample consideration to individualisation requirements and the challenges involved. That is why we need to make the Metaverse accessible to everyone and at all times.

The Metaverse must make participation a central feature.

#7 - Well-being
"Supporting people."

The Metaverse is a personal experience that places new physical and psychological demands on the individual. However, technological possibilities and basic human needs do not always harmonise. In the Metaverse, we can have multiple identities in a three-dimensional digital environment, be mobile without moving and work, learn and live autonomously. However, in everyday life, we nonetheless have personalities and bodies with their own needs and are fundamentally social beings. Therefore, the providers of Metaverse worlds and spaces must take into account the mental and physical state of the users whilst simultaneously counteracting addiction and abuse.

The Metaverse must support the well-being of the people.

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About the Committee Metaverse:

The Committee Metaverse of the German Association for the Digital Economy (BVDW) is a forum of experts focussed on inspiration and facilitating an interdisciplinary exchange and proactive debate on this development.

The Committee is headed up by Mark Wächter (MWC.mobi, Chairman), Stefanie Scognamiglio (Xandr a Microsoft Company, Deputy Chairwoman), Dominik Wöber (Google, Deputy Chairman) and Nico Wohlgemuth (DAYONE, Deputy Chairman).

The Committee is currently divided into three Labs:

- Metaverse Lab: Technology - Infrastructure, Devices, Software
- Metaverse Lab: Economy - Business Models and Ecosystems
- Metaverse Lab: Society - General Framework, Ethics and Sustainability

About the BVDW

The German Association for the Digital Economy (BVDW) is the central body for the representation of the interests of companies that operate digital business models and whose value creation is based on the implementation of digital technologies. As the driving force, guide and accelerator of digital business models, the BVDW represents the interests of the digital economy towards politics and society and campaigns for the creation of market transparency and framework conditions that encourage innovation. With figures, data and facts, its network of experts provides orientation for a central area of the future. Besides DMEXCO and the German Digital Award, the BVDW organises a multitude of professional events. With members from many different industries, the BVDW is the voice of the digital economy.

Contact

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