

Title: Purchase spillovers from the metaverse to the real world: The roles of social presence, trialability, and customer experience

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Abstract: The promise of the metaverse as a collective, virtual, and shared social space is revolutionizing digital retail. This study provides groundbreaking insights into customer experience in immersive metaverse environments, as well as into how these experiences on metaverse platforms influence customers' real-world consumption behaviors. Drawing upon data from metaverse platform users in the US, this study identifies the specific antecedents of a positive customer experience on metaverse platforms, including the role of social presence and trialability. Further, it demonstrates the potential for purchase spillovers from the metaverse to traditional retail channels, extending the omnichannel retail literature. In addition, it examines how early-stage versus long-term users of the metaverse shape users' intentions to revisit metaverse platforms. Based on our results, we offer a comprehensive model of customers' metaverse behaviors, which may be used to predict and enhance customers' purchase intentions across channels. Our results also demonstrate that the metaverse is not merely a parallel digital retail channel but instead an influential extension of the customers' real-world consumption. From a managerial perspective, we offer metaverse operators and retail brand managers insights into how an engaging and immersive customer experience in the metaverse can be developed to support metaverse platform growth, and targeted brand strategies that translate into real-world gain for both the brand and the customer. The findings suggest that metaverse platforms must deliver customer experiences at a very high level to prevent stagnation in metaverse usage intentions; therefore, managers can confidently continue investing in relevant strategies to fuel metaverse platform growth.

Key words: Metaverse, Immersive customer experience, Digital retail, Social presence, Trialability, Omnichannel marketing, Consumer behavior,

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