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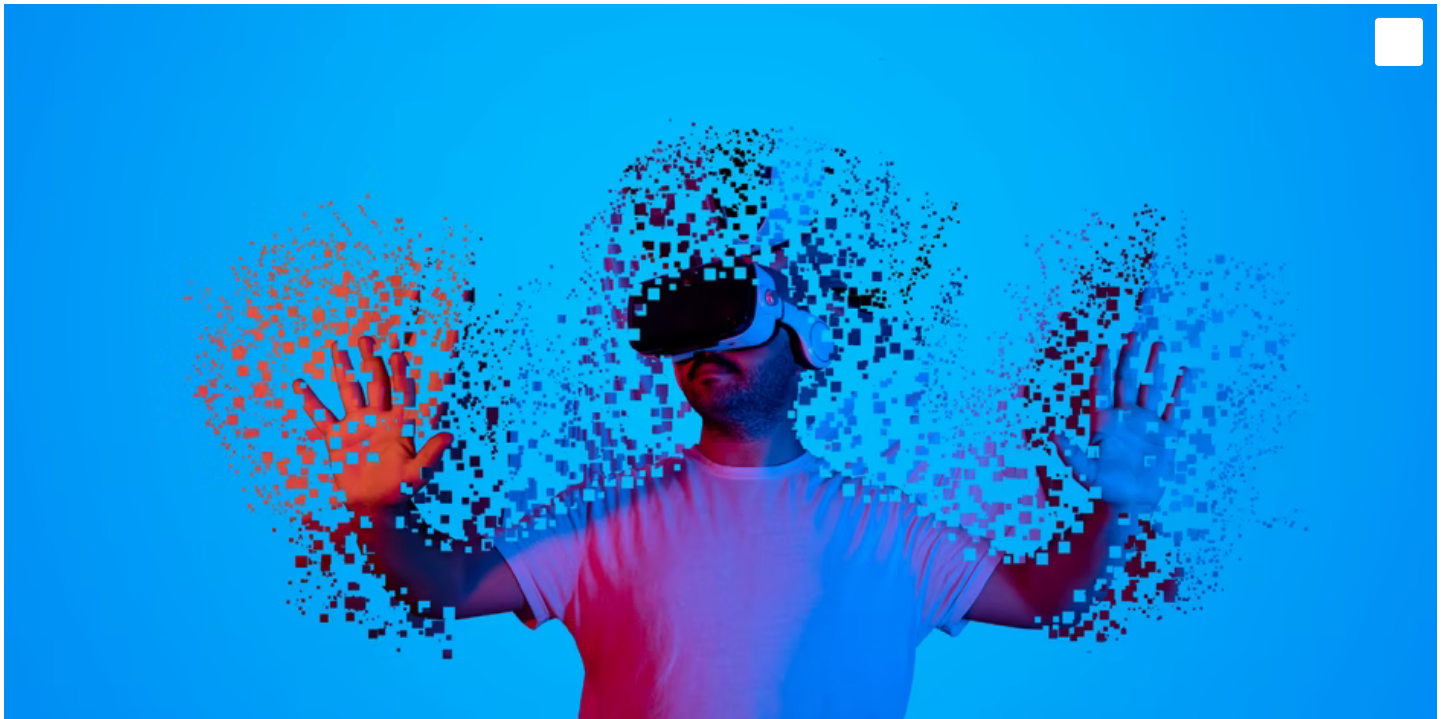
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Facebook beware? Study shows most Americans don't care about the metaverse

By [Kenneth Hein](#)

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The concept of the metaverse is a bit fuzzy for US consumers.

Marketers sure do love their metaverse right now. The buzziest of buzz words reached new heights when Facebook announced that they will now be known as Meta - a nod to their aspiration to be a leader in the metaverse. But do Americans even know what it is? Do they care? YouGov asked 876 US adults that very question on Friday. This is what they had to say.

Most Americans don't know what metaverse is and the majority aren't interested in participating in it, according to a new poll conducted by YouGov in conjunction with The Drum.

A third of the 876 Americans polled on Friday have never heard of the metaverse. Consumers aged 45-64 were the largest group (41%) to not have any knowledge of the metaverse. And only 31% claim to have a very good, or somewhat good, understanding of what the metaverse is.

"It's like talking about e-commerce in the early days of Internet," says Adam Swann, chief strategy and innovation officer at MMB. "When someone opened an online store amid all of the poorly designed information sites and grubby porn purveyors, it just felt alien... Or imagine if you tried to explain Twitch to someone 15 years ago."

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(43%) and 45-64 (32%). Only 19% of respondents over the age of 65 were interested.

"It's just more proof that we're all dancing to Zuckerberg's choice of music," says Big Spaceship founder Michael Lebowitz. "Whose business are you helping if you invest time or money in something nobody currently wants?"

Two-thirds of respondents have never actively played a game inside a shared **virtual** environment like Roblox or Animal Crossing. Unsurprisingly, those 18-29 had the most experience (52%) followed by those 30-44 (43%). The drop off was steep among consumers aged 45-64 (21%) and 65-plus (6%).

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respondents (72%) say they aren't likely to use a VR headset in next 12 months. Only 6% are very likely. Facebook is overhypeing the metaverse. Oculus Quest 2 is terrific hardware, but even the best such devices still wind up in a junk drawer within months or days after use," says marketing consultant David Berkowitz. "Consumers show little appetite for buying extra hardware to interact with a more immersive experience."

The role of advertising in **virtual** worlds is a bit fuzzy, according to survey respondents. Almost a third of those polled (31%) didn't know if ads were appropriate in the metaverse. Some 29% say ads are not welcome compared to 43% who say ads are at least somewhat acceptable. Respondents 18-29 were the most receptive of ads in **virtual** environments with 56% offering a positive view followed by 48% of those ages 30-44.

The inevitable beginning of a new conversation

There is a great deal of debate about whether Facebook's open armed embrace of the metaverse is a ploy to detract from negative publicity or a masterstroke of future vision - or both.

Either way, awareness of the metaverse is about to soar. "The announcement of a name like Meta starts a new conversation, and provokes creative thinking around what the metaverse is, and where the technology is headed," says Megan Cunningham, CEO and founder, Magnet Media.

Given chief exec Mark Zuckerberg's knack for being ahead of the curve, masses moving into the metaverse now feels somewhat inevitable, says Jay Friedman, president of Goodway Group. "One area to give Mark Zuckerberg credit is in his early '10s focus on mobile. He knew that to get the company to pivot, he would have to personally be all mobile all the time. In this case, he may be doing something similar, noting the need to focus on the lives of users overall and not just one platform at a time."

Still, many have noted the timing is slightly suspicious **given all of the negativity surrounding Facebook and its practices**. "Facebook's rebrand to Meta signals a move to simultaneously overcome its current struggles and define a new growth opportunity," says Tom Bianchi, vice president, marketing, EMEA, at Acquia. "The shifting of its focus towards the metaverse and goal to make AR and VR-enabled experiences part of 'the next generation of online social experiences' has been well publicized and is indicative of how digital experience is evolving and touching more of our everyday lives."

However, "a name alone won't be enough to restore consumer trust in the face of a series of data privacy and misinformation scandals," says Bianchi. "Instead, Facebook needs to do something far more sizable... While the metaverse is an exciting prospect and one that deserves column inches, Facebook needs to focus on rebuilding its foundations first and foremost."

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This article is about: **North America, Facebook, Metaverse, YouGov, Roblox, Virtual Reality (VR), Mark Zuckerberg, Brand Strategy, Social Media, Modern Marketing, Digital Transformation, Future Of Media, Brand**

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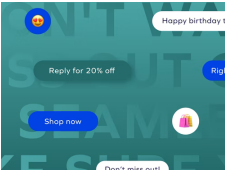
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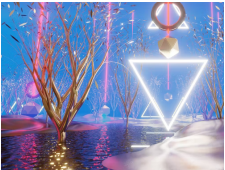
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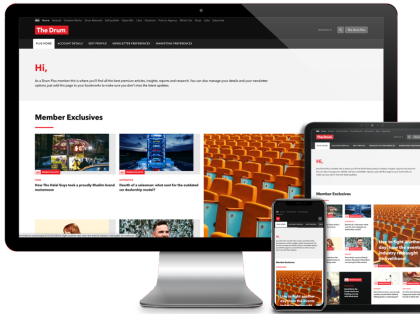
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