



Find products, advice, tech news



PCMag editors select and review products independently. If you buy through affiliate links, we may earn commissions, which help support our testing. [Learn more](#).

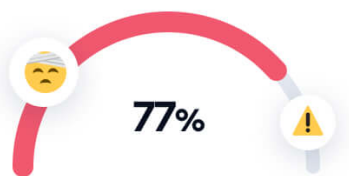
[Home](#) > [News](#) > [The Why Axis](#)

Metaverse Predictions: It Will Be Harmful, Addictive, and Inevitable

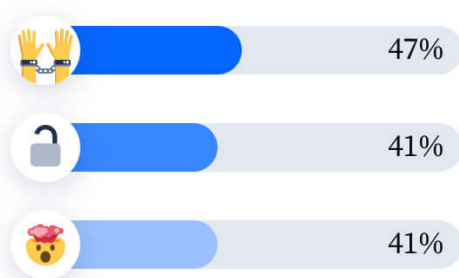
It could be ugly, in other words.

By [Eric Griffith](#)

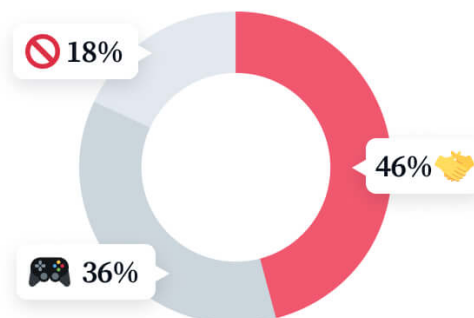
December 6, 2021



Almost 77% of respondents believe that the **metaverse can cause serious harm** to modern society



Respondents perceive **addiction to a simulated reality** (47%), **privacy issues** (41%), and **mental health issues** (41%) as the biggest perils of the metaverse



At the same time, almost 46% think that 10 years from its release, **people will live and coexist mainly in the metaverse**

Second Life debuted in 2003. I like to picture then 19-year-old Mark Zuckerberg in his dorm at Harvard, wearing his grey hoodie, hunched over a laptop coding away at the first version of The Facebook, when someone (maybe a Winklevoss) sent him an invite to the 3D service (probably via AOL Instant Messenger). He likely signed on, made a cool avatar (with horns and a cape instead of the hoodie) with a handle like ZuckThisN00bs. Maybe he even found true virtual love. But he got ditched, much like in that opening scene of *The Social Network*. So he went back to his text-based social network idea...but he never forgot.

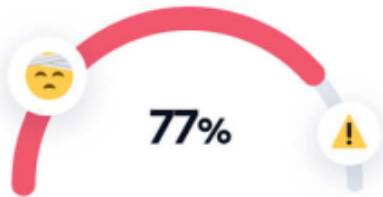
That's the only way I can wrap my head around his decision to rename his corporation to Meta, so it can fully embrace "the metaverse." That's the idea that the internet can and should be a 3-D virtual space for people to do all the things they do today online—shop, work, play, etc.—using avatars in a 3D world, ala *Ready Player One*. But it's not like Meta (the company) is the only one who's going to try and launch one—Microsoft, Apple, Google, the wireless carriers with 5G, and even Disney, they all want in. The basics are there, enough for people to have opinions before they even strap on their haptic bodysuits and 3D goggles.

That's why the folks at the customer service platform provider Tidio set out to survey 1,050 people (gathered from Reddit and surveyed via Amazon's Mechanical Turk) with 24 pertinent questions about the metaverse and how they feel about it.

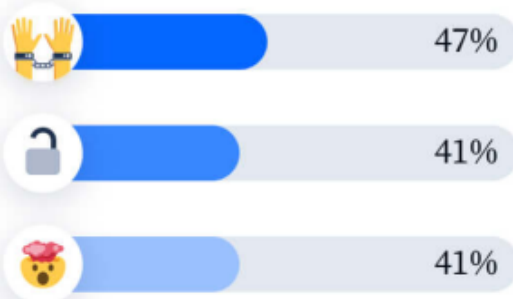
From the get-go, it's not good news. Over three-quarters believe the metaverse will "cause serious harm to modern society."

The metaverse: a blessing or a curse?

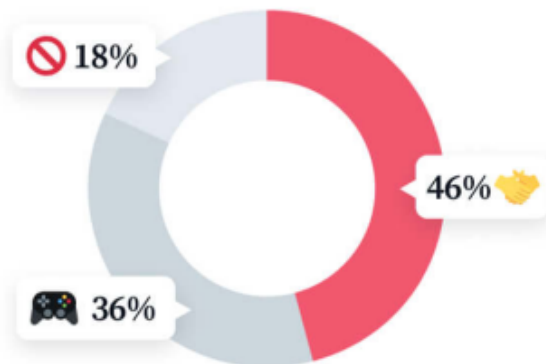
How do people perceive the metaverse?



Almost 77% of respondents believe that the **metaverse can cause serious harm** to modern society

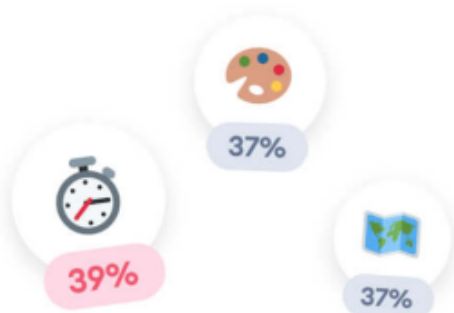


Respondents perceive **addiction to a simulated reality** (47%), **privacy issues** (41%), and **mental health issues** (41%) as the biggest perils of the metaverse



At the same time, almost 46% think that 10 years from its release, **people will live and coexist mainly in the metaverse**

The biggest possible benefits of the metaverse

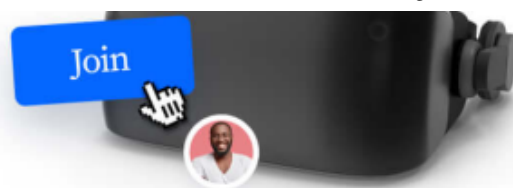


Respondents list overcoming **real-time obstacles** (39%)

Work possibilities (52%), art and live entertainment (48%), and money investment (44%) are the **most popular reasons to voluntarily join the metaverse.**



Real-time obstacles (37%), increasing creativity and imagination (37%), and traveling the world without moving (37%) as the main benefits



As many as 72% of our study participants who admit to having health-related limitations would voluntarily join the virtual social spaces for art and entertainment

61%



About 61% would like to try extreme sports in the metaverse, like skydiving or bungee jumping

The metaverse and the self

“Pretending to be someone else/ creating an alter ego” is the third most popular answer (24%) to the question: “What would you do in the metaverse that you would never do in real life?”



Out of 88% of respondents who believe that it's possible to form meaningful relationships in virtual space



More than half (54%) admit that they would design an avatar that doesn't look like them in real life



That image above spells out not only the harm expected (like tech addiction getting even *worse*) but also a lot of positives. It's possible that simply having Facebook associated with a metaverse could be seen as harmful, considering what has come before.

ADVERTISEMENT

Most people would want to join a metaverse for work and entertainment. But a lot also see it being used for investment, education, and online dating (69% said they'd totally do a cyber hook-up with a stranger in a virtual club). Weirdly, gaming isn't high on the list, even though 73% claimed they'd play a win-or-die game (like in *Squid Game*) if it was virtual.

RECOMMENDED BY OUR EDITORS

The Metaverse: A Multi-Generational Affair?

Facebook's Push Into the Metaverse May Start With Meta Retail Stores

Microsoft Jumps on Metaverse Bandwagon

Respondents were high on the possibilities of using a metaverse to try things they wouldn't do IRL, like participate in virtual extreme sports (38%), use VR to alter themselves without substances (27%), and create an alter ego that's nothing like their real-life persona (24%). More than half plan to make an avatar that looks nothing like them.

The questions even go into asking if people such as registered sex offenders should be given access to the metaverse to use it to get rid of their criminal urges. (Most said no.) That leads to the kinds of content people feel should be censored or restricted in these future VR/AR worlds—like depictions of suicide, racism, or animal abuse, and how much money they'd be willing to spend to get the VR gear needed for access. Read the full report at [Tidio](#) to see more.

Get Our Best Stories!

Sign up for **What's New Now** to get our top stories delivered to your inbox every morning.


This newsletter may contain advertising, deals, or affiliate links. Subscribing to a newsletter indicates your consent to our [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). You may unsubscribe from the newsletters at any time.

FIGURE | Equity Solutions

\$4.7B

raised, managed, traded.

Launch your dataroom. Request demo today.

 Figure F

AdChoices 

Sponsored


Conversation

 [Log in](#) [Sign up](#)

Be the first to comment...




Popular in the Community



your job is grow your company.

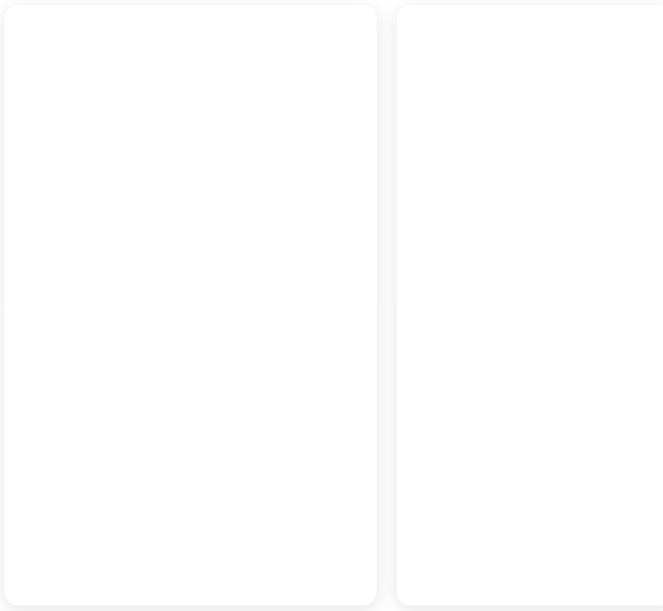
FIGURE | Equity Solutions
Raise, manage, trade all on one powerful platform.

**Launch your dataroom. Req
demo today.**

 Figure F

AdChoices 

Sponsored



DIG DEEPER WITH RELATED STORIES

TaxAct 2022 (Tax Year 2021) Preview

H&R Block 2022 (Tax Year 2021) Preview

Pending Facebook Class-Action Suit in UK Claims \$3.15B in Damages

BY ROB PEGORARO

PUBG Developer Sues Google, Apple, Game Maker Over Copycat Apps

BY MARK KNAPP

PCMAG STORIES YOU'LL LIKE

Must-Watch: The Most-Streamed TV Shows and Movies This Week

BY ERIC GRIFFITH

Razer Zephyr Wearable Air Purifier

BY ERIC GRIFFITH

The Most-Search Abbreviations Ma SMH, NGL

BY ERIC GRIFFITH

About Eric Griffith



Eric Griffith has been writing about computers, the internet, and technology professionally for 30 years, more than half of that time with PCMag. He was previously on the founding staff of publications like *Windows Sources*, *FamilyPC*, and *Access Internet Magazine*, all of which are now defunct, and it's not his fault. He spent six years writing exclusively about Wi-Fi, but don't ask him to fix your router. At PCMag he runs several special projects including the Readers' Choice and Business Choice surveys, and yearly coverage of the Fastest ISPs and Best Gaming ISPs, plus regularly writes features on all tech topics. He's the author of two novels: *BETA TEST* ("an unusually lighthearted apocalyptic tale" according to *Publishers' Weekly*) and *KALI: THE GHOSTING OF SEPULCHER BAY*, which you can still get as ebooks. He works from his home in Ithaca, NY, and did it long before pandemics made it cool.

Read the latest from Eric Griffith

- [Must-Watch: The Most-Streamed TV Shows and Movies This Week](#)
- [What to Stream This Weekend](#)
- [You Talking to Me? These iOS Apps Support the Most Languages](#)
- [The Best Tech Brands for 2022](#)
- [Facebook, Uber, and Dating Sites Top the List of Companies Collecting Your Personal Data](#)
- [More from Eric Griffith](#)

PC Magazine Digital Edition Read Great Stories Offline on Your Favorite Device! →

PCMag Newsletters Our Best Stories in Your Inbox →

Follow PCMag



HONEST, OBJECTIVE REVIEWS

PCMag.com is a leading authority on technology, delivering Labs-based, independent reviews of the latest products and services. Our expert industry analysis and practical solutions help you make better buying decisions and get more from technology.

[How We Test](#) [Editorial Principles](#)

[Reviews](#)

[Best Products](#)

[Categories](#)

[Brands](#)

[Events](#)

[Series](#)

[Encyclopedia](#)

[Sitemap](#)

[About PCMag](#)

[Careers](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Press Center](#)

© 1996-2022 ZIFF DAVIS. PCMAG DIGITAL GROUP

PCMag, PCMag.com and PC Magazine are among the federally registered trademarks of Ziff Davis and may not be used by third parties without explicit permission. The display of third-party trademarks and trade

names on this site does not necessarily indicate any affiliation or the endorsement of PCMag. If you click an affiliate link and buy a product or service, we may be paid a fee by that merchant.

[About Ziff Davis](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms of Use](#)

[Advertise](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Do Not Sell My Personal Information](#)

 [AdChoices](#)



askmen⁺



Mashable

Offers.com[®]

 SPEEDTEST[™]

techbargains[™]