



Moving into the metaverse

A paper about creating a virtual
world for your enterprise

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In the enterprise, the metaverse is all about bringing people together via a rich virtual experience that far exceeds the potential of videoconferencing.

A virtual world of possibilities

The metaverse presents a virtual world of possibilities for enterprises. Companies that can master the metaverse can reap business benefits by exploiting the power of shared virtual environments. This paper shows you how to get your organization to the metaverse and discusses what outcomes you can expect once you make the enterprise metaverse a reality.

What is the metaverse? The metaverse is a persistent shared virtual environment where you, as an avatar, can meet and interact with other people and engage in a wide array of virtual activities. The metaverse can be used to work, play, learn or all three — and its applications in the enterprise are limitless.

The emergence of the metaverse

The term “metaverse” originated as the name of a virtual world populated by user-controlled avatars in *Snow Crash*, a science fiction novel by Neal Stephenson published in 1992. Virtual environments started being used primarily in gaming settings, especially MMOs (massively multiplayer online games). More recently, large technology companies and enterprises have been taking advantage of what the metaverse has to offer. The metaverse is associated with digital realms such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR). Note: AR/VR goggles may be part of a metaverse experience, but they don’t have to be.

In the enterprise, the metaverse is all about bringing people together via a rich virtual experience that far exceeds the potential of videoconferencing. The global pandemic’s impact on business over the last 2 years has accelerated the emergence of virtual work environments. There’s a growing consensus that the metaverse will play a significant role as employees settle into hybrid and remote working patterns.

The metaverse can serve as a forum for collaboration, staff meetings, training and other events, and also for those “watercooler” moments that are psychologically important for employees to experience. A metaverse environment provides participants a sense of place and togetherness, because your avatar allows you to feel like you are in the same location as the other avatars you are meeting.

As employees’ avatars navigate the office metaverse, they may experience what we like to call unplanned social collisions and opportunities to say “hi” or chat — perhaps about topics that can lead to further discussions on creating innovative products or improving productivity. In fact, the freedom of movement that characterizes the metaverse makes it easier for some workers with disabilities to spontaneously meet and interact with their colleagues.

Being there

The metaverse is the perfect setting to make use of other relatively recent digital innovations such as cryptocurrency and non-fungible tokens (NFTs). For example, unique clothing for avatars can be purchased with crypto wallet funds, or employees can be rewarded with an NFT.

Another advantage of operating in the metaverse is that avatars can be given the ability to navigate via teleportation to participate in groups, go shopping or join events. In the enterprise, teleportation is an efficient way to get around a large virtual enterprise campus.



At DXC Technology, we have a banking customer interested in opening a virtual branch where avatars of its advisors would be available 24x7 to assist customers wherever they are located, providing a far more connected experience than talking to someone over the phone.

More metaverse applications

The metaverse and virtual worlds are being applied in numerous other business settings. Businesses are beginning to see that the metaverse provides opportunities to engage with customers in new ways. Companies ranging from Benetton to Nike to Walmart are exploring the e-commerce metaverse, where shoppers' avatars can enjoy immersive, visually striking experiences with opportunities to do things like "try on" apparel, and purchase physical or virtual items. Media and entertainment companies are expanding beyond the gaming world to offer social experiences and events such as virtual concerts — Taylor Swift's 2020 Folklore concert, for example, or more recently, rapper 24kGoldn's El Dorado Concert Experience, which included pre-show activities such as a scavenger hunt.¹

Manufacturers can create digital twins of their factory locations, processes and physical products, which can be used by production teams to watch virtual assembly lines to see if a new product design will function in the context of the existing manufacturing structure. At DXC Technology, we have a banking customer interested in opening a virtual branch where avatars of its advisors would be available 24x7 to assist customers wherever they are located, providing a far more connected experience than talking to someone over the phone.

¹ Benetton, Nike, Walmart, Taylor Swift's 2020 Folklore concert, 24kGoldn's El Dorado Concert Experience

1,300+

attendees at a DXC virtual conference for sales professionals

50+

exhibitors in expo hall at DXC virtual conference, including some global partners

Connecting the metaverses

Standardization will present one of the biggest challenges in the metaverse.

How, for example, will consumers or employees be able to reuse their avatars across metaverse platforms? What interconnectivity can we expect? Today, people can suit up their avatars in whatever they'd like them to wear, for instance, but can't then take what they've created over to another platform.

This likely will be addressed as companies establish partnerships with each other across worlds, and as new business models based on NFTs and cryptocurrency emerge.

Virtual-first company sees virtual success

At DXC, a virtual-first company of 130,000+ colleagues, we are pioneers in bringing our own enterprise into the metaverse. Different parts of the business are using our DXC Virtual World platform for team building and allocating private space. We have also invited customers to virtual workshops and created a career building and leadership program where new hires for our UK offices can meet and get to know their colleagues in a virtual world environment. We've had parties in the metaverse, too, such as our company-wide New Year's celebration. We also recently invited 20 journalists to join us in the DXC Virtual World for a media briefing and to experience the metaverse firsthand.

In early 2022, DXC hosted a virtual conference for our Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) sales professionals, and we had more than 1,300 attendees. The 2-day event offered nearly all the familiar features you would see at a real-world onsite conference, including keynote presentations by industry leaders and an expo hall with more than 50 exhibitors, including some of DXC's global partners.

The planning for our EMEA virtual sales conference was much like the preparation that goes into a real-world event. Signage was designed for virtual expo booths, where accommodations were also made for showing videos and holding private conversations, for instance. There was a bit of gamification too, as a scavenger hunt was created to add a sense of fun to the overall experience. An impressive line-up of speakers was arranged, both executives from DXC customer companies and our own sales leadership team. Some presented as avatars on stage and others via live streaming video or video recordings on the presentation board.

A big success at the conference was the opportunity for attendees to randomly bump into other attendees. Those unplanned social collisions provided opportunities for attendees to schedule follow-up meetings and increase collaboration.

Of course, it's not unexpected for a few hiccups to occur whenever new technology is stress-tested for the first time, especially on such a major scale. Some people struggled to control their nascent avatars, and the auditorium control panel and Q&A functionality need to be further refined; however, we were generally able to fix issues as they occurred.

Feedback received from conference attendees was universally positive. DXC employees enjoyed the virtual experience, especially interacting with colleagues they had not seen for a long time. Participants who found the most pictures and objects in the scavenger hunt were delighted to receive special prizes. At the end of the event, a sales awards ceremony was held, with winners' avatars coming forward to accept their trophies and give acceptance speeches — just like they would do in the real world.

Today's workers are becoming accustomed to conducting business virtually — doing so with avatars in a metaverse environment can make the experience more interesting and fulfilling.

The next dimension

Where is the enterprise metaverse headed? As far as the human imagination can take it — and don't worry, virtual worlds are not taking over the real world. Although a few companies have begun leveraging the metaverse as virtual headquarters, it is not necessarily a replacement for a physical office, or for live event forums, videoconferencing or the plain old 2D internet. The enterprise metaverse is just the next iteration of how we interact with digital content.

The opportunities to launch new businesses in the metaverse or to complement real-world operations are exciting. In fact, whole new industries are forming — NFT marketplaces, crypto custodians, metaverse realtors and more.

Real benefits from virtual worlds

An obvious benefit of holding a virtual event in the metaverse is the tremendous cost savings it provides. Imagine the travel, flight and hotel costs for getting more than 1,000 employees to a physical conference, not to mention the catering and facility rental fees. Today's workers are becoming accustomed to conducting business virtually — doing so with avatars in a metaverse environment can make the experience more interesting and fulfilling.

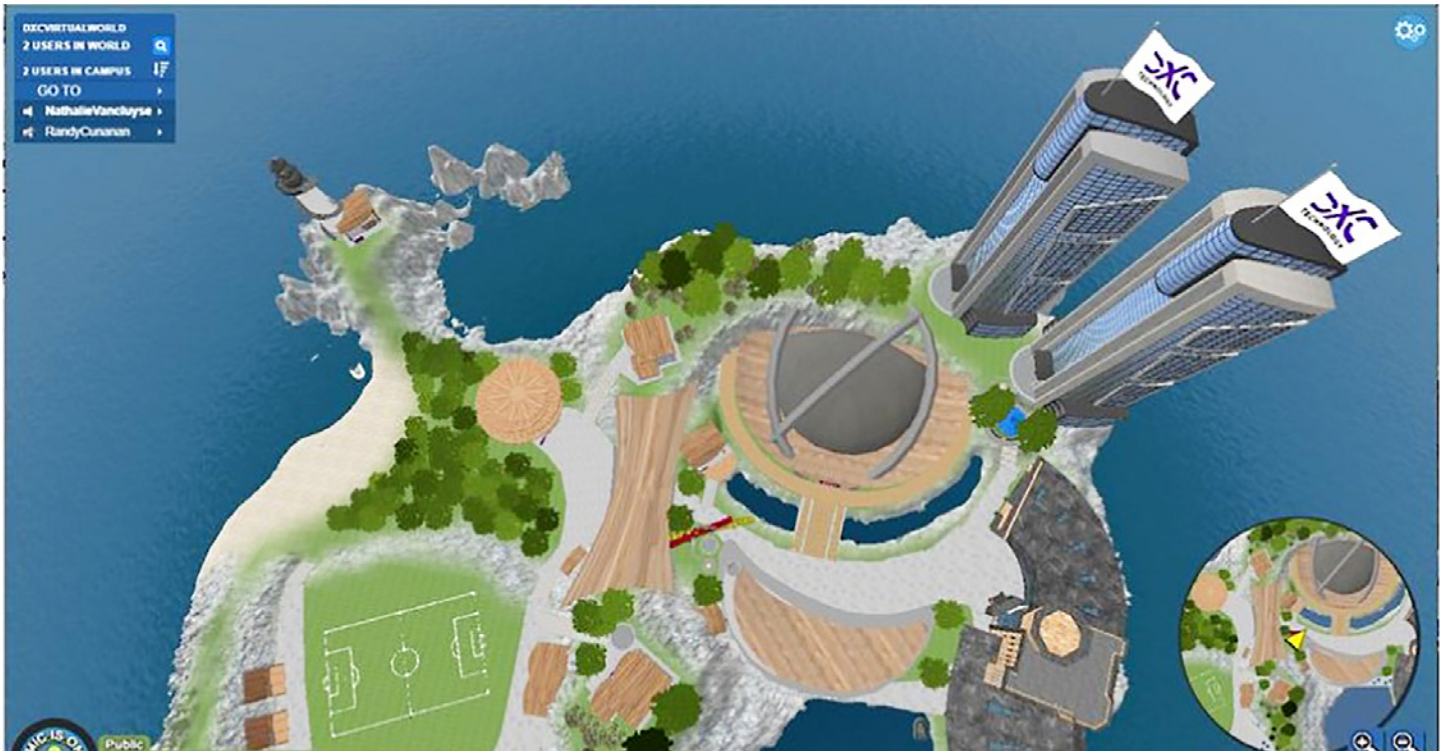
It's good news that to enter a basic virtual world, enterprise users do not need to buy a \$300 VR headset. For many platforms, users need only a standard desktop or laptop computer, access to the software platform the virtual world is operating in, and training.

So what virtual world platform should an enterprise use? There are plenty available, and the list of players keeps growing. Leading technology companies have entered the metaverse space, with Microsoft introducing Microsoft Mesh and with Meta (previously Facebook) offering enterprise-facing products such as Horizon Workrooms. Notably, Virbela is emerging as a leader in providing platforms for enterprise metaverse solutions, including virtual events, meetings and remote learning.

As with most emerging technologies, the lack of standardization across the different virtual world platforms is a challenge. For example, if you have created an avatar in one platform, you generally can't use that same avatar in another. Standards need to be established for enabling interoperability between metaverse environments.

DXC is vendor-agnostic when supporting enterprises' virtual world endeavors. As a software platform for our sales conference, we used Virbela's mature virtual event platform. We benefited from the support Virbela provided for the event and augmented that support with our own experts.





Learn more about using the metaverse

For more insights into making a virtual world work — whether for a large event, workplace collaboration, team building or other opportunities — check out our blog [Your metaverse journey, step by step](#).

How DXC can help

DXC is an early pioneer in the metaverse. We have developed DXC Virtual World as a key capability within our Modern Workplace Intelligent Collaboration offering. DXC Virtual World is one of the most advanced business metaverse environments designed to enhance workforce collaboration, add an exciting 3D dimension to virtual meetings and host large-scale events with up to 2,500 simultaneous users.

DXC provides scale, handles complexity and offers customizations for business metaverses (from building new spaces to creating 3D assets like desks and chairs), as well as training, onboarding and service desk and support services. DXC Virtual World offers a great variety of meeting spaces across 20 floors, including an expo hall, auditoriums, classrooms, a soccer field, beach, theater and music venue.

With almost unlimited potential to add new buildings and spaces at the click of a button, the DXC Virtual World can grow instantly in line with business requirements, saving millions of dollars in event costs and helping to reduce a company's carbon footprint.

We're living in exciting times. A new virtual world of opportunities and possibilities awaits in the metaverse.

About the authors



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Learn more at
dxc.com/intelligent-collaboration

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