
IS METAVERSE IN HOTELS A FRIEND OR FOE? PERSPECTIVES OF EXPERTS IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

The hospitality industry is constantly evolving with technological development in its fundamental strategic activities. Thus, to remain competitive and to keep up with the rapid changes, the usage of information technology is unavoidable. In this respect, virtual reality (VR) tourism / meta-tourism provides consumers with the opportunity to experience a destination in VR and can play a significant role in encouraging visitation and engaging in the particular travel activities and behaviors. Also, the experience of (VR) in hotels provide a glimpse of reality. Hence, guests will have an accurate representation of the location, hotel rooms, and amenities prior to making a purchase and will not be disappointed upon arrival. Metaverse hotel/ Meta-hotel enables hotel guests to virtually experience the hotel stay and services while the hotel will gain upselling virtually. This paper aims to identify if using VR and Metaverse in hotel will effect positively or negatively on the hotel occupancy percentage, to identify the category of hotels that can implement Metaverse. Also, contribute a comprehensive understanding of Metaverse technology, its applications, and its impact on hospitality. Interviews were conducted with five hotels of five-star international hotels, five hospitality experts as a sample to explore their perceptions about the advantages and disadvantages of Metaverse in the hospitality industry and online interview with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and founder of the Metaverse Hospitality website. The results showed that Metaverse is a friend of the hospitality industry, and its transformation has transformed it into a more digital industry. In this respect, The Metaverse hotel can be a friend and a very useful tool if hotel managements use it effectively under strict, secure policies and regulations.

KEYWORDS: Hospitality Industry Experts, Hotels, Metaverse.

INTRODUCTION

Initially, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted one of the risks to which the tourism sector could be exposed. Likewise, tourists may choose to travel locally rather than internationally due to climate change (Matthews *et al.*, 2021). In this sense, the Metaverse can be characterized as another advanced reality that consolidates components of augmented reality (AR), VR, blended reality, social collaboration, internet games, shopping and work (Puerto, 2021). Furthermore, the concept of interactive virtual worlds has the power to adjust how customers connect with other locations and, in certain situations, to completely replace physical travel without causing harm to the business (Matthews *et al.*, 2021). In this context, the Metaverse assumes an undeniably significant part in recreational travel, from reservation to support arrangements and deals Real domain, AR/VR, and symbols can supplant actual staff and deal with the front office (Mathews, 2021). In the Metaverse, realism is attempted to aid a user's psychological and emotional involvement with the world (Lee & Kim, 2022).

Though the idea of virtual reality and immersiveness is not new, businesses have already felt its significance, and there is a huge customer market waiting to experience Metaverse together in both personal and professional space (Hilken *et al.*, 2022). Furthermore, it is a notable technological advancement often called the "new internet," which is believed to transform tourists' way of living much like the internet did in the past (Natarajan *et al.*, 2024). In this respect, in October 2021, Mark Zuckerberg stated that Facebook would change its name to Meta and spend heavily on Metaverse (Damar, 2021). Where humans interact as avatars with each other in an immersive world in the Metaverse. On this basis, it is accessed by computer terminals that display virtual reality (Ritterbusch & Teichmann, 2023). Furthermore, users can create their avatars, travel, construct virtual real estate they have sold and bought, and engage in the entire spectrum of human social and instrumental activities (Damar, 2021). By 2030, Metaverse platforms will be available in over 700 major cities, according to a World Economic Forum (WEF) report (Florida, 2024). Figure 1 shows that, according to WEF (2023), the world's top tourist destinations for the Metaverse scenario are Seoul, Santa Monica, and Dubai. In addition to using the Metaverse as a marketing tool to enhance their brand image, these three cities also use it as a practical tool to enhance their economic budgets, sustainability, mobility projects, urban planning, transportation, education, and health services (Florida, 2024). As a result, the Metaverse is more of an open-ended digital culture that exists alongside the physical domain than

gaming with particular restrictions and aims (Dionisio, *et al.*, 2013; Kim & Hall, 2019).



Figure (1): Three urban cities that are leading the way in the Metaverse scenario

Source: (Florida, 2024, P. 6)

According to, Natarajan *et al.* (2024), the Metaverse draws attention from various industries because of its numerous advantages. Furthermore, the Metaverse is still an idea that hasn't been fully realized (Lee & Kim, 2022). However, there's a substantial knowledge gap within the metaverse and its openings for specialists and the scholarly world (Buhalis *et al.*, 2023). Likewise, there is a research gap on the perception and use of the metaverse in the hotel industry, even though it was viewed as one of the industry's future drivers and a factor in improving the brand experience (Nevzat, 2023). Furthermore, Mahdikani & Mina (2024) called for studying the challenges and opportunities facing the metaverse and studying its impact on workers. Therefore, the current research focuses on studying the opinions of experts in the hospitality industry about Metaverse including the advantages of using it in hospitality, and whether developing countries will accept and implement Metaverse hotels, and Whether Metaverse hotels can affect the actual occupancy percentage of the hotel. Also, the research aims to explore the category of hotels that can implement Metaverse, the requirements for implementing Metaverse in the hotel, the procedures of hotels to secure the avatars and accounts of guests in the virtual world, The possibility of using Metaverse to train existing and new hotel staff, whether hotel

associations around the world will support hotels to implement Metaverse, whether developing countries will help and support tourism and hospitality enterprises with good technological infrastructure to put their countries on the Metaverse map worldwide, whether hotel associations around the world will implement security measures to secure this virtual world or hotel managements will do so, and finally, find out whether Metaverse can be considered as a friend or a foe for hotels.

LITERATURE REVIEW

METaverse BACKGROUND AND DEFINITION

Initially, the concept of the Metaverse was introduced in 1992. While many people view "Metaverse" as a new term, the idea itself is not new. However, Mark Zuckerberg's press release brought significant attention to the Metaverse (Damar, 2021). Furthermore, the term "Metaverse" is a portmanteau of "Meta" (meaning "beyond" in Greek) and "universe." It was coined by Neal Stephenson in his 1992 science fiction novel *Snow Crash*. In the book, the metaverse is depicted as an all-encompassing virtual world that exists alongside the physical world (Buhalis *et al.*, 2023).

Although the term "Metaverse" was coined in 1992, there seems to be no consensus on a universal definition. In this respect, Davis *et al.* (2009, p. 91) defined the metaverse as "an immersive three-dimensional virtual world in which people interact as avatars with each other and with software agents, using the metaphor of the real world but without its physical limitations." Likewise, Buhalis and Karatay (2022) described the metaverse as a seamless integration of digital and physical realms that utilizes ambient intelligence to improve physical spaces, products, and services. Moreover, Damar (2021) defined the Metaverse as a "3D virtual shared world where all activities can be carried out with the help of augmented and virtual reality services" describing the Metaverse as "the layer between you and reality."

METaverse IN HOTELS: ADVANTAGED AND BARRIERS

Indeed, researchers have speculated that the Metaverse will alter how the hospitality and tourism industry operate (Gursoy *et al.*, 2022). In this respect, Metaverse applications will probably become more important to the industry as consumers and technology advance, improving customer decision-making, communication, marketing, and guest experiences (Gursoy *et al.*, 2022). Furthermore, Metaverse presents opportunities to facilitate communication, engagement, and travel planning, thereby effectively altering consumer behavior (Kumar *et al.*, 2023).

Additionally, Metaverse technology can enhance branding and marketing for companies in the hospitality industry (Gursoy *et al.*, 2022).

A major advantage of Metaverse technology for the hospitality sector is the possibility of improving guest experiences (Kumar *et al.*, 2023). An additional advantage of Metaverse technology for the hospitality sector is its capacity to boost profits and revenue, which would lessen the need for front desk employees and save money (Periyasami and Periyasamy, 2022). Moreover, Metaverse technology can improve the accessibility and convenience of clients and hospitality businesses (Kumar *et al.*, 2023).

Many previous studies have confirmed the difficulty of people with disabilities (PWD) enjoying tourist trips or some tourist activities such as mountain climbing, due to their health conditions (Domínguez Vila *et al.*, 2024; Farah & Ramadan, 2024). In this regard, the researchers believe that the metaverse provides them with this enjoyment in the best possible way without the need for movement, which contributes to raising morale and improving their quality of life. This leads to adding a new segment of tourists to tourism in general and increasing the revenues of hotels that enjoy providing this service.

Metaverse has already made a significant impact on the hotel industry (Buhalis *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, the concept of the Metaverse and the virtual experiences that go along with it have drastically changed people's perceptions of technology's future and how it might affect the hospitality and tourism sectors (Buhalis and Karatay, 2022). The Metaverse can potentially extend the physical world using augmented and virtual reality technologies allowing users to seamlessly interact within real and simulated environments using avatars and holograms (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2022). First Airlines, based in Japan, for instance, has started providing virtual flights from Tokyo. The company reports 100 percent occupancy for virtual flights to multiple (Gursoy *et al.*, 2022).

The hospitality industry has consistently been at the forefront of adopting new technologies (Vaughan *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, industry professionals' interest in the Metaverse is growing, and the number of users living there is also exponentially increasing (Gursoy *et al.*, 2022). Meanwhile, cost is one of the biggest obstacles to using Metaverse technology in the hospitality sector. Because of their financial limitations, many small and medium-sized businesses might be unable to implement Metaverse technology (Polas *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, researchers believe that its application is currently limited to large hotel chains.

REQUIREMENTS OF METAVERSE IMPLEMENTATION IN HOTELS

Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) play a crucial role as central decision-makers and are likely to have the greatest influence on the extent to which hotels invest proactively in new technologies, such as the Metaverse or service robots (Querbach *et al.*, 2020). Moreover, strong technical teams are needed to supervise the creation and execution of the Metaverse strategy (Tussyadiah *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, hotels could collaborate with Metaverse platforms to create branded virtual environments and provide cutting-edge, immersive experiences that go beyond real estate (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2024).

Virtual reality settings may be susceptible to fraud, hacking, and other cybercrimes, which could harm the hotel industry's reputation (Kumar *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, when implementing Metaverse technology in the hospitality sector, privacy and security are also crucial factors to consider (Monaco & Sacchi, 2023).

A recent addition to the training and development landscape is Metaverse, a technology that combines virtual and real-world elements to create a highly immersive experience (Saeed & Ashfaq, 2024). Walmart, for instance, trains its staff in a variety of scenarios, including handling Black Friday crowds and being ready for emergencies, by using the Metaverse (Sisson, 2019). Despite the widespread adoption of these educational tools by human resources professionals, Academic research exploring employee training within Metaverse settings and its consequences remains in its early stages (Saeed & Ashfaq, 2024).

For brands that aim to provide their users with an immersive experience, the Metaverse has proven to be a difficult subject (Nevzat, 2023). In this respect, Metaverse hospitality and tourism experiences, goods, and services are becoming more and more popular among consumers (Gursoy *et al.*, 2022). Due to recent technological developments and the growing integration of virtual reality (VR) and the internet into our daily lives, the idea of the Metaverse has attracted a lot of attention (Sindiramutty *et al.*, 2024). Although the Metaverse won't replace real-world hospitality and tourism experiences, it will undoubtedly change how customers use these goods and services (Gursoy *et al.*, 2022). According to Nevzat (2023), the Metaverse offers a more global, scalable, and engaging experience. Therefore, it is a friend. Likewise, for the Metaverse to work in their favor rather than against them, companies should have a strategy regarding the spread of technological acceptability of the Metaverse (Nevzat, 2023).

A viable Metaverse contains four features that are considered important components:

- 1- **Realism:** The virtual environment is realistic enough for users to feel mentally and emotionally involved in the other world.
- 2- **Ubiquity:** all existing digital devices (from PCs to tablets to mobile devices) capable of accessing the Metaverse's virtual spaces, and users' virtual identities or collective identities may stay unchanged during Metaverse transitions.
- 3- **Interoperability:** the virtual spaces follow standards to ensure that; digital assets used in the reconstruction or rendering of virtual environments are interchangeable across different implementations and users may travel easily between places without losing their immersion.
- 4- **Flexibility:** The server architecture is powerful enough to allow large numbers of users to access Metaverse without harming the system's efficiency or the users' experience (Dionisio *et al.*, 2013 & Gao *et al.*, 2022).

Figure 2 shows the focus areas for the Metaverse under two important characteristics of technology and ecosystem (Lee *et al.*, 2021). It discusses the essential two factors that affect Metaverse application. The first factor is the ecosystems of the Metaverse such as the security and privacy policy that should secure the avatar, the means of trusted payment methods that guests will use, the content that will appear in the Metaverse world, and how society will accept it. The second factor means of technology used to create a Metaverse for a specific hotel, such as computer vision, network and cloud that will upload every edit and every avatar, artificial intelligence blockchain, robotic IOT, user interactivity, and how to extend reality by visual reality.

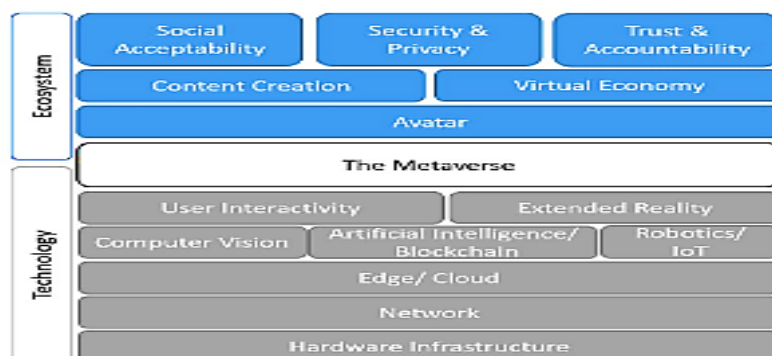


Figure (2): Metaverse' technology and ecosystem
 Source: (Lee *et al.*,2021,P.5)

METHODOLOGY

This research is based on a qualitative method. The structure utilized in this research is semi-structured qualitative face-to-face interviews to explore the perceptions of sales and marketing managers and senior hotel managers in the international chain of five-star hotels regarding the Metaverse concept and its importance as a new marketing tool. Also, to investigate the opportunities and challenges of the effect of applying Metaverse in hotels. Experts were identified based on their experience and knowledge of the issue under investigation. They all had no less than 15 years in hotel senior marketing positions. They were willing to participate voluntarily in the study and devoted their time to participation. Experts were purposefully selected and contacted via their offices or mobile telephones and invited to participate in the study voluntarily.

Interviews were conducted at their offices. On the other hand, Semi-structured interviews with hospitality department professors were conducted to investigate the effect of Metaverse on hospitality from a theoretical perspective. Scanning with fifteen doctors and professors, and after a small conversation, only four doctors and professors meet the selection criteria. Also, an online interview with the CEO and founder of the Metaverse Hospitality website, which contributes to a virtual hotel for Metaverse. Experts were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Hence, codes were used for all participants (e.g., H-EXP1-5 for hotel experts or Prof. 1-4 for professor and doctor experts) instead of their names or hotel names to ensure anonymity.

Expert type	Code
General Manager	H.Exp.1
Director of communication	H.Exp.2
Sales and Marketing Manager	H.Exp.3
Senior Cluster E-commerce M.	H.Exp.4
Sales and Marketing Manager	H.Exp.5
Professor in international university	Prof.1
Professor in local university	Prof.2
Doctor in local university	Prof.3
Associate Professor in local institute	Prof.4

RESULTS OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW DATA ANALYSIS

The semi-structured interview of hotels contains twelve questions. The results were as follows for each question:

WHAT IS METAVERSE

All the hotel experts and professors agreed with Damar (2021, P.1) that the term Metaverse is described as a virtual shared space that combines virtual reality, augmented reality, and the internet, which gives humans the chance to visit different places and have experiences in a virtual world.

ADVANTAGES OF USING METAVERSE IN HOSPITALITY

Hotel experts no.1, 2, 3, and 5 agreed with H.Exp.4, and professors Prof.1, 2, 3, and 4 that it allows the guest to access the room, make orientation for the hotel, and experience it before coming through the virtual world, reducing the too-long conversation with the operator during booking procedures (optimize time). This result agrees with Gursoy *et al.* (2022), who confirmed that Metaverse applications will probably become more important to the industry as consumers and technology advance, improving customer decision-making, communication, marketing, and guest experiences. Furthermore, H. Exp.4 added that Metaverse is a good marketing channel through which hotel can present its offers, and it will oblige the hotel team to be updated to the modern telecommunications and world of the internet and it will be an extension of their current virtual teleconferencing they applied since covid-19 pandemic. This result agrees with Kumar *et al.* (2023), who confirmed that. Also, the CEO of Metaverse Hospitality company led the hotel companies on how to enter the world of Metaverse in the best fit for them from operating their concierge system virtually to hosting F&B events at their restaurants in Metaverse and more. Although Prof.4 said that these advantages depend on the hotel's financial abilities this service will be so expensive. This result agrees with Polas *et al.* (2022), who confirmed that cost is one of the biggest obstacles to using Metaverse technology in the hospitality sector.

IF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WILL ACCEPT METAVERSE HOTELS AND APPLY IT

The H. Exp.4 agreed with 5 that all depends on the internet services provided in these countries; however, the real experience because even the developing countries are keen on exploring that new world as they did so when social media platforms came up to life. On the other hand, H.Exp.2 commented that they are a part of an international chain of hotels, so they will apply whatever the mother company applies as a French brand and as a luxury brand, they have to keep the company brand. H.Exp.1 and 2 illustrated that the developing countries must accept it otherwise, they will miss the opportunity; they have to adapt themselves to match this technological revolution. He also added that till

now, joining the virtual world is still optional after that it will be obligatory. He followed his conversation by “The managerial companies will implement Metaverse with fees, and the hotel operation managers have to comply.

IF METAVERSE HOTELS WILL AFFECT THE REAL OCCUPANCY PERCENTAGE IN THE HOTEL

Expert type	Code	opinion
General Manager	H.Exp.1	Yes
Director of communication	H.Exp.2	No, I doubt
Sales and Marketing Manager	H.Exp.3	Yes
Senior Cluster E-commerce M.	H.Exp.4	I don't think so
Sales and Marketing Manager	H.Exp.5	No
Professor an international university	Prof.1	Yes, with a positive effect
Professor at local university	Prof.2	Yes, with a positive effect
Doctor in local university	Prof.3	Yes, it will have positive effect
Associate Professor in local institute	Prof.4	No, I don't think so

The H.Exp.1, and H.Exp.3 agreed with Prof.1, 2 and 3 that Metaverse hotels will affect positively the occupancy percentage as it will maximize the occupancy percentage and will keep on the guests who are enjoying the real stay in the hotel. This result agrees with Buhalis *et al* (2022), who confirmed that, Metaverse has already made a significant impact on the hotel industry. Furthermore, H.Exp.1 commented with an example of the COVID-19 pandemic which made a restart all the business of hotels, so hotels transfer their business to the local business instead of international business. While H.Exp.2, 4, and 5 agreed with Prof.4 that they don't think that Metaverse will effect on the occupancy percentage with an example of the COVID-19 although everything turned to virtual, still guests searching for travel and hotel stays and interaction with others. On the other hand, the CEO of Metaverse Hospitality disagreed with all experts and professors. He explains his opinion that “*It's very hard to say that right now. I hope throughout the next 1-5 years we will see the hotel's Metaverse bookings through concierge steadily rise. It took hotels a while in general to adopt the mobile booking and mobile key card access, so it is tough to say what type of timeline Metaverse bookings would start happening while people are still transitioning from phone call reservations to app reservations.*”

CATEGORY OF HOTELS THAT CAN APPLY METAVERSE HOTELS

All the hotel experts and professors mentioned that the beginning of the Metaverse application will be from the international chain hotel company brands and the luxury hotels who have the qualified employees who have the ability to learn and deal with such technology then others will follow gradually.

REQUIREMENTS NEEDED TO APPLY METAVERSE IN THE HOTEL

The H.Exp.2 explained they must have 3D scanning look like reality for people and places. The H.Exp.4 and 5 added that they must have:

- excellent, strong internet service,
- capable and experienced IT team, this result agrees with Tussyadiah *et al* (2022), who confirmed that, strong technical teams are needed to supervise the creation and execution of the Metaverse strategy,
- an expert designer who will design the horizons where their Metaverse will be exposed,
- set up a security system to secure guests and private data.

On the other hand, H.Exp.1 and 3 agreed with the CEO of Metaverse companies who commented that these requirements will differ from one managerial company to another and that the system of Metaverse should interface with the opera system. This result agrees with Bilgihan & Ricci (2024), who confirmed that hotels could collaborate with Metaverse platforms to create branded virtual environments and provide cutting-edge, immersive experiences that go beyond real estate. However, the CEO of Metaverse Companies has another opinion. He said that *“the best thing in Metaverse is decentralized and there are no requirements. Some countries may have laws in place for cryptocurrency (crypto) or Non-fungible tokens (NFTs), but everything is on blockchain and still very open till now.”*

PROCEDURES OF HOTELS TO SECURE GUESTS’ AVATAR AND ACCOUNTS IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD

The H.Exp.2, 4, and 5 agreed with Prof.1, 2, and Robinson,2022 that every hotel management company will set its new privacy policies to make sure that all hotel guests’ data are secured and not exposed to any violation risks. While H.Exp.1, 3 and Prof.3, 4 disagreed with them justifying that the government should set and apply a policy of security standards to all hotel management. the previous results agree with Monaco & Sacchi (2023), who confirmed that when implementing Metaverse technology in the hospitality sector, privacy and security are also crucial factors to consider.

USING METAVERSE FOR TEAM MEMBERS AND FRESHER'S TRAINING

H.Exp.1, H.Exp.3, and Prof.1 agreed with the CEO of Metaverse Hospitality that hotels must use Metaverse in training for hotel employees to upgrade their qualifications and train freshers. The CEO added that it will be very useful for freshers to learn in virtual learning and have some experience of interaction before facing real guests. This result agrees with Sisson (2019), who confirmed that Walmart, trains its staff in a variety of scenarios, including handling Black Friday crowds and being ready for emergencies, by using the Metaverse. While H.Exp.2 disagreed with them as Prof.2,3 and 4, he said that it can be, but it's not recommended because we have to keep humanity interacting (the human touch) in training. Also, Prof.2 added that the most important things in training are body language and coaching techniques. On the other hand, the H.Exp.4 and 5 mentioned that they do similar things through online live webinars, and online meetings through Microsoft Teams but utilizing the Metaverse itself is not done yet simply because it is not there, and its regulations are not done till now.

IF THE HOTEL ASSOCIATIONS WORLDWIDE WILL SUPPORT HOTELS APPLYING METAVERSE

All the investigated samples of hotel experts agreed with Prof.3 and 4 that they believe that the hotel associations worldwide will support Metaverse applications as it's the new trend in the whole world. H. Exp2, added that the Egyptian hotel association has a new department called digitalise consultant, to collect all hotels in one system to make marketing for all of Egypt worldwide. On the other hand, the Prof. 1 and 2 had another opinion. They mentioned that it depends on each government, its regulations and guidance. Prof.2 added that our government may provide support if the government sees a real sample of applying Metaverse in any hotel company brand and finds the real benefits of applying it.

IF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WILL HELP AND SUPPORT HOSPITALITY ESTABLISHMENTS WITH GOOD TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO PUT THEIR COUNTRIES ON THE METAVERSE MAP WORLDWIDE

H.Exp.1, 2 and H.Exp.3, agreed with Prof.1,3 and 4 that the hotel association ask all hotels to increase the speed of the internet in each room and enhance the cables of internet, so they are working to improve the infrastructure, but the hotels will pay the costs. The H.Exp.2 added that they help by giving many competitive companies that provides the facilities so costs will reduce because of supply-demand instead of before as there was only one company that provide this service. While H.Exp.4

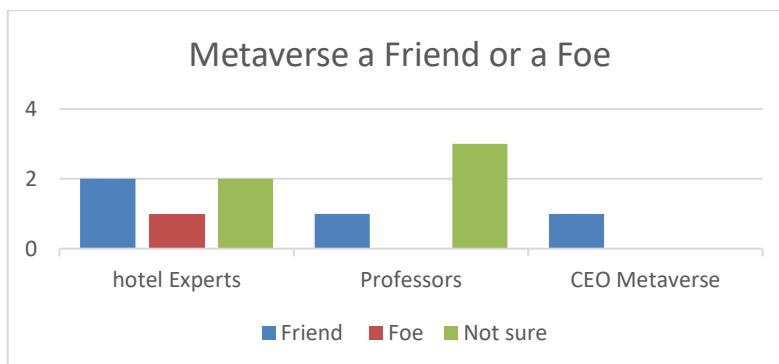
and 5 assumed that it depends on the government’s vision. But Prof.2 illustrated that this way of thinking may will appear but not now.

IF THE HOTEL ASSOCIATIONS WORLDWIDE WILL APPLY SECURITY PROCEDURES TO SECURE THAT VIRTUAL WORLD OR HOTEL MANAGEMENT WHO WILL DO IT

H.Exp.4, 5 with Prof.3 and 4 mentioned that it’s a must for hotel associations worldwide to apply the security procedures otherwise none will be able to use it. The H.Exp.1, 2, 3 agreed with Prof.1 and Prof.2 that the security procedures will be established and applied through managerial hotel companies. Each management company has its own vision and policies so it should be responsible for it.

Metaverse is a friend or a foe?

Expert type	Code	opinion
General Manager	H.Exp.1	Friend
Director of communication	H.Exp.2	enemy
Sales and Marketing Manager	H.Exp.3	Not sure
Senior Cluster E-commerce M.	H.Exp.4	Not sure
Sales and Marketing Manager	H.Exp.5	Not sure
Professor at international university	Prof.1	Friend
Professor in a local university	Prof.2	Not sure
Doctor in local university	Prof.3	Not sure
Associate Professor in a local institute	Prof.4	Friend
CEO of Metaverse Hospitality	CEO	Friend



H.Exp.1, Prof.1, and Prof.4 agreed with the CEO of Metaverse Hospitality that the Metaverse is a friend and it’s very useful for the hospitality industry. This result agrees with Nevzat (2023), who confirmed that the Metaverse offers a more global, scalable, and

engaging experience. Although H.Exp.2 pointed out that Metaverse is an enemy of the hospitality industry, which depends on human interaction. But it may encourage people who like adventures. On the other hand, H.Exp.3, 4, 5 agreed with Prof.2 and 3 that it's too difficult to identify now. If the hotels use Metaverse effectively with secure policy and regulations it will be a very useful friend to the hospitality industry. Furthermore, It's a double-edged weapon.

CONCLUSION

Regarding investigating, is Metaverse in hotels a friend or foe? Opinion of experts in the hospitality industry, the research produced some findings. The following is a presentation of the conclusion's points:

- Metaverse is a friend to the hospitality industry, and will transform it into a more digital industry.
- The Metaverse can improve the tourist experience; tourists will be able to travel all over the world and experience tourism and travel services in real-time.
- The Metaverse technology will completely shift tourists' relationship with travel because they will cut down the time, spend getting a visa or book a flight ticket.
- It is an extension of the mixed reality experience “Try before you buy” which will be a real marketing tool and help destinations to improve their branding. But it is like any new technology needs the infrastructure and laws to secure the tourists and tourism providers. Its cost may be expensive.
- Metaverse Hospitality can be a friend and a very useful tool if hotel managements use it effectively under strict, secure policies and regulations.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The current research has several and various determining restrictions yet determines opportunities for future studies. This research was limited to sales and marketing managers and senior hotel managers in the international chain of five-star hotels and experts. Therefore, future researchers should focus on studying the opportunities and challenges of the Metaverse in the tourism and hospitality industries. As well as studying the actual cost of implementing the Metaverse in the hospitality industry. Researchers recommend that future researchers conduct a study on the role of the Metaverse in improving the quality of life of people with disabilities (PWD) and its impact on increasing the revenues of hotels that have this technology.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the previous results,

- The hotel's senior management must qualify its employees to deal with modern technology techniques such as Metaverse by providing specialized training, as well as paying attention to appointing an integrated team that is proficient in dealing with modern technology.
- The hotel's senior management must also prepare the infrastructure, including changing and updating the internet cables, for example...etc. for the hotel to facilitate the application of the metaverse.
- The Ministry of Tourism and Egyptian Hotel Association should provide financial support to hotels to help implement Metaverse technology in their hotels.
- The Ministry of Tourism and the Egyptian Hotel Association should develop more legislation and laws that facilitate the application of the metaverse in hotels and ensure the protection of guest data from cyber-attacks.
- Studying the possibility of applying crypto-currency transactions in Egyptian hotels.

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