

THE Restore Sessions

Episode 4

IDENTITY GAMES

Debrief Summary

Experts



Inder Phull

Founder and CEO of
Pixelynx



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Brand strategist, trend
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*Break the Internet: in
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Is this the age of the post-authentic self?



1 in 3

Gen Zers say that that their online identity is their most authentic self, compared to 1 in 5 Gen Yers and 1 in 10 Gen Xers

Vice

The authentic self has been made malleable through social media filters and tools. And while social media as a reflection or physical identity isn't going away, avatars and pseudonyms are mainstreaming as people look beyond the limitations of IRL identity.

Expert panel:

How can brands still communicate their identities in anonymised online environments?

It's actually quite interesting to see where a brand really fits in the metaverse. I think what you'll see is there'll be many new brands created that are digital-only which tap into a lot of these new paradigms that have community at the heart of why they work. They'll have identity also at the heart of how the, let's say the project exists so there's a number of different things that we'll see unfolding.

— Inder Phull

From a brand strategy perspective we talk a lot about this idea of the headless brand as being the kind of the brand of web 3.0. The headless brand is a brand that is created en masse and constantly iterated by a community of people so it's similar to handing over your IP, being flexible with the branding tools you're giving to people, and then allowing them to kind of create and remake and iterate on those elements of your brand. NFT collective Bored Ape Yacht Club is a really good example of that happening - once you've bought into it you then own the rights to your individual ape avatar.

— Olivia Yallop

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Where will the metaverse meet reality?



87%

of people who know
about the metaverse
say digital movie
viewings sound
appealing

Wunderman
Thompson

Departing away from restrictive social media UX, the metaverse gives users greater control over their experiences. It will centralise digital experiences into a single immersive environment - where avatars, currency and digital objects are transferable between locations and services.

Expert panel:

What's driving people to participate in the metaverse?

One of the core things that typically drives most of the usage is that it's become a new canvas to enjoy culture in different ways. Whether that's a virtual performance of Travis Scott on Fortnite or Lil Nas X on Roblox, these start to bring new audiences in because they're pillars of culture now expressed in a medium that people didn't necessarily expect them to be expressed within.

— Inder Phull

How is social identity represented in the gaming context?

Digital identities are in a massive state of flux at the moment. There are several different ways of approaching online identity that are currently being explored. There isn't a kind of coherent vision yet for the future of digital identity and what I think is interesting is that we're seeing tensions between different explorations pull them in different directions. Thinking about the future, what we're going to see is more customization. At the moment we're working within very specific parameters around what your identity could be in the metaverse. In the future, you could be buying into a randomised programmatically generated identity that's been created from a set of kind of pre made components.

— Olivia Yallop

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How will people consume digital objects?

30%

30% of Americans and 27% of Britons think the NFT space is "just another playground for the mega-rich"

Pipslay

While many think digital ownership is a fad, the metaverse promises to extend beyond luxury transactions, with more people expected to pay for assets to create avatars and participate in the virtual world.

Expert panel:

How will commerce operate in metaverse environments – currently and in the future?

In terms of accessibility - how will we gamify the onboarding process? Because setting up a wallet is pretty complex. We have to evangelise the tech. It's really fascinating because when you explore the digital fashion space, it does feel like a very kind of collaborative mindset where even competitive companies are sharing notes around how we create adoption within the space so it's still in its infancy, but I think there's already a lot of proof points to kind of show where things are going.

— Inder Phull

Who is interested in digital fashion now – and will digital fashion become mainstream in the future?

The barriers to entry are quite high - you need wallets, you need to know your way around crypto, you need to be able to kind of have the spaces to wire these items. And at the moment we are still in the nascent stages of this market, where people who are consuming this kind of thing tend to sit more towards the kind of pioneer and trendsetter rather than the mass market. I think digital fashion will start to become more and more mainstream, but I think we really have to look to the big players within the market to make it palatable and make it understandable.

— Olivia Yallop