About the Committee Metaverse:

The Committee Metaverse of the German Association for the Digital Economy (BVDW) is a forum of experts focussed on inspiration and facilitating an interdisciplinary exchange and proactive debate on this development.

The Committee is headed up by Mark Wächter (MWC.mobi, Chairman), Stefanie Scognamiglio (Xandr a Microsoft Company, Deputy Chairwoman), Dominik Wöber (Google, Deputy Chairman) and Nico Wohlgemuth (DAYONE, Deputy Chairman).

Click here to view the press photos of the Committee's leadership team.

The Committee is currently divided into three Labs:

- Metaverse Lab: Technology - Infrastructure, Devices, Software
- Metaverse Lab: Economy - Business Models and Ecosystems
- Metaverse Lab: Society - General Framework, Ethics and Sustainability

The Head of the Metaverse Lab: Technology is Andreas Günter (Ströer Digital Media GmbH). Arnold Pötsch (UX3D GmbH) and Sebastian Thelen (42Ads GmbH) are Deputy Lab Heads.

Head of the Metaverse Lab: Economy is Elmar Arunov (Deutsche Telekom AG). Dr. Silvia Zaharia (Niederrhein University of Applied Sciences), Hendrik Menz (Anzu Virtual Reality Ltd), Frank Ditz (Meta Platforms Inc.) and Björn Schneider (constructiv GmbH) are Deputy Lab Heads.

The Lab Heads of the Metaverse Lab: Society are Carsten Rossi (Kammann Rossi GmH) and Daniel Zellmer (Digitas Pixelpark).

An overview of our Lab Heads is available here. All the members named above have contributed to the following Position Paper.

Introduction

In this Position Paper, the individual terms of the Metaverse Definition, which was published in July 2022 (click here), that were found to require further explanation are now explained in detail. The BVDW Committee Metaverse considers these explanations to be necessary in order that, as a forum of experts, it is able to provide a deep level of transparency and clarification and avoid possible misunderstandings. A definition which is to serve as a foundation on which to further develop technologies, business models and the social questions involved, as well as being a basis for redesigning the ecosystem, must be completely tangible and understood in order that it may be built upon to provide access to the Metaverse and proactively help to shape it.

Metaverse Definition

“The ultimate vision of the Metaverse is a decentralised, interoperable, persistent and immersive digital ecosystem with unlimited user capacity. It will co-exist both in an augmented as well as a truly virtual version as an expansion to the physical world. The fully developed Metaverse will converge with real life and fundamentally change our society and the way we connect, work, live and interact with brands.”
The ultimate vision of the Metaverse is a decentralised...

In the Metaverse, decentralisation refers to the transfer of control and the decision-making capacity from a centralised entity (individual, organisation, or a group which has emerged from these) to a distributed network. Decentralised networks aim to reduce the level of trust that participants need to place in each other. It thus discourages them from exerting authority or control over each other, which can negatively affect the functionality of the network.

This can be achieved through a Decentralised Autonomous Organisation (DAO). This is a collective entity which belongs to and is operated by the members of the community. Funds are held in the entity's own coffers and are governed by smart contracts so that the DAOs are not dependent on the banks for safeguarding these funds. There is no central person of authority within the organisation. Decisions are made through the submission of proposals and voting.

Decentralised thus means that Metaverse content is created, owned and organised by individual participants.

... interoperable ...

Interoperability ensures that participants are not restricted to one platform and that their experiences, property and identities are transferred across multiple platforms without being changed.

In addition, hardware-specific interoperability plays an important role. Participants should be in a position to collect experiences regardless of the devices being used.

The Metaverse will be a blend of the connectivity of the web and the immersiveness of spatial computing. An open and inclusive Metaverse will bring together a wide variety of technologies which will require interoperability standards to be set up. This will be absolutely essential if we are to achieve an open and inclusive Metaverse.

... persistent ...

The Metaverse is a consistent and persistent digital space created by the convergence of virtual, augmented and physical reality. The Metaverse will be a place of eternal and continuous existence - where life goes on regardless of whether participants are on or offline.

This digital world must be permanently accessible to participants at all times. The persistence of this Metaverse world can be divided into “data persistence”, “world persistence”, and “event persistence”. Data persistence ensures that the data of the Metaverse world is not lost even if the computer system fails. World persistence means that the world continues to exist and is available to participants whenever they want to access it. Event persistence refers to the persistence of events within this world.

Thus, digital content that has emerged - or will emerge - regardless of time, device, and reality (AR, MR, VR) will be “here to stay”.

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The Metaverse can be seen as an ecosystem where users can immerse themselves in a realistic-looking and immersive 3D environment. The more the physical and virtual worlds merge, the more the Metaverse will become part of our daily lives - and the more immersive our experiences will become.

An almost endless range of possibilities and creations will lead to intense user experiences that will be defined by numerous cooperation and interaction models in the B2B, B2C, and C2C areas. The ecosystem will serve as a kind of catalyst for creativity and inspiration, where people will actively engage with the content instead of just passively consuming it.

From a governance perspective, this Metaverse ecosystem will, therefore, be a distributed, adaptive, and open system marked by self-organisation, scalability and sustainability. It will be owned by the people who live, connect, create, and participate in it.

The improvements in computing, such as AI, AR, VR, cloud computing, natural language understanding, and blockchain technologies, combined with an improved infrastructure, such as 5G or Wifi6, will help to overcome many of today's technical limitations and enable unlimited user capacity.

The requirement of being able to achieve unlimited user capacity within the Metaverse is the key to a shared virtual reality. Like the Internet today, the Metaverse must hypothetically be able to provide access to all participants without having to limit the number of people, experiences or worlds involved.

This unlimited capacity includes the availability of access points, login servers, and storage for all user-specific data. In addition, the system must be able to stream the Metaverse and its data to each and every participant without delay in order to enable real-time synchronous interaction.

Once the Metaverse has fully developed, it will challenge many certainties and the established forms of conduct in today's world. This is why a whole range of ethical, political and psychological issues need to be discussed well in advance so that we are ready to see the upcoming change through and can contribute to positively shaping it.
Planned Metaverse Committee Events in 2022:

1) DMEXCO (main stage Panel and Masterclass) - September 21/22, 2022 in Cologne, Germany.
2) 2nd Committee meeting on October 27, 2022 in Berlin
3) Metaverse Summit – December 1/2, 2022

Downloads

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Contact

Bundesverband Digitale Wirtschaft (BVDW) e.V.
Schumannstraße 2, 10117 Berlin
www.bvdw.org

Media Contact

Janina Iglück, Press Spokeswoman Agencies and Digital Marketing
Tel: +49 30 2062186-22
iglueck@bvdw.org

Katharina Jäger, Digital Marketing Consultant
Tel: +49 30 2062186-16
jaeger@bvdw.org

About the BVDW

The German Association for the Digital Economy (BVDW) is the central body for the representation of the interests of companies that operate digital business models and whose value creation is based on the implementation of digital technologies. As the driving force, guide and accelerator of digital business models, the BVDW represents the interests of the digital economy towards politics and society and campaigns for the creation of market transparency and framework conditions that encourage innovation. With figures, data and facts, its network of experts provides orientation for a central area of the future. Besides DMEXCO and the German Digital Award, the BVDW organises a multitude of professional events. With members from many different industries, the BVDW is the voice of the digital economy.