

**International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management Special Issue**

**The Metaverse in Hospitality and Tourism**

Submissions open 1st May 2023

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The recent changes at the macro level (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic, Ukraine war) have resulted in unprecedented acceleration in innovation and acceptance of new technologies (Bagozzi et al., 2022; Shamsi et al., 2021) in the hospitality and tourism context (Li et al., 2021). This phenomenon is particularly prolific given its requirement to transform face-to face interaction into virtual alternatives (Li et al., 2019; Loureiro et al., 2020). In tandem with the adoption of new technology,

technology leaders (e.g., Epic Games) have now ramped up their efforts to launch the metaverse and benefit from its advantages in the service-based industries (Belk et al., 2022) such as hospitality and tourism. The term 'metaverse' originated from Neal Stephenson's (1992) novel *Snow Crash*.

'Metaverse' describes a combination of mixed reality and virtual reality which users can access through a headset or browsers, allowing them to engage in real-time experiences and interactions across distances (Forbes, 2022). It can be regarded as a digital facsimile of how guests will interact with hotels (Hollensen et al., 2022; Yung et al., 2022). In this 3D virtual environment, the guests and travelers can congregate in virtual space using avatars that resemble their appearance, simulate their movements, and allow them to interact with one another and their surroundings (Belk et al., 2022) which generates numerous opportunities for hospitality and tourism.

The metaverse can play a critical role in the hospitality and tourism industry, offering a wide range of possibilities (Scholten et al., 2019). Hotels can offer virtual reality tours of their facilities that allow their potential guests to have access to their virtual rooms, hold meetings, or visit the hotel facilities using their own avatar. This platform gives the hospitality industry an ability to create new opportunities for travelers and guests to compare service offerings and be engaged (Lim and Rasul, 2022; Tan and Saraniemi, 2022) with hotels and their facilities. Moreover, hotels can benefit from the metaverse to provide virtual hotel experiences for potential guests and travelers (Bonetti et al., 2022; Rauschnabel et al., 2022). In this way, hotel brands can interact with their potential guests without them necessarily leaving their homes, and they can reach new target groups. As a result, they can provide personalized experiences that turn virtual guests into real-life paying guests. Travelers can benefit from the tourism metaverse before they make their actual travel decisions, and tourists can attend events such as live concerts, museum tours, or dance nightclubs from their homes. This allows guests who are using metaverses to share and experience hybrid worlds, which in turn generates community experiences and reaches guests separated by distance (Rauschnabel et al., 2022).

Against such a background the hospitality and tourism businesses need to know how to employ such technologies and benefit from the opportunities available while tackling the challenges the industry faces, particularly post COVID-19 (Doborjeh et al., 2021). Yet, research on the metaverse in the hospitality and tourism industry and how it is going to impact the industry as a whole going forward

is scant. Therefore, it is timely for researchers to develop insightful models to assess how practitioners can incorporate such technologies into their strategies. This special issue addresses questions related to the metaverse and its application in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Submissions related to the following questions are particularly welcome but not limited to:

How can hospitality and tourism businesses embrace the metaverse in providing a personalized travel experience?

How can the metaverse be used as a tool for enhancing the engagement of guests and travelers with others?

How would guests' and travelers' engagement in the metaverse differ from traditional alternative online/offline strategies?

What are the challenges in adopting the metaverse in the hospitality and tourism industry and how can these challenges be overcome?

How can the metaverse strengthen the performance of hospitality and tourism organizations?

How can the metaverse co-create value for different stakeholders in the hospitality and tourism industry?

What are the security concerns associated with metaverse adoption in the hospitality and tourism industry?

How can the metaverse impact management of the relationships between guests and travelers and the industry? What strategies should hospitality and tourism businesses employ to benefit most from this relationship?

How should hospitality and tourism managers communicate in the metaverse? How would this differ from communicating in the online environment?

Submitted articles should be original and not have been previously submitted to any other journals.

This Special Issue welcomes different research methodologies which adopt a sound theoretical foundation. The Special Issue invites various empirical submissions that have applied mixed methods, longitudinal approaches, literature reviews which extend the metaverse models, empirical perspectives, and empirical studies which address various hospitality and tourism challenges. For further enquiries, we advise researchers to contact the Special Issue editors.

### **Submission Procedure**

Prospective authors are strongly encouraged to contact the Special Issue guest editors regarding potential topics of interest or any questions/suggestions regarding the special issue.

Abstracts (up to 750 words) should be submitted directly to the guest editors via email:

Pantea.Foroudi@gmail.com by 1 March 2023. Abstracts must be concise and to the point, with appropriate references. Abstracts will be reviewed and invitations to submit full papers will be sent out by 1 April 2023. Acceptance of the abstract does not guarantee acceptance of the paper.

Full papers must be submitted by 1 September 2023 through ScholarOne Manuscripts, the online submission and peer review system. Please submit to the correct issue: Metaverse in Hospitality and Tourism. Registration and access are available at: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ijchm>

### **Author guidelines for the IJCHM can be found at:**

[http://emeraldgroupublishing.com/products/journals/author\\_guidelines.htm?id=ijchm](http://emeraldgroupublishing.com/products/journals/author_guidelines.htm?id=ijchm)

The International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management offers a valuable outlet for hospitality and tourism scholarship-oriented topics and themes. It welcomes both interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary articles along with empirical research from the hospitality and tourism perspective. Articles range across the full spectrum of hospitality and management disciplines, with contributions from around the globe. Prospective scholars are strongly advised to contact the Special Issues guest editors regarding their potential topics of interest, with any questions they may have, and for feedback. Researchers can submit their abstract (up to 750 words) directly to guest editors' emails by the 1 March 2023. In order to make your abstract effective, it must be concise and accurate with appropriate references.

### **Review Process**

Each paper submitted to this special issue will be subject to the following review procedures:

It will be reviewed by the guest editors for general suitability for this special issue.

If it is judged suitable, at least three reviewers will be selected for a rigorous double-blind review process.

Based on the reviewers' feedback, the guest editors, the Associate Editor for special issues and the Editor-in-Chief of IJCHM will decide whether the particular paper should be accepted as it is, revised

and re-submitted, or rejected.

### **Timeline**

Abstract Submission: 1 March 2023

Abstract Decisions: 1 April 2023

FULL Paper Submissions: Open May 1, Deadline September 30, 2023

Revisions and Decisions: December 2023

Publication: Mid 2024

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