



## Metaverse in the tourism domain - introduction to the special issue (part 2)

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This is the second part of the special issue on Metaverse. As said in the introduction to the first part (JITT 2023 no. 25) this collection of current technologies assembled in spaces where users can explore and interact, the Metaverse, has been until recently quite a popular theme. Now, once the big hype has faded away there is time to better understand what possible future opportunities and benefits may exist for all the stakeholders in tourism and hospitality domain. The papers of this special issue have this objective.

*Metaverse for tourists and tourism destinations* explores the way in which Metaverse and its underlying technologies can reshape the tourism industry, considering both the supply and the demand perspectives. The paper reviews a number of works on this theme summarizing the outcomes that present several promising solutions.

In *Metaverse and tourism development: issues and opportunities in stakeholders' perception* the objective is to understand how the managers of tourism attractions (archaeological parks, museums, seaside resorts, nature reserves, etc.) face the challenges and the use of the digital transformation and specifically how including Metaverse tools in their strategies. The results show the influence of the stakeholders' perception of the Metaverse and confirm the existence of heterogeneous preferences.

The relationships between Metaverse applications and tourism are the subject of *Beta tourist world: a conceptual framework for organizing an event in the metaverse*. This study aims at providing tourism businesses, especially hotels, with a framework containing a development life cycle model for delivering an event in the virtual Metaverse world, from the initial planning to the implementation and evaluation phases.

The paper *ARTour: an augmented reality collaborative experience for enhancing tourism* discusses how serious games, that have been used for various purposes, can

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be employed for supporting cultural heritage. The case described is ARTour, a collaborative game that enhances the overall “visitor” experience by improving their engagement with a number of existing heritage sites.

Financial services for tourism gamification are a relevant topic. *Deep resource allocation for a massively multiplayer online finance of tourism gamification in metaverse* proposes such a solution that can have virtuous effects. A convenient payment experience, the authors state, can also promote tourism products and services in the real world. Experimental results show that this method can ease the use of smart contracts in gaming environments.

Blockchain is one of the new technologies belonging to the Metaverse ensemble with the potential to radically change many aspects of the tourism and hospitality domain. Two papers deal with it.

*Understanding the development of blockchain-empowered metaverse tourism: an institutional perspective* discusses how a destination can adopt a blockchain-empowered Metaverse environment. The study explores the effects of different institutional factors and the impact this environment can have providing practical guidelines for a destination stakeholder for improving their competitiveness.

Finally, the paper *The determinants of the adoption of blockchain technology in the tourism sector and metaverse perspectives* aims at providing answers to the question of how to explain the intention to adopt blockchain technology in the accommodation sector. It focuses on the possible implementation of this technology for several applications such as loyalty programs, online booking and customers’ reviews and highlights the main factors that might influence an adoption thus providing guidance to accommodation managers.

This second issue confirms the significant impact of the Metaverse has or can have in the tourism and hospitality domain through the contributions presented here. In closing this special issue, we reiterate the invitation to scholars and experts to go deeper into the different aspects of the Metaverse and in what it would be possible to achieve in the future for the tourism and hospitality operators.

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