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## Dating Is Getting Hot in the Metaverse, Data Suggests

Original:

<https://www.btcc.com/en-US/academy/research-analysis/dating-is-getting-hot-in-the-metaverse-data-suggests>

According to new exclusive user data from Reddit, in the metaverse, everything is sunshine and rainbows with a blossoming romance. Mentions of “dating” in VR interest groups have increased by nearly 250%.

In its research, Reddit reveals the driving factors behind the metaverse dating trend.

For one, the global Covid-19 pandemic brought about travel restrictions and limited in-real-life socialization. This led many consumers to virtual reality (VR), fueling a transition to emerging virtual experiences. Notably, there has been a 92% year-over-year increase in the sales of VR headsets.

This trend has been quite pronounced on Reddit, with Redditors being 125% more likely to interact in the metaverse and meet new people than the general public. Another 42% of respondents also confirmed that they would prefer to spend time online rather than meet in person. Comparatively, Redditors are twice as likely as the general public to join the [metaverse](#). Between March 2021 and March 2022, screenviews of the subreddit r/VRchat grew by 193%.

“It’s not just that you and I [might be] Star Wars fans; we can literally throw ourselves into a Star Wars universe and... play out that passion in real time in a way that doesn’t require me to travel across the world and doesn’t require me to buy a bunch of stuff, dress up or cosplay like you might otherwise do,” says Rob Gaige, Reddit’s director of partner insights. He added:

***“We can do it in a much more casual way. You generate a more honest connection at the level of a passion – versus where in the [face-to-face] dating world, where it’s a little bit more superficial.”***

But not to worry, the metaverse is not going to replace IRL dating. While users may be able to find love in the metaverse, they cannot escape the real world as couples will need to experience real-life communication and physical intimacy.

Gaige explains that virtual experiences will continue to play a role in the real-life relationships of couples who find love in the metaverse. He said:

***“We’re already seeing indications of this sort of hybrid relationship, where just because you met in the metaverse and now you’re in real life doesn’t mean that you leave the metaverse behind. This isn’t like having the Tinder app where you delete the app after [you’ve found a relationship] [...] We might physically be together, but we’ll go back into that world and have date night now on [Star Wars’] Tatooine.”***

Ultimately, the [metaverse technology](#) is still in its infancy, in the discovery phase. But for now, the possibilities seem almost endless. Will Cady, global director of Reddit’s KarmaLab, noted:

***“These are open fields to a degree — there are new habits and new rituals that can be formed that haven’t been formed yet. As an example, I officiated a wedding in the metaverse, and it was entirely this new moment. There were about 200 people online and about 10 people in person IRL. That is something that didn’t exist before.”***