



## Metaverse Trade

Author: [Dr. Manahel Thabet](#)

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Hollywood has consistently envisioned the technologies humanity might need. In James Cameron’s *Avatar*, the protagonist Jake Sully, confined to a wheelchair in reality, operates an avatar remotely to save a distant planet. He engages with others, acquires new skills, and even gets married, all while his physical body remains miles away.

It’s accurate to assert that many aspects of this scenario are no longer purely science fiction. Today, companies are developing and marketing robots enabling users to navigate remote work environments and engage through computer screens, creating what is termed the “metaverse” — a realm beyond the internet. These systems possess self-evolving functions and exhibit unlimited learning behavior. However, their applications are currently limited to addressing high-value problems, such as enabling clinicians to remotely diagnose stroke patients, a service that smaller hospitals may lack due to budget constraints.

The progression toward the “embodiment” of the economy has faced constraints from two non-robotic technical factors: internet connection speed and communication latency over long distances. Connecting a Thai worker to a robotic figure in Japan, with precise signal accuracy, might be adequate for performing non-routine tasks more complex than engineering an affordable robot structure and its control systems.

Moreover, the “metaverse” economy is poised to usher in vast economic markets. For instance, physical brands may have virtual counterparts available for purchase, equivalent or even surpassing their real-world prices. Owning a Rolex watch in the “metaverse” may require a virtual purchase, allowing users to flaunt it in the virtual community. This extends beyond fashion items to encompass various aspects of reality, from cars to virtual homes and cutting-edge Samsung TVs with virtual goods purchasing features.

Yet, within the “metaverse,” lies a realm more perilous than our reality, with virtual social classes, peculiar diseases, and mental health issues, all in the absence of governance. It signifies a new world with an unconventional order.

Concerning human resources, workers in the metaverse could potentially offer their services at a lower cost. The logic of outsourcing applies to numerous well-paying jobs dependent on physical presence and motor skills, such as the work performed by cardiologists and machines.

However, the hurdles faced by the “metaverse” economy extend beyond technical challenges to encompass legal, political, and social dimensions. Questions arise about the nature of work when a gardener’s robot is controlled by a different remote worker each day or when a single operator oversees 50 self-driving taxis. How much work remains in regions with high labor and housing costs?

In conclusion, outsourcing physical labor stands to yield significant economic benefits, but it may also present challenges. I believe that the outsourcing of non-routine work through remote robotic presence could witness widespread adoption within a decade. It is crucial to approach the “metaverse” economy with careful consideration while it is still in its infancy. Presently, consumers often view the “metaverse” as an ambiguous term, yet to be precisely defined, much like asking about the Internet’s meaning before it became widely understood. For now, the “metaverse” remains a concept that is yet to materialize fully.