

Festivals and Metaverse: A new era of music?

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Music unites us and, undoubtedly, something moves us inside. And it is really nothing new, there is evidence of the musical inclinations of human beings since their origins. Already in prehistoric times it is known that there were instruments made of different materials, that, even if rudimentary and organic (such as stones, skins, or animal bones), fulfilled their purpose of reproducing sounds at the whim of its interpreter. Likewise, it is no coincidence that in the history of all ancient civilizations references can be made to their musical development.

In this evolution it is interesting to note how later, as societies became more complex, music also became instrumentalized according to a purpose. Thus it has resulted in a diversification of popular, vindicative, religious, educational and, of course, ludic music.

Focusing on this last facet of music, the ludic, it should be noted that the range of styles and artists has continued to grow. So, in this context, it is not surprising that festivals have become more and more popular within the cultural offer. In the same festival we can enjoy a whole line-up full of our favorite singers and djs.

But now the relationship between human beings and music has gone a step further, festivals have reached the metaverse! And iconic festivals, such as Woodstock, have already raised the decibels of virtual reality.

To understand this new reality, we may have to place ourselves in the pandemic and, specifically, when the health alert ended and we all wanted to get out of the house, feel our friends and family close again and, of course, enjoy their company

with good music. This situation went hand in hand perfectly with the music industry's need to recover the time and money that the quarantine made them lose in events and festivals.

And these two factors are probably the cause of the exponential increase that was experienced -and we are still experiencing- in the supply of concerts and festivals, bordering on what we could call an inflation of the sector. Moreover, this flood of possibilities has also brought, at times, havoc that has manifested itself, mainly, in less cared for and less prepared festivals.

So, in this scenario of supply saturation and, sometimes, poor execution, the industry has chosen to reinvent itself and stand out among its competitors. How? We have already made a spoiler before: by turning to the new market for brands, companies and communities, the metaverse.

In this way, we can no longer only listen to a repertory of different styles and artists in a single event, but also offer an immersive and revolutionary experience never seen before. In addition, we cannot forget that festivals in the metaverse offer certain advantages and advances compared to what we are used to in the physical plane, among which we can highlight:

Accessibility from anywhere in the world:

The barrier of space is overcome and, no matter where they are, people from all over the world can join virtually.

Inclusivity:

People's physical conditions disappear and everyone can live the experience equally.

Creative freedom:

An entire visual environment can be designed at the whim of artists who, without being subject to any physical rules, can let their imagination run wild in a virtually unlimited way.

Sustainability:

As it does not involve travel or resource costs, its respect for the environment is significant.

However, it goes without saying that, of course, this type of virtual festivals also raise certain controversies. On a social level we can mainly talk about the loss of contact and interaction, which is inherent to human beings and makes us grow and develop, so it is not a trivial issue. But at the legal level, and especially in terms of Intellectual Property Rights, there are also challenges such as their management and protection in such a volatile environment as the virtual one. For example, it would not be unreasonable to think that there could be cases of plagiarism, i.e. fraudulent events using creative or audiovisual resources from previous original festivals. In addition, the traceability and prosecution of potential perpetrators would undoubtedly become an obstacle to overcome, especially if we take into account the anonymity of the Internet and the existence of technologies such as bitcoin and blockchain that make this identification difficult. And possibly there are many other advantages and problems that we cannot imagine at this point in time, but this is the challenge offered by the unstoppable growth of technology. Certainly for our ancestors in prehistoric times - and certainly not so long ago - this way of experiencing music would have been unimaginable. And although there will always be those who prefer to feel a physical loudspeaker nearby and people around, the interesting thing is that now we have a new possibility to experience music and festivals. In the end, music has accompanied the development of all civilizations in their particularities. Thus, its appearance in the metaverse is not a coincidence, but a reflection of the technological era in which we live. Music will always endure, whether or not it does so in the metaverse, only time will tell.