Welcome to fashion's latest playground, the metaverse

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After Nike and adidas, luxury fashion houses are the latest companies entering the metaverse. OTB Group and Balenciaga recently announced plans to join the game, while the South Korean giant Naver Z Corp has launched its own Zepeto platform, where many of the avatars are clad in couture gear.

The entirely virtual world of the metaverse is proving to be a real life-size playground for fashion brands. Not content with partnering with online video games, like Balenciaga x Fortnite, these labels now want to own their own arenas in which to present and sell their collections digitally -- making them much more accessible than in real life -- as well as unveil their campaigns, sell NFTs and build, or retain, a whole community.

Accessibility, exclusivity, interaction

First social networks, then online video games, have allowed luxury houses to reach an important target -- Millennials and Gen Z consumers. With the metaverse, such brands could go even further in reaching a younger audience who, while they might not be able to afford designer sneakers costing several hundred dollars, could buy their virtual equivalents to dress their ultra-stylish avatars.

If there's one metaverse to follow closely in the fashion world, it is the South Korean Zepeto, launched by Naver Z Corp. Not content with exploring this digital universe -- home to nature, cities, amusement parks and attractions.
Corp. Not content with exploring this digital universe — home to nature, cityscapes, amusement parks and dream destinations — user avatars have the possibility of getting kitted out like never before. MCM, Louboutin, Ralph Lauren and Gucci are among the major fashion houses that have already jumped into the South Korean metaverse, while Dior or Nars offer virtual cosmetics.

Zepeto is also causing a stir among artists, and animation or sports giants, who are also keen to offer clothing and other virtual products to their fans. Miraculous, Selena Gomez, Major League Baseball, Blackpink, The Little Mermaid or One Piece are, for example, reaching out to users of this new world. Accessible via a mobile application, Zepeto now has two million active users per day, reports The Wall Street Journal.

The digital revolution is underway

And luxury fashion houses aren't stopping at these partnerships, creating their own digital universes. Nike has partnered with Roblox to create its Nikeland universe, while Adidas has joined forces with Bored Ape Yacht Club, Gmoney and PUNKS Comic to build its own virtual community.

In the luxury sector, Balenciaga announced the establishment of a unit entirely dedicated to this parallel world. Meanwhile, OTB Group is also working on the subject via the company BVX (Brave Virtual Xperience). The race is well and truly on.