

# Avatars Enable People to Embrace Their Uniqueness

The way human psychology and social perception typically work is: people make judgements based on visual information wherever it's available. Which is why [science](#) says looks matter, at least somewhat, when people interact with one another.

This report explores what motivates expression in immersive spaces where people connect and communicate as avatars. When Gen Z users create avatars to later socialize with people in various 3D settings, are they creating authentic looks **they** like? What prompts them to compliment another avatar? And if people are able to more authentically express themselves in immersive spaces, how does it help fuel their confidence or support mental well-being?

“Fashion is a critical way for people to express and explore their identity, but sometimes it can be difficult in the physical world because of various barriers, stigma and stereotypes. Not that the digital world is completely free of any challenges, but it often provides a space for users and wearers to play with their identities, a place where they feel safer to be the most authentic versions of who they are. Similarly, fashion designers aren't as restricted here by conventions of the physical realm and can experiment and play more with form, design, etc.”

## Ben Barry

Ph.D. Dean & Associate Prof. of Equity & Inclusion,  
School of Fashion  
The New School's Parsons School of Design

According to the 2023 survey\*:

- Gen Z care more that their avatar looks good to them vs. others: **62%** said they care “a lot” that their avatar looks good to them, as compared to **37%** who care “a lot” that it looks good to others.
- Gen Z also care equally as much about their avatar being **unique (30%)** as they care about it being **attractive/good looking (31%)** when deciding on their look.
- **2X more** respondents believe they are judged less on their looks in the metaverse (**36%**) than in the physical world (**18%**).
- **2.2X more** respondents say expressing themselves in immersive spaces via their avatar feels better (“more me”) (**36%**) than expressing themselves in 2D social media, posting IRL photos (**16%**).

\*2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey





# Authenticity IS Beauty in the Metaverse

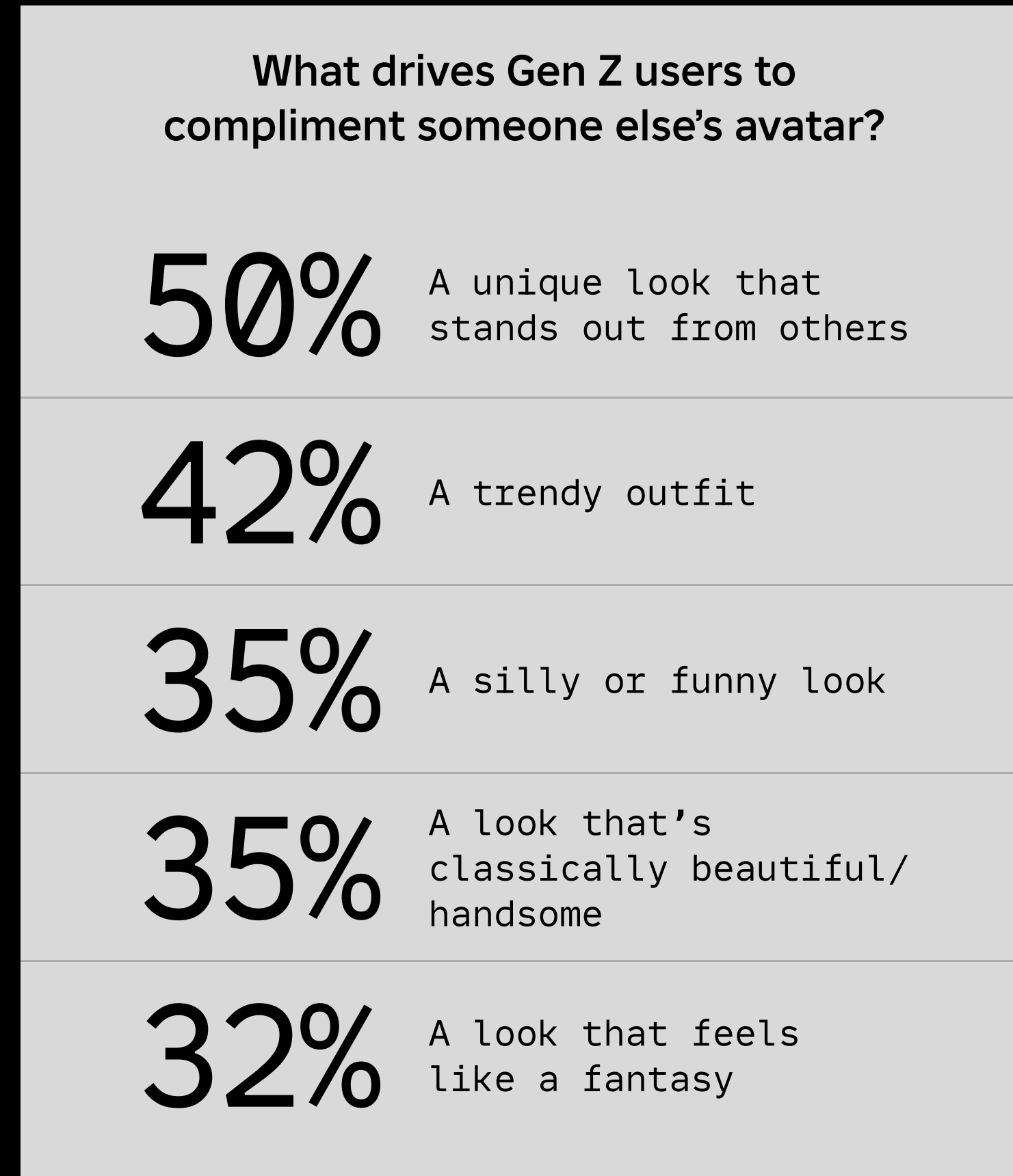
While many respondents feel beauty in the metaverse looks at least “somewhat similar” to the expressions of it we see in the physical world, **over a quarter (28%) said the parameters differed**, crediting more breadth of expression in immersive spaces to more “freedom,” “creative options,” “different trends,” and ability to “be whoever we want.” Additionally, survey respondents said:

- “In the metaverse most people make their avatar unique and different. In the real world there is an expected standard of beauty.”
- “There are more [avatar] parts that can be manipulated... whereas in the physical world things are mostly out of our control.”
- “You can look funny and unique,” and “nobody really cares how insane you look, it’s part of the appeal.”
- “It’s a different vibe,” and “people are there just to have fun.”
- “It’s less judgemental,” and “price of clothes is less of an issue.”

The same sentiment shows in other survey data where the #1 response to the question of “What drives you to compliment someone else’s avatar?” is **“a unique look that stands out from others.”**

This data\* speaks to expanded self-expression opportunities and acceptance of individuality that people find in immersive spaces where the drive is to be unique and reflect yourself in an authentic way.

\*2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey





# Trends Spotted on Avatars in 2023

Gen Z respondents said last year that IRL trends and physical fashion they love impacts what they wear on their avatars in immersive spaces.

In this year's survey\* we asked where exactly they get the inspiration and the top three answers are:

- **43%** - Trends I see on social media,
- **38%** - What my friends and other people are wearing IRL, and
- **35%** - What my friends and other people are wearing in virtual spaces.

Additionally the same number of respondents said they were equally inspired by:

- **28%** - IRL celebrities/influencers,
- **28%** - Metaverse celebrities/influencers, and
- **28%** - Brand ads, items, or images they see in the metaverse.

"Y2K nostalgia fashion styles are flooding social feeds, runways, fashion magazines, and specifically, Roblox. Gen Z has revived the trend across the platform, sporting vintage sportswear, crop tops, colorful sunglasses, wide-leg jeans, and baguette bags.

It's been a trend on social media for over a year now and users seem to enjoy it just as much, or even more than they did when it first started about a year ago."

**Rush Bogin @Rush\_X**

Creator on Roblox

So which of those trends that people saw on social media and on people around them, both in the physical world and in immersive spaces, made it onto the platform? Looking at some of the popular tags for items created and sold in the Roblox Marketplace in 2023,\*\* here are just a few examples of trends visible on the platform:

- **#Mermaid**-tagged offerings reflecting the popular 2023 #Mermaidcore trend grew both in creation (**up 61%**) and paid purchases (**up 182%** year over year)
- **#Y2K**-tagged items' creation was up **110%** year over year

The survey\* also asked which popular IRL fashion trends Gen Z spotted in the metaverse in 2023. The top five named were:

1. **Y2K** (46%)
2. **Pink** (40%)
3. **Neutral colors/Beige** (39%)
4. **Cargo pants** (37%)
5. **Sheer dresses/skirts/shirts** (35%)

\*2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey

\*\*Roblox platform data collected from January through September 2023.

## What Attributes People Pay Attention to When Deciding if an Avatar is 'Cool-Looking'

**52%** Stylish digital clothes

**50%** Unique

**48%** Avatar hair

**46%** Stylish digital accessories

**37%** Avatar body shape/size



“ I love that Y2K is back! I’m the Queen of Y2K fashion and pop culture, so, of course, I had to bring these trending styles into Roblox within my Slivingland world.

I had so much fun designing UGC\* items for and with the community, like my iconic diamond choker and 2000s flip phone accessory that are part of my distinctive style. It’s so cool that avatars are wearing these items for millions of hours across Roblox.”

**Paris Hilton**

Entrepreneur, Activist and Influencer

\*\*UGC stands for user-generated content on the platform, including community-created digital fashion items





# What Brands Need to Know About Metaverse Fashion

The Roblox platform has seen over 200 brand activations\* to date, with brands finding success while co-creating with the community, getting inspired by unique avatar styles and even using platform trends to inform their physical product plans.

However, the full impact of brands' digital items and experiences tied to self-expression in the physical world (and vice versa) is yet to be fully understood.

For example, if a cool avatar look is associated with having stylish digital clothing, how important is it that it comes from a recognized brand—be it a popular metaverse fashion designer or a well-known IRL brand?

For **3 in 4** respondents it's at least "somewhat" important that their digital fashion is from a recognized brand, while **nearly half (47%)** of Gen Z respondents said it's "very" or "extremely" important.\*\*

The demand for branded items on the platform also includes community creators building their own recognized brands.

For example, the new CHRUSH streetwear brand focused on limited-edition items was built by well-known creators @Rush\_X and @Bunnexh who, within a few weeks of launch, garnered tens of thousands of followers across Roblox and traditional social media.

More importantly, once people wear or try a brand in virtual spaces, they are more likely to consider it in the physical world.

**84% of Gen Z said they're at least "somewhat likely" to consider a brand in the physical world once they try on or wear its item on their avatars virtually, including 50% who are "very" or "extremely" likely to do so.\*\***

"When DRESSX came to me about the Roblox collab, I was literally obsessed with iridescent things and thought if we could create a super cute iridescent pink jacket, that would be amazing.

Now that the collection is live, I can wear it every single day, all my characters can wear it, and now all my fans can wear it too."

**McKenzie Turner**  
Video Creator

\*Brand activations are the number of brand activities on the Roblox platform that are either facilitated by our creator community or directly by the brand. A brand/partner can have more than one activation at any given time.  
\*\*2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey



## What People Want to See Most From Fashion Brands in the Metaverse

**43%** "Twinning" items that I can wear both on my physical/avatar self

**37%** Physical items trending online (and brought to the metaverse)

**36%** Rare, digital-only items that don't yet exist in the physical world

**30%** Big recognizable branding, patterns, and logos

**30%** Collabs with native community creators



"Digital me looks very much like physical me, including the same love for high heels and the same blonde hair. I even wore the same Halloween costumes on Roblox as I did in real life!"

**Lana Rae**  
Video Creator



# Immersive Shopping Is Social

Most Gen Z are **willing to spend on avatar customization and digital fashion each month**—with about **half (52%)** saying in the survey\* they are comfortable with budgeting at least some money every month (under \$10). Another **19%** say they are willing to spend up to \$20, and an additional **18%**—up to \$50-\$100.

Gen Z will often do so with some advice from friends: **nearly half (49%)** of respondents say they prefer to shop with friends in the metaverse vs. on their own.

This trend can be seen within experiences that offer social shopping like [Catalog Avatar Creator](#) by [@ItsMuneeeb](#). With a whopping **1.5 billion+** visits\*\*, it offers a way to browse through an ever-growing collection of over **9 million** community-created outfits together with friends and other community members, try items on for free, and save any avatars created in the process within the experience.

“Ever since launch, Limiteds have been trending on the platform. I've seen prices skyrocket for our CHRUSH brand!”

Our top selling item is reselling for 5K Robux (a 1,600% increase from the original price) while even the free items are selling for about 70 Robux. Usually, I price my own accessories at 50 Robux!”

**Rush Bogin @Rush\_X**  
Creator on Roblox

\*2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey  
\*\*As of September 30, 2023





# Consumers Seek Exclusivity: Limited-Edition Wares

In 2023, Roblox launched the ability for its community, including brands, to offer free or paid Limiteds in the Roblox Marketplace and earn from resales of those more exclusive items (previously, only Roblox could publish such items on behalf of creators).

This concept of scarcity mirrors the physical world, where consumers appreciate things of special value and are willing to pay more to own them.

Since launch, the majority of community-created Limiteds are resold for more than their original cost, and many items get acquired very quickly.

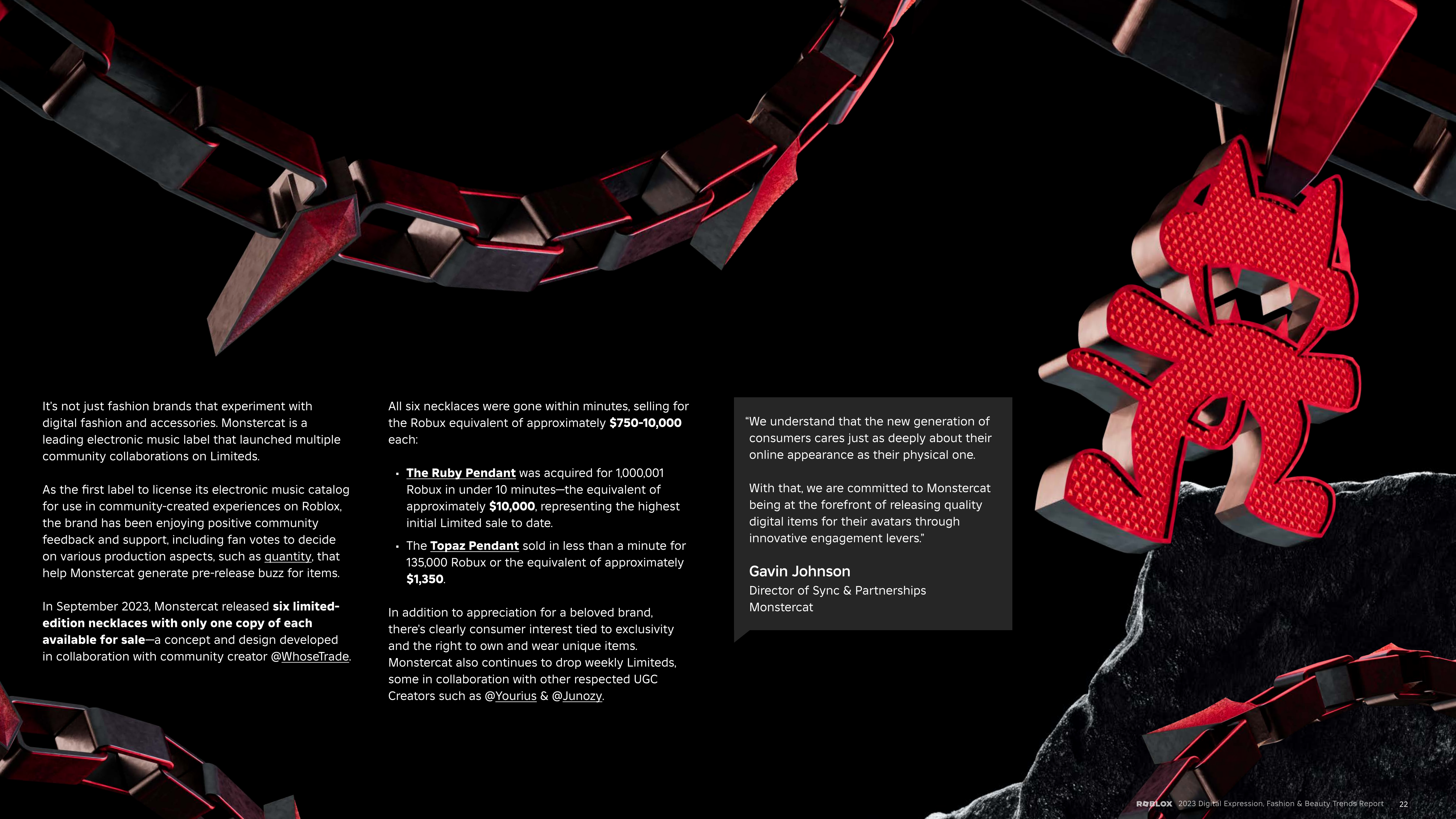
In the recently updated Gucci Ancora experience, people (or rather their avatars) were lining up to solve puzzles and earn three limited-edition items—the Gucci Ancora Ice Cream Cone, Hat, and Hair items—within the brand's new immersive neighborhood where art and fashion come together.

- **Gucci Ancora Ice Cream Cone** (30,000 items) ran out within eight hours of users solving the challenges.
- **Gucci Ancora Hat** (20,000 items) sold out within approximately four hours.
- **Gucci Ancora Hair** (10,000 items) disappeared into people's virtual closets in just under one hour.

Time will certainly tell how sought after these initially earned items will be, and meanwhile, community members on Roblox can be seen sporting these coveted items on their avatars.







It's not just fashion brands that experiment with digital fashion and accessories. Monstercat is a leading electronic music label that launched multiple community collaborations on Limiteds.

As the first label to license its electronic music catalog for use in community-created experiences on Roblox, the brand has been enjoying positive community feedback and support, including fan votes to decide on various production aspects, such as quantity, that help Monstercat generate pre-release buzz for items.

In September 2023, Monstercat released **six limited-edition necklaces with only one copy of each available for sale**—a concept and design developed in collaboration with community creator [@WhoseTrade](#).

All six necklaces were gone within minutes, selling for the Robux equivalent of approximately **\$750-10,000** each:

- **The Ruby Pendant** was acquired for 1,000,001 Robux in under 10 minutes—the equivalent of approximately **\$10,000**, representing the highest initial Limited sale to date.
- The **Topaz Pendant** sold in less than a minute for 135,000 Robux or the equivalent of approximately **\$1,350**.

In addition to appreciation for a beloved brand, there's clearly consumer interest tied to exclusivity and the right to own and wear unique items. Monstercat also continues to drop weekly Limiteds, some in collaboration with other respected UGC Creators such as [@Yourius](#) & [@Junozy](#).

“We understand that the new generation of consumers cares just as deeply about their online appearance as their physical one.

With that, we are committed to Monstercat being at the forefront of releasing quality digital items for their avatars through innovative engagement levers.”

**Gavin Johnson**

Director of Sync & Partnerships  
Monstercat



# Physical to Digital & Back

Creators and brands have also further explored the crossover between physical and digital, quickly bringing runway items straight to consumers on Roblox (e.g., looks from the [Carolina Herrera's Resort 2024 collection](#) showed up in Karlie Kloss' Fashion Klossette) and recreating runways from Paris Fashion Week (L'Oreal's in Livetopia) and Milan Fashion Week (Gucci Ancora) for people to explore and enjoy.

At the same time, more and more physical items are inspired by metaverse creations or communities:

- **Carolina Herrera's Good Girl Blush perfume** bottle design [was voted on](#) by the community in collaboration with Karlie Kloss' Fashion Klossette on Roblox.
- **Fenty Beauty's next Gloss Bomb** was co-created in the metaverse together with Roblox users who cast over a **million votes** for community-created Gloss Bomb designs within the Fenty Beauty+Skin limited-time experience.
- **Parsons students'** digital looks became one-of-a-kind physical garments. As students graduated from their first Roblox course on metaverse fashion presenting [a digital collection](#) first, two of their looks were recreated IRL by Myami studio and showcased during the 2023 Roblox Developer Conference.

"In the first Parsons x Roblox course we launched last year, our students learned new digital tools and explored new career pathways created by Roblox, a massive metaverse-like platform with an extremely successful UGC (user-generated content) marketplace.

The newfound skills and our media presence definitely attract new job opportunities with digital fashion and other brands to our students."

## Kyle Li

Assistant Professor of Communication  
Design and Technology  
Parsons School of Design





# Five-Year Predictions From the 2023 Roblox Developers Conference

“A top fashion designer will be discovered on Roblox, without having any experience in physical fashion.”

“Some Roblox creators will make more money from selling physical merchandise on Roblox than virtual merchandise.”

**David Baszucki**  
Founder and CEO  
Roblox





# Digital Self-Expression Can Support Mental Well-Being

Speaking to the generation that grew up in digital spaces, they certainly feel very comfortable in these environments. In fact, the vast majority of Gen Z respondents (**88%**) say\* that expressing themselves in immersive spaces has likely helped them comfortably express themselves in the physical world, too.

In addition, **40%** of Gen Z in our survey say they find it easier to present their authentic selves in the metaverse than in the physical world. They also feel they receive **impactful benefits**, saying digital self-expression:

1. Helps build connections with others (**29%**)
2. Is good for mental health in other ways (**25%**)
3. Boosts confidence (**24%**)
4. Allows to express true self (**21%**)

## How People Feel When Customizing Their Digital Identity & Avatars

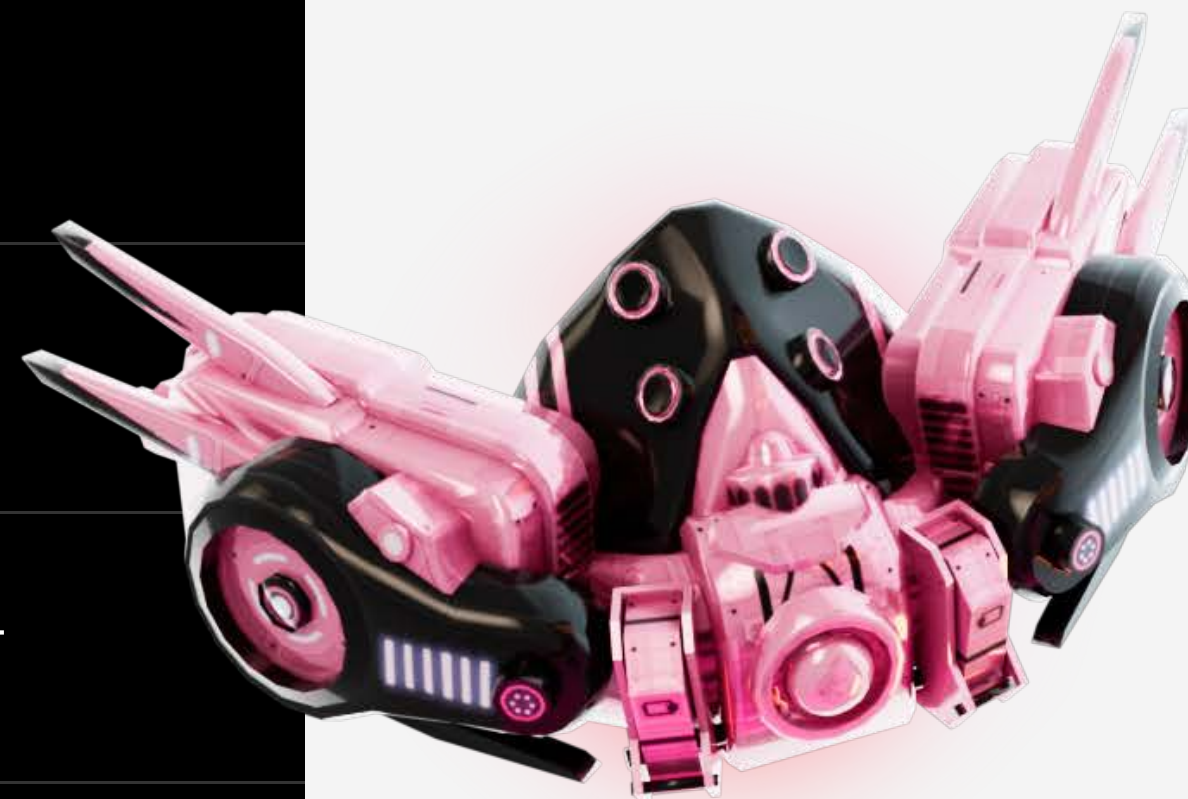
49% CREATIVE

45% HAPPY


42% >STYLISH  
>UNIQUE

38% CONFIDENT

37% COOL







“As someone who’s had a whirlwind of a year searching for my own body positivity, I’ve been finding ways to confidently style and explore the avatar characters that I create while my real-world healthy habits grow.

Expressing myself through an avatar that I love has had a positive impact on how I express myself in the physical world—I’m able to quickly create outfits without having to buy anything that I haven’t tried digitally first.

As this year comes to a close, my aspiration is to witness the progress (and be part of that progress!) in more body-inclusive selections on Roblox’s bundles marketplace, which debuted earlier this year.”

**Vivian Arellano @EvilArtist**  
Creator on Roblox



# In Conclusion

“Immersive spaces are fascinating to study and observe as the future of communication, connection, and self-expression unfolds right in front of our eyes.

While Roblox continues to iterate on its platform for communication and connection, as well as the technologies to further enable creation and creativity in these spaces, there’s still a lot more to understand about how people utilize them to enhance their lives.

We are excited to continue our research in this space, and we believe brands and industry experts alike will find these latest insights eye-opening for responding to changing consumer needs.”

## Christina Wootton

Chief Partnerships Officer  
Roblox

“Looking into the future, people will have more and more opportunities to express themselves creatively and authentically in digital spaces, as avatars and clothing become more expressive and realistic.

Today, avatar creation can take an experienced creator days to complete, or even up to a week. But recently, we showed just how easy it will be to create a fully-personalized avatar in just minutes with new generative AI tools.

The ability to express emotion through avatars will also be expanded soon, going beyond facial expressions to hand gestures and upper body movements, with new machine learning techniques enabling more realistic avatar movement.

In the near future, a person’s avatar could mirror their exact facial expressions, right down to the same blink rate. All of these elements of realism are as essential for emotional connections in these immersive experiences, as they are in the physical world.

We will continue to improve upon the Layered Clothing technology we launched in 2022, allowing even more precise layering and creation of inclusive digital fashion that fits any avatar body type.

We saw close to **20,000 items of 3D fashion designed with Layered Clothing** and sold in the first three quarters of 2023, and we hear from designers that this technology has vastly expanded what they’re able to create.

Our researchers are also taking things a step further, exploring novel approaches, for example, to efficiently capture fine wrinkling details when simulating complex materials like thick leather garments, and opening the door for even more realistic materials and clothing in the future.

We’re so excited to see what people will create when empowered with so many new capabilities in the future!”

## Manuel Bronstein

Chief Product Officer  
Roblox



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## FEATURED ITEMS FROM CREATORS/BRANDS ON ROBLOX

- Akusesa UGC  
@Aku\_HolderAccount
- Azaph3D  
@Azaph3D
- Builder\_Boy  
UGC Fashion House  
@Builder\_Boy
- Bunnexh  
@bunnexh
- Debizinha  
@yDebbi
- DRESSX  
@dressxcom
- EltonJohn  
@EltonJohn
- Main Apparel  
@MainGag
- Monstercat x  
@WhoseTrade
- M4RC  
@M4RC
- Nut  
@Nutest
- PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN  
@ParsonsTNS
- Prince Accessories  
@PrinceCorprblx
- Protopoly  
@Protopoly
- PureSweetener  
@PureSweetener
- Rage: 3D Avatars & Clothing  
@Soulskor
- ReddieTheTeddy  
@ReddieTheTeddy
- Strawbawie  
@heartsteelbiggestfan
- The Berry Fields  
@FrostyCherries
- Tiger  
@Rorien
- Tommy Hilfiger  
@tommyhilfiger
- Tropika Fashion  
@TaeSchnee
- Rush X  
@Rush\_X
- Valkenheim UGC  
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**ROBLOX**