

2023 Digital Expression, Fashion & Beauty Trends

How Gen Z Express Themselves
in Immersive Spaces

ROBLOX



The Power of Authentic Digital Self-Expression

“Last year we embarked on a journey to better understand how communities—especially Gen Z, who are growing up in the digital world—are expressing themselves in immersive spaces. We had been observing the expanding interest in avatar customization and digital fashion on the platform for over a decade, and we had our hypotheses on what this form of self-expression meant for people. But we were only scratching the surface of understanding what drives people when they create their digital look and frequently customize their avatar style, as well as how this impacts the physical world’s trends and behaviors.

Our 2022 report provided insights that researchers and the broader industry, both fashion and tech, found valuable. We uncovered, for example, that many Gen Z users already feel their avatar style is more important to them than their physical look, or that the majority often wear physical clothes inspired by their decked out avatars.

This year, we are looking deeper into the full spectrum of self-expression through digital identity, avatars, and fashion—from the psychology behind creating an avatar look and ‘beauty’ considerations, to the impact of authentic self-expression on the physical style trends, purchasing decisions, and even mental well-being. Now we are seeing in the data just how much authentic self-expression in immersive spaces means to many people—helping them build confidence and connections, in addition to their style.”

Christina Wootton

Chief Partnerships Officer
Roblox

“Authentic self-expression is often described as a universal connector for people: when we share who we truly are, we make genuine connection possible. As we build our platform and products for immersive communication and connection, ensuring that people have the broadest set of opportunities to authentically express themselves via their digital identity is front and center for us. We want everyone to be whoever they want to be, and create avatars—and digital fashion—they love.

Every so often, there’s a generational shift guiding how people connect with one another, and one is happening right now with immersive 3D simulation and communication. Data from this report shows that digital identity and avatar style are playing an increasingly impactful role in people’s daily lives.

Most importantly, our growing creator community (including the world’s top brands and influencers) is continuously expanding self-expression opportunities for people by creating bodies, heads, clothes, and even movements that represent a diverse range of global consumer interests. No single company could come up with this breadth of choices on its own.

As we are opening up creation opportunities to millions, it is clearly changing the game for digital fashion and expression, and we are excited for these opportunities to continue to grow.”

Manuel Bronstein

Chief Product Officer
Roblox



“Last year’s report on digital fashion trends that Parsons collaborated on with Roblox was groundbreaking, and this year’s research on broader self-expression trends in immersive spaces is no different.

For Gen Z, we learn that there is a symbiotic relationship between digital and physical fashion. The report shows that users and designers don’t silo how they think about fashion, but inspiration from each space influences how they dress and create clothing in the other. We also learn how important digital fashion is for Gen Z users’ mental well-being and self-expression. Having the agency to select their avatar's body, hair color and texture, skin color, make-up, clothing style and mood to best represent them has a critical role.

Whether it’s a safe space to play with fashion or carry over their style from the physical world, digital fashion is critical for Gen Z to explore, express and expand who they are.”

Ben Barry

PhD Dean, Associate Professor of Equity & Inclusion,
School Of Fashion,
The New School's Parsons School Of Design

Key Insights*

- **Digital self-expression for Gen Z continues to grow in importance.** Over half (**56%**) of **Gen Z** now say styling their avatar is **more important** to them than styling themselves in the physical world (vs. **42%** answering a similar question last year). The vast majority also say digital fashion is at least “somewhat important” for them (**84%**), and think the importance of digital fashion has grown at least “some” over the past year (**85%**). Over half (**53%**) think it’s grown **“a lot.”**

- **Expression, creation (and sales) on Roblox are growing alongside this trend.** In 2023, total avatar updates grew 38% YoY to **165 billion**, and people bought nearly **1.6 billion** digital fashion items and accessories, up 15% YoY.

- **Most Gen Z’s physical style is inspired by avatar style.** **84%** agree that their physical style is at least “somewhat” inspired by what their avatar and other avatars wear, and **54%** say they are “very” or “extremely inspired.” Using this inspiration, Gen Z are expanding their go-to fashion styles and wearing bolder fashions, playing with their hair color/style, getting more comfortable wearing gender-fluid clothing, and even often trying to look just like their avatars.

- **Brand recognition matters in the metaverse—and it’s likely to impact IRL purchase consideration.** **3 in 4** Gen Z say wearing digital fashions from a recognized brand is at least “somewhat” important to them, and **47%** of survey respondents say it’s “very” or “extremely important.” Most (**84%**) also agree that after wearing or trying on a popular brand’s item virtually, they are at least “somewhat likely” to consider this brand in the physical world, including **50%** who are “very” or “extremely likely” to do so.

- **Gen Z consumers are more open to spending on digital fashion.** Most Gen Z users are willing to spend on styling their avatar: **52%** say they’re comfortable budgeting up to \$10 each month, another **19%** say they’d be willing to spend up to \$20, while an additional **18%** are open to buying up to \$50-\$100 worth of items every month.

- **The more exclusive the better:** The recent launch of community-created Limiteds on Roblox highlighted users’ immediate demand for more exclusive items that are limited in quantity. The majority of community-created Limiteds are resold for more than their original cost, and one such single-edition item—**Monstercat’s Ruby Pendant**—was acquired for the **equivalent of approximately \$10,000.**

- **Authenticity drives self-expression in immersive spaces and positively impacts well-being.** When deciding on their avatar look, Gen Z strive to be unique, noting the metaverse feels “less judgemental” and prioritizing that their avatar looks good to them (**62%** say they care a lot about this) vs. others (**37%** say they care a lot that their avatar looks good to others). The vast majority (**88%**) think expressing themselves in immersive spaces has likely helped them comfortably express themselves in the physical world, allowing for true self-expression and to build connections with others, boosting confidence, and bettering mental health in other ways.

* **Report Methodology** - this report includes two complementary sets of data:

- **Behavioral data** collected from the Roblox platform from **January 1 through September 30, 2023.**

- **Self-reported survey data** collected from **1,545 Gen Z** users between the ages of 14 and 26, living in the United States (1027 respondents) and the United Kingdom (518 respondents). To obtain these responses, Roblox commissioned a nationally representative survey from Qualtrics fielded **September 27-29, 2023.** Included stats represent the full respondent sample given sentiment between the two markets was largely similar. The sample has been balanced for gender in both markets (using the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey for the U.S. and Office for National Statistics in the UK) to reflect the demographic composition of these markets’ population in that age range. Later in the report survey data is referenced as **‘2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey’.**



Understanding the Impact of Digital Self-expression on Roblox & Beyond

This year's report dives deeper into the full spectrum of self-expression through digital identity/avatar. Similar to [last year's survey](#), we turned to Gen Z users who are growing up in the digital world and asked **over 1,500 people ages 14-26 in the U.S. and the UK** about general trends and how they express themselves in immersive spaces.

We specifically focused on people who confirmed that they spend time (at least monthly) on platforms like Roblox, knowing these would be some of the most metaverse-savvy consumers out there with a depth of experience to share.

To complement the findings, the research also leverages vast behavioral data from Roblox, where **70.2M daily active users spend 2.5 hours**, on average, per day connecting and communicating in immersive environments.

Many are Gen Z users, with people ages **17-24 representing our fastest growing demographic** and 13+ making up 57% of the community.*

This is the generation that has spent over a decade dressing up and expressing themselves on the Roblox platform while interacting with their friends. They know and deeply understand digital identity, fashion trends in the space, and the power of digital self-expression that's available to them.

For example, one of last year's curious findings was centered around the overall importance of self-expression via digital clothing and accessories—as compared to dressing up in the physical world.

We learned that **for two in five Gen Z respondents, self-expression in the digital world was already more important in 2022 than expressing themselves in the physical world.** We intentionally repeated this question in our 2023 survey to see if things may have shifted. **And they have.**

"The digital avatar is a boundless reflection of our true identity."

Vivian Arellano

@EvilArtist
Creator on Roblox



*Roblox Q3 2023 data as of three months ended September 30, 2023



Today, digital self-expression is even more important:

- **Over half (56%)** of Gen Z respondents say* styling their avatar is more important to them than styling themselves in the physical world (as compared to **42%** answering a similar question last year).
- This is especially true for older Gen Z (ages 22-26), where **64%** said if they had to choose, then dressing up their avatar would be more important for them right now.
- Additionally, the vast majority (**84%**) of Gen Z say digital fashion is at least “somewhat” important for them, and **85%** think the importance of digital fashion has grown at least “some” over the past year. **Over half (53%) think it’s grown “a lot.”**

This sentiment is reflected in the growing number of digital fashion creators—as well as customer purchases on Roblox.

In the first three quarters of 2023:**

- Nearly **1.6 billion** digital fashion items and accessories were purchased, as compared to approximately **1.4 billion** in the same period last year; a **15%** year-over-year increase.
- The number of 2D and 3D digital clothing designers has grown from **11.5 million** to over **13 million** year over year, with inspiringly equal growth numbers of self-identifying male and female creators involved in digital fashion creation.

Additionally, when it comes to the full range of digital identity creation and self-expression, some members of our Roblox creator community are now, as of 2023, also designing and selling 3D avatar bodies and heads of all shapes and sizes, as well as items known as Limiteds (for which creators can specify the quantity to control their scarcity).

The items are made available via Roblox Marketplace (previously known as Avatar Shop) to the **14 million users who visit daily** to shop, resell, trade their items, and more. These categories of items were previously mostly created by Roblox—but are now open to the community to create and further enable authentic self-expression.

*2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey

**Roblox platform data collected from January through September 2023

“Digital fashion is transforming how people design, style, and share their creations with other people in an increasingly online world. And Roblox is transforming how digital fashion gets created and reaches its consumer, democratizing access to fashion design and self-expression.

The top designers in the world with shows during Fashion Weeks will never reach that sort of distribution. That's what's so interesting here—the limitless potential and scale of this space to create and share.

In the past, a fashion publication used to play that curation role, and I think still does, but the next generation is going other places for that influence, that taste-making.”

Karlie Kloss

Supermodel and Entrepreneur
Launched [Fashion Klossette](#) [Beta] in March 2023 on Roblox with **25M+** visits to date*

*As of September 30, 2023



How Avatars Inspire Physical Style



What real-life inspiration do people get from creating and styling their avatars?

In the 2022 survey, **70%** of Gen Z said they got physical clothing ideas for themselves from dressing their avatars, at least “sometimes.” In 2023,* survey respondents were asked if they were “ever” inspired to dress a certain way in the physical world based on what their avatar or other avatars are wearing:

- A staggering **84%** said their physical selves were at least “somewhat” inspired by their avatar’s style.
- This includes over half (**54%**) who said they were “very” or “extremely inspired.”

Asking how exactly digital fashion impacted their look in the physical world, **1 in 4 said they “often try to look just like” their avatars**, although this isn’t the top result.

How Avatar Styles Inspired People’s IRL Looks:

42% Expanded kind of fashion styles they wear

37% Changed their hairstyle

34% Wore bolder styles and/or colors

29% Colored their hair

29% Became more open/comfortable dressing more gender-fluid

25% Often try to look like their avatars

Interestingly, the number of Gen Z who said they got more comfortable dressing in a more gender-fluid style goes up to **37%** for respondents who self-identified as belonging to the LGBTQ+ community.

*2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey

Digital Identity: An Array of Self-Expression Opportunities

Fashion is just one part of a person's look and digital representation in immersive spaces. Every user journey on Roblox starts with creating an avatar, and this includes choosing:

- A **body** and **head** for your avatar, along with skin color.
- A **face** and a **hairstyle**.
- **Movements** (so-called **emotes**) like signature dance moves, and for many users—the ability to express some **emotions** should they choose an avatar head with facial animation enabled.
- Of course, **clothes** and **accessories**, including fantastical ones like auras and shoulder companions.

This year's report looked at the full spectrum of self-expression options to see which are prioritized and trending in our community.

As Roblox is moving towards more expressive avatars which can closely mimic via camera people's facial expressions—and in the future gestures—realistic emotions will also soon become a part of their self-expression.

"We are on the cusp of an explosion of creativity—in the near future, conversational AI* will enable push-button creation of a custom avatar from a photo or different images.

These avatars can then be tailored to people's liking to be taller or rendered in anime style. This will further expand the range of self-expression possibilities for communities around the globe, empowering literally anyone to be part of digital identity creation."

Manuel Bronstein

Chief Product Officer
Roblox



*Roblox Assistant technology previewed at the annual 2023 Roblox Developer Conference

The Importance of Avatar Customization for Gen Z

Looking at the first three quarters of 2023, **millions of Roblox users** continued to update their avatars on a daily basis with **165 billion total avatar updates** (up 38% from 120 billion in the same period last year).*

Looking at the frequency of daily active user updates by gender, an interesting piece of data appears: female-identifying users and users who didn't specify their gender are more likely to update their look daily than male-identifying users.

Gen Z respondents said in last year's survey that their avatar's look helps them make a statement without saying a word, and can reflect their current mood or the weather in the physical world.

This year, when asked **which avatar elements are most important for them to customize often**, the top five answers from survey respondents started with clothing, closely followed by hair.**

*Roblox platform data collected from January through September 2023.
**2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey

Most Important Avatar Elements to Customize Often (Daily/Weekly)

70% Clothing

67% Hair

52% Accessories

47% Skin tone

46% Body shape





“My audience is people who are native to Roblox and native to the internet. Roblox has created a space and a culture that is hard to define when outside of it, but inside, my fashion designs thrive.

People are making memories with their friends on Roblox that rival physical experiences, and digital fashion—the way people express themselves and design or dress their avatars—is a major part of this.”

Sam Jordan

@Builder_Boy

Digital Fashion Designer on Roblox

From Head to Toe, Avatars Enable Experimentation with Expression

Last year's survey found that a full range of avatar body shapes and skin colors were important for the vast majority of Gen Z users. This year, we asked* which two primary body/skin options people are most likely to experiment with when it comes to customizing their avatars, and the top responses include:

- **42%** - Human skin tones close to my own,
- **36%** - Body types close to my own, and
- **29%** - Body types somewhat different than mine (bigger, smaller, more muscular, etc.).

It seems people are looking for at least some resemblance to their physical selves while customizing their digital identity. There are, however, those who prefer to experiment with body types that are non-human (**16%**) or represent other genders (**15%**), as well as human skin tones different from theirs (**19%**) and non-human skin tones (**15%**).

*2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey
**Data for August-September 2023

The range of avatar body options on Roblox has expanded a lot over the past few years as avatars evolved from blocky characters and fantastical creatures to include a selection of more realistic and natural humanoid avatars.

Additionally, since Roblox opened up avatar body and head creation to some of the community creators in August 2023, **over 700 different bodies and over 1,000 unique heads** enhanced by facial animation have already been created.

Yes, you can mix and match bodies and heads, and the Roblox Marketplace now includes avatar options previously undreamt of, from stick figures to other creatures and humanoids of all kinds. The community's creativity never ceases to amaze.

Even more fascinating is how quickly the community warmed to these creations catering to a diverse range of tastes: in less than two months**, users have already acquired nearly **561 million of these community-created heads and over 383 million bodies.**

"When I do custom avatars, I ask about who they are as people. Roblox is a great platform to truly express yourself—a blank canvas to represent your true self, whether it be culture, gender identity or personality. I believe someone's avatar is a reflection of their true soul, so I try to pack that personality into every creation I make."

Maisy Fifield
@RastaMyPasta
Creator on Roblox



"Life isn't perfect but your hair can be"*

Similarly, when it comes to hair, faces, and skin colors, the majority of Gen Z respondents are looking for a full range of options for authentic representation and being whoever they want to be.

When asked* **which avatar options help people feel fully represented in the metaverse**, these traits were at least "somewhat important" to the vast majority of users:

- **91%** - Hair colors, textures and styles (**70%** said "very" or "extremely" important),
- **90%** - Skin tones (**72%** said "very" or "extremely" important),
- **90%** Representative face attributes like eye colors, noses, lips (**67%** said "very" or "extremely" important), and
- **89%** Body sizes like thin, curvy, muscular, tall, short (**67%** said "very" or "extremely" important).

The importance of these customization options is also mirrored in the Roblox platform data which shows, for example, strong growth in avatar hair supply and demand.

In 2023**, Roblox has seen over **139 million total purchases of various hairstyles** (up **20%** year over year), including over **7.3 million users who bought five or more hairstyles**.

Some research shows that, for example, women in the physical world get an urge to change their hairstyle about three times per year on average (and actually do something about it twice a year). On Roblox, **among self-identifying female users** who have made any hair purchases in 2023, the average number of purchases includes **five different hairstyles**** (male users purchased three, and users who didn't specify gender - four).

With the lower cost and ease of expression in immersive spaces people are in a position to have fun changing up their hairstyles more often.

On the creation side, realistic hair design is a complex process. For example, even the most carefully designed hairdos can present movement challenges in immersive 3D environments, requiring new frameworks to preserve their shape against the pull of gravity and other external forces.

While Roblox researchers are working on tackling these complex issues, it's exciting to see community members focused on technical excellence and innovation to offer a diversity of hairstyles for users on the platform.

Creators are also coming together—e.g., the 20+ community artists who make up the SHOP COLLECTIVE group—to bring timely trending hairstyles along with other digital items to the community on a regular basis.

So far this year, Roblox has seen nearly **44,000** unique hairstyles introduced by the community (**up 681%** year over year)*.

"The way I see it, creation should be representative. I set out to create authentic black hairstyles for avatars. Its design is technical and pretty complex, but I knew I could do it with passion and flare. I even went back to school to learn the latest methods. I love helping build things to make everyone feel at home."

@Lirn

Creator on Roblox



*Popular anonymous quote.

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

Avatars Wear Makeup Too

35% of Gen Z say it's important for them to customize their avatar makeup often—daily or weekly (and the number goes up to 51% for self-identifying female survey respondents).*

On Roblox, many community-created experiences already include beauty and makeup salons where you can socialize and create a cool look. And in this year's survey, **over half (54%)*** of Gen Z respondents agree that makeup helps complement beauty in the metaverse, similar to how it serves people's expression in the physical world.

Perhaps this is why in 2023, creators seemed to have had more fun than ever with makeup, both on their own and co-creating with brands. For example, Roblox creator Jenni Svoboda (@Lovespun) translated her love for lashes into a fun new offering, selling **hundreds of thousands** of lash extensions for avatars.

Beauty and hair brands are taking notice of just how much attention people pay to their avatar's look, and are finding ways to connect with their fans in immersive spaces. The splash of beauty brands on the platform this year includes the likes of Fenty Beauty, Givenchy Beauty, Maybelline, NARS Sweet Rush, NYX, and L'Oreal, among others—reinvesting in existing experiences or launching new community collaborations and immersive spaces.

They're inviting users not only to try on new hair or makeup, but also to co-create products and packaging designs. To bring these ideas to life, they are actively engaging community creators and influencers.

NARS brought several community creators together to replicate some of their makeup artists' iconic looks via a limited-time collaboration in the NARS Sweet Rush experience, while Fashion Klossette introduced a first-of-its-kind in-experience styling studio with makeup customization.

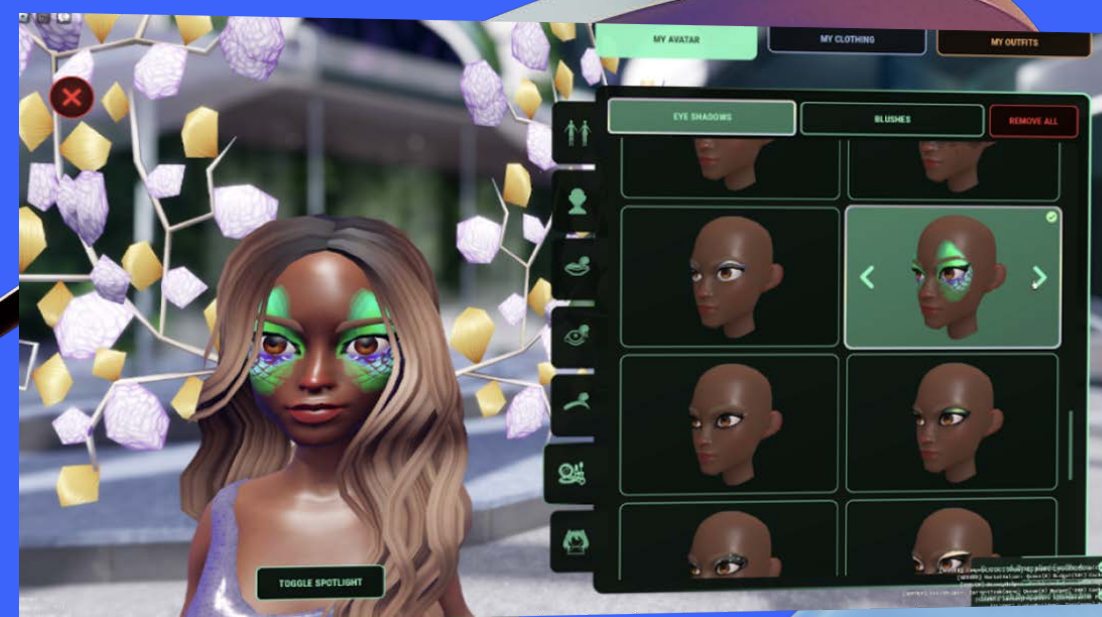
"Whether it be working with a brand to bring their ethos to the digital world or creating a custom lash that makes eyes pop, making items that help people bring to life their true identity is so inspiring.

When you can express yourself fully, there are no limits, and I love being able to play a part in making that happen for people."

Jenni Svoboda

@Lovespun
Creator On Roblox

*2023 Roblox Self-Expression Survey



The Rise of Emotes, Auras, and Other Innovative Self-Expression Ways

86% of Gen Z we surveyed said the ability for their avatar to express emotions is at least “somewhat important” to them to feel fully represented in the metaverse.

Users and creators are also leveraging innovative methods of self-expression, from signature avatar movements (emotes) to fantastical auras wrapping around avatar shoulders. In Paris Hilton’s *Slivingland* you can choose an aura to express your vibe in the moment. Now if only we could wear those IRL...

Users and brands are also taking great interest in emotes on Roblox. In 2023,* **9.8 million users** bought emotes (up **64%** year over year), and brands like Tommy Hilfiger introduced some emotes of their own, in addition to dropping digital fashion items throughout the year.

The fun *Tommy Archer* and *Tommy K-Pop Mic Drop* emotes created in collaboration with community creator @Lovespun were in broad demand—especially the Archer emote, which is now part of **160,000+** users’ personal collections of virtual moves.

At the moment, there are not as many emotes available to users on the platform, which likely also drives strong interest in unique new offerings, especially those tied to fandom.

Consider the emotes from K-Pop band TWICE that represent their iconic choreography, displayed in a shopping window of the *TWICE Square* experience launched in March 2023.

To date, these TWICE emotes have been acquired **over 3.1 million times**, and one emote in particular—*TWICE The Feels*—went viral with **1.8 million users** now showing off the move both on and off Roblox. Similarly, *Elton John’s Heart Skip* emote, launched around his ‘Beyond the Yellow Brick Road’ concert experience, was acquired **over 1.5 million times in 2023.***

“We are a fashion brand, and you wouldn’t typically think of emotes for Tommy Hilfiger, but it’s been fascinating to see the community’s excitement around these offerings on Roblox.”

Jemma Ware

Sr. Director of Digital Fashion & Innovation
Tommy Hilfiger



*Roblox platform data collected from January through September 2023

*Roblox platform data collected from January through September 2023.

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

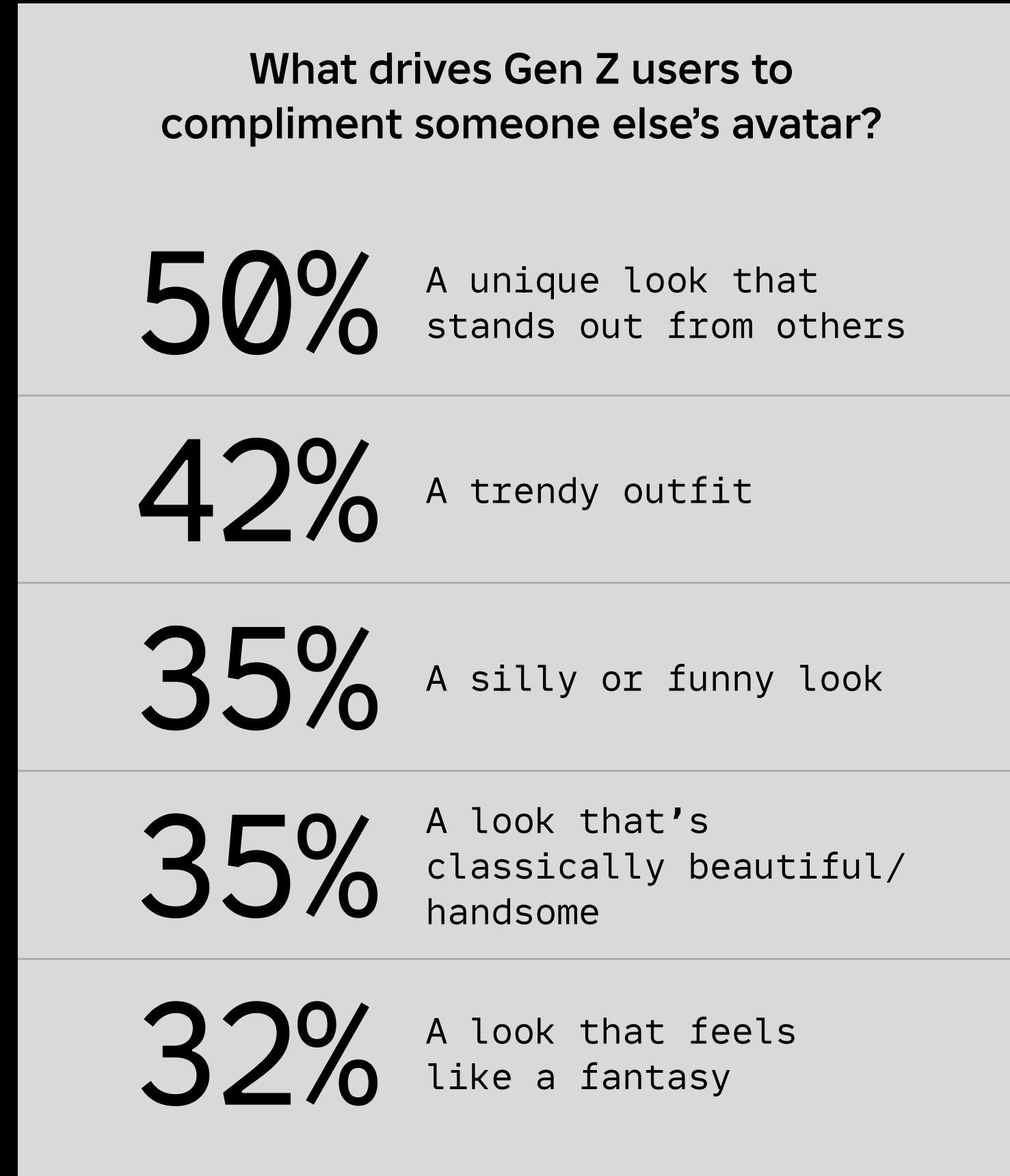
While many respondents feel beauty in the metaverse looks at least “somewhat similar” to the expressions of it we see in the physical world, **over a quarter (28%) said the parameters differed**, crediting more breadth of expression in immersive spaces to more “freedom,” “creative options,” “different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

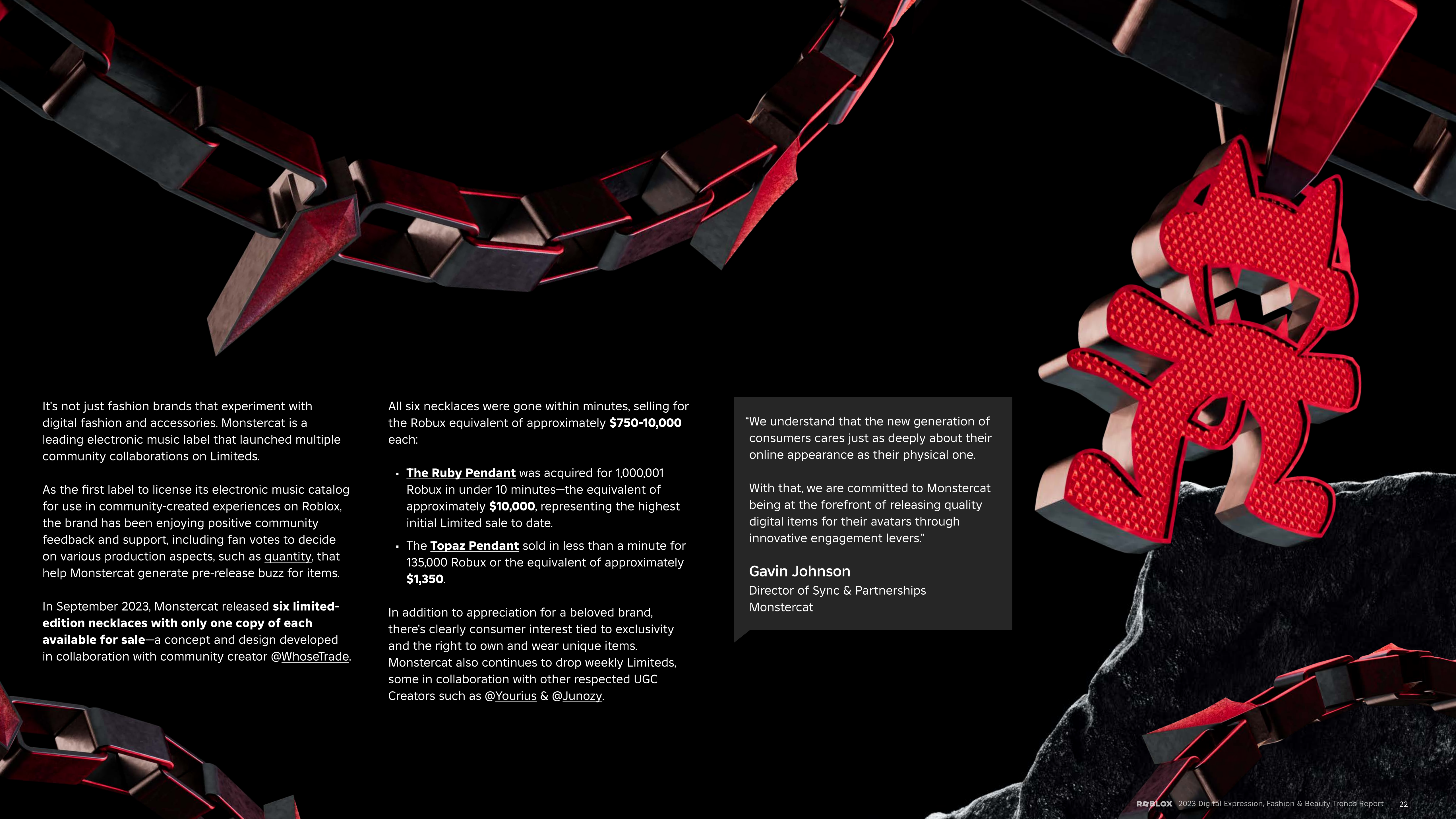
Since launch, the majority of community-created Limiteds are resold for more than their original cost, and many items get acquired very quickly.

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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