



Innovation Pioneers

THIS DOCUMENTATION INCLUDES KEY TAKE-AWAYS FROM ROUNDTABLE “THE METAVERSE OF WORK” HOSTED BY VASAKRONAN IN COLLABORATION WITH FLOWPASS AND VIRTWAY.

The Roundtable Meeting took place on September 22nd, 2021 at Arena Sergel, Malmskillnadsgatan 36, Stockholm

PARTICIPATING COMPANIES & ORGANIZATIONS

Alfa-Laval, Arbetsförmedlingen, Flowpass, Googol, KTH, Lindab, RISE Research Institutes of Sweden, Sweco, Vasakronan, Veryday, White Architects

PURPOSE

The purpose of the meeting was to get immersed into new trends and to do some future-gazing to understand where the workplace 3.0 is going. The members got a chance to discuss the up-and-rising technologies and services to discuss how these could affect and be implemented in their own organisations. The members also discussed the benefits and challenges of new work technologies and trends and how one could overcome potential pitfalls. The members also learned about the components that will make up the third workplace.

ABOUT THE HOST AND COLLABORATORS

[Vasakronan](#) is Sweden's largest property company with a portfolio comprising 170 properties with a total area of 2.3 million square metres. They own, manage and develop centrally located office and retail properties in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö and Uppsala. The market value of their property portfolio totals around SEK 170 billion. The number of employees is approximately 310.

[Virtway](#) offer a unique, easy, fun, and engaging communication experience from anywhere in the world and with any device: mobile phones, tablets, and computers. Their 3D technology has taken the concept of virtual communities to the next level.

[Flowpass](#) gives workers access to local workspaces when they are tired of working from home or on the move. For employers they give them instant access to flexible work spots in one platform where all employees can choose where they are right now. Finally workspace owners can increase occupancy and create new revenue streams.



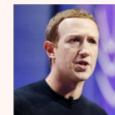
THE METAVERSE OF WORK - INTRODUCTION

The session kicked off with an introduction to the thematic vision 'Metaverse of Work' presented by Peter Ingman, founder of Flowpass. The metaverse is a new concept, a play with words, as it does not yet exist, however many big tech companies are visioning around it as we speak. Facebook is currently investing 20% of its workforce to develop this new concept which Mark Zuckerberg refers to as "an embodied internet". Instead of experiencing work and meetings from a 2D screen, you would instead experience it in a virtual world with your full five senses.

In the metaverse, you'll be impersonated with your own avatar, which will need to be designed just like anything else. You'll experience sound in a similar way to reality, with sound level increasing as you are approaching the source of the sound and you'll hear your colleague just like you would in the real world. The key term going forward will be whether the participants are 'immersed' and how you can create great virtual work experiences. According to Peter Ingman, we have a lot to learn from the gaming industry who are already ahead of us in terms of creating immersive experiences.

The metaverse world/worlds need to be created and everything needs to be designed, which is why we are seeing a boom of digital assets such as NFT art. (NFT means Non-Fungible Token, which is a type of cryptocurrency where every NFT created is unique). Nobody knows what digital assets we'll need in the future, which is why we see a purchase race of bulks of digital assets being bought.

- "[The metaverse is] an embodied Internet that you're inside of rather than just looking at. We believe that this is going to be the successor to the mobile Internet." ¹



Mark Zuckerberg
Facebook

As inspiration, the members watched the trailer for Ready Player One movie by Steven Spielberg, a science fiction movie about a future virtual world. When the narrator's voice said "People come to Oasis for all the things they can do. They stay for all the things they can be" an instant AHA moment took place amongst the audience.

The link to the movie: [READY PLAYER ONE - Official Trailer 1 \[HD\]](#)



Is the metaverse for real?

Doesn't all of this sound too crazy? Will this metaverse workplace really happen? According to Peter Ingman, the development has partially already happened. Apple revolutionized our way of working with their Smartphone invention and we now see services offered online that it would have been unthinkable to offer online before, such as vet's and doctor's appointments. "It might be too much for us, but it is not for sure it is too much for our children," Peter Ingman said.



Is the demand large enough?

There are about 7.9 billion people in the world today, of which an astonishing number of 2.81 billion people are gamers. This audience is already immersing themselves into virtual worlds. The gaming industry is valued at approximately 300 billion dollars. It is therefore highly likely that the metaverse is coming and that the demand does exist. As a large proportion of gamers are still male, one member brought up an important point about women also needing to take control of the metaverse development to influence what it will become.

Food for thought

- What will a square meter in a digital world be worth? How will prime locations be valued versus less-visited digital areas?
- What new work roles will we see in the future? In the digital world, every single little brick or pixel will need to be designed. Will the next work title be "Avatar Stylist"?
- How will finance departments be able to estimate the value of digital assets, such as NFTs, digital design assets and digital locations in the metaverse?
- Will you need to purchase your apartment in the parallel metaverse world to claim it before anyone else does?
- With increased automation of repetitive work tasks, what can we create when we have more time for value creation activities?
- The need for getting back into nature: we have seen during the pandemic that activities such as golf, hunting and getting a dog have spiked. How will this need continue to evolve as a result of the increased digitization?



DEFINITIONS IN THE FUTURE OF WORK

Peter Ingman also went through their terminology and definitions when discussing the future workplace.

New language required

Definitions

Metaverse

Zuckerbergs new vision for Facebook. But also Epic, Decentraland, Google, Microsoft and others have projects to elevate public interest in VR/AR and Gaming experience into everyday use of virtual worlds and mixed reality.

Hybrid

The term Hybrid is often used to describe when people meet/collaborate and some are participating digitally and some are physically present. But it's also points towards the decision on how many days should be spent at the Office vs WFH. Also called "Flex".

Third Workplace

The alternative to "Working from Home" or "at the Office" will be named **the third workplace**. A whole series of various spaces used to collaborate, deepwork or perform tasks where its necessary for the individual to have a supporting environment. Similar to "Hub & Spoke"

1. Metaverse

As previously described, the metaverse is the successor of the mobile internet - a fully immersive experience in a virtual world developed based on our five senses. It is a parallell world where we can interact and collaborate with friends and colleagues from all over the world, powered by VR and AR technology. There are three main components that make up the metaverse; software, hardware and behaviour.

2. Hybrid

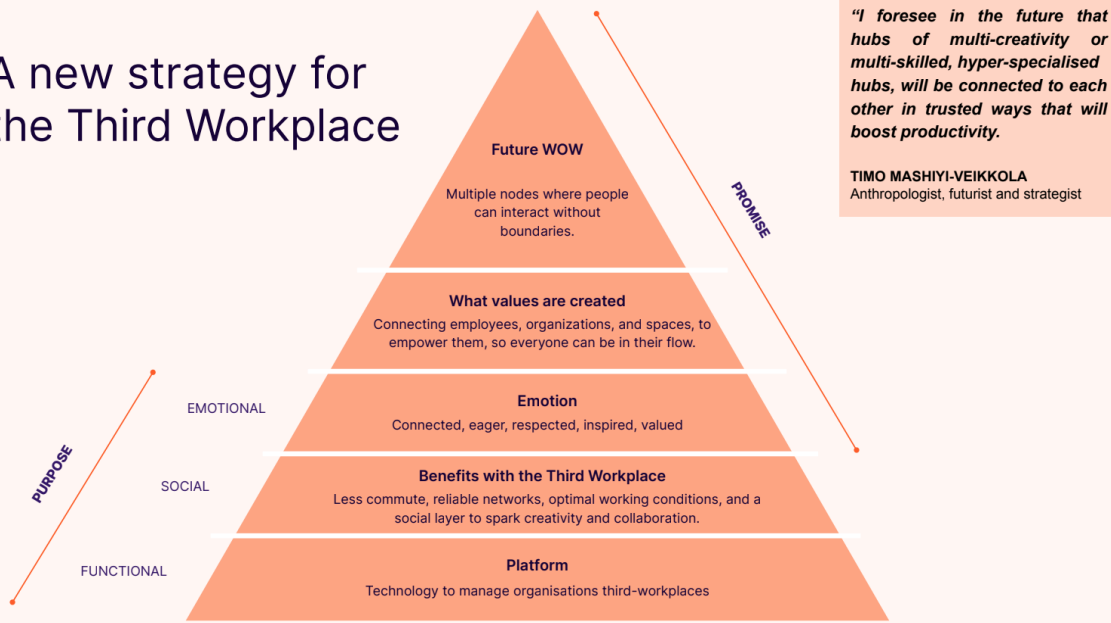
We've all gotten familiar with the term hybrid work during the pandemic, which is a work style mix of in-office and digital meetings. The important thing to consider post-covid when everyone has been working digitally is how to handle this distributed work mix.

3. Third Workplace

A third workplace which is neither home nor the office, such as coworking or hotel lobbies. The third workplace fulfils a need you do not get from working at home, which is mostly the social interactions. HR departments have noticed that employees report being productive at home, but they lack social connections. Finding ways to create human connection within a distributed workforce will be the number one HR challenge going forward. Possible solutions could be applications like Flowpass, to be able to find where your peers or community is working from in real-time, to join your peers at the nearest café or space for the day.



A new strategy for the Third Workplace



ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS: THE FUTURE OF WORK

Before going into breakout rooms to discuss challenges of the future of work, a framework for creating the next workplace strategy was introduced. The future of work will include four main components; People, Place, Digital and Process.



Based on this Future of Work model the members were divided into two groups to discuss their own challenges and reflections about the future of work.

The members were given a set of questions to spur the conversations:

1. Are you already working distributed - how?
2. What are your concerns or wins?
3. What does increased flexibility mean to you? How should it be implemented?

REFLECTIONS AND LEARNINGS

The participants were divided into two groups and shared their own experiences during the pandemic and their own future of work reflections. Here are some of the topics that were discussed:

- One challenge of working remotely post-pandemic is that during the pandemic we were all forced to work from home, but post-pandemic we'll be working in a hybrid style. How do you manage a workplace with some employees being physically present and some being present remotely?
- A member reflected on the fact that she has built a whole team during the pandemic without meeting any of them. How do you master the art of selling a vision to the team digitally?
- How do you plan office space? Will 1000 or 3000 employees return to the office?
- The importance of remote-first: if you are going to run a hybrid style office, then everyone *always* need to adapt to the meeting members calling in online
- How do you as a manager keep track of employees' wellness if you are not meeting them? Could we start measuring wellness in real-time through digital tools? How do you do that ethically?
- Some members believed that we'll become more purposeful when we do meet physically. We'll go to the office "...because..." instead of by default. The physical meetings could therefore become more valuable if people become more intentional about participating in onsite meetings.
- One member shared that, in their company, they had every Wednesday visited the office for discussion-based work in a lean coffee setting. This worked well for them.
- Labor law restrictions could complicate hybrid offices. For example, you need to be at the office 51% of the time otherwise new regulations kick in and employees would be entitled to "traktamente" (food allowances).
- How do you manage employees with inappropriate home office environments?
- One member brought up the Flow research shows that you shouldn't try to force creative work when you are not feeling creative and vice versa. Hybrid style offices could enable mood-of-the-day-based work whether you are in the creative, admin or discussion mood.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMART OFFICES

How will the new office - the Smart Office look like? Smartphones have already revolutionized our way of working and new technologies are entering the workplace. We also need to accept that Millennials think differently than the older generations. We risk losing an important workforce if we do not meet their expectations, so we cannot afford to detract the Millennials from our workplaces.

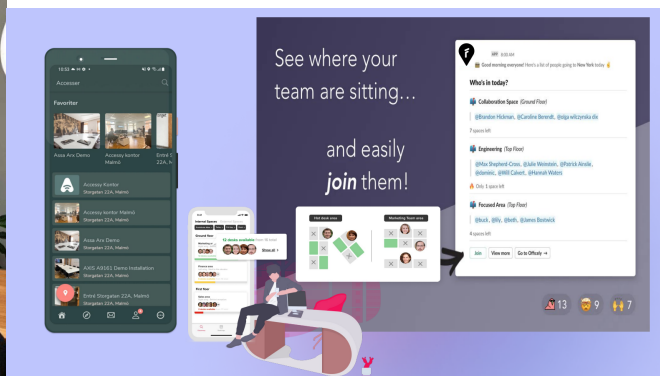


Post New Normal Smart Office

The advent of the smartphone elevated humanity into a new era of technology usage. Younger generations are used to access whatever, whenever and whoever. The expectation for continuous improved and integrated technologies in the Workplace are real. Most organisations struggle with staying on top and at the same time adhering to company policies, security and reliability. Maintaining one's work- and business systems are crucial to drive staff and client engagement, increase productivity and minimize cost of operations.

The members got a quick intro to some new technologies that are entering the workplace:

- Hand scanning - the successor of the time-clock, which was the greatest work invention of its era. Apple has already used hand scanning for events.
- Zoom auto-caption - get subtitles directly in your meeting, enabling a Swede to work with a designer in Pakistan. Just like Google translate, we'll see an exponential development of its accuracy in transcribing voice into words.
- Mixed Reality - VR and AR are developing at a fast speed, enabling you to experiment with visualisations and test-driving a car. How could this technology improve your work processes or offering?
- New applications - in the future we'll want to know where "my fellow growth hackers" are working so that we can join them physically or virtually. We'll see more apps developing to cater for community-based work needs.
- New work mobility services - in the future we'll want to be able to "work from where we are". This will lead to a new demand for micro offices - the reinvented phone booth - so that we can take meetings on-demand and pay by the minute.
- Work out in nature - perhaps we'll see more workstations and coworking opportunities out in the scenic nature?
- Opportunities of self-driving cars - will we be able to work in the car instead, decreasing unproductive commuting hours?



The members got a chance to discuss these technologies and got a set of questions to help guide the discussions:

1. Could you benefit from any of these trends and technologies?
2. What have you already implemented or experimented with?
3. What would your smart office look like?

REFLECTIONS AND LEARNINGS

The participants were once again divided into two groups and got a chance to discuss these technologies and their potential. Here are some of the reflections that were brought up:

- There was a discussion around collective learning and how we'll increasingly work on projects together in real-time.
- Decreased need for instructions: one member mentioned how they have already integrated the AR/VR technology by showing the customer through augmented reality how to fix their machines.
- Architects also already use VR technology to show their clients their building designs.
- There was also a discussion around being able to show customers their solutions instead of customers having to visit the factory.
- A point was raised about increased competition, potentially you'll even compete with players offering your service for free. Perhaps we'll start visiting our own customers more, to invest in the relationship?
- Perhaps we'll see a decrease of "the bottleneck of meeting rooms" with more people realizing that they rather need a creative discussion and more natural forums to cater for this need. How can we create more forums and natural ways of meeting?

CLOSING THOUGHTS FROM INNOVATION PIONEERS

The Roundtable is a new adjusted format from our earlier Initiator meetings. In this test format we have taken away the time for conversations around practical matters around Innovation Pioneers to secure the thing you all value the most - knowledge transfer between members around challenging topics and networking.

We also see that it will take awhile before we know how you all handle the new normal in terms of prioritizing and allowing physical meetings again, which means that we will continue to try out new formats and have a close conversation with all our members to be able to find out what works best for you.

In this session we joined forces with our Initiator company Vasakronan and their partners Flowpass and Virtway to take a leap into the future of the Metaverse of Work with inspiration and facts about new technologies and services and it's possible impact on the future of the workspace and worklife. It was evident that the future of work can be seen in so many variations and that there are so many improvements you as an employer can do and need to do. As you cannot do everything at the same time, how do you prioritize and filter all these endless opportunities? The meeting ended with all participants giving their comment about what would fit their organisation and focusing on the improvements that would have the biggest impact first.



SOURCES FROM THE FLOWPASS PRESENTATION

Ready Player One trailer: <https://youtu.be/cSp1dM2Vj48>

Why Facebook is spending billions on the Metaverse: <https://youtu.be/QvZSdDC9rWo>

Horizon Workrooms by Facebook: <https://youtu.be/lqj50lxRrKQ>

Virtway Events: <https://youtu.be/FLpmuvzyqpU>

Driving into the Future with Unity: <https://youtu.be/kIBSeLnT5kE>

Half-Life Alyx (the VR game): <https://youtu.be/6yQKLp0Uc70>

Avatar 2 - official trailer: <https://youtu.be/AxLH0IXEGAY>

Svenska Quixel (VR elements) - visades aldrig: <https://youtu.be/Sh7Gbyf4XMY>

Case 1

Amazing TEDx video with the professor of the study: Nicholas Bloom.

<https://youtu.be/oiUyyZPIHyY>

Case 2

Volvo Mixed Reality Core Team with finnish Varjo. <https://youtu.be/eo3vuht1-jk> (the more design oriented showcase)

Artiklar

<https://www.computerweekly.com/feature/First-priorities-for-the-third-workplace>

<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/whats-next-for-remote-work-an-analysis-of-2000-tasks-800-jobs-and-nine-countries>

Microsofts nya stora studie som pekar på minskad synkrona komms

(<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-021-01196-4>)

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/infinite-scroll/facebook-wants-us-to-live-in-the-metaverse>

<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/google-ceo-sundar-pichai-on-the-future-of-work-131001210.html>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/cathyhackl/2020/07/05/the-metaverse-is-coming--its-a-very-big-deal/?sh=58c6ab43440f>

SHARED DOCUMENTATION

Presentation from Flowpass + Innovation Pioneers documentation

(available on Member's Area of the website: innovationpioneers.net/members-area),
password: innopion2019

NEXT SESSION

- [Tankmeeting nr 57 at RISE \(on location\) – How to stay relevant in a complex world](https://www.innovationpioneers.net/event/tankmeeting-nr-56-at-rise)
<https://www.innovationpioneers.net/event/tankmeeting-nr-56-at-rise>

CONTACT

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