Anand and Anand in Metaverse to Discuss 'IP in Metaverse'

News & Updates • March 21, 2023

Metaverse is the new buzz word. With the recent case of Hermes meta Birkins, debate around protecting intellectual property in this virtual world has gained steam. In order to brainstorm the challenges posed to IPR in Metaverse and the possible solutions, Anand and Anand took to Metaverse to discuss 'IP in Metaverse' in a session that also marked celebration of firm's centenary.

The session on IP in Metaverse had as its panellists INTA CEO Etienne Sanz de Acedo, Sunil Abraham (Director-Public Policy for data and Emerging Tech at Meta), Lakshika Joshi (Global IP Head at Capegemini Engineering) and Anup Kumar from Microsoft. Their avatars joined the session in the Metaverse while the avatar of Anand and Anand Managing Partner Pravin Anand moderated the discussion.

The session delved into peculiar trademark issues like will the platform owners be held responsible in case of disputes when trademark appears on the Metaverse and if there was need for specialist legislation to govern the rights and obligations of the parties given the peculiarities of the Internet and the Metaverse.

One of the many interesting points the panellists mulled over was – Can a trademark be well-known only in the Metaverse without being well-known in the physical world?

The panellists spoke about 'sustainability' and how the idea was to leverage the best of this parallel world in healthcare, infrastructure etc while ensuring that users can move from one Metaverse to another seamlessly.

"...We have 5.16 billion Internet users, If we look at the investment in metaverse, just in first semester, it was 100 bn US Dollars and doubled in 2022. The value of Metaverse is estimated at 5 trillion US Dollars by 2030. It is going to change entirely the consumer experience. But we know that standards do not exist and we have several metaverse and not just one – Consumer Metaverse, Enterprise and business metaverse and that means several metaverse not yet interconnected, there is risk for brand owners and equal risk for consumers," said Etienne while emphasising on INTA's dedication to the cause of protecting brands and consumers in the virtual world.

Sunil Abraham of Meta spoke about sustainability perspective being adopted at the company and how it has pledged all its patents which were useful from that perspective.

Anup from Microsoft shared that the company is making advancements in terms of both software and hardware including Teams workspace where Microsoft has made investments in online meeting

Apps (mesh) where people can work together.

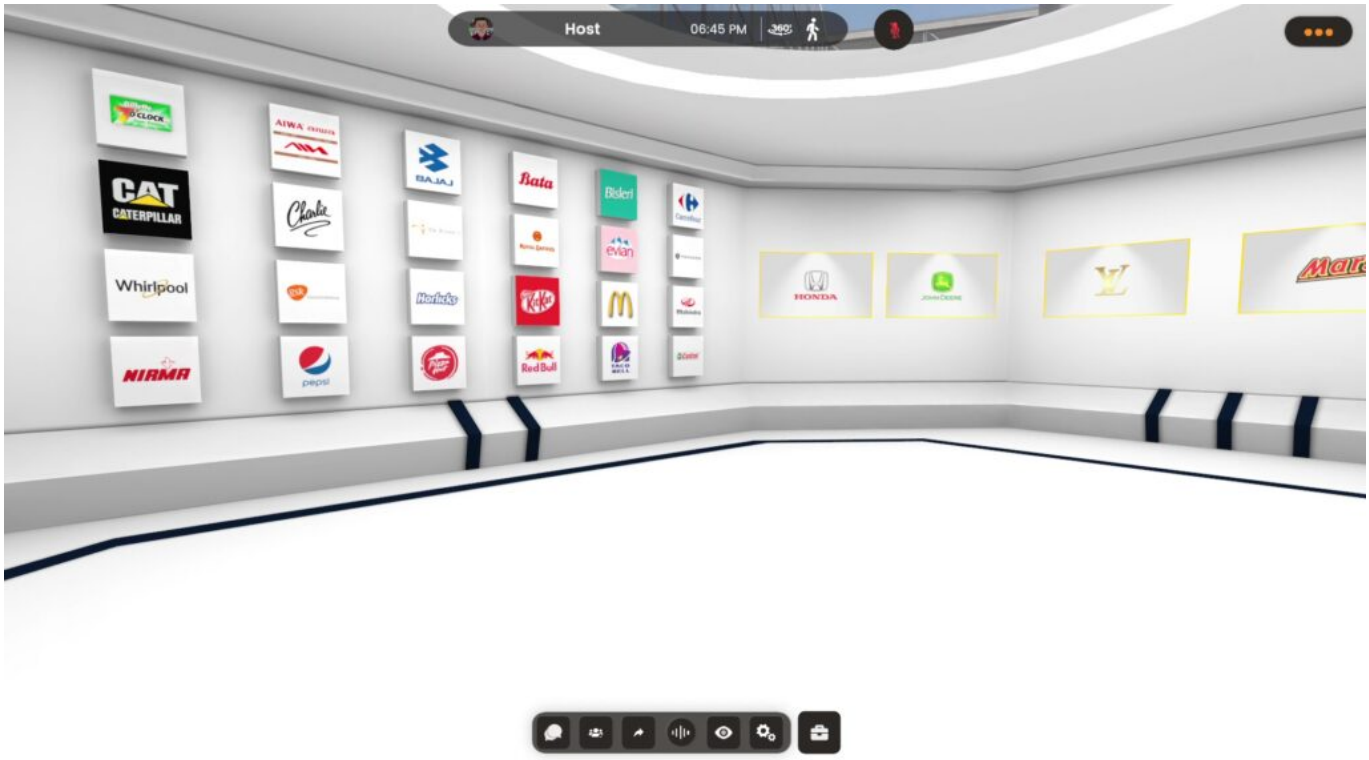
Lakshika Joshi shared how the debate around IP in Metaverse "takes me back to about two decades when from a physical world we were latching on to digital world and had similar apprehensions about protecting trademarks, domain names etc. From a legal standpoint, it is a sort of déjà vu.

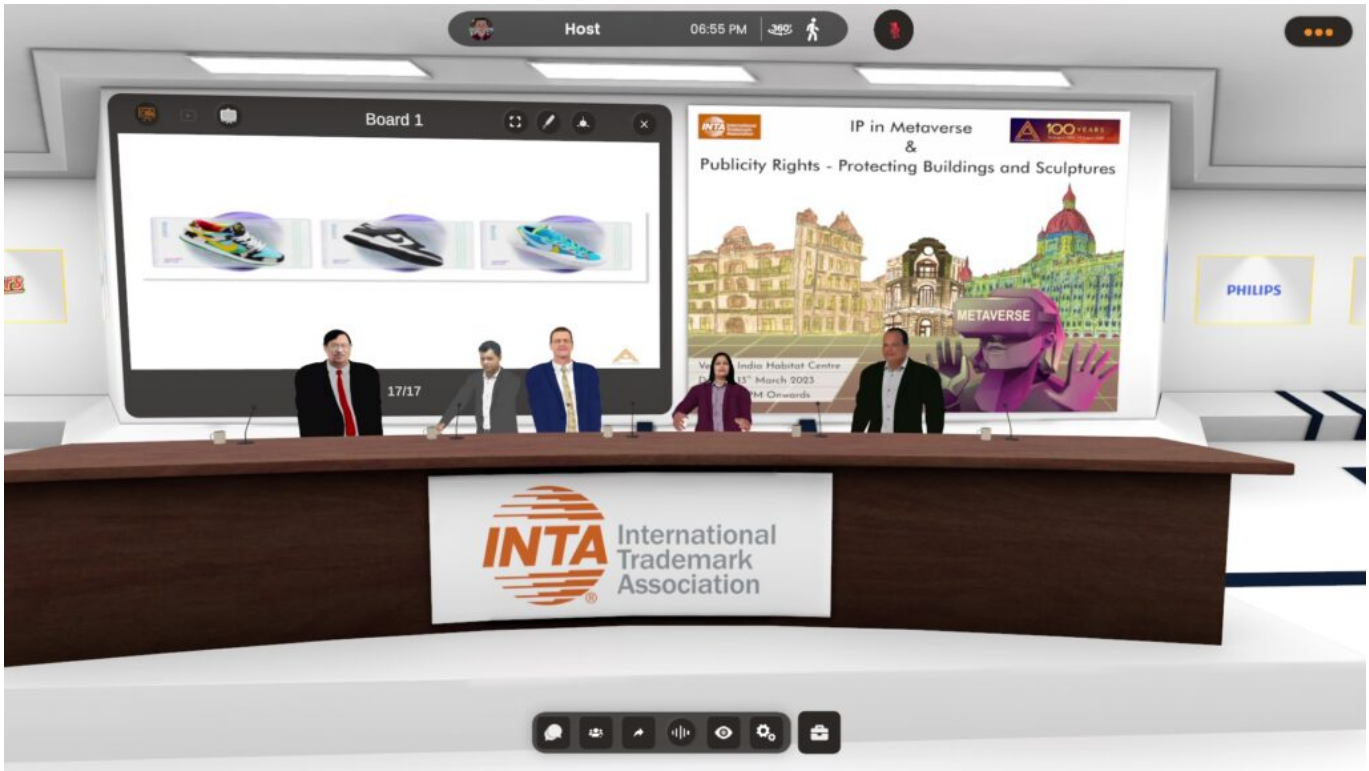
"Bigger challenge is around the kind of case laws we will see happening in this space. How will we put Rogers test to use, does it still protect the artists' rights," said she as she spoke about protection of Art in the Metaverse while also wondering what happens to marks which are not well known in physical world and ways to protect marks in different metaverse.

Touching upon recent 'MetaBirkin' trial and the Nike v. StockX case where StockX made Nike's sneaker designs and sold NFTs – the session had the speakers deliberating on leveraging Metaverse to help customers in the field of engineering, healthcare etc and looked to the future where avatars from one Metaverse could travel to another Metaverse. In this direction, Sunil said, "we don't want consumer to be restricted to Meta Metaverse, Google Metaverse or Microsoft Metaverse and referred to the telecom infrastructure project given the large bandwith needs of the Metaverse".

Meanwhile, to a question, Etienne expressed reservation on treating virtual goods any different from real goods for sake of IP protection.




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