Virtual & Immersive Futures - Audio

Jonny Pope

Wow, hello, everybody. Good grief, there's actually people in this session I really didn't expect to have any more anybody here, if you've made it through these incredible talks, and now you're lumbered with me. So we're an ERDF funded projects. I'm just gonna let that hang for a moment with that with that mystical, European funding, that sort of like Angel Dust money that doesn't exist anymore. ERDF funded project collaboration between Exeter and Falmouth University, and it's our remit to introduce immersive technologies to businesses within Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly with the idea that you guys can develop new products and services, and hopefully gain a competitive edge within your respective marketplaces.

Jonny Pope

We've got a shiny facility on the Falmouth Penryn campus. It's filled with incredible tech, such as virtual reality headsets, augmented reality headsets, motion capture studios, all the software and half the expertise to go with it. And we invite you guys to come and visit us. We don't charge for our time, we've got a couple of incredible business fellows that are with us here today, we've got Rosie Goodship, and Grant Day behind you guys, I encourage you, I implore you to speak to these guys, because they will answer all your questions and help with sort of onboarding with the process. And they're absolutely killer at locating grants and, and match funding and hooking you up with them so, so well worth well worth your time. So, I thought we'd put together a bit of a talk about cryptocurrencies, web 3.0, immersive technologies and hopefully weave a kind of a thread between them all, and have a look and see what we create a round roundtable discussion at the end of it.

Jonny Pope

So this is where we are. There's a massive tsunami of a wave of change of technologies that are it's already upon us actually. And I don't think many people are aware of it. And it's going to it's going to fundamentally change the way we offer up products and services in the future. Much like when web 0.1 was upon us. And I was involved in web 0.1 we couldn't give websites away, we couldn't give domain names away at the early stage, we're in yellow pages and we don't need your goddamn technology. And look at where we are, look at where we are now. So these are some of the topics we'll discover. And I'm going to I'm going to kind of rush through all of these topics. I think we have to kind of understand what the underlying technology is to really understand where the opportunities lie. And if we can, if we can understand that then maybe we can we can exploit these technologies. We're in that kind of renaissance of technology again, we're in that wild west sort of era where people are trying to figure out what what these things are and what how they work. And it's within this sort of disruptive sort of churn that we can actually start leveraging opportunity. So first of all, Blockchain, what the hell is blockchain? Okay, so it's essentially a technology. It's a cryptographic technology. It's a it's a database, a ledger, essentially, it's a it's a way to record transactions and data. So if we talk about it in relation to Bitcoin, we have all of these transactions flying back and forth, left and right. And we need to record

these transactions, stay with me, everybody, okay? It's gonna, it's going to make points that it's going to make some points at the end of it.

Jonny Pope
And so we need a way of recording these transactions. And what happens is, buckets of these transactions are grouped together. And they're put into what are called blocks. The blocks are then verified and then they're written to this immutable chain, basically a ledger that anyone can read at any one time. And once they're written, the whole process starts again. So who's heard? Let's have a show of hands who's heard of Bitcoin mining? Has anyone heard about Bitcoin mining? I thought we had. Right, so Bitcoin mining is really a way of verifying and keeping the blockchain truthful. So you have these things called miners and what they are is they're essentially they're huge, huge buildings filled up with GPUs, okay graphical processing units, computers, and these, these machines, these, these guys are competing for the right to verify the data in the blocks in this blockchain, okay? And when they when when one of these people win the rights to verify that block of data they get paid in Bitcoin to do it. So they verify this block of data, it gets written to the blockchain and then they move on, and they fight each other for the right to verify another block of data. Okay, so that's, that's, that's the process, they're in about 10 to 15 Bitcoin a day doing it, and for of 27,000-30,000 pound per Bitcoin, It's not a bad business to be in for those guys, right. So they're little tiny bits of code that run and execute automatically without the need for a third party. So, if I were, if I were a real world business, for example, we could, and I ran a hotel, you could have a smart contracts that basically said, I'm going to book a book a room, I come in, I book it on my phone, it checks to see what my credentials are, it checks to check to see whether I have the currency, I booked the room, it automatically takes the money out of my account, it sends me the key card, and at the end of it retracts my key card. So it's just a bit of code. And if you can write a contract for anything you like, no matter how complicated, it might be multiparty or whatever, a smart contract is what will execute that thing without the need for a third party. So we could do away with lawyers with notaries, all that kind of stuff. So it's quite an important, quite an important part of, of how web 3.0 is going to run. Now I'm aware that we're, I'm going to skip through these things, okay. So you can you can read these on the, on the screen. And there's obviously there's going to be a PDF at the end of it if you if you want to, if you want to read it.

Jonny Pope
So the next next part of that is de-fi. And de-fi stands for decentralised finance, is this awfully tech-heavy, I do apologise, so decentralised finance, and all that essentially means is, is you are going to be the custodian of your own money, right? So rather than having your money in a bank, you will have your money in your wallets and there will be decentralised systems that allow you to transact amongst each other without the need for a third party. Okay, this is this is going to be important. So now we're starting to get through to the semi creative stuff now. Okay, so we have NFT's, non fungible tokens. So non fungible tokens means that it's a unique, unique asset, it's not fungible, we can't we can't mash things together. So an NFT is essentially a way for us to make a piece of digital content unique and prove it beyond doubt. So that starts to become quite interesting digital arts, okay, you can you can prove that your JPEG or whatever it is you've created, that is a unique JPEG, that is the number one, we can do that in the real world, it's very hard to do that in a digital world, we can make music unique, you know and if we pair that, with a smart contract, we can then control how many of these things are released into the world, we can also control, we can write into the contracts, the usage rights for these

things that we have, right? So we can say, okay, there's only ever going to be ten of these, or people, if they are collecting items of my work, perhaps the next one will be discounted that can be built into the smart contract. So being able to make a piece of digital content unique is is reasonably cool.

Jonny Pope
NFT's in terms of gaming become quite interesting because we can now start owning assets within games. Okay, and we can we can sell these assets, we can rent these assets. You might start a game and own, I don't know, axe, right? And maybe you pay $20 for this 20 pounds for this unique axe. And then as you go through the game, the axe becomes more powerful you add runes to it you've attack certain monsters and it becomes an all powerful super axe. Well, this axe might increase in value that could be written to the smart contract rights. And we end up this axe is now worth 160 pounds, right? Or 500 quid, whatever you really want it to be. So all of a sudden you've got an asset that's actually worth something. And then maybe you might want to rent that asset out to new games and own your own own sort of a percentage, you know, every month or every week, or just hold it and sell it at a later date. So we can, we can start adding adding value, a value proposition to these, these items, you might have a piece of art, you might be very good at creating, I don't know, futuristic sci fi art. Now you can actually start selling your art and renting your art to other other users within within games or within virtual worlds. And it can be unique, so someone could copy your work, but it wouldn't be the genuine item. So that's, that's quite important.

Jonny Pope
At the moment, we're in a bit of a craze with NFT's and people don't really know what they are and they haven't they haven't really really used them. We've got NF T's selling for millions of pounds for JPEGs hundreds of 1000s of pounds for pieces of clipart. It's It's bonkers. It makes no sense whatsoever. But again, it's like the .com revolution, right. You know, domain names literally went for hundreds of millions of pounds, just because. Right, metaverse, this is sort of the bit we're sort of sort of looking for. I scratched my head and I tried to come up with a description for what the metaverse was, and I came up with some reasonably good descriptions that are a lot shorter than this. But then I read this and I thought actually, this does actually embody pretty much what the metaverse could be. So, interconnected experiences, a Metaverse isn't a destination, right? Just like Google isn't a destination for the internet. The Metaverse in my view is is really a description for a type of interaction that we're going to be having and there's going to be lots of Metaverses multi-verses perhaps right? Lots of different ways to experience digital content in a way that's not just flat. So the metaverse will be persistent, just like we view the real world, we go to bed, we get up and the real world is still here, maybe. The real world changes and the metaverse changes because it's people coming in, they're building they're taking down, they're changing, that's really what the metaverse is it's an all encompassing, persistent universe. It will be hardware agnostic, hopefully, in most cases, so we will be able to view the Metaverse on our phone we will be able to view the Metaverse on our PC, we'll also be able to put a headset on and perhaps in the future we will have haptics we will have ways of touching the metaverse smelling the metaverse, there'll be all of these different sort of iterations. And we're just at the beginning. You know, most Metaverse experiences are absolutely rubbish.

Jonny Pope

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Web 3.0 will form an integral parts of the metaverse. So again, governance; if you own tokens, you know, representations of you know, like shares basically within this, you'll have a say in how the that Metaverse is created and the things that happen, okay. And and obviously all of the all of the good stuff such as, such as decentralisation and payments, you know, being able to buy things sell things, rent things, that's that's a pretty cool thing to be able to do. So I thought I'd put together a collection of different Metaverses that we that we currently have, this is a such a tiny sliver of what's actually out there there are a hell of a lot of different different Metaverses or what we call Metaverses at the moment. Sandbox is. It's kind of a crypto Metaverse, I suppose, it's huge. It started off as a kind of a Minecraft clone I think it was about 10 years ago and it's got a dilute market cap of $11 billion at the moment. So huge amounts of money is flowing into these things. We have we have people like Adidas, Snoop Dogg, all of these different IPs that are interested in this. So the sandbox essentially allows you to buy segments or packets of land. And watch what can you do on these packets of land, you can do anything you like, right? You can build any experience you like, the sandbox comes with a set of digital creative tools built into it. So you don't need to take coding, you don't need to be a 3d artist, you can use other people's assets, they've already gone to the trouble someone who's really good at creating houses, maybe they've got lots of house type stuff for you to be able to put on your patch of land. Okay, so this is a new way of, of interacting. You can buy, sell and rent land. What does land go for in this? Well, people are spending half a million a million on plots of land, typically about 6000 pounds at the moment, five or six pounds for a plot of land in in the sandbox. It comes with an NFT marketplace. So again, what is an NFT marketplace? it is a unique digital asset that you can buy, doesn't mean that just has to be one of them. But you know, they can be they can be many NF T's of the same thing. But this is a place that's a marketplace. So if you're a content creator, you can create content. You can display it, you can sell it, you can rent it. What sort of spaces can you can you have? Galleries, shops, meetups, you can use it for anything you like, just think of it as another digital universe.

Jonny Pope
The cool thing with the content creation tools is you can script things as well. So you can actually create games in the metaverse, you can create whole games within your space. Really, it's just a place for you to sort of exist and do things. It's like one of these sort of wibbly wobbly games where it's you create your own adventure, right?Decentraland is exactly the same, it's just another example of an online space. Again, look at that, $5 billion market cap for this diluted market cap for this thing! ROBLOX this an example of a Metaverse that's got nothing to do with crypto at all right? It's aimed towards younger kids and again, you you access it through you through a website and you can use their content creation tools, you can create these worlds. 50 million users on this platform! I'd never heard I'd never heard of Roblox, you know, in my research, I was like, What the hell is this? Wow. Lots of people accessing. So, gaming and web three. What is web three gaming? It's a fusion of decentralised finance, and web three technologies. That's what web three kinds of brings brings to the forte. Play-to-earn; I don't know if any, any of you heard about play-to-earn? Yeah, so that's really where the NFT's come into it. If you're creating a game, you can then rent your assets out, you can you can share your assets, the assets can be pitted against each other.

Jonny Pope
Axi infinity; have any of you heard of Axie infinity? Again, $14 billion market cap for this one game, absolutely crazy. And these little fellows here, these are what you buy. They're called axis. These are

NFT's, essentially. And what you do is you buy your little axes, and you pitch them against each other, and they fight each other and you power them up, and you can buy land and grow your axis and they can breed together and all of this absolutely crazy. What can you earn from Axi infinity? 1000-1200 pounds might be netting you 700 quid a month, automatically, you can rent your axis out. It's bonkers, right?

Jonny Pope
So the final little bit is okay, so you've created a game company, you've created an entity. Now these things go I'm just going to mention this. There are things called launch pads. It's a bit like Kickstarter, but for an IPO for your company. So it gives you the ability to highlight, spotlight your company offer initial liquidity or coins within your company that people can stake and people can own. And they, they do a lot of the promotion kinds of things for you, we're not going to get too too heavily into that. But they're quite, they're quite useful, quite useful things.

Jonny Pope
So I'm going to end with a couple of opportunities and the ability for us to have a little bit of a talk. So the ability for us to be able to create persistent universes or spaces that we can interact within, and we can build out, we can buy and sell and promote, essentially, we can create these worlds. And we can create these experiences, and we can monetize them as well, which is pretty cool. And there is no there's no counterparty within all of this. So it's direct interactions between each other just like we used to have cash in our wallets. Right, it's it sort of takes us back to that time.

Jonny Pope
Yeah, so artists, can he actually make money from existing within these, there can be can be whole ecosystems within these spaces that can then grow up. So if you're particularly good, like I said at making medieval weapons, maybe that could be your job. And you can sell these weapons and rent these weapons out to people. If you're a band, you can put concerts on, you can sell your you can sell your music, within the space kind of like a Spotify essentially, without needing to pay Spotify for that. And you can sort of you can mint, very limited editions and have people can compete for them. NFT's enable unique ownership and trade opportunities so being able to make unique digital items and prove that it's unique is pretty cool. I tell you one thing, just before we do end this session, and as it's sort of coming to an end, I do actually have to say that none of the advice offered within this is financial advice. You know, I'm just some guy that likes to play with his crayons, right? And also these views that I have expressed are my own views and are not of Exeter or Falmouth universities.

Jonny Pope
So where I would where I would end that is again, it's not all about crypto. Sorry, I went on a complete tangent here about crypto right. But you know, we've got a incredible facility back at Falmouth Penryn, and we are actually all about immersive technologies. So so we've got headsets, we've got incredible Filming things. We're connected to some incredible people at the university and if you do fancy coming down, having a play with some of the kit, exploring how we might be able to integrate that into your businesses, right. And Rosie and grant will be able to to to help you to help you with that process. Thank You.