

lingua business

Second Life Means Business

By Dónal Thompson



From an initial investment of \$9.95 Anshe Chung made \$1,000,000 in two and half years selling land you can't walk on, clothes you can't wear and investing in business you can't see....unless you have a computer and are a citizen of *Second Life* the virtual world where Chung made her millions.

In Second Life people trade in a virtual currency called Linden Dollars and they can convert what they make into real US dollars. The possibilities are as limited as your imagination. There are clothes shops, concert halls, night clubs and open spaces.

Some real world businesses have a presence in *Second Life* too. Imagine a place where your clients can try on clothes in a virtual world that they then might buy in the real world. Toyota and H&R treat Second Life like an economic laboratory. It is perfect place to try out new business models.

But it is in real estate where the money is to be made. You can buy private 'land', build features like roads and buildings and then rent or sell it at a profit. There 9,000,000 residents who are your customers and Second Life grows by 20% every month.

Universities such Texas State, Princeton and The Open University are present 'inworld' and the educational possibilities for this virtual environment are breath-taking.

Business can hold virtual meetings with powerpoint and video presentations for people all over the world. It really is quite impressive the sensation of being physically present that the virtual world gives you.

Silicon luddites, of course, think that a virtual world can not be serious. They see the 'inworld' characters (avatars) going about their business and imagine it's all a game. However, Second Life turns over \$550,000,000 a year. That gives it a Gross Domestic Product similar to Samoa. Some game.

Want to play?

These are some of the business opportunities available in Second Life

- party and wedding planner
- pet manufacturer
- tattooist
- nightclub owner
- automotive manufacturer
- fashion designer
- aerospace engineer
- custom avatar designer
- jewelry maker
- architect
- XML coder
- freelance scripter
- game developer
- fine artist
- machinima set designer
- tour guide
- dancer
- musician
- custom animation creator
- theme park developer
- real estate speculator
- vacation resort owner
- advertiser
- bodyguard
- magazine
- publisher
- private detective
- writer
- gamer
- landscaper
- publicist
- special effects designer
- gunsmith
- hug maker