ENTERTAINMENT TECHNOLOGY CENTER / CES 2025

ETC@USC CES 2025 REPORT

Artificial Intelligence Agentic Models Generational Shift Creator Spaces Lifestyle Tech Ages and Stages

62%

CES 2025: AI for All



271

Entertainment Technology Center CES 2025 Report



155



ENTERTAINMENT TECHNOLOGY CENTER@USC

CES 2025 REPORT

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Perceptions of AI Generative AI 93% The Consumer Technology U.S. adults familiar Association with Generative Al found broad familiarity with 61% Al, revealing that 61% of U.S. adults already U.S. adults use AI tools at work. use AI tools at work. OCES Powered by OCTA

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About this Report

The 2025 CES Report is presented by the Entertainment Technology Center at the University of Southern California (ETC), a research center and think tank organized within the School of Cinematic Arts. Find more Information at etcenter.org, read the latest industry technology news at etcentric.org, and subscribe to our free Daily News Brief. Our reporting from CES 2025 presented here, and in a narrative presentation by ETC analysts that becomes available after the completion of a series of liveonsite briefings, highlights products, technologies, companies, issues, and trends important to media, entertainment, and technology companies.

About ETC

The Entertainment Technology Center at the University of Southern California is a think tank and research center that brings together senior executives, innovators, thought leaders, and catalysts from the media & entertainment, consumer electronics, technology, and services industries along with the academic resources of the University of Southern California to explore and to act upon topics and issues related to the creation, distribution, and consumption of entertainment content. As an organization within the USC School of Cinematic Arts, ETC helps drive collaborative projects among its member companies and engages with next generation consumers to understand the impact of emerging technology on all aspects of the media and entertainment industry, especially technology development and implementation, the creative process, business models, and future trends. ETC acts as a convener and accelerator for entertainment technology and commerce through research, publications, events, collaborative projects and shared exploratory labs and demonstrations.

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ENTERTAINMENT TECHNOLOGY CENTER / CES 2025

ETC TRENDS AND SUMMARY

More than the CES logo was different at CES 2025. The sprawling trade show that spreads across multiple venues and bills itself as the "the most powerful tech event in the world," reflected the rise of a new generation of consumers and creators. The show floor had plenty of brilliant products and displays, but the real excitement comes from the possibility of what is next. The combination of human ingenuity and advances in artificial intelligence points towards a decade of transformation.

By Don Levy

CES 2025 focused on artificial intelligence, unveiling a wave of innovative offerings — whether practical, visionary or experimental. As we stand on the brink of transformative change, it's worth recalling that early AI models often fell short when they attempted to mimic human methods. As we recap CES in service to the entertainment industry, we are most interested in products that use this constant advance to assist and amplify human potential. Media applications that impact the next generation of compelling stories, production techniques, and consumer experiences are the focus of our attention.

In the two years since the commercialization of AI, there is a growing realization that giving AI more data and letting it learn itself in its own different way — letting AI be AI daily — proves to be a more spectacular path. In his 2019

TRENDS



Artificial Intelligence (AI)	Al continues to be a central theme, with advancements in autonomous Al agents capable of planning and executing tasks, and Al governance platforms ensuring responsible use
Sustainability	There's a growing emphasis on eco-friendly technologies, including energy-efficient computing and sustainable innovations across various sectors
Health and Wellness Technology	Innovations in personalized healthcare devices and AI-driven health solutions are expected to be prominent, reflecting the ongoing integration of technology in healthcare
Enterprise and B2B Growth	The event will highlight enterprise technologies, focusing on AI, robotics, smart cities, fintech, and the Internet of Things (IoT), underscoring the expanding role of technology in business operations
Advanced Computing	Discussions on post-quantum cryptography and hybrid computing wil address the future of secure and efficient data processing.
Human-Machine Synergy	Technologies like spatial computing and polyfunctional robots will be featured, emphasizing enhanced interactions between humans and machines

essay *The Bitter Lesson*, researcher Rich Sutton noted, "We want AI agents that can discover like we can, not which contain what we have discovered."

The human channeling of this massive change in analysis is the most compelling aspect of this moment and we expect new paths and advances in storytelling, production and immersion as a result.

No sector will escape the impact of AI, and we think it will benefit none more than the entertainment world. In a time of change, there is good reason to scout tirelessly for innovations that help us tell new and more immersive stories with an AI multiplier for imagination.

Within the CE giants, we see increasing benefits in all their products for AI technical assistance in building better experiences.

Whether in the startup universe of Eureka Park or cruising the major halls, there are few limits to what was on display: A clairvoyant, Al-driven robot that picks up and replaces objects in its way. The best and brightest displays, where bright means intelligent? The perfect home-brewed craft beer, kombucha or cider. A spoon that gives you the taste of salt without the sodium.

CES keynote speakers delivered insights, technological advancements, and a glimpse into the future of various industries:

- Nvidia: Nvidia founder and CEO Jensen Huang (below) delivered his keynote at Mandalay Bay, offering insights into the transformative potential of Al and computing. Known as a visionary leader, Huang's address set the tone for a conference rich in Al innovation.
- Panasonic: Yuki Kusumi, Group CEO of Panasonic Holdings Corporation focused on the theme "WELL into the Future." Panasonic unveiled new sustainability and smart energy initiatives that aim to enhance societal well-being, reflecting the company's commitment to addressing global challenges like climate change.
- SiriusXM: Jennifer Witz, CEO of SiriusXM, and Ashley Flowers, host of podcast "Crime Junkie," engaged in a fireside chat on the future of audio. Their C-Space keynote conversation explored how technology is reshaping storytelling, content creation, and consumer behavior.
- **Delta:** In a groundbreaking event Ed Bastian, CEO of Delta Air Lines, became the first-ever CES keynote presenter at Sphere. Leveraging Sphere's immersive technologies, Delta's session highlighted how advancements in technology are set to transform air travel and human connection in the airline's next century of flight.

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Accenture: Accenture Chair and CEO Julie Sweet showed how businesses can leverage emerging technologies and how quantum computing, alongside AI and cloud technologies, is set to revolutionize industries by providing unprecedented computational power and efficiency.

CES Innovation Award honorees reflect the spirit of technological advancement, enhancing industries from entertainment and gaming to robotics and smart home solutions. The following are some promising examples among this year's 362 honorees:

- **10kM:** A mobile app that transforms text-based documents into professional-grade videos in minutes, using real-time CSS animations.
 Designed for users with minimal video editing skills, it significantly reduces the time and cost of creating high-quality digital content.
- Aegis RS2 15th Gaming Desktop: This Alpowered gaming rig features Nvidia graphics and Intel CPUs with NPU-driven Al optimizations. It dynamically adjusts settings for peak performance, making it a flexible and future-proof choice for gamers.
- Ailive Studio: A web service that uses Al to create high-quality 3D content effortlessly. It combines image-to-3D, text-to-motion, and textto-speech technologies, making 3D animation accessible to everyone.
- Romi Lacatan: An Al-powered emotionalsupport robot that holds real-time conversations, complete with gestures and facial expressions.
 Designed to alleviate loneliness, it simulates authentic human interaction.
- **EVOM AI Piano:** An Al-driven, self-playing piano that composes music in real time based on the environment. Perfect for events and exhibitions, it blends creativity and Al to enhance live experiences.
- **AMD 3D V-Cache:** Combined with the advanced Zen 5 processor architecture, the 3D V-Cache technology works to attain the highest processor gaming performance on the market.

- Qualcomm Snapdragon 8 Elite: Featuring the Qualcomm AI Engine, this mobile platform delivers on-device generative AI, enabling smartphones to process multimodal AI tasks while maintaining privacy.
- Self-Driving Al Home Hub by LG: A robotic Al home assistant that moves autonomously, provides emotional support, and manages smart devices. Its situational awareness makes versatile addition to any smart home.
- **TooToon by Onoma AI:** A suite of AI tools for storytellers, offering capabilities for story generation, character design, and illustration creation. It streamlines the creative process for webtoons, games, and other media.
- Skyworks Al Dialog Boost: This Al-driven tool enhances dialogue clarity by separating narration and dialogue from background sounds and remixing them in real time.
- Sony 4K XR Head-Mounted Display: Sony's XR head-mounted display delivers an immersive 4K resolution per eye experience with a microOLED panel. Tailored for mixed reality, it features Video See-Through capabilities and is powered by the Snapdragon XR2+ Gen 2 platform for seamless 3D interactions.

CES typically attracts policy-makers and government officials from around the world. CTA hosted its annual Leaders in Technology (LIT) dinner, which featured Waymo Co-CEO Tekedra Mawakana, and will.i.am, creative artist and tech entrepreneur. While government guests from around the globe explored innovative consumer technology and discuss policy issues at the Innovation Policy Summit (IPS), the impending government transition in Washington, D.C. less than two weeks after CES meant that few legislators or policy-makers were in any position to present definitive direction. CTA officials raised a note of concern and uncertainty over tariffs, that could have an outsized impact on the sector.

Another LIT gathering, Labor, Innovation, and Technology, attracted labor and union officials for two days of summit talks. SAG-AFTRA and the Directors Guild of America were among the speakers from the entertainment industry to discuss how they positioned and bargained to win critical control over AI use in their contracts.

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Tomorrow's Tech – 2025

CES TECH TRENDS TO WATCH

1. Shifting Demographics and Purchasing

- **Patterns:** Gen Z is the one to watch. As the largest global generation (making up 35% of the population and 27% of the OECD workforce), Gen Z's purchasing patterns have the potential to impact the tech market. 60% of Gen Z in the U.S. are early tech adopters, and the total tech industry retail revenue is expected to jump 3.2% in 2025 to \$537 billion.
- 2. Al Integration: 93% of U.S. adults are familiar with generative AI, and 61% are already utilizing it at work. Consumers are also taking advantage of AI with 64% of U.S. consumers using AI tools while shopping online and 40% being more likely to purchase with AI personalization. The consumer AI upgrade cycle isn't limited to consumers; smartphones, laptops, TVs, smart glasses, and vehicles are some of the major players expanding AI integration.
- 3. **Sustainability and Security:** As the U.S and global markets work to advance the Energy Transition via infrastructure, grid resiliency, and experimentation, there also exists a push to bolster the food supply chain with automation and conservation at the forefront.
- 4. **Smart Devices, Smarter Homes:** Smart home comforts that will become increasingly available include TV command centers, health integration, energy management, and AI personalization, with TV consoles that are so attuned to family needs, they can tell users if their child is dehydrated.

5. Longevity and Aging in Place: Smart home tech and aging in place go hand and hand in the consumer mind: 80% of U.S. consumers consider smart homes as age tech. Despite that preconception, 52% of U.S. consumers own at least one of the top ten perceived "age" products, meaning consumer perception may see a realignment. It's not only older Americans who can benefit from mental health apps, accessibility devices, and automated care stations, to name a few examples.



Gen Z Demographics



U.S. Al to

U.S. consumer use More likely to Al tools shopping purchase with Al online personalization

Forecasting the U.S. Tech Market

		Total Industry Retail Revenue (\$ Billions)				1 22 3
	471	530	517	508	520	<u>537</u>
	139	153	154	168	176	184
Software 332 Hardware	377	363	340	344	353	
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Hardware		13.5%	-3.9%	-6.2%	1.1%	2.6%
Software & Servi	ces	9.6%	0.8%	8.9%	5.2%	4.6%
Total		12.4%	-2.5%	-1.7%	2.5%	3.2%
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CTA CES RECAP

From the Consumer Technology Association

CES 2025, the most powerful tech event in the world, welcomed over 141,000 attendees from around the globe. With more than 4,500 exhibitors, including 1,400 startups, and more than 6,000 media attendees, CES highlights the innovation and technology trends addressing global challenges and shaping the future.

"CES is where innovation comes to life," said Gary Shapiro, CEO and Vice Chair, Consumer Technology Association (CTA), owner and producer of CES. "From the largest companies to trailblazing startups, the entire tech ecosystem is at the show. CES is the stage for groundbreaking product launches, transformative partnerships, and serendipitous business moments that define the future of technology."

CES 2025 BY THE NUMBERS: (pre-audit figures)

- 4,500+ exhibitors, including 1,400 startups
- 141,000+ attendees, of which 40% were international from

over 150 countries, regions, and territories

- 6,000+ global media, content creators, and industry analysts
- Over 60% of Fortune 500 companies
- 300+ conference sessions with 1,200+ speakers
- 27,000+ news stories and content

"From groundbreaking innovations that improve lives to transformative ideas that redefine industries, CES is a celebration of the art of the possible, showcasing how technology enriches our world and inspires a brighter future for all," said Kinsey Fabrizio, President, CTA. "The evolution of CES has surged at this year's show, where creativity, connectivity, and innovation inspire with visionary keynotes, thought-provoking conference sessions, and mindblowing exhibits."

As one of the most transparent trade shows, CES adheres to rigorous auditing standards established by UFI, The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry. To maintain the integrity of its reports, CES engages independent auditors, fostering trust among stakeholders.

"CES reaffirms its status as the largest audited annual business event," said Fabrizio. "We look forward to releasing third-party confirmation in the spring, because at CTA we believe auditing is not just a nice-tohave, but the gold standard for global business events."

Catch all the highlights and announcements from CES 2025 – including all conference programming – via <u>CES YouTube</u> and the <u>CES Tech Talk Podcast</u>. Watch the CES 2025 State of the Industry Address <u>here</u>.

CES 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Artificial Intelligence – CES 2025 connected the dots between humanity and AI through powerful exhibits and programming. From AI-driven

CTA CES RECAP



productivity tools to breakthroughs in medical advancements, products and services on the show floor demonstrated that artificial intelligence is not just a technology trend but a transformative force improving lives worldwide. *Exhibitors included: AMD, Hisense, LG, NVIDIA, Qualcomm, Samsung, Siemens, TCL.*

Digital Health – This year, CES saw tremendous energy at the Venetian where attendees witnessed the category's seamless alignment with the smart living experience. CES has cemented itself as a premier convenor for the healthcare industry, bringing together trailblazers to explore biotechnology, telehealth, and wellness advancements that enhance patient care and longevity. Attendees celebrated the vibrant and dynamic environment that underscored how technology is transforming everyday life, particularly in health and wellness. Exhibitors & Sponsors included: AARP, Abbott, Eyebot, FlowBeams, Lumia Health, OnMed, Panasonic, ResMed, Withings.

Energy Transition – With the growth of high-power demand technologies like Al, cloud, and other datacenter innovations, the energy transition to zero carbon sources was a significant focus at CES 2025. Experimental energy solutions including battery and energy storage technologies, emerging energy sources like green hydrogen, and small modular nuclear reactors. *Exhibitors included: Eaton, Jackery, Otrera, SK, Sony Honda Mobility.*

Mobility – Mobility innovation spanned construction, agriculture, marine tech, and advanced air travel. At CES 2025, self-driving and electric technologies enhanced planes and boats, and EV market growth brought new models from global OEMs to the show. Automation in construction and industry enhanced safety and addressed workforce gaps in laborintensive roles. Exhibitors included: Aptera Motors, BMW, Bosch, Brunswick, Caterpillar, Daedong, Garmin, Honda, Invo Station, John Deere, Kubota, Mobileye, Oshkosh, Scout Motors, Sumitomo Rubber, Scout Motors, Suzuki, Waymo, Xpeng AeroHT, Zeekr.

Quantum - CES 2025 featured the latest innovations in quantum technologies, offering a glimpse into the future. Quantum technology uses properties of quantum mechanics to enable three distinct disciplines: improved networking, computing, and sensing. Innovations at the show demonstrated how quantum computing, working alongside AI, will allow for breakthroughs in research and computing for finance, chemistry, materials, logistics, and more. Exhibitors included: Integrated Quantum Photonic, IonQ, QSIMPLUS, Quandela, SK.

Sustainability – Sustainability is a crucial trend shaping technology innovation, especially in the context of energy transition. CES featured key advancements including new battery technologies, alternative material development like graphene, and off-grid renewable energy solutions. The show also put a spotlight on innovations such as synthetic microbes, bioplastics, and self-healing concrete that will contribute to sustainable construction. *Exhibitors included: Hydrific, Lyten, Melliens, Panasonic.*

Startups – Eureka Park was completely full, with 1,400 startups from 39 countries including country pavilions representing Africa, European Union (EU), France, Italy, Israel, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, Switzerland, and Ukraine. Eureka Park is where innovators, investors, and the media meet to highlight and get hands-on with the technologies that will shape our collective future in core areas including accessibility, AI, digital health, and sustainability.

<u>C Space</u> – C Space at ARIA brought together thousands of senior-level marketing professionals to explore the intersection of technology, media, and branding. Attendees heard from leading industry innovators from brands like Reddit, NBCUniversal, and Microsoft Advertising about how technology is shaping the future of storytelling, consumer engagement, and brand strategy. C Space sessions

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emphasized the importance of creativity and authenticity in navigating the ever-evolving digital landscape.

CES Creator Space – The first-ever CES Creator Space, presented by Sony, gathered storytellers to network, create content, and relax in between visiting exhibits. Sessions led by industry experts helped creators elevate their craft, featuring discussions on storytelling, content monetization, brand partnerships, rights and ownership, and more.

Digital Health Summit brought together the entire health ecosystem to learn, network, and explore the role technology plays in advancing and reforming medicine, healthcare, and consumer wellness.

Great Minds series explored the intersection of technology and humanity. Speakers included C-Suite executives, philanthropists, influencers, government leaders, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, and more.

Innovation for All Track included dedicated programming focused on ensuring all voices are represented in technology and innovation, bringing together thought leaders for a series of engagement opportunities, dynamic session content, and networking events.

Innovation Policy Summit advanced CTA's Innovation Agenda. CES brought together policymakers and government guests from around the world to discuss domestic and global tech policy issues including Al, privacy, trade, competition, and more. Conference sessions featured high-level government speakers from the White House, Department of Commerce, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Transportation, Federal Communications Commission, Federal Maritime Commission, Federal Trade Commission, and more.

Mobility Stage made its debut in West Hall, exploring the future of mobility tech on the CES show floor. Topics included AI, connected vehicles, software, supply chain, and more.

Quantum Means Business, a multisession conference track developed with Quantum World Congress, gathered some of the brightest quantum minds, showcasing breakthroughs that were once confined to science fiction. Industry leaders from IBM, Microsoft, and beyond shared insights into how quantum, paired with advancements in AI and machine learning, creates unparalleled opportunities across industries.

<u>Startup Stage</u> in Eureka Park brought together visionaries to discuss AI, health, startup funding, and more.

Celebrities at CES

Celebrity brand ambassadors like Alexis Ohanian, Denim Richards, Karlie Kloss, Maria Shriver, Mark Cuban, Martha Stewart, Meghan Trainor, Sophia Bush, Stevie Wonder, Terry Crews, Tim Meadows, Tunde Oyeneyin, and will.i.am attended the show. Read more about CES 2025 celebrity guest participation here.

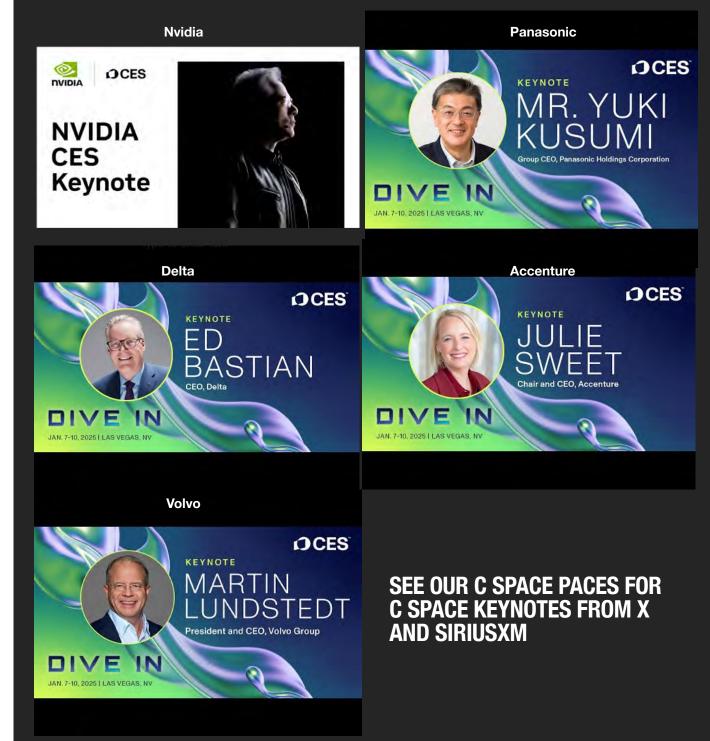
Visit <u>CES</u> or the <u>CES App</u>,

sponsored by Panasonic, for keynotes, sessions, and product announcements. View the high-res image gallery and download B-roll. Check out news from this week with CTA press releases including CTA's U.S. Consumer Technology One-Year Industry Forecast, CES 2025 Green Grants, CTA 2025 Global Innovation Scorecard, CES 2025 Open, and a new investment in Quantum Word Congress.

CES returns to Las Vegas January 6-9, 2026.

KEYNOTES AND CONFERENCE SESSIONS

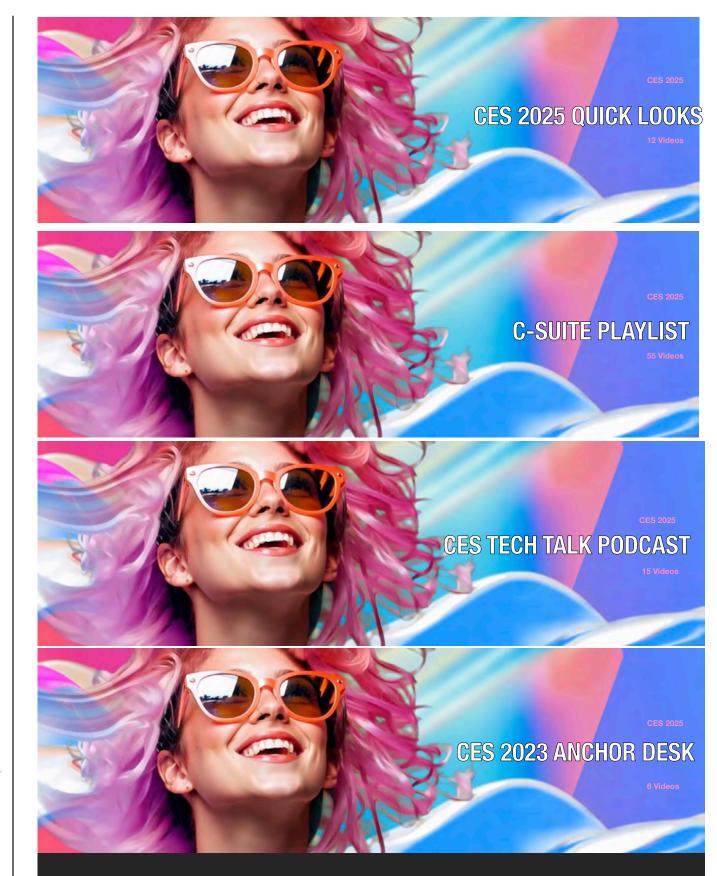
CES keynotes in 2025 reflect a focus on AI-driven solutions, net-zero innovation, storytelling and creativity, transformative technology, digital communication, sustainability, and impactful innovation with presentations from Volvo Group, SiriusXM, Delta, X Corp, Panasonic, Accenture, and NVIDIA.



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Click on any of the banner arrows to access conference session videos and highlights from the show floor. C Space, where media and marketing take center stage, featured sessions on talent, brands, content creation, AI, data, and research. The Tech Talk Podcasts explore a variety of topics, including Decrypting Crypto, FinTech, Experiential Retail, Social Shopping, and Game Health.

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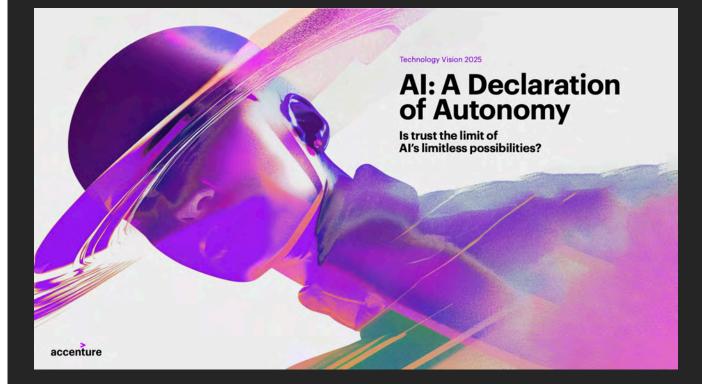
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GENERATIVE AI UPDATES: GOOGLE, ACCENTURE, AND THE AI INDEX REPORT

Google kicked off 2025 with major AI advancements across education, business, and consumer technology. The Gemini 2.0 Flash update enhances AI performance, while Gemini Live now supports multimedia inputs on select devices. In education, Google showcased AI-powered learning tools at <u>BETT London</u>, and startups are leveraging AI for personalized education. Mercedes-Benz will integrate <u>Google Cloud's Automotive AI Agent</u> for conversational in-car assistance. Reflecting on 2024, Google leaders highlighted scientific breakthroughs, robotics progress, and AI-powered innovations. Finally, <u>Google.org</u> launched its <u>2025 Generative AI Accelerator</u> with \$30 million in funding to support nonprofits using AI for social good.

Accenture's <u>Technology Vision 2025 Report</u> explores AI's increasing autonomy and its impact on businesses, trust, and human-AI collaboration. As AI evolves into "cognitive digital brains," integrating workflows and decision-making, leaders must build trust to fully unlock its potential. Four key trends shape this shift: exponential AI expansion disrupting traditional systems, the need for brand differentiation as AI personalizes customer interactions, LLM-powered robotics enabling more adaptable machines, and a new learning loop where AI and employees continuously enhance each other's capabilities. Successfully navigating this transformation requires strategic AI integration and a focus on trust.



View the report in its entirety here.

Finally, looking at the bigger picture of Generative AI and beyond, <u>Stanford University's 2024 AI Index Report</u> provides a comprehensive analysis of AI's growing societal impact, covering technical advancements, public perception, and geopolitical trends. Most importantly, Generative AI investment surged to \$25.2B, despite an overall decline in AI funding.

Other key findings include Al outperforming humans in some areas like image classification but lagging in complex reasoning tasks. Industry continues to lead Al research, with rising costs—Google's Gemini Ultra cost \$191M to train. Currently, the U.S. dominates Al model development, outpacing China and the EU. Al boosts worker productivity and accelerates scientific discovery, but standardized responsible Al evaluations are lacking. U.S. Al regulations have increased, and in terms of public perspecitve, anxiety about Al is rising, with 52% of Americans more concerned than excited about its impact.

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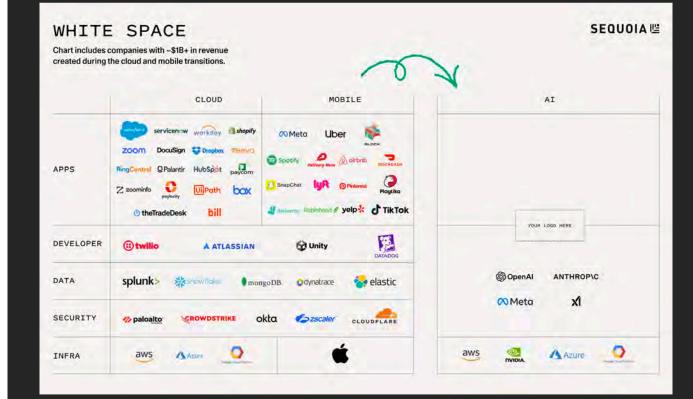
SEQUOIA CAPITAL: GENERATIVE AI IS SHIFTING FROM RAPID-RESPONSE MODELS TO REASONING-BASED MODELS

HOW THEY COMPARE

	MODE OF THINKING	COMPUTE	FINANCIAL MODEL	MATURITY
REASONING LAYER	System 2 Thinking: Slow, Deliberate	Inference Time	COGS	Emerging
PRE-TRAINING LAYER	System 1 Thinking: Fast	Pre-Trained	Opex/Capex	Maturing

EXAMPLES

	AlphaGo	LLMs	Robotics
REASONING LAYER	Monte carlo tree search	Chain of thought	Simulation
PRE-TRAINING LAYER	30M	Internet scale text	Internet scale video



These images are presented in-depth in Sequoia Capital's 2024 Generative AI report, found <u>here</u> on their website. Additional reading in their AI in 2025 projection article <u>here</u>.

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INDUSTRY LEADERS HIGHLIGHT TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF AI

By Don Levy & Yves Bergquist

CES 2025 kicked off appropriately with a high-powered panel on Al's impact in entertainment. Under the expert moderation of our friend, and former president of the Hollywood Professional Association, Seth Hallen, three of the industry's most senior leaders spoke candidly about what the technology means to the industry: Samira Panah Bakhtiar (GM of Media and Entertainment, Games, and Sports at Amazon Web Services), Academy Award-winner Ed Ulbrich (Chief Content Officer and President of Production at Metaphysic), and Richard Kerris (GM of Media and Entertainment at Nvidia).

The tone was as spot-on as we've seen, with serious but sober enthusiasm for the technology, hope for how it would open up creative avenues previously not available, and the need for empowering vs. replacing.

Empowering VFX Artists

Pivotal in this argument was Metaphysic's Ulbrich, fresh from his team's masterful Generative AI work on Robert Zemeckis' "Here," assuring the audience that he is "all in" with the tech. From sound and color in film to CGI, every advancement brought initial fear but eventually created more opportunities for storytellers, he reported.

And while AI drastically reduces production time and cost, vastly accelerating visual effects, Ulbrich noted, "this is not push of a button. It still takes artists and talent to make this technology sing. The tools are powerful, but the fundamentals of storytelling remain vital."

Having led the VFX team for "The Curious Case of Benjamin

Empowering Creatives

Hallen opened by summing up where the entertainment community is today in its conversation about Al: It's all about "shifting our focus back to the human."

Sure, panelists

agreed, giving everyone "near-Hollywood" visual media creation tools was the right thing to do. But as the ocean of visually-stunning-acid-trip GenAl videos we've all been deluged with makes abundantly clear, GenAl alone can't touch the craft of narrative.

It is highly refreshing to see that after many months of hyperbolic circus, the focus was thankfully back to where it started: "a good story, a good story and a good story," to quote Jeffrey Katzenberg, who was speaking nearby. Quite an opening for an annual gathering chronically over-optimistic about technology.



Button" (which won him an Oscar), Ulbrich also knows intimately how difficult and threatening AI can be for VFX and postproduction artists: "traditional VFX takes years, tens of millions of dollars, and hundreds of people, and suddenly we could do it in real time."

But as his experience co-founding Digital Domain has taught him, this new wave of creative disruption, just like CGI in its day, will create even more jobs than it automates out of existence. He reminded everyone that CGI was controversial when it started, and DD had been picketed many times back in the day.

In the end, said Ulbrich, "the talent is what makes this stuff works."

Empowering the Audience

More and more industry players are looking at leveraging Generative AI to create new products for the audience. It was great to see Bakhtiar of AWS join this trend when she talked about the "strategic unlock" of enabling advertisers and streamers to deliver tailored experiences such as "custom



streams" and hyper-personalized recommendations for Amazon Prime customers.

Kerris echoed these sentiments, highlighting Nvidia's vision of "real-time AI in the stream." He described future possibilities like dynamic content adjustments, interactive storytelling, and hyper-personalized advertisements, all powered by advanced AI. These innovations promise to enhance both audience engagement and content monetization.

The panelists acknowledged concerns about job displacement but highlighted the industry's history of adapting to technological shifts. From sound and color in film to CGI, every advancement brought initial fear but eventually created more opportunities for storytellers. "It's about leaning into the disruption," Bakhtiar said, "and embracing the tools to captivate audiences in new ways."

Ultimately, the session underscored that while AI is revolutionizing entertainment, the heart of the industry human creativity and storytelling — remains unchanged. With these advancements, a new era of democratized content creation and immersive experiences is on the horizon.

As Ulbrich concluded, "Al has brought the joy back into filmmaking. I'm having fun again."

Al Pioneer Yann LeCun on Al Agents, Human Intelligence

By Debra Kaufman

During CES 2025, Meta Vice President and Chief Al Scientist Yann LeCun had a compelling conversation with Wing Venture Capital Head of Research Rajeev Chand on the latest hot button topics in the rapidly evolving field of artificial intelligence. Some of the conclusions were that Al agents will become ubiquitous — but not for 10 to 15 years, human intelligence means different things to different Al experts, and nuclear power remains the best and safest source for powering Al. And, for those looking for more of LeCun's tweets, he said he no longer posts on X.

Chand began the conversation by asking for LeCun's response to the statement by OpenAI's Sam Altman that "we know how to do AGI," referring to Artificial General Intelligence, the ability to create machines that match or surpass human intelligence. LeCun responded that he doesn't like the term as a way to talk about human intelligence.

"Human intelligence is very specialized — we don't have general intelligence," he said. "If we talk about human intelligence, what do we mean by it?" It's often measured by benchmarks, but he noted, "for every task we can benchmark, we can build a specialized system to beat the benchmark."

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This very problem has existed for many years, he continued, noting that any time a machine can beat a human at chess, the conclusion is that we're ever closer to machines that can do everything. "It's a terrible definition," he concluded. "We'll have systems that can do a lot of things but it doesn't mean they have human intelligence with the capacity to understand the physical world, solve problems and have some common sense."

He noted that Altman did not specify what type of architecture he was referring to. "In the past, Sam said we're thousands of days away from AGI," LeCun explained. "I agree. The question is, how many thousands? If the plan we're working on at Meta succeeds and we don't hit any obstacle, I don't see this happening for five to six years."

LeCun pointed out that, "there are tasks that are purely intellectual" and, with sufficient training, data and architecture, these tasks might be automated "in a relatively short period of time." But we're not going to have an automated plumber any time soon, because "it's incredibly complicated and requires a deep understanding of the physical world."

He reported that "the basic paradigm of a lot of Al systems today are on self-supervised running." "You only train the system to predict missing information from the input, like filling in a missing word," he said. "But you just cannot predict all the details in the real world, so these systems have been a failure."

LeCun's vision is JEPA (Joint Embedding Predictive Architecture), which aims to build models of the physical world and then plan a sequence of actions, which he calls object-driven AI.

"The new key words are Action Condition World Models, which are those types of models that allows a system to plan and reason," said LeCun. In this model, all the unpredictable details are eliminated, which makes the "prediction problem" easier and moves the system towards learning relevant information. There are no commercially available systems that use this model.

LeCun revealed that the company is, "about to submit a paper that the JEPA systems have acquired some common sense."

Deloitte CTO on Tech Trends 2025 from AI to Quantum

By Debra Kaufman

Deloitte Consulting Chief Technology Officer Bill Briggs opened a CES panel discussion on Tech Trends 2025 with the declaration that, "the pace of change in technical has never been faster and the magnitude has never been greater." "How do we translate that into the investments we need to be making and how we think about products and customer experiences?" he asked. Much of what faces us, he stressed, is "more knowable than we feel it is." In Deloitte's 16th annual Tech Trends report, the company lists six tech trends, with artificial intelligence as the common thread.

In addition to "Al everywhere," Briggs identified spatial computing taking center stage; what's next for Al, the renewed importance of hardware; IT, amplified; solving cryptography in an age of quantum and the Intelligent Core. Briggs asked panelists to comment on the trends from the perspective of their industries.

Regarding AI, Adobe SVP of Experience Cloud Products Amit Ahuja said every brand experience they work with wants to know what it means, whether it's how to make search better or more interactive experiences. "I've heard people say AI is the new UI," he said.

Deloitte Chief Innovation Officer Deborah Golden noted that spatial computing will enable "productivity and operational efficiencies ... and discovery of how to operate in virtual environments."

Worldwide Head of GTM for Spatial Computing at Amazon Web Services David Randle is particularly excited about the potential of AI powering spatial computing. "We'll be able to intimately understand how we function with the world," he said. "We're now seeing new form factors for wearables that people will don. For the first time, we'll have the killer app for spatial computing — and something miraculous will happen."

Toyota Motor North America Group VP of Information Systems and CIO Holly Walters addressed the issue of the Intelligent Core. "There is no front end and back end in this space," she said. "It's about customer and team member experience. The business of IT has to change; we can have brilliant tools and data platforms, but if we don't have an operating model to run IT as a business, how do we make

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sure that customers are at the focus and team members function in a better way?"

The shift to quantum and quantum encryption is a new paradigm — "frighteningly different" from the faux-threat of Y2K, suggested Golden. "It could be very disruptive," she said. "A lot of people may know where their important systems are — the crown jewels — but may not know how long they need to be secure."

She added that cyber criminals are stealing data now with the hope it will be unencrypted "in a day, a month or a year" when quantum comes into play. "Quantum is the gasoline on the fire for AI," explained Golden. "And it will be here sooner than we expected. Waiting for that to happen is a fool's errand."

Nvidia's Cosmos Models Teach Al About Physical World

By Paula Parisi

Nvidia Cosmos, a platform of generative world foundation models (WFMs) and related tools to advance the development of physical AI systems like autonomous vehicles and robots, was introduced at CES 2025. Cosmos WFMs are designed to provide developers a way to generate massive amounts of photo-real, physicsbased synthetic data to train and evaluate their existing models. The goal is to reduce costs by streamlining realworld testing with a ready data pipeline. Developers can also build custom models by fine-tuning Cosmos WFMs. Cosmos integrates Nvidia Omniverse, a physics simulation tool used for entertainment world-building.

While purpose-built to generate a physics-aware framework — including instructional videos — for training robotic and AV intelligence, Nvidia Cosmos models could in theory also be used to train synthetic characters for entertainment use.

"Cosmos taps generative AI to fill the biggest gap that's keeping robots from becoming more useful: training data," writes *ZDNet*, which awarded Cosmos two <u>Best of CES</u> 2025 honors.

"The ChatGPT moment for robotics is coming. Like large language models, world foundation models are fundamental to advancing robot and AV development, yet not all developers have the expertise and resources to train their own," Nvidia founder and CEO Jensen Huang said during his CES 2025 keynote and in a <u>news</u> <u>announcement</u>. "We created Cosmos to democratize physical AI and put general robotics in reach of every developer."

"Nvidia Cosmos' suite of open models means developers can customize the WFMs with datasets, such as video recordings of AV trips or robots navigating a warehouse, according to the needs of their target application," <u>VentureBeat</u> reports, quoting Huang saying Cosmos was "trained on 20 million hours of video. It's about teaching the AI to understand the physical world."

Also at CES, Nvidia introduced the Llama Nemotron family of open LLMs, built using Meta Platforms' Llama Al. "With new Nvidia Cosmos Nemotron vision language models (VLMs) and Nvidia NIM microservices for video search and summarization, developers can build agents that analyze and respond to images and video from autonomous machines, hospitals, stores and warehouses, as well as sports events, movies and news," Nvidia explained in a separate announcement.

Nvidia is making Cosmos models available under an open source model license to accelerate the work of the robotics and autonomous vehicle communities. Developers can preview the first models on the <u>Nvidia API</u> <u>catalog</u>, or download the family of models and fine-tuning framework from the <u>Nvidia GPU Cloud catalog</u> or Hugging Face.





Google TV Integrates Gemini Al for a Conversational Feel

By Paula Parisi

Google TV is incorporating Gemini Al to make it easier to converse with a voice assistant as well as generating helpful onscreen information. These new Google TV devices will also feature an upgraded, Gemini-powered voice experience capable of handling more complex voice commands. "You and your family will be able to gather together and have a natural conversation with your TV," Google announced at CES 2025, where it shared a preview of the new capabilities. The Gemini model also lets Google TV users create customized artwork, control smart home devices and get an overview of the day's news.

While the remotes for many current Google TV devices have built-in microphones, they require remote control proximity to communicate with the TV. "Upcoming Google TVs won't have this problem, though, as they'll have far-field microphones built directly into them," writes *Android Police*, explaining that "farfield microphones can capture audio at a distance," which will allow users "to interact with the assistant on your TV in the same way you do with the assistant on a Google Home speaker."

Google says the changes are coming in late 2025 on select devices, and new Google TVs will also have a proximity sensor. "Proximity sensors, a staple in smartphones, allow them to detect the presence of a nearby object," *Android Police* reports, noting that "future Google TVs will use proximity sensors so they can sense when you're approaching your TV and then show you an onscreen hub that contains 'personalized and informative widgets.'"

Google explains the on-screen hub is still a work in progress, according to *Android Police*, which writes that it currently includes widgets for "the weather, a news brief with stories you may be interested in, and your morning commute."

Asking Gemini to play a "News Brief" will prompt the Al assistant to "scrape news stories from across the Internet and YouTube video headlines posted by trusted news channels, and will produce a brief summary to catch you up on the day's events," *TechCrunch* reports, calling the News Brief feature "a notable step from Google into Al news summaries, a treacherous space for tech companies to venture into these days."

Various media companies have filed lawsuits against OpenAI, Microsoft and Perplexity claiming their AI systems appropriate copyrighted intellectual property to generate AI summaries.

Al news summaries have also been prone to "embarrassing hallucinations," *TechCrunch* writes, citing examples of misleading summaries by Apple Al and Google's own Gemini Al.

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Is the ChatGPT Moment for Robotics Around the Corner?

By Yves Bergquist

CES has regularly featured robots over the years, but we've never really seen anything pivotal. CES 2025 marked a change in this area. "The ChatGPT moment for robotics is just around the corner," said Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang in his keynote, and we couldn't agree more. And while attention was focused on LLMs, the field of industrial robotics has been unleashed like never before. According to World Robotics 2024, the International Federation of Robotics' recent report, 4.3 million units were deployed in factories worldwide as of Q3 2024, a number that's increasing at a clip of half a million units per year. This is double from 7 years ago, and the trend is accelerating.

These industrial robots don't make it to CES, but the past 10 years' extraordinary innovation around machine intelligence and 4D movement is starting to trickle down in significant ways, as we witnessed in Las Vegas.

These May Be the Droids We're Looking For

Even the myriad of robot-ish companions felt a lot more "finished" than years past. In the "silly but cute" category, the hands-down winner was the clip-on bot <u>Mirumi</u> from Yukai Engineering. <u>More accessory than robot</u>, it's in the crowdfunding stage right now, with a \$70 retail price target, but we can easily see this becoming a must-have in Asia. Samsung promised that its much-anticipated home companion Ballie, unveiled in 2020, will finally be <u>commercialized in the first half of 2025</u>. Meanwhile, like everyone else, we fell in love with TCL's Ai Me (pronounced "Amy"), a companion robot concept that is by far the cutest and most clever take we're ever seen in the "Pixarinspired" genre.

Like Ballie, <u>Ai Me</u> (below) is a smart home control center. Unlike Ballie, it's incredibly cute and cuddle-ready because the robot is separate from its egg-shaped "carrier." which navigates its environment with impressive mobility, thanks to an integrated camera. One of these days one of these will hit it big and this one may be it.

A big unlock in the companionship segment is LLMs, a serious game-changer for conversational agents, so the level of experience developers can build into robots now is orders of magnitude greater than even last year.

One example was Realbotix's somewhat strange but buzzy "female companion" robot Aria. It's still pretty rough around the edges, especially for the \$175,000 price tag, and the conversational elements still are not ChatGPT-grade, but we can clearly see how the systems will improve in the near future. Pretty niche play, but it's going to get better fast.

Ai Me Smart Home Control Center



→

Leap Forward in Mobility and Dexterity

More seriously, we're keeping a close eye on a sub-category of robots that will likely revolutionize home management and home care over the next 5 years. In this category, the 20 years and billions of dollars invested by Boston Dynamics and others in 4D mobility is trickling down to the consumer level. This year we saw a pretty impressive jump in "affordable" real world navigation and mobility.

On the higher end, OpenDroids R2D3 "home helper" robot turned a lot of heads at CES. Labeled "Roomba on Grack." this \$60,000 robot is capable of handling such complex 4D tasks as folding laundry and washing dishes. The dexterity seems impressive, and we love the focus on a small handful of tasks, which in robotics directly translates into robustness.

In the same category, it was hard to miss the star of CES 2025: **Roborock Saros Z70** (below), a Roomba clone with a mechanical arm capable of picking up debris in its way. Sure it's a bit gimmicky, but it's apparently the first massproduced robotic arm, and presents a clear innovation that, for once, isn't chasing a use case.

Much more technically sophisticated in our book was the Lymow One robotic lawnmower. With tank wheels and mulching blades, it seems very technically sound and robust, especially when it comes to navigating obstacles and traversing 45-degree slopes. And for \$2,000 that's not bad, especially since it can cover almost 2 acres per day.

We were also impressed with South Korea's **Tesollo** robotic grippers, which represent both an order of magnitude greater capability for a fraction of the price of previous such systems. We can't wait to see them in the systems of their clients (Samsung, LG, Hyundai).

But by far the most impressive "price-performance" mix was Unitree Robotics! \$1,600 robot dog (below), a clone of Boston Dynamics Spot, which amazed us with its agility. This is the future of policing for sure.

Clearly China is taking a leading role in cheap and capable at-home robots, which will be certain to raise some serious national security eyebrows. But whether it's China or another country, expect these to share your living space in the next 10 years. The tech is ready for prime time.

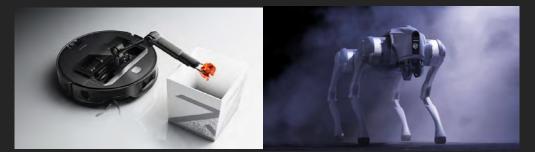
Nvidia Makes a Big Play with Cosmos

To scale, the whole field will need a lot more data. And as always, Nvidia is leading the way with its <u>Cosmos Al platform</u>, announced with fanfare at CES. Cosmos is a set of Al tools, which, together with Omniverse, aims to accelerate the development of physical Al systems, particularly for autonomous vehicles and robots.

From the early documentation, it looks like users can use Omniverse to generate simulations, which Cosmos will transform into photorealistic video imagery aimed at training any agent system (like a robot or self-driving car) meant to navigate the world in 4D. "Take thousands of drives and turn into billions of miles." is how Jensen Huang summed it up.

The platform features generative "world foundation models" (WFMs), advanced tokenizers, and an Alaccelerated data processing pipeline. Cosmos enables developers to generate synthetic training data and build custom models more efficiently, processing 20 million hours of videos in just 14 days using Nvidia's Blackwell platform.

The platform's new tokenizer offers 8x more compression and 12x faster processing than current solutions, while incorporating trustworthy AI principles with built-in guardrails to mitigate harmful content. Cosmos WFMs are available under an open model license, with early adopters including major companies like Uber, Toyota, XPENG, and several robotics firms.



Roborock Saros Z70

Unitree Robotics' robot dog

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Nvidia Will Launch a \$3,000 Personal AI Supercomputer

By Rob Scott

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Just weeks after Nvidia announced the availability of its \$249 "compact AI supercomputer," the Jetson Orin Nano Super Developer Kit for startups and hobbyists, CEO Jensen Huang revealed the company is planning to launch a personal AI supercomputer called Project Digits with a starting price of \$3,000. The desktop-sized system features the GB10 Grace Blackwell Superchip, which enables it to handle AI models with up to 200 billion parameters. Nvidia claims there is enough processing power to run high-end AI models (performing up to one quadrillion AI calculations per second) while the compact system can run from a standard power outlet.

"Each Project Digits system comes equipped with 128GB of unified, coherent memory — by comparison, a good laptop might have 16GB or 32GB of RAM — and up to 4TB of NVMe storage," reports <u>The Verge</u>. "For even more demanding applications, two Project Digits systems can be linked together to handle models with up to 405 billion parameters (Meta's best model, Llama 3.1, has 405 billion parameters)."

"The system features Nvidia's latest-generation CUDA cores and fifth-generation Tensor Cores connected via NVLink-C2C to a Grace CPU containing 20 power-efficient Arm-based cores," notes *The Verge*. "MediaTek, known for their Arm-based chip designs, collaborated on the GB10's development to optimize its power efficiency and performance." <u>Wired</u> suggests the availability of Project Digits "will let you ditch the data center." The announcement coincided with other CES news including Nvidia's new AI tools for developing autonomous agents.

"Al will be mainstream in every application for every industry. With Project Digits, the Grace Blackwell Superchip comes to millions of developers," Huang said in a <u>press</u> <u>release</u>. "Placing an Al supercomputer on the desks of every data scientist, Al researcher and student empowers them to engage and shape the age of Al."

"With the Grace Blackwell architecture, enterprises and researchers can prototype, fine-tune and test models on local Project Digits systems running Linux-based Nvidia DGX OS, and then deploy them seamlessly on Nvidia DGX Cloud," explains the release. "This allows developers to prototype AI on Project Digits and then scale on cloud or data center infrastructure."

The company points out that Digits users will also have access to the library of "Nvidia AI software for experimentation and prototyping, including software development kits, orchestration tools, frameworks and models available in the Nvidia NGC catalog and on the Nvidia Developer portal."

Digits will be available in May, starting at \$3,000.





SONY

Sony's "Creative Entertainment Vision" is the long-term vision for where Sony wants to be in 10 years. Exemplified by their showings at CES 2025, including their immersive "The Last of Us" experience and other main booth exhibits, Sony is entering a new era of empowerment for creators and their IP.

Sony Introduces Interactive Experience – 'The Last of Us'

By George Gerba

During CES, Sony demonstrated a proof-of-concept experience based on the popular HBO postapocalyptic drama "The Last of Us." We were dropped into a six-person pod of newly enlisted defenders and assigned to a hardened defender who needed new recruits to combat a serious surge of zombie assaults that she was convinced could be overcome with our assistance. Armed with LEDenabled shotgun-like devices and tracked flashlights to assist our leader in discovering the concealed attackers, our combat leader led us with sharp and direct commands as she guided us through the terrors of the attack. Participants were guided by a "combat leader" through the immersive experience. Check out the <u>Sony Exhibits at CES</u> 2025 for more on what they showed.

With the flashlights and shotguns, the tracking was accurate to the emerging zombies in real time. Shouted commands were obeyed and the onslaught was rebuffed up to the end.

The venue featured three ceiling-to-floor screens with scenic elements added on the ground plane to heighten the dimensional reality in the subdued lighting in an abandoned warehouse. Of course, adding a sharply defined character with an actor with the skills to exhibit effective command presence was one of the highlights as the new defense pod was quickly snapped into service of the "The Last of Us."

The exhibit was presented at the Sony booth and was graced with a wraparound line happy to patiently wait for a glimpse of the future of location-based entertainment with well known IP.

Like the Afeela vehicle approach from Sony Honda Mobility, this is a graduated and incremental experiment in the technology necessary to have group experiences in holodeck-like realms vs. VR headsets.



Sony's Vision for the Future of Creators

By Don Levy

At CES 2025, Sony unveiled their vision for the future of content creation, one that empowers creators through cuttingedge technology, immersive digital spaces, and innovative tools. This vision is built upon a foundation of extended reality (XR), artificial intelligence (AI), and transmedia storytelling, ensuring that creators have unprecedented opportunities to collaborate and express themselves across multiple entertainment formats.

A New Era of Co-Creation in XR

Sony introduced a revolutionary XR-powered creative hub, where artists, musicians, filmmakers, and game developers can collaborate in a seamless virtual environment. Through advanced XR glasses, creators from around the world can connect and co-create regardless of their physical location. In this virtual space, customized avatars allow for interaction beyond real-world constraints, enabling a fully immersive creative process.

The hub provides access to state-of-the-art virtual studios and cutting-edge production tools, allowing creators to shape their imagination into reality. By blending physical and virtual experiences, Sony envisions a future where hybrid creative programs drive new forms of artistic expression and synergy between different entertainment genres.

Empowering Independent Creators

Sony's vision also embraces the rise of independent creators by offering support structures that foster growth, collaboration, and audience engagement. A newly developed ecosystem provides creators with tools to refine their skills, manage their work, and build dedicated fan communities.

A key example of this initiative is the story of a young creator who, through Sony's XR collaborative space, developed a short animated film in partnership with artists from various disciplines. The project won a prestigious award, opening doors to professional opportunities that once seemed out of reach.

Sony anticipates that within 10 years, creating content through XR will be commonplace, with digital twins providing fully customizable creative workspaces. These spaces will enable creators to scout virtual locations, share ideas in real time, and fully immerse themselves in their projects.

The Power of AI and Real-Time Creativity

One of the most groundbreaking aspects of Sony's vision is the ability to reproduce creative intent in real time. Al-powered tools will allow creators to transform 2D sketches into fully realized 3D models instantaneously. Such innovations will streamline the creative process, enabling teams to work intuitively and efficiently, regardless of size or location.

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Transmedia Storytelling and Interactive Content

Sony foresees a future where storytelling transcends traditional formats. In the coming years, transmedia—where a single narrative spans multiple entertainment platforms like games, anime, movies, and theme park experiences—will become the norm. Digital-native creators will leverage various media forms, ensuring that their stories reach audiences in innovative and engaging ways.

Additionally, Sony predicts that fan communities will play a pivotal role in content creation. With the rise of interactive content, fans will contribute ideas, provide feedback, and even create their own interpretations of popular works, creating a dynamic and evolving entertainment ecosystem.

A Future of Limitless Creative Expression

Sony's vision for creators is one of boundless possibilities. By leveraging



XR, AI, and transmedia storytelling, the company is paving the way for an era where creativity is no longer confined by time, place, or traditional industry barriers. The next decade promises a revolution in how content is created, shared, and experienced—empowering creators to push the boundaries of imagination like never before.



New Vehicle Processing System that Utilizes Virtual Production: "PXO AKIRA"

"PXO AKIRA" is a new system that transforms the traditional method of shooting vehicles, by enhancing safety, reducing costs, and maximizing creative freedom. PXO AKIRA combines an advanced robotic camera crane with a custom-built motion platform, LED volume technology and an integrated digital twin tool to deliver an all-in-one solution for filming vehicles using virtual production in any setting. The booth exhibit showcased a 3D reconstruction tool that perfectly complements PXO AKIRA, offering the capability to capture real-world environments and transform them into immersive, 3D digital backgrounds.





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LG Wireless OLED

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DISPLAYS

LG Wireless OLED **TVs Boost Brightness**, Include Al Tech

By Paula Parisi

Extreme brightness, advanced AI and a 165Hz refresh rate for gaming are among the features of the LG's 2025 OLED evo lineup. Powering the OLED evo M5 and OLED evo G5 series is LG's freshly minted Alpha 11 Gen 2 processor, with improved power and AI capabilities to take it beyond last year's G4 series in picture and sound. LG calls the line the world's first wireless OLEDs, with the ability to transmit throughout the home. LG's Brightness Booster Ultimate offering "brightness three times higher than conventional OLEDs" and the Alpha 11 Gen 2 processor enhance the package.

The Alpha 11 Gen 2 processor can "more meticulously analyze and refine low-resolution and low-quality images to deliver more natural and sharp upscaling results, while a new 'Professional' grade of LG's longacclaimed dynamic tone mapping system provides users and calibrators with a new level of color and detail precision when customizing and fine-tuning HDR images for all viewing environments," *Forbes* writes.

Singled out as notable progress among LG's 2025 premium evo OLEDs is "the brightness of the new M5 and G5 screens," according to Forbes, citing the new Brightness Booster Ultimate, which combines "the latest so-called 'four stack' OLED panel designs (which use an extra OLED layer to enhance brightness and efficiency) with advanced pixel color and light control courtesy of the new Alpha 11 processor," resulting in

"brightness peaks three times higher than those achieved by 'regular' OLED TVs."

In terms of audio, "the latest Alpha 11 processor includes the ability to output all sound sources, even basic stereo, in a virtual 11.1.2 surround sound configuration, with supposedly improved tonal balance and clarity," Forbes adds.

In a newsroom post, LG

emphasizes personalization, explaining that the AI Picture and Sound Wizard in its newest OLEDs tailors audio and visual modes to each user "by analyzing over 1.6 billion image settings and 40 million sound profiles."

Deep learning algorithms "analyze and refine low-resolution and lowquality images, enhancing them to a higher definition with pixel-level precision for natural and sharper visuals," LG says, adding that



From LG's newsroom post



"Dynamic Tone Mapping Professional offers expert-level control over HDR10 content for professional creators," allowing fine-tuning of images for accurate color and detail representation.

The "flashiest upgrade," *Tom's Guide* reports, is the native refresh rate of up to 165Hz. "Since 4K console games are still holding steady at 120Hz, the appeal is limited to a narrow slice of gamers. Nevertheless, the appeal is real," *Tom's* concludes.

A *Tom's Guide review* of the G5, calls it "one of the most impressive TVs I've seen at CES 2025." It will be available in 42-, 48-, 55-, 65-, 77- and 83-inch configurations, with pricing and availability yet to be announced.

Samsung Aims to Bring Its 'Vision AI' to TVs and Homes By Paula Parisi

Samsung has made a tradition of opening CES with a "First Look" event the night before exhibits open in Las Vegas. This year, that January 6 event introduced the theme "AI for AII: Everyday, Everywhere," with artificial intelligence allowing devices like TVs to intuitively (and sometimes autonomously) make choices that enhance our lifestyle. Samsung sees TV as "no longer just a screen, but a companion that enriches your home." In addition to displays, Samsung also plans to introduce its "Vision AI" technology across various home appliance and mobile devices in 2025.

During the First Look press event, Samsung Electronics CEO and Head of Device eXperience JH Han emphasized how Samsung's ongoing effort to make devices smarter has entered a "home AI" phase that will "reshape our industry."

Samsung Electronics America Connected Experience Center President Jonathan Gabrio, based in Ridgefield, New Jersey, heralded "the age of home Al."

The gist of it is, Samsung sees devices, including TV, as not just "one-directional for passive consumption but as interactive, intelligent partners that adapt to your needs," Samsung President of Visual Display Business SW Yong said during his First Look presentation.

"Drilling down into what this means brings us to the 'three As': aware, adaptive and autonomous, meaning products should be aware of their surroundings, adaptive to user preferences and autonomous in delivering intuitive features," *Forbes* reports, adding that "the showcase put some meat on these philosophical bones by providing specific examples of what Vision AI can and will deliver on Samsung's 2025 products."

Among the enhancements, Click to Search on designated Samsung TVs, for instance, "will provide viewers with instant information about what's currently playing, identifying actors and connected content,"

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From Samsung's newsroom post

says *Forbes*, adding that "Live Translate will be able to provide real-time subtitle translations."

Samsung's <u>newsroom post</u> explains the new TVs can even keep an eye on your pets and loved ones while you're away. It also mentions Vision AI will draw from the advancements of various technology partners, specifically mentioning its search features will be powered by Microsoft Copilot.

Digital Trends notes TVs with the feature can even "identify food that's in the movies and shows your watching and deliver recipes for the food to your screen."

A feature called 8K Al Upscaling Pro will elevate lowerresolution content up to 8K quality, "adding millions of extra pixels to sub-8K content with groundbreaking accuracy and naturalism," *Forbes* reports. Another feature, Auto HDR Remastering Pro "analyzes content frame by frame, applying scene-adaptive color expansion for lifelike visuals and vibrant colors, even in dark scenes," per Samsung.

Complete entries for Samsung CES 2025 events and announcements can be found in on a dedicated page in the company's newsroom.

TCL's QM6K Series TVs Boost Brightness by 53 Percent

By <u>Paula Parisi</u>

TCL's new QM6K series of mini-LED TVs is turning heads at CES 2025 for its combination of high-end features, low price, and fact that it is available now, starting at \$750 for the 50inch model, going up to 98-inches for \$3,500. Featuring a bezel-free design, the TV is powered by the company's proprietary AiPQ Pro Processor, a Super High Energy mini-LED chip that TCL is using on all its 2025 mini-LED TVs. The company says the AiPQ Pro produces 53 percent more brightness and has 500 local dimming zones controlled by TCL Precise Dimming, debuting on the QM6K series.

TCL explains the QM6K "offers a level of picture quality that has never been offered in its price band before," and <u>TechRadar</u> takes the claim seriously, writing that "considering that the TCL QM851G, one of 2024's best TVs, was the brightest TV we've yet measured, delivering more than 3,500 nits peak brightness in some modes," the QM6K's 53 percent improvement is "really saying something."



TCL QM6K Series TV

DISPLAYS

In addition to those improvements, TCL's press release specifies the QM6K series includes:

- New Halo Control System
- High HDR Brightness
- 144Hz Native Refresh Rate
- Game Accelerator 288, for up to a blistering fast 288 VRR
- Dolby Vision IQ (Plus HDR10+, HDR10, HLG, and the NEW DLA)
- Dolby Atmos
- DTS Virtual:X
- IMAX Enhanced & AMD FreeSync Certifications
- New Dolby Vision Filmmaker Mode
- New Hands-Free Voice Control
- New Onkyo 2.1 Speaker System
- Google TV

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The company notes the new Super High Energy LED Chip developed by the TCL Pangu Lab increases light efficiency by 10 percent. The lab also created a new Condensed Micro Lens so the increased brightness can be precisely focused via a narrower light path.

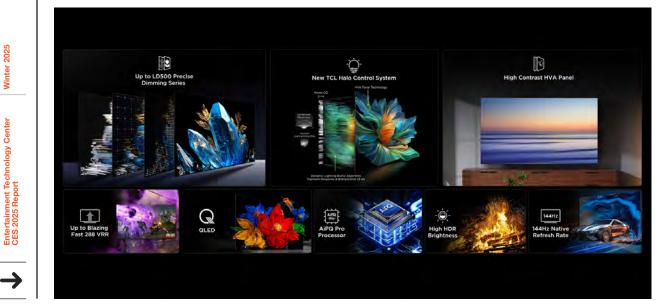
"A redesigned backlight system further reduces optical distance, or OD, between the backlight and diffuser plate, creating the new TCL Micro OD," TCL adds, noting that "minimized optical distance virtually eliminates any halo effect, also known as blooming, and creates clear, sharp edges, even between the brightest white and darkest black, providing a 143 percent improvement in backlight uniformity, and over an 18 percent improvement in blooming control."

"Other advancements for 2025 include a new highcontrast QLED display panel that's capable of 98 percent coverage of the UHDA-P3 color gamut and a Dynamic Light algorithm that's said to render SDR signals at near-HDR quality," TechRadar notes.

A Tom's Guide video calls the TCL QM6K Series "the brand's big reveal in the home entertainment category for CES 2025," and says the \$1,000, 55-inch set could "have a lot of appeal."

<u>CEPro</u> quotes TCL North America EVP Chris Hamdorf saying that the company "will be 'doubling down on QLED, QD-Mini LED and XXL screen sizes' as consumer preferences continue to tilt towards bigger TVs for their homes."

In the press release, Hamdorf also touted TCL securing its position "as the top 2 best-selling TV brand for the sixth consecutive year and just received a 2025 Circana Consumer Electronics Performance Award for Top Increase in TV Market Share in North America."



Hisense Goes Big and AI with New Micro-, Mini-LED TVs

By Paula Parisi

Hisense is going high-end at CES 2025, with two XXLsize TVs that leverage new display technology. For 2025 the company has queued up a 136-inch micro-LED TV and a 116-inch mini-LED TV that uses RGB backlight for improved color. The Chinese company's 2025 TVs all feature a new Hisense Hi-View AI Engine X processor that the company says is faster than last year's and uses artificial intelligence to optimize the picture and sound, as well as energy consumption. The models also have built-in ATSC 3.0 tuners for NextGen digital TV broadcasts. No word yet on pricing or availability.

The <u>Hisense 136MX</u> (below) utilizes an array of over 24.88 million microscopic LEDs — each pixel is its own light source, composed of independent red, green and blue LEDs. This eliminates the need for traditional backlight. The self-emissive design "achieves a nearinfinite dynamic contrast ratio, delivering deep blacks, dazzling brightness, and remarkable clarity," according to Hisense.



The 136MX is capable of up to 10,000 nits of brightness and 95 percent BT.2020 color space coverage and features an ultra-low reflectivity screen. It features Dolby Vision IQ, HDR10+ and Filmmaker Mode, which dynamically optimizes the picture to match the content and viewing environment.

Audio is enhanced with Dolby Atmos and DTS Virtual X, with Google TV and Hisense's own VIDAA OS as smart TV platforms (compatible with Google Assistant and Amazon Alexa). Micro-LED TVs are still pretty rare. Samsung has been releasing consumer versions in the U.S. since 2021, expanding the lineup in 2024 with prices of \$100,000 to \$150,000 per display.

ZDNet describes the dimming technology of the Hisense 116-inch TriChroma as "a bridge between today's mini-LED advancements and the next frontier of micro-LED."

The new TriChroma 116UX (below) is "the world's largest mini-LED TV from any TV maker, making it quite the spectacle," reports *TechRadar*, which calls it "the future of TV." At up to 10,000 nits, it is also one of the world's brightest.



Digital Trends runs through "the basic setup of an LED TV — backlights of blue or white LEDs shine through a color filter (in 2025, often a quantum dot filter) to produce the colors we see," then details how the TriChroma differs: with "tens of thousands of RGB Local Dimming optical lenses that each contain a red, green, and blue LED." Controlled in clusters, the dimming occurs "at both the optical lens level and the RGB chip level."

"Having individual red, green, and blue LEDs allows for a much wider color gamut — much like Hisense is able to do with its <u>TriChroma Laser TVs</u> — and it achieves 97 percent of the BT.2020 color space (according to the Hisense test lab)," *Digital Trends* notes, comparing the mini-LED model to the new Hisense short-throw projector.

To improve the performance of its premium and laser TV lines, <u>Hisense has partnered</u> for Pantone Validated on the picture-side and Devialet for audio expertise.

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XR AND AR

Companies Present AR Use Cases for New Smart Glasses

By Douglas Chan

Long billed as a manifestation of augmented reality (AR), the field of smart glasses has seen a wide range of products emerging on the market over the years. Notable products include the Ray-Ban Meta collection (a collaboration with Meta Platforms), Microsoft's Hololens, and Vuzix's entire product line. A survey at CES this year indicated the market of head-worn wearable computers is by no means a mature market. Our team found a few companies demonstrating their latest offerings. The principals of these companies believe their innovations differentiate from the current field with their own paths for solving specific use cases.

One of them was Israeli startup Sightful, which introduced its Spacetop G1 screen-less laptop last year that paired with AR glasses for viewing a 100-inch virtual screen. At this year's CES, the company has relaunched Spacetop as a software-only product that ditches the display-less laptop.

Their spectacles lets user sees an entire laptop screen projected onto the lens and the screen's contents can be placed anywhere on the plane of view. Thus, the computer desktop is no longer confined by the computer screen size and expanded into the AR space — specifically, up to a 50-degree field of view.

The outcome is akin to having multiple display monitors that extend the computer desktop seamlessly. Creative professionals, like film editors, who often have multiple windows opened on their computer desktops, may find Spacetop useful when they wish to work in locations without a multiple-monitor setup.

While their eyewear weighs and appears like normal glasses, a flexible cable similar to a typical power cable connects to the laptop via USB-C interface. There is no wireless version yet. Their software currently works only on Windows-based laptops, with a macOS version in the works for next year. Spacetop retails at \$950 for a 1-year subscription that includes the glasses.

Another smart glass company is Even Realities that positions itself as a provider of aesthetically and ergonomically designed everyday eyewear that lightly augments the lens with mostly textual and simple



graphical information. For example, displaying via a thin font, the lens can show text messages or notifications. Other use cases include simple navigation directions or teleprompting during a speech. The glasses connect wirelessly via Bluetooth to a phone installed with their app.

Delegates from Japan's NTT QONOQ Devices, a collaboration between Sharp and telecom giant NTT, demonstrated their recently launched Mirza wireless XR glasses that connect to smartphones. A centrally ensconced camera and "mirror bars" on its lens for enhancing the AR projection distinctively adorn the Mirza.

Selling for about \$1,700, the Mirza currently only works on phones designed for the Japanese market.

Halliday's AI Smart Glasses Project Directly into the Eye

By Paula Parisi

Wearable technology startup Halliday has unveiled smart glasses that beam images directly to the wearer's eyes. At CES Unveiled, the Shenzhen-based company previewed Al-powered eyewear that that projects images directly into eyes instead of onto a lens and is controlled by a smart ring. The "minimal optical module projection technology," coined DigiWindow, is being called first-of-its-kind. The device has a "proactive Al assistant" that reacts to its environment without being asked. The frames come in matte black or tortoiseshell and have lenses that can accommodate prescriptions.

The DigiWindow module, located in the frame's upper right, "is the world's smallest and lightest near-eye display module and can display information to the wearer 'regardless of whether they have perfect eyesight or require vision correction,'" according to <u>The Verge</u>, which says the projection appears as "a 3.5-inch screen in the upper-right corner of the user's view with minimal obstruction," visible even in bright sunlight.

<u>VentureBeat</u> says DigiWindow "discreetly delivers information and AI-enhanced insights directly to the user's

2025

eyes, setting a new standard for what wearable technology can achieve."

The effect is "invisible to anyone you are conversing with (except at night when you may see a green light), but there is no camera on the device so it doesn't have the same privacy issue that other smart glasses recording devices have," *VentureBeat* adds, noting that the Halliday frames integrate a microphone that lets users interact with the proactive AI agent.

"Like voice assistance such as Siri or Alexa, the user is required to manually launch the Halliday Al application for it to commence listening to conversations but the audio is not permanently recorded," per *VentureBeat*. Halliday says that in addition to privacy protections, omitting recording options allows for longer battery life.

Digital Trends calls the absence of a camera "a departure" and notes that in addition to focusing on display rather than image capture, and adding the control ring, Halliday's product differs from the competition, something also manifested in the "proactive" AI, which can do things like provide assistance in meetings, supplying answers to questions, summarizing key points and generating notes afterwards.

"The AI features require the glasses to be connected to a smartphone via Bluetooth, according to Halliday, but the company hasn't mentioned what AI model it uses or if there are additional costs involved," reports *The Verge*, noting "features include real-time AI translation in up to 40 languages, live navigation for directions."

The glasses are expected to be available in March, selling for around

\$400, initially through a Kickstarter campaign <u>Halliday</u> co-founder Carter Hou tells *Digital Trends* was more about order management than funding.

Play For Dream Touts 'World's First' Android MR Headset

By Rob Scott

Play For Dream Technology made a splash at CES 2025 with a new mixed reality headset inspired by the Apple Vision Pro, which the startup described as "the world's first Android-based spatial computer." Play For Dream MR has been applauded by some analysts for its user interface, eye tracking, media capture and overall performance. The company, which announced a new strategic partnership with Tobii, is targeting consumers and B2B



applications with "customized solutions tailored to meet the diverse needs of various industries," such as media, entertainment, gaming, medical, healthcare, education, research, automotive and aviation.

"The Play For Dream MR distinguishes itself through its exceptional hardware performance, state-of-the-art software algorithms, and ergonomic design, offering users an unparalleled immersive experience," claims the press release, noting "intuitive spatial interaction, lifelike visuals, and comfortable wearable experience." During CES, the company announced a partnership with eyetracking pioneer Tobii to integrate Play For Dream MR with Tobii's technology for a device that will provide "a versatile tool for enterprise applications, including training, medical research, and skills assessment."

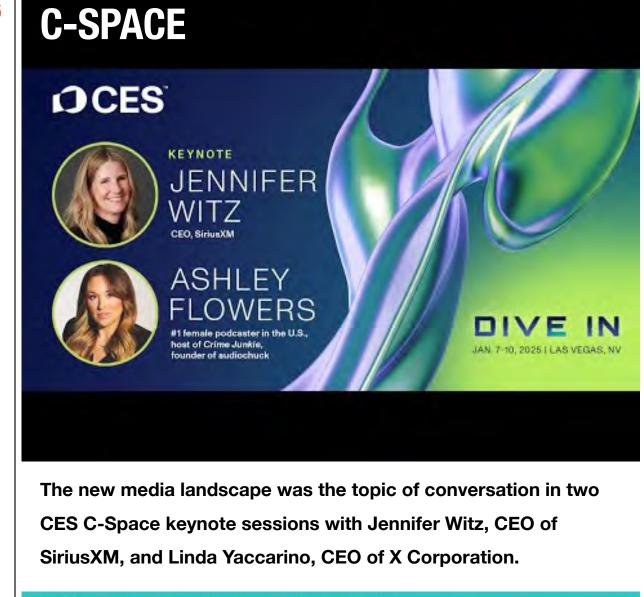
"China's high-end standalone was the star of CES," suggests *UploadVR* in its hands-on review, explaining that "unlike the cheap Chinese knockoff we saw at last year's CES, Play For Dream MR actually has high-end specs, including the Snapdragon XR2+ Gen 2 chipset and 4K micro-OLED displays. I found Play For Dream MR to be the most impressive XR hardware of any kind at CES 2025."

The headset features 3,840×3,552 micro-OLED displays, a 90Hz refresh rate, 92 percent DCI-P3 color gamut, auto IPD adjustment, and wired and wireless PC streaming. The pancake lenses provide a 103-degree field of view.

It also includes "Quest Pro-inspired rear-mounted battery and Touchstyle controllers," notes <u>Road to VR</u>, which details positive comments from former Meta Quest engineer Amanda Watson.

"The Play For Dream headset was absolutely the best all around HMD demo I saw on the floor today," Watson <u>wrote on X</u>. "It is quite literally an 'Android Apple Vision Pro,' but the execution was excellent. Great performance, optics, UI and media capture/playback features."

Play For Dream MR is scheduled to reach the U.S. market in March in the \$2,000 range for the 512GB version and \$2,300 for the 1TB model. Discounts are available on the product's <u>Kickstarter page.</u>



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Winter 2025

Entertainment Technology Center CES 2025 Report

C-SPACE



Panelists: Elizabeth Kiehner, Nortel (moderator); Dustin Callif, Tool of North America; Natalie Comins, Independent Consultant; Eric W. Shamlin, Secret Level; Cathy Hackl, Spatial Dynamics; Tony Gemma, Yahoo; Diana Caverly, McCann Worldwide

The Future of Advertising: AI, 3D, XR, and Spatial Computing at CES 2025

By Don Levy

Advertising is undergoing a seismic shift, driven by artificial intelligence (AI), 3D content, extended reality (XR), and spatial computing. At CES 2025, industry leaders discussed how these technologies are transforming brand engagement, consumer interaction, and creative execution. Al is enabling hyper-personalized, scalable campaigns, while XR and spatial computing are moving advertising beyond screens into immersive, real-world environments. The next frontier will be context-aware advertising, blending digital and physical spaces to create more interactive and seamless brand experiences. As Algenerated influencers, virtual product placements, and dynamic 3D advertisements gain traction, the industry must navigate ethical considerations and adapt to a post-screen marketing landscape.

Al's Growing Dominance in Advertising

Panelists highlighted Al's rapid evolution from predictive analytics to generative AI, fundamentally changing the creative process. Al is streamlining content production, enabling brands to personalize ads in real-time and automate creative asset generation. However, the industry remains cautious about potential pitfalls, including content authenticity, brand safety, and intellectual property rights. As AI continues to integrate into advertising workflows, companies must balance efficiency with human creativity to maintain authenticity and emotional resonance.

Spatial Computing and XR: Advertising Beyond Screens

Spatial computing is emerging as the next major platform for advertising, offering new ways to engage audiences through AR glasses, virtual environments, and Al-powered digital overlays. Brands will soon be able to place interactive ads directly into consumers' real-world surroundings, creating more personalized and engaging experiences. This shift will require companies to rethink traditional ad formats, focusing on immersive, locationbased storytelling rather than static placements.

The Rise of 3D and Synthetic Media

3D advertising is expanding, particularly in digital out-ofhome (DOOH) campaigns and e-commerce. Al-driven 3D modeling is reducing production costs, making highquality product visualization more accessible. Additionally, Al-generated influencers and synthetic brand representatives are gaining prominence, raising new challenges around transparency and consumer trust.

Predictions for 2025 and Beyond

• Al will become a core tool for brands, with greater regulatory clarity around its applications.

Winter 2025

C-SPACE

- Brands will transition from designing for screens to creating spatial experiences.
- Al-driven personalization will redefine consumer-brand interactions, making advertising more contextual and immersive.
- The rise of synthetic media will challenge perceptions of authenticity, requiring new standards for transparency.

CES: How Brands and Marketers Are Integrating AI, Creativity

By Debra Kaufman

Billed as a conversation among CMOs, this CES panel moderated by Consumer Technology Association VP of Marketing & Communications Melissa Harrison – drilled down into how major brands and advertising technology companies are integrating artificial intelligence into their pipelines and organizations. They agreed that, although this is still at the beginning stage and requires experimentation, those who are frozen and have not yet started engaging with AI will quickly be at a learning curve disadvantage. Still, panelists emphasized that AI will not replace human creativity.

"We're all excited about generative Al," said Index Exchange CMO Lori Goode. "I think it will take time, and we'll discover new use cases as we advance, along with best practices and standards."

Samsung Electronics Vice President Allison Stransky said her company feels like it's "at the tipping point" for achieving personalization at scale. "Getting the creative to scale is always the hardest part," she noted.

Harrison asked the panelists to describe the ways they're currently using AI. Stagwell Chairman and Chief Executive Mark Penn explained his digital-first marketing company's tools will help write the press release, send it to all the people likely to cover it and that pitch letter as well. "It might take somebody all day to do what we can do in a few minutes," he said.

Goode notes that Index Exchange has been using machine learning in the programmatic ad marketplace for years. "We get nearly 500 billion requests for transactions per day," she said. "We have this massive scale of data. We're really investing in our AI technology to help with predictive modeling, to make it efficient from a compute perspective and match at scale across any device or screen."

At Qualcomm, CMO Don McGuire said the company uses Writer on a daily and weekly basis. "We're saving 2,400 hours per month on productivity across my organization by deploying Writer across scale," he specified. "Writer's user interface is very intuitive and has a Chrome plug-in so it was easy to get through our process of deployment."

Harrison asked for the panelists to comment on data and privacy

regarding AI. "I don't think the regulatory approach to data and privacy fits what people really believe and what would work best for an efficient marketing system," suggested Penn. "You shouldn't have to print 'accept' for every website. Consumers could just file what data they're okay for and create a zone of privacy where they only get what they're okay sharing."

When it came to the familiar question as to whether AI will replace people, McGuire laughed. "I don't know any CMO that says they're over-resourced and has everyone they need," he said. "The world works at the speed of TikTok. At the end of the day, everyone wants to own their IP and it's only ownable if you put your unique stamp on it."

Stransky added that, "marketers should think about how their roles will evolve — and how they want it to evolve."

As to the future of AI, McGuire said, "AI is becoming the new UI." Penn said it will be "magnificently engaging."

"The point is to be personal, to communicate with technology and receive responses that are like communicating with a person who knows something about you," he said. "If we achieve that, we'll ultimately have the most engaging marketing in the history of marketing."

GAMES

Gaming Is the New Social Media for Young Generations

By Douglas Chan



In the conference track of CES this year was a lineup of talks and panels on gaming and esports. During the "Generational Shifts: The Evolution of Gaming" panel, moderated by Consumer Technology Association (CTA) Senior Manager of Market Research Steven Hummel, industry executives and thought leaders shared their views on market trends emerging post-pandemic and how those trends are driving gaming across other media. While it is not surprising to hear that the average age of gamers tends to skew younger these days, perhaps the bigger takeaway is that gaming has become the new social media for manv.

Hummel launched the discussion with U.S. statistics that indicate 86 percent of Gen Z (age 13-27) are gamers, representing the largest percentage among age groups, with that percentage proportionately decreasing with older age. Hummel expects this trend to amplify as he observes Gen Alpha (age 4-12) starting to play games at even earlier ages.

Microsoft VP of Global Revenue & Business Planning Jonathan Stringfield also notes that Gen Z is probably the first age group to perceive gaming as an entirely normal activity, even as an everyday habit. Given this generational shift in mindset, we should expect an accompanying cultural change as well.

The focus turned to Michael Mairs, the Twitch Ambassador also known as "Smirky" — who was most likely the only Gen Z representative on the panel — about what kindled his interests to play games. He shared that it was the desire to connect with others.

He recalled his first ventures into multiplayer online games like Disney's "Toontown Online" or "Club Penguin" that uses an avatar to interact with other players virtually. Mairs believes that the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited physical connections, may be the primary reason for the proliferation of online gaming in the past few years.

Electronic Arts Senior Director of Esports Brand Strategy & Marketing Monica Dinsmore added that esports is also a platform for connecting not only players in-person, but also their viewers — who are trending younger, too. Members of these communities are likely to spend 3 to 5 times more hours engaging with gaming IP.

In fact, the impact of social influence can determine the sustaining sales of a game. Richard Goldsmith, Senior Manager at Deloitte Consulting's Gaming & Esports vertical, discussed how a few vanguards can move their gaming community to adapt a newly released game. He cited the fastestselling game in Q1 2024 as an example, explaining to our reporting team that this is a third-person PvE game.

With more Millennials and Gen Z admitting that they discover new music or new sports through games, in addition to the platforms continuing to serve as powerful communication tools, the industry should be cognizant that gaming could have an increasingly significant impact on culture and entertainment.

Power of Gaming IPs, Why Games Are the New Comics

By Debra Kaufman

Fourth Frame Studios Head of Studio Oluwafemi Okusanya held a conversation with Blizzard Entertainment Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer Monica Austin on how her company is defining its IP in the marketplace. Austin reported that "World of Warcraft" just had its 20th anniversary and reached one-quarter of a billion players. "Blizzard was the first studio to recognize community," she said. "For the next 20 years, we want to think about a modern version of building community. Community from a marketing and Blizzard lens is the biggest opportunity for exploring our IP."

Austin, who joined Blizzard six months ago, said her No. 1 question is where the community is spending its time, to ensure that the company is invested in those platforms, from TikTok to YouTube. "We want to have authentic conversations with them there on those platforms," she noted. "And we also need to invest energy in keeping the IP fresh and relevant with evergreen content."

An in-house team creates most of Blizzard's copious media output. "The way we engage is like a content ecosystem," Austin explained. "We also work to connect with influencers, viewers, and fans as a way to work with brand content."

She pointed to Blizzard's collaboration with over 100 content creators and influencers for "World of Warcraft: The War Within." "These games are incredibly global and we're really going deep with our international teams," she said. "It's important that we're helping them by offering enough content so they want to engage."

Other marketing activations included Vases of Hatred, a promotion to celebrate the launch of the "Diablo IV" expansion, "Vessel of Hatred." The promotion let players send a bouquet of dead flowers to a frenemy or rival.

"It drove engagement with players across the Internet," she pointed out. To promote "The War Within," the inhouse team built a VR experience, "Escape from Dalaran."

With regard to linear media, Austin noted that "Warcraft" was the "first to lean into that" with a 2016 movie "which was huge outside the U.S." "We look for an expansion of things you can't get in a game, be it in-person events, VR or exploring TV and film," she said.



The company is also looking for a way to use the mobile platform. "When you get it right, the players show up," she concluded. "Games are the new comic books."

Power of Gaming IPs, Why Games Are the New Comics

By Debra Kaufman

During the "Speed, Customization, Innovation: Al in Gaming" panel during CES, game publishers and developers shared their latest insights regarding how they use generative Al tools. A prevailing question involved the impact of Al's ability to generate pixels and video frames efficiently — especially in light of Nvidia's keynote announcing its new Blackwell RTX 50 Series GPUs' enormous ability to do so. Other opinions shared during the panel included thoughts on whether Al is overhyped for gaming and wish lists for fixing the limitations of Al tools.

The panel's moderator Dean Takahashi, longtime Silicon Valley tech journalist who is now lead writer at *GamesBeat* (from *VentureBeat*), set the stage with a highlight from Jensen Huang's Nvidia keynote. Huang touted GeForce RTX's incredible efficiency of generating three additional video frames via Al for every frame rendered through computations.

In response to that, HP Senior Director of Experience Engineering Haval Othman said the benefit is the game will feel more realistic. Whereas Burcu Hakguder, co-founder and CRO at Layer AI, believes the extra pixels generated can particularly help simulate shaking motions. And in general, she has noticed generative AI has tremendously shortened development of mobile games from the order of three weeks to three days.

However, the panelists acknowledged there are limitations with Al in gaming. Devin Reimer, founder and CEO of AstroBeam, observed that while Al can rapidly deliver 90 percent of gaming development, the remaining 10 percent of honing and perfecting work is not performed with Al tools.

Hakguder shared that artists often prefer a slower paced development to ensure quality and AI tools also have steep learning curves preventing adaptation by creative professionals. She also doubts agentic AI can create games that monetize, to which Gamesight Head of Influencers Emilee Helm agreed because that is achieved by building a user community around a game.

LC3 plus

THINGS TO WATCH

FRAUNHOFER DEMONSTRATES DYNAMIC LOSSLESS AUDIO CODEC

By Hank Gerba

German research organization Fraunhofer IIS has unveiled LC3plus Lossless, an audio codec that promises to streamline wireless audio transmission by introducing dynamic lossless capabilities to its established LC3plus technology. The new codec represents a complete solution for high-resolution wireless audio, automatically switching between lossless and lossy compression based on available bandwidth. This adaptive approach maintains perfect audio quality when possible while seamlessly falling back to high-quality compression when needed, all while preserving LC3plus's core benefits of low latency and robust transmission.

Dr. Alfonso Carrera, Executive MBA, noted that Fraunhofer considers its family of codecs to be a kind of "toolbox," offering various capabilities based on the needs of any given application. LC3plus offers various bitrates, up to 500 kbps per channel, and a variety of latency modes, including the promise of a 1.25 millisecond mode coming in the near future. In situations where such high bitrates or low latency are not needed, these features can be disabled, allowing the codec to run at higher efficiency. LC3plus Lossless builds on LC3plus, offering lossless streaming whenever possible while retaining all of the modular capabilities of LC3plus.

Fraunhofer emphasizes the practical benefits of its approach to lossless audio. The system's ability to seamlessly switch between lossless and lossy compression modes preserves all of LC3plus's existing advantages, including its Advanced Packet Loss Concealment and superior performance in challenging wireless environments.

"True wireless stereo earbuds that can now be marked with the Hi-Res Audio Wireless logo are perfectly adapted to the use in Bluetooth LE Audio thanks to the low bitrates of LC3plus," notes Manfred Lutzky, Head of Audio for Communications at Fraunhofer IIS.

While LC3plus Lossless has not been implemented in any product as of CES 2025, Carrera noted that LC3plus is incorporated into Android 15, with the expectation that its new Lossless variety will see adoption in the coming year, with devices from audio companies like Bang & Olufsen to follow.

THINGS TO WATCH



Wearable measurement device





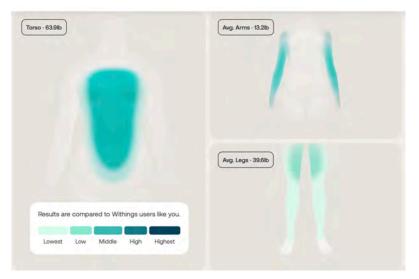


TimeKettle

At 2025 CES, TimeKettle launched the newest version of their interpreter device and headphones, the W4 Pro Al Interpreter Earbuds. In addition to the offerings of the X1 translator, the earbuds now offer real-time two-way translation for user phone and video calls.

Withings OMNIA

Developed especially for CES 2025, OMNIA is a central hub from Withings designed for health tracking, effortlessly collecting and analyzing data from Withings' wide range of connected devices, including smart scales, blood pressure monitors, and sleep analyzers. By integrating with thirdparty apps and tools, it brings all your health information together in one place, providing a complete picture of your well-being. This seamless connectivity enables you to monitor trends and gain deeper insights into your health over time.



THINGS TO WATCH

Gaudio Music Placement



TCL QM6K



AddOptics



First prescription lenses for AR glasses

Brelyon Ultra Reality



hollo Conversational Al Twin with a Personality

Hollo is an AI enabled digital twin focusing on fan engagement.

The Brelyon Ultra Reality display delivers a wide field of view, immersive virtual screen, and high-fidelity visuals with dynamic depth, unlocking new possibilities for enterprise and prosumer use. Its compact, portable design makes it ideal for simulation, training, remote vehicle operations, and visual inspections. Additionally, it provides expansive screen space, offering an alternative to multimonitor setups or headsets for tasks like financial trading, video editing, and metaverse experiences.

Empowering Independence with Technology Among Adults Age 50-Plus

January 2025

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AARP.ORG/RESEARCH | CTA.TECH/RESEARCH

LONGEVITY

At CES 2025, AgeTech took center stage as AARP and industry leaders showcased groundbreaking innovations designed to enhance aging and well-being. Through the AgeTech Summit and Digital Health Summit, experts explored cutting-edge technologies—from robotics and smart health devices to brain health wearables—that empower older adults to live healthier, more independent lives. AARP's new CEO, Dr. Myechia Minter-Jordan, highlighted the growing role of technology in aging, emphasizing quality of life over longevity. With a projected \$96 trillion market potential, AgeTech continued to evolve, driven by consumer demand—66% of adults over 50 viewed technology as a key tool for improving daily life. As AARP's AgeTech Collaborative spotlighted startups pioneering this space, CES 2025 solidified AgeTech's role in shaping the future of care, mobility, and digital health.

Age tech is defined as technology designed to improve quality of life and independence, specifically among aging adults.

Agreement with the following AgeTech statements Among adults ages 50-plus Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neutral Somewhat or strongly disagree Average somewhat Technology helps make my daily life easier 27% 46% 18% 8% or strongly agree^ 66% Technology can help make aging easier 18% 39% 29% 13% Technology helps enrich my life 20% 44% 26% 10%

*This is average percent of respondents who agree with the three age tech attributes.

Entertainment Technology Center CES 2025 Report

AI FOR HEALTHCARE

AARP's national survey on Americans aged 50-plus and their technology uses

AARP's latest survey on 2025 tech trends in older adults, published December of 2024, highlights how adults 50 and older are increasingly integrating digital tools into their daily lives. From health-tracking apps and smart home devices to telemedicine and emergency alert systems, older adults are leveraging technology to enhance security, well-being, and independence. While AI adoption has doubled since the previous year, concerns about data privacy, ease of use, and cost remain barriers to full acceptance. The findings underscore the need for age-inclusive design, better technical support, and increased awareness to close the digital gap and empower older consumers.

66% of adults 50+ say technology enriches their lives and makes aging easier.

71% use health-tracking apps, and 59% participate in fitness classes online.

46% own safety devices like alarms and cameras, and 40% are interested in them.

70% of older adults manage chronic conditions, and 27% are caregivers who rely on tech for assistance.

67% made a tech purchase in the past year, spending an average of \$753 (compared to \$798 in 2023).

Al use among older adults has doubled from 9% in 2023 to 18% in 2024, with 30% expressing interest in its benefits.

91% own a smartphone, making it the most common device, followed by smart TVs (78%) and laptops (72%).

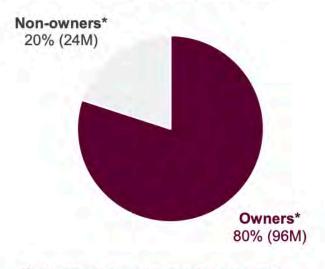
64% believe they have the digital skills to take full advantage of being online.

71% are interested in a tech support service tailored for older users.

59% feel technology isn't designed with their age in mind (down from 64% in 2023).

Age Tech Is Taking Hold

Age tech ownership Among adults ages 50-plus



*Self-reported owners (personally own or share ownership in household) and nonowners of at least one of 40 technologies that can help consumers age in place

Source: Aging in Place: Staying Connected with Technology, CTA Research, Oct. 2024

ETC@USC REPORTING

Throughout CES, editor Rob Scott, Hank Gerba, Paula Parisi, Deborah Kaufman, Douglas Chen, Paul Bennun, and Don Levy attended live and virtual press conferences and monitored conference sessions to bring ETCentric readers news with a sharper focus on topics of importance to ETC member companies. Stories that have not already appeared elsewhere in this report are presented to you here.

Utilizing Real-Time AI to Measure Representation in Ads

Brands Mastercard and MGM Resorts International, the Ad Council and advertising technology company XR Extreme Reach (XR) gathered for a CES panel discussion on how real-time AI metrics can help increase representation in ads, thus boosting greater marketing ROI and audience trust. It was moderated by The Female Quotient Chief Executive Shelley Zalis, whose company collaborated with XR to unveil, in October, the Representation Index (RX) to measure inclusivity in global advertising. XR's SVP of Enterprise Solutions Kristin Wnuk was also there to describe her company's work in the space.

How Brands and Marketers Are Integrating AI, Creativity

Billed as a conversation among CMOs, this CES panel moderated by Consumer Technology Association VP of Marketing & Communications Melissa Harrison — drilled down into how major brands and advertising technology companies are integrating artificial intelligence into their pipelines and organizations. They agreed that, although this is still at the beginning stage and requires experimentation, those who are frozen and have not yet started engaging with Al will quickly be at a learning curve disadvantage. Still, panelists emphasized that Al will not replace human creativity.

Show Features a Surprisingly Small Number of Al Agents

In the never-ending smorgasbord of Al hype, "agents" represent practical and worthwhile potential. Al agents are autonomous Al programs that can understand some context and take action in that context. Agents can autonomously perform a task that involves mapping a goal to its context and parameters (even if they're not explicitly laid out), process data across multiple formats and ontologies to understand the goal and work through the task, call multiple functions across multiple apps, and take some action to achieve the goal. Unfortunately, however, while many are talking about Al agents, few are promoting actual products at CES.

Sony Bows Production Tools for Metaverse, Digital Twins

Sony has launched XYN, a platform for the creation and display of spatial content. Pronounced "zin," XYN is an integrated software and hardware solution that "accurately captures real-world objects, human motion, and backgrounds, recreating them in virtual environments for 3D computer graphics production," according to Sony. In addition to the XYN Motion Studio, at CES 2025 this month the company shared prototypes for a XYN spatial capture solution and a XYN headset equipped with 4K OLED micro displays and video see-through function that Sony says is intended for production purposes.

Canon Demos New Volumetric X Motion Capture System

The Canon Americas Lab exhibit at CES this year featured a demonstration of Canon USA's Volumetric X Motion Capture system that creates videos viewable from any camera angle. The multi-camera system leverages 2D data, 3D volumetric data, and analytical tools for sports and entertainment applications. The basis of the system is the same as the Free Viewpoint video system — Canon's CES 2023 headliner — which was used in an NBA pilot for Cleveland Cavaliers' alternative game stream. We checked in with the project's researchers for updates, including ESPN highlights on Meta's Xtadium VR app, a new U.S. volumetric studio, and how Al was used in this technology.



2025

Disney+ to Support HDR10+ High Dynamic Range Video

Disney+ is the latest major streaming service to deploy HDR10+, which adds dynamic metadata to any video source to optimize picture quality on a frame-by-frame basis. In doing so, it joins other big streamers: Apple TV+, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, Paramount+, and Google's YouTube. The HDR10+ standard, which replaces SDR (Standard Dynamic Range) provides improved brightness and contrast as well as the benefits of standardization and global certification. HDR, originally debuted in 2017 by Samsung and Panasonic, now has over 160 adopters and more than 13,000 compatible products. CES featured a collection of additional HDR10+ announcements.

HYPERVSN Showcases Latest 3D Holographic Solutions

At this year's CES, London-based 3D holographic system maker HYPERVSN presented its latest portfolio of solutions built with its LED-based rotor technology and specialized accessories. At the center of the exhibit was a nearly 30-feet tall version of the company's SmartV Wall that manifested 3D objects in a futuristic circular glass case. Next to that display was a 3D human-sized digital avatar integrated with ChatGPT that interacted with attendees in real time. Also competing for attention was a live-streamed 3D hologram of a person presented via a camera and green-screen setup.

Spherical Drone Design Could Benefit Media Production

When walking through the Japanese exhibits at CES 2025, it was difficult to miss the huge black spherical drone aircraft HAGAMOSphere that was prominently positioned as if demanding the passerby's respect. And respect it deserved, for this drone prototype was one of this year's CES Innovation Award recipients recognized for outstanding design and engineering in consumer technology. HAGAMOSphere's innovation is its distinct ability to move both horizontally and vertically without tilting the aircraft. If the HAGAMOSphere is outfitted with a suitable camera, jerky movements in captured drone footage could potentially be eliminated or mitigated.

TCL Introduces Three Models of RayNeo Smart Glasses

TCL announced three different smart glasses at CES 2025, led by the flagship RayNeo X3 Pro. Powered by Qualcomm's Snapdragon AR1 Gen 1 chipset, its lenses feature full-color micro LED screens. The specs also boast a dual-camera setup — one for picture-taking and augmented reality vision and the other to assist with things like roomand hand-tracking. The midrange RayNeo V3 doesn't have integrated lens screens, but comes with a 12MP Sony IMX681 sensor, on-device speakers and a trio of microphones. Rounding out the bunch, the RayNeo Air 3 AR smart glasses need to connect to a compatible USB-C device to create a 201-inch virtual screen floating screen.

BMW iDrive Turns the Car Windshield into an AR Display

BMW has revealed an upcoming release of its iDrive operating system that essentially turns the entire windshield into a 3D heads-up display. The "close-to-production" version of BMW Panoramic Vision showcased at CES 2025 integrates augmented reality to layer navigational directions and driver assistance tips onto the windshield. It also does away with the conventional dashboard "gauge cluster," projecting digital equivalents onto the windshield that can be customized. The setup is powered by the new BMW Operating System X and will be introduced in all new BMW models from the end of 2025.



Xreal One Pro AR Glasses Are Thinner, with Greater FOV

The Xreal One Pro AR glasses have raised the stakes for those competing in the wearable augmented reality space, according to some CES 2025 attendees. The eyewear, which debuted at the show, updates the Xreal One, released in the U.S. last month. The Pro's cinematic virtual display (of up to 447 inches) comes with 57-degree field of view, an improvement over the Xreal One's 50-degree FOV. Xreal says the Pro model offers "professional-grade color accuracy." An optional detachable 12MP camera, Xreal Eye, captures photos and video. The new model will sell for \$500 starting in March.

Panasonic OLED is Competitive in Premium TV Category

Panasonic reinforced its 2024 reentry into the U.S. television market, introducing three new models including the flagship Z95B OLED at CES 2025. Some say the company's new top-of-the-line torch bearer — with spatial audio and sizes up to 77 inches — is competitive with premium models from top manufacturers such as Sony, Samsung and LG. The Z95B features a "next-generation" OLED panel "with Primary RGB Tandem technology, which employs a four-layer emission structure that refines the wavelength of light and increases color purity, thus enhancing light efficiency by 40 percent," according to Panasonic.

Hisense Introduces L9Q Laser TV with Compact Console

One of the new television unveilings at CES this year was Hisense's L9Q, the latest evolution of the Chinese company's L9 Series of laser TVs first introduced in 2014. Offering five immersive screen sizes ranging from 100 to 150 inches at 4K UHD resolution, L9Q touts the most compact laser TV console (as small as a 12-inch laptop). Its proprietary TriChroma triple-laser light engine emits up to 5,000 lumens with a 5,000:1 contrast ratio and is the first to achieve 1,500 nits full-screen brightness. Each L9Q is paired with one of the company's Ambient Light Rejection (ALR) screens. The L9Q also supports Dolby Atmos, DTS Virtual X, and eARC for quality surround sound.

Deloitte CTO on Tech Trends 2025 from AI to Quantum

Deloitte Consulting Chief Technology Officer Bill Briggs opened a CES panel discussion on Tech Trends 2025 with the declaration that, "the pace of change in technical has never been faster and the magnitude has never been greater." "How do we translate that into the investments we need to be making and how we think about products and customer experiences?" he asked. Much of what faces us, he stressed, is "more knowable than we feel it is." In Deloitte's 16th annual Tech Trends report, the company lists six tech trends, with artificial intelligence as the common thread.

CTA Futurist Predicts the Impact of Latest Tech Trends

At CES 2025's opening session on Tech Trends, futurist Brian Comiskey, the Consumer Technology Association's senior director of innovation and trends, forecasted record retail revenues of \$537 billion in 2025, representing a growth in hardware, software and services. He also enumerated the growth of Al as a continuing trend. Fueling this record growth is the dominance of Gen Z, which he dubbed "the first true digital natives." Comiskey noted, however, that the incoming government proposal to establish tariffs threaten U.S. purchasing power for technology products.

Lenovo Yoga Laptops Include One with Invisible Camera

Lenovo's new laptops include the Yoga Slim 9i, on display this week at CES 2025. Its 14-inch PureSight Pro OLED screen is essentially bezel-free, with 98 percent screen-to-body ratio made possible by the world's first camera-under-display technology in a laptop. "Hiding the camera under the display panel until it is needed means a pure, uninterrupted screen with no camera notch," Lenovo claims. When the 32-megapixel camera is activated, the laptop deactivates the pixels where the camera lens is positioned behind the screen. To correct image distortion and lowlight issues, Lenovo is tapping technology provided by Israel-based Visionary.ai.

Tech Trends Focus on Gen Z, AI, the 'Quantum Decade'

At CES 2025 in Las Vegas, the Consumer Technology Association (CTA) unveiled transformative trends and expected highlights of the massive trade show during a media preview on Sunday. CTA Senior Director of Innovation and Trends Brian Comiskey led a discussion on the rise of Gen Z, the increasing influence of artificial intelligence, and predicted a "Quantum Decade" for the 2030s. Sustainability, energy transitions, and human security, especially around food, also emerged as critical themes. "Innovation is never just one thing — it's the convergence of technology and human-centric values that drives progress," Comiskey noted.

Standards Are Increasingly Vital for Fostering Innovation

In an era of tremendous innovation and an explosion of new lines of products, the creation of standards has never been so important. UL Standards & Engagement (ULSE) created its first standard in 1903 and now boasts a portfolio of 1,700 standards; other standardssetting bodies include the Consumer Technology Association (CTA) and the Connectivity Standards Alliance (CSA). Moderated by ULSE Director of Insights Sayon Deb, a CES panel of experts underscored the critical importance of such standards for developing and marketing innovative products. According to Deb, 60 percent of consumers express greater confidence in certified products.

Image Sensors Adapt to Light Changes Like Human Eye

CES's Eureka Park is a section of exhibits where startups and early-stage products from all over the world solicit feedback and explore opportunities. From this year's Italian delegates at Eureka Park, our team found EYE2DRIVE, a semiconductor company that develops CMOS chips for digital imaging inspired by the human eye. Their image sensors use AI to mimic the human eye's ability to adapt its response to changing environmental light conditions. As a result, quality and color of the captured image remains unaffected. While currently focusing on autonomous navigation applications, the tech has potential for media production as well.

Halliday's AI Smart Glasses Project Directly into the Eye

Wearable technology startup Halliday has unveiled smart glasses that beam images directly to the wearer's eyes. At CES Unveiled, the Shenzhen-based company previewed Al-powered eyewear that that projects images directly into eyes instead of onto a lens and is controlled by a smart ring. The "minimal optical module projection technology," coined DigiWindow, is being called first-of-its-kind. The device has a "proactive Al assistant" that reacts to its environment without being asked. The frames come in matte black or tortoiseshell and have lenses that can accommodate prescriptions.





ALSO NOTED...

In addition to ETC's original reporting, the following pages provide links to articles from other publications published before, during and immediately after the show, curated by ETC editor Rob Scott and ETC staff. You will find these headlines linked to their sources and cataloged by relevant categories.

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