Adobe

Design Innovation - Where Next?

Adobe in Partnership with Edelman
Data & Intelligence and Havas Play

Introduction

There's no getting around it—the world of work looks vastly different to the way it did a few years ago. Despite a creative industry packed with big dreamers and world-leading trend forecasters, no one could have predicted the shape of work as it is today. Add in rapid technological advancements and the advent of generative AI and things look set to change even further.

But change can be good. It brings with it opportunities, as well as the chance to grow and question how we do things.

What role will generative AI play? How can we harness its power to free the imagination? And how can we leverage technology to pioneer new means and modes of expression?

We spoke with 450 creatives and non-creatives across a range of industries, and at varying levels of AI-adoption, to understand the state of creative productivity across industries—from retail to media, finance, and manufacturing.

We'll uncover the power of generative AI in unleashing creativity, how it's helping to drive new content formats, and alleviate teams from the monotony of manual tasks.

Whether you're taking your first tentative steps or are leading the vanguard, the following report is packed full of real-world insights from improving productivity to easing the strain on employees and taking creativity to the next level.

What is generative AI?
Generative AI is a subset of artificial intelligence (AI) that focuses on creating or generating new content, such as text, images, or even music. It uses machine learning techniques to generate data that is similar to existing data that it has been trained on.

Adobe

**What do we mean by "creatives"
and "non-creatives"?**
While creativity transcends roles and job titles,
we wanted to distinguish between traditional
creative and non-creative job roles.

For the purpose of this report, our research refers
to a "creative" as anyone in a creative or design
role at a company who uses design software.
And a "non-creative" is an employee (director/
manager+) in specific roles who create, produce,
or collaborate on creative content.

Everyone's an artist

Remember that trend when everyone used
an AI-based app to turn into an instant artist on
Instagram? AI-generated self-portraits of people
in ethereal landscapes proliferated the app back
in 2022, heralding the mass uptake of AI.

Overnight, it seemed everyone was creating with
generative AI. And that is the beauty of AI-powered
artistry; it democratizes creativity in a way we
haven't seen before.

Some of us are understandably cautious, but the
future of AI-powered creativity isn't as dystopian
as we might think. Generative AI still requires
inputs, still requires text to generate imagery
and video, and still requires ideas. And ideas have
always been the currency of creativity. Creators
will still need to consider form and composition,
lighting, color and perspective. Only now their
ideas will be less limited by their technique.

And this is where we're seeing the most exciting
and emerging trends with generative AI; creatives
are using it to speed up repetitive, manually
intensive work, while non-creatives are using
it to upskill.

3

Adobe

The imagination printer

Havas UK's Operations Director, Tash Thomas, likes to think of generative AI as an imagination printer: **"A creative that has an idea in their mind typically would have to hand draw that or write it as a script. You can now put a prompt into any kind of image engine and it will produce something for you—something you may not have ever expected before."**

It's certainly an interesting way to cycle through ideas and iterate on concepts; it empowers the creatives to do the type of open-minded thinking that wins awards and captures attention.

For Meredith Cooper, Senior Director of Product Marketing at Adobe, the most exciting prospect among so much change is the possibility for a new era of creativity:

"

The emergence of generative AI truly opens the door for limitless creativity. Ideation is instant. Creatives can dream up an idea and instantly bring it to life to share, iterate and collaborate, leaving time-consuming scamping, reworking, and 'imagine if' sessions to the creative scrapheap.

"

Meredith Cooper,
Senior Director of Product Marketing,
Adobe

Instead, it seems, "imagine if" sessions can become exactly that. A free space for creatives to dream up their most elaborate ideas, and trial and test them instantly using generative AI. This accelerated trial and error process is bound to weed out the bad ideas from the good, allowing creatives to respond in real-time to the world around them.

For Senior Designer at Havas Play, Lewis Oliver, this is where the magic lies:

"When most work was driven by print schedules, the turnarounds were a lot slower. Now something can be created and uploaded on the same day and go live 10 minutes after you've saved the file. It's ushering in an almost seamless loop of creating and publishing work. Our clients want to be reactive. We're getting briefs now to respond to something that is happening in the public eye, in pop culture, and so there is a natural demand to be quick and hyper reactive."

So, with this unbridled freedom, where is design heading?

4

Real-world solutions

57% of decision makers believe generative AI will play a major role at their organization, solving some of the largest challenges that content creators face. **60%** specifically want help with a faster content speed to market. Director of Product Marketing at Adobe, Jonathan Tse, says generative AI is helping to solve the age-old problem of how to do more with less: **"Business leaders are already seeing huge creative productivity gains from the adoption of pinpointed generative AI solutions."**

When we spoke to those on the front-line of creating content, they had very specific requests:

- **79%** wanted a way for cameras to upload footage directly to the cloud for instant editing and review.

- And **74%**, better access to stock imagery for the same reason.

- **71%** wanted a way for collaborators to draw directly onto video frames to clarify their feedback.

- And **71%** wanted the ability for comments and feedback to be left directly within their editing tool.

Generative AI isn't just helping creatives to put their ideas on paper, but also to manage the production process through to completion, accelerating and shortening the time from ideation to execution. This inadvertently creates more space and freedom in and around creative ideas that has brought with it some surprising results: creatives are beginning to look for new ways, channels and formats to express themselves, driving innovation not just in the ideas, but in how and where people engage with them.

The booming visual industry

With the video and visual industry continuing to explode, creatives are more interested than ever in mastering different video and photo techniques.

And we're seeing a clear trend amongst the top content areas that current creators are most interested in: live action videography, stop motion and 360-degree/virtual reality videos.

For Meredith Cooper, it's a trend she's following closely: **"I love seeing creatives use technological advancements to drive new trends. We follow these closely at Adobe. We want to ensure that however creatives choose to express their work, and however brands want to reach their audiences, Adobe is there to help. It's all about letting the creativity take center stage. How can we best do that? How can we support and empower the people behind that?"**

The boom in the video and visual industry is encouraging creators to look to new areas of growth. **60%** of creatives we spoke to are already doing considerable amounts of photo editing—**51%** work with visual effects and **49%** with 2D image design.

A huge **72%** say video is a big bet to deliver personalized experiences with almost **3 in 4** agreeing 8K video is becoming a higher priority in their organization. With the rapid rise in technology and picture improvements, as well as the ever-increasing speed and ease of production, visual elements once preserved for niche experts are becoming more and more accessible.

Over half of the creatives we spoke to want to create more 360-degree/virtual reality videos, **53%** want to work more with stop motion, and **61%** are interested in live action videography.

The barrier? Despite increased accessibility, roadblocks, like training and education, still stand in the way of taking up new crafts.

59% say a lack of experience is preventing them from creating the types of visual content they're interested in. **56%** say they lack enough training, **52%** don't have enough time, and **50%** lack access to the right tools in the workplace.

Generative AI is one such tool, with Adobe Firefly already booming among creatives. **"Generative AI isn't new. And it's unlikely to replace humans, but it is likely to become integral to how we live and how we work going forward. It's vital that we harness this tech to transform not just how we do business, but how we live our lives,"** says Tash Thomas.

Limitless creativity

Repetitive, manual creative tasks are a big drain on the creative workforce. Uploading footage to the cloud, looking for stock footage to fill gaps, clarifying, understanding, implementing feedback, and transferring media from memory cards and hard drives are all key, but are also time-consuming parts of any creative's workload.

58% of creatives cite that waiting for files to upload, download, or transfer is a huge inefficiency in their workflow. **54%** say their work is interrupted more than once a week by someone asking for access to content, media or assets.

When it comes to visual content projects, most creatives feel that they are wasting time on manual tasks and wish there were better solutions out there.

One example that Lewis Oliver gives is the direct selection tool. Previously **"cutting out in an image could take hours depending on the complexity of it. Now, with Generative Fill, you can literally do it by pressing a button. I use it to cut out when I'm pressed for time or to put a mood board together."**

This is where the power of generative AI really shows up, not just in the creation of artwork, but in the saving of the modern workplace's most valuable commodity—time. Not just for efficiency's sake, but to unlock the space needed for bigger thinking and industry-leading creativity.

7

Adobe

Almost **3 in 4** creatives and **83%** of non-creatives believe using generative AI for creative projects has helped them to work more efficiently. And more than **70%** of decision makers, non-creatives and creatives believe generative AI could lead to new opportunities for creativity, as it frees up time to focus on more strategic and high-level tasks, such as 3D design. Creatives (**84%**) are very interested in working with 3D content for both the immediate visual impact (creating immersive experiences or 3D designs), as well as for finding work efficiencies. Despite this interest, budget (**35%**), the right tools (**32%**) and training (**32%**) are again cited as obstacles that prevent adoption.

With decision makers, creatives and non-creatives being almost unanimous in their approval of generative AI, there is still a discrepancy between appetite and action. One that, unfortunately stems from the top. **85%** of decision makers are confident in the near-term outlook of their company, **83%** noted a change in employee workload over the last twelve months, and **3 in 4** are certain they will invest in tools and software to improve productivity. Yet there appears to be a lag between this conviction and actual action that is freeing up creatives.

Getting paid for your time

Uploading footage, transferring files and collating feedback are all part of a creative's job and, of course, billable hours. But the real value for creative companies and clients is in the artwork itself.

Instead of focusing on manual, repetitive tasks, creatives want to be creating 3D models (**47%**), visualizing designs in 3D (**45%**), creating virtual photography (**30%**) and building AR/VR immersive experiences (**28%**). To do so, they need to create more engaging customer experiences, increase their content creation abilities, and accelerate design processes.

Upskilling a workforce, and freeing them up to do so, is not only good for employee morale, attracting the best talent and winning awards, but it also helps to grow design offerings for clients, deepen client advocacy and add new revenue streams.

These aren't far flung ideals either—they're happening before our very eyes. If your Uncle Steve can render himself as a 20's space, rock-God, imagine what you could do.
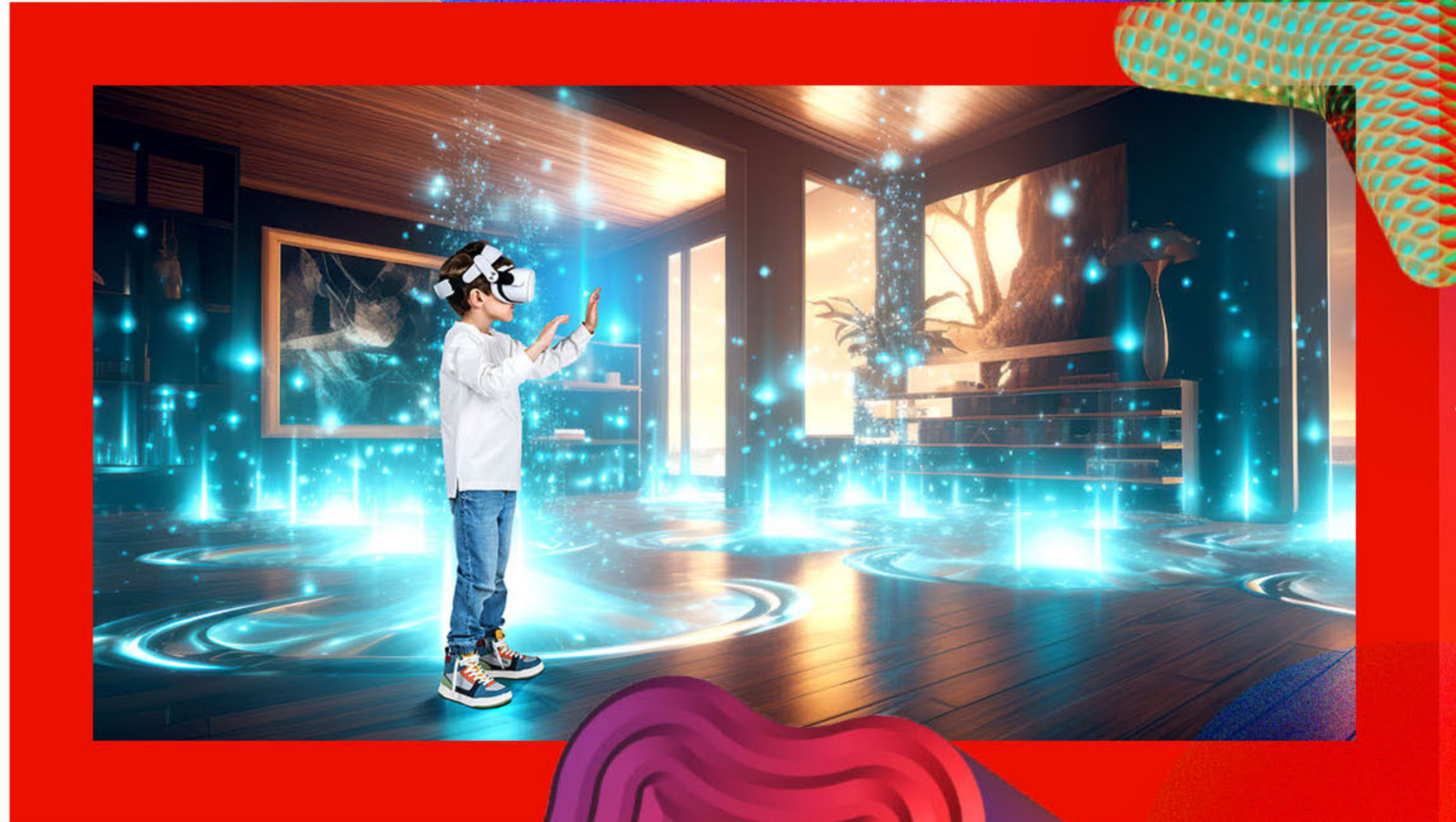
Adobe

Conclusion

Generative AI is already becoming an integral part of most work streams, but there are still those who are reluctant or cautious to use it. While this hesitancy is entirely expected, it needn't be. Intuitive tools, such as Adobe Express, Frame.io, and Adobe Stock, are seamlessly embedding generative AI into their interfaces, helping to remove the barriers that creatives and non-creatives are facing.

For creatives, it's reducing time spent on manually-intensive, and repetitive (or less valuable) tasks. For non-creatives, it's project management related issues, while both want greater collaboration and more seamless integration of feedback and asset sharing.

As ever this requires change, which rarely comes easy. For those that embrace the AI revolution, it could be a lucrative one.

Product info

Creative Cloud for Business
Introducing Adobe's newest version of Creative Cloud specifically for businesses, powered by Firefly generative AI

Creative Cloud Pro Plus Edition is a fully integrated platform, bringing together best-in-class creative solutions and services for all creative work. Unleash your creativity with powerful generative AI tools; scale productivity with 375M+ high-quality photos, videos, music tracks and more.

Frame.io
Unify creative collaboration with Frame.io

Integrate powerful cloud-based review and collaboration tools with Adobe tools using Frame.io, a platform that centralizes lightning fast and secure review and versioning across the creative lifecycle. It's now easier than ever to simplify workflows across video, photo, design, and more, thanks to a single platform to store, share, communicate, review, and approve all of your creative projects.

Adobe Express
Create flyers, reels, resumes and TikToks with generative AI

Make amazing work that stands out with generative AI features powered by Adobe Firefly. From Text to Image and Text to Template, creators and businesses can now bring their vision into their work. Whatever you type will come to life with Adobe Express. Create easier. Dream bigger.

Adobe Firefly
Unleash Creativity with Adobe Firefly

Combine the transformative power of generative AI with world-class creative apps using Adobe Firefly. Generative AI automates low-value, manual tasks, resulting in a 2x-8x increase in creative capacity, empowering users of any skill level to instantly turn ideas into content. Create with confidence thanks to IP indemnification with Creative Cloud Plus Edition.

Future-proof your creative offering with Adobe Creative Cloud for business, powered by Adobe Firefly generative AI.

Creative Cloud for business with Firefly and Frame.io solves your content production needs by bringing together best-in-class creative solutions on an integrated platform for all creative work.
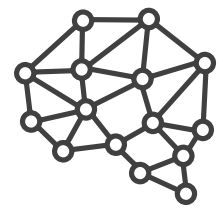
Unleash creativity. Accelerate ideation and creation with powerful generative AI tools inside creative apps. Scale branding using custom model extensions and APIs.

Scale productivity. Enhance storytelling with **350M+** natively integrated high-quality photos, videos, music tracks, and more.

Unify collaboration. Integrate creative collaboration on a platform that centralizes lightning-fast, secure review and versioning across the creative lifecycle with centralized storage and sharing.

NEW: Generative AI
Features powered by Firefly inside creative apps and IP indemnification.*

Industry-leading apps
20+ creative apps, including Photoshop, Premiere Pro, and Adobe Express

Centralized creative review
One solution for creative storage, collaboration, and review with Frame.io.

Creative assets
Unlimited access to Adobe Stock inside creative apps.

*Opportunity to obtain an IP indemnity from Adobe for content generated by select workflows powered by Firefly under certain Adobe offers. Terms will apply.

Adobe

Thanks

If you want to know more

Contact us