90% of Games Developers Already Using AI in Workflows, According to New Google Cloud Research

Study shows 97% of developers believe gen AI is transforming the industry, with a focus on creating more dynamic worlds, intelligent nonplayer characters (NPCs), and more efficient workflows

COLOGNE, Germany, Aug. 18, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- At devcom developer conference 2025, Europe's biggest game developer event, Google Cloud today released new research, conducted by The Harris Poll, that reveals the widespread adoption of generative (gen) AI in the games industry and its transformative impact on game development and player experiences.

The study of 615 game developers in the United States, South Korea, Norway, Finland, and Sweden found that 97% of respondents believe gen AI is reshaping the industry, with a majority (90%) already integrating the technology into their workflows. The findings come at a time when the industry is grappling with rising development costs, market saturation, and players gravitating toward older games, underscoring the need for continuous innovation.

Generative AI is driving impact across key areas in games

The study also highlights a significant shift in how developers see creativity and efficiency in the development process, from automating repetitive tasks (95%) to exploring new gameplay possibilities, like developing new mechanics (93%) and new genres (92%). The research also indicates a strong belief that this technology will fundamentally reshape how games are produced, as 94% of developers surveyed say it is already driving innovation.

Developers have coalesced around several key areas where they see gen AI as most impactful:

- **Accelerating workflows:** An overwhelming 90% of developers are already using some form of AI in their game development workflows. In fact, 95% say that AI is reducing repetitive tasks, freeing them up to focus on more strategic and creative concerns. This acceleration is particularly strong in key areas like playtesting and balancing (47%), localization and translation (45%), and code generation and scripting support (44%).
- **Driving creative innovation:** AI is also being used in core parts of the creative workflow, with 36% of respondents personally using it for dynamic level design, animation, and dialogue writing. This is leading to enhanced experimentation with new gameplay and narrative concepts (37%) and increased flexibility in creative exploration (36%).
- **Enhancing player experiences:** The use of AI is changing what players expect from games, with 89% of developers observing these shifts. Players are seeking games that feel more "alive" and dynamic (37%) and expect smarter, more adaptive nonplayer characters (NPCs) (34%). Developers see opportunities to enhance these experiences through dynamic world changes in response to gameplay (23%) and NPCs that learn and adapt (23%).
- **The rise of AI agents:** AI agents are software systems that use AI to pursue goals and complete tasks on behalf of users. Developers who are using AI agents are implementing them to create more dynamic and intelligent gameplay with 44% using them for content optimization that adapts to in-game needs, and 38% for dynamic balancing and tuning of gameplay. Other uses include procedural world generation (37%) and automated content moderation (37%).
- **Industry democratization:** The survey indicates that developers also see AI as a powerful tool for democratization, with a third (29%) believing it can level the playing field for smaller, independent studios to compete with more established players. This optimism is balanced by a keen understanding of the challenges of gen AI, such as the cost of AI integration (24%), the need for upskilling staff (23%), and difficulty measuring the success of AI implementations (22%).
- **Navigating ownership and IP concerns:** While the outlook is positive, the survey also points to developers' concerns regarding data ownership with AI applications and games (63%). It uncovers challenges such as player data privacy (35%) and uncertainty around who owns AI-generated content (32%).

"The survey results underscore a clear message: AI is no longer a futuristic concept for the games industry—it's a present-day reality that's driving innovation and changing the very nature of how games are made and played," said Jack Buser, global director for Games, Google Cloud. "From creating more responsive and immersive player experiences, to accelerating development cycles, generative AI is empowering developers to push creative boundaries and build the next generation of games."

When it comes to the implementation of AI, developers are already outlining a clear path forward for effective integration. For example, 40% of developers recommend using small-scale pilots or testing before full implementation. A similar portion (39%) emphasize the need to align AI use with the creative vision and goals, while another 39% stress the importance of providing training or upskilling for staff on AI tools. Lastly, 38% of developers recommend establishing clear criteria for evaluating the success of AI implementations to ensure agreed-upon metrics are in place.

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Survey Methodology
This survey was conducted online by The Harris Poll on behalf of Google Cloud from June 20, 2025 - July 9, 2025 among 615 adults aged 18+ working in game development in the United States, South Korea, Finland, Norway, and Sweden.

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