

GEN AI - THE END OF CREATIVITY OR A BRAVE NEW WORLD?

By Will Guyatt

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As a gob-on-a-stick for hire, I spend quite a bit of time broadcasting about AI, explaining complex stories to millions of people weekly, but the more I think about AI and its impact on the world - the more confused I become. I veer between AI being the best thing ever for human creativity, and its absolute end. Increasingly, I'm also wondering if punters really care if it's a human or a meat puppet behind it.

Two stories from the last week conflated all of these points into a bit of a heatwave soup. Firstly - the monstrous 800% spike in use of generative AI in game development on Steam over the last year, and secondly - a dubious AI band which generated millions of listens for fake albums.



I could tell there was something very off about The Velvet Sundown in seconds, to the extent you wonder who the hell is listening to a bunch of turgid rock tune knock offs not once - but on multiple occasions.

On one hand, this made me furious - AI taking opportunities away from talented musicians who already struggle to find them. On the other, my lack of talent no longer stops me from aiming for an number one album - despite my ability to hold a note, or play a single instrument. It's a challenging moral argument.

So - while it's easy to throw up our hands in alarm that 1 in 5 developers publishing to Steam now admit they are using AI tools - but just how many smaller teams and independent developers have found it possible to create games they may have been unable to deliver on their own?

We shouldn't kid ourselves that human-developed games are always at the peak of creativity - we've all been familiar with shovelware since ET was pumped out to the Atari 2600 in the early 80s.

And, on some early signals from gamers - it would appear that being gen-AI enhanced doesn't instantly make it a stinker. According to the Totally Human Media report, the AI RogueLike game has an 82% positive rating on steam - which means it outperforms some of the fully-human created PC titles I'm really enjoying.

It's going to be an interesting 18 months or so ahead to see whether gamers react and start boycotting games that chose AI over humans - and whether public opinion would force a major player like Microsoft to reverse the decision to use AI in game creation? I'd love to see the industry surveyed?

We know jobs are being lost, but does that stopped developer finding gainful employment, or even starting their own thing and using AI tools themselves. Right - just off to finish my first track - it's probably a number two at best.



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