

CES 2024

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CES 2024

Trend Recap

**AI Everywhere, EV Growing Pains,
Disappearing Tech, and More**

Written by IPG Media Lab

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CES 2024 marked an return to almost-normalcy for the biggest consumer tech convention. The [official press release from the CTA notes](#) that CES ended its four-day run on January 12th with “a total count of 135,000 attendees and more than 4,300 exhibitors, up 17% and 34%, respectively, from the 2023 show.” Sure, there were still Abbott booths near security points handing out masks and COVID test kits, but for the most part, CES 2024 felt lively, expansive, and in sync with the key trends happening in tech and the broader culture this year.

As always, the entire IPG Media Lab team was in Las Vegas, pounding the show floors to bring you the noteworthy exhibitors and must-see innovations. Over the course of the week, we have published the following daily recaps, as well as a pre-show preview the week prior:

- [CES 2024 – Day 0 Recap](#)
- [CES 2024 – Day 1 Recap](#)
- [CES 2024 – Day 2 Recap](#)
- [CES Trend Preview for The Drum](#)

Now, to bring everything together, here are the top five trends that the Lab team spotted from the Vegas show floors.

AI Everywhere, But Not All Equally Useful

As expected, Artificial Intelligence (AI) of all varieties, but especially generative AI, dominated the CES show floors this year. While most companies outside of “Eureka Park” (the section of CES dedicated to global startups) showed some restraint from gratuitously brandish “generative AI” on their signage, almost everyone that you talk to will tell you that AI is a top priority for them.

From [smart TVs](#) to [car dashboards](#) to [electric bikes](#) to even [toilets](#), generative AI is being integrated into a wide range of products on display, with varying degrees of usefulness. Most of them are powered by either OpenAI’s ChatGPT model or other open-sourced AI models, although Google did heavily advertise “Google AI on Android devices” around the CES venues, including a takeover of the Sphere when the show opened on Tuesday.



Image credit: [Ad Age](#)

Although OpenAI was not at CES officially, its presence was deeply felt on the show floors. The company's mind share at CES was further boosted by the launch of its much-anticipated GPT Stores, which enables ChatGPT subscribers to share and find custom chatbots made by third-party developers. So far, over 3 million custom chatbots have been created, per [Bloomberg](#).

If there's an AI breakout product at this CES, it would be the R1 pocket AI companion made by a startup called Rabbit, which [sold out 10,000 presale units](#) in one day following its buzzy CES debut. In essence, R1 is a smartphone-lite device with a voice interface powered by generative AI. Rabbit developed a Large Action Model (LAM) capable of learning how to interface with any app or web service, so that it could, say, order a pizza or plan a whole trip on your behalf. All users have to do is to tell R1 about what they need to get done, and then confirm the solutions that LAM comes up with.



The AI-driven UI of Rabbit R1 | Image credit: [Rabbit via the Verge](#)

While doubts abound over the viability of the device's real-world use cases and Rabbit's business model, it nevertheless signals an exciting new era of AI-first hardware devices that could one day replace smartphones as our primary device.

Mobility's Growing Pains

In recent years, CES has been dubbed a "car show" thanks to the growing number of major automakers and mobility startups coming to Vegas. This year, however, the mobility sector was notably subdued, with major auto brands such as [GM and Ford canceling their CES attendance](#) in the fall due to the ongoing UAW strike. With [the development of autonomous vehicles hitting a wall](#) and [the growth of EV sales slowing down](#) last year, there seems to be a consensus among mobility innovators that the sector is experiencing some growing pains after a decade of rapid advancement, as reflected at CES this year.

Still, in the absence of the major U.S. car manufacturers, global car brands continued to showcase their latest electric models and in-car dashboard innovations. Korean automaker Hyundai dominated the show floor with four sprawling booths, each showcasing a different aspect of its mobility solutions. One highlight was its Mobis EV concept car that has wheels that can rotate 360 degrees, enabling the car to move sideways like a crab. Finally, parallel parking may soon become a crab-cakewalk!



Image Credit: Hyundai

As previously mentioned, AI is driving the next phase of the dashboard. For example, Volkswagen began integrating ChatGPT into its production vehicles, making it a standard feature in the majority of its passenger vehicles, which they are looking to make all electric over the next decade. Amazon also had a sizeable booth showcasing their auto-related AI initiatives, including developing a voice assistant powered by Amazon's own large language model for BMW cars.

Disappearing Tech at Home to Assuage Screen Fatigue

Blame it on the screen fatigue, or our insatiable drive for the perfect home decor, but tech gadgets that can disappear into the background are having a moment at CES. Whether it's the awe-inspiring transparent TVs from Samsung and LG that become see-through glass panels when not in use, or the cute Samsung Music Frame speaker that is designed to look like a picture frame, or a digital project that hides into a ceiling light, it is evident that people want their smart home devices to blend in and stay out-of-sight unless needed.



Image credit: [PC Mag](#)

Sometimes, this disappearing act is also done for more than just aesthetic reasons. Nobi, a startup that focuses on fall detection tech, showcased [a smart lamp](#) with motion sensors built-in, so that it could relieve seniors from the burden of having to wear a wristband at all times for fall prevention. Designs like this prove that smart home devices can deliver a frictionless user experience without necessarily drawing attention to themselves.

Climate Anxiety Tech Showing Up in Spades

The sustainability tech section has been expanding at CES in recent years, and that was no exception this year. Plenty of eco-friendly companies and startups showed off their latest solutions in recycling, clean energy, and eco-friendly materials. Ottorbox debuted new faux-leather phone cases [made from cactus](#), while [Reencle](#) upgraded its at-home decomposing bin.

What's new this year is a palpable sense of anxiety around the worsening impact of climate change, reflected in many of the sustainability tech solutions on the show floor. For example, many solar battery solutions, while ostensibly developed for EV charging at home, can also serve as an alternative power source when disaster strikes.

Perhaps the most telling product in this regard is the Yeelight Pro P20 Rooflight, a very realistic-looking ceiling panel that mimics the effect of a skylight. It ensures that the sky always looks blue from inside your home, no matter how apocalyptically orange the sky outside has become. Turns out, technology can help us preserve a sense of normalcy in the face of mounting chaos, after all.

Apple Upstaged CES Again

As always, Apple doesn't have an official presence at CES this year. Yet, it still manages to stay top of mind for many CES attendees, thanks to [a strategically timed announcement](#) on Tuesday of the release date of its much-anticipated Vision Pro spatial computing headset. At CES, Apple's halo effect is always quite evident.

For instance, Chinese mixed-reality startup Xreal revealed a new pair of AR glasses that will retail for \$699 and ship in March, attempting to offer a lower-end alternative to Apple's \$3,500 device. Sony also teased a new "spatial content creation" system designed to let users edit and shape 3D models.

At the end of the day, CES is best thought of as the R&D center for the entire tech world. Everybody is here, even if they're not showing products or doing keynotes, to see what the latest breakthroughs are. And a lot of the things that we're seeing on the show floor might end up being incorporated into products from big tech companies down the road, and trickle down to everyday consumers. Once again, CES showed us the relentless pace of innovation, and how everyone, from tech companies to brands, is doing their best to keep up.

Want to Learn More?

If you'd like to learn more about the trends that emerged from CES and their marketing implications, or simply to chat broadly about how to adapt to changing user behaviors and uplevel your brand strategies in 2024 and beyond, the Lab is here to help.

You can start a conversation by reaching out to Josh Mallalieu (josh@ipglab.com).