

MASS BUILDERS

AI is turning software creation into a mass behaviour; anyone with an idea and a text prompt can now build, ship, and share functional applications.

May 2026

FAST FORWARD REPORT



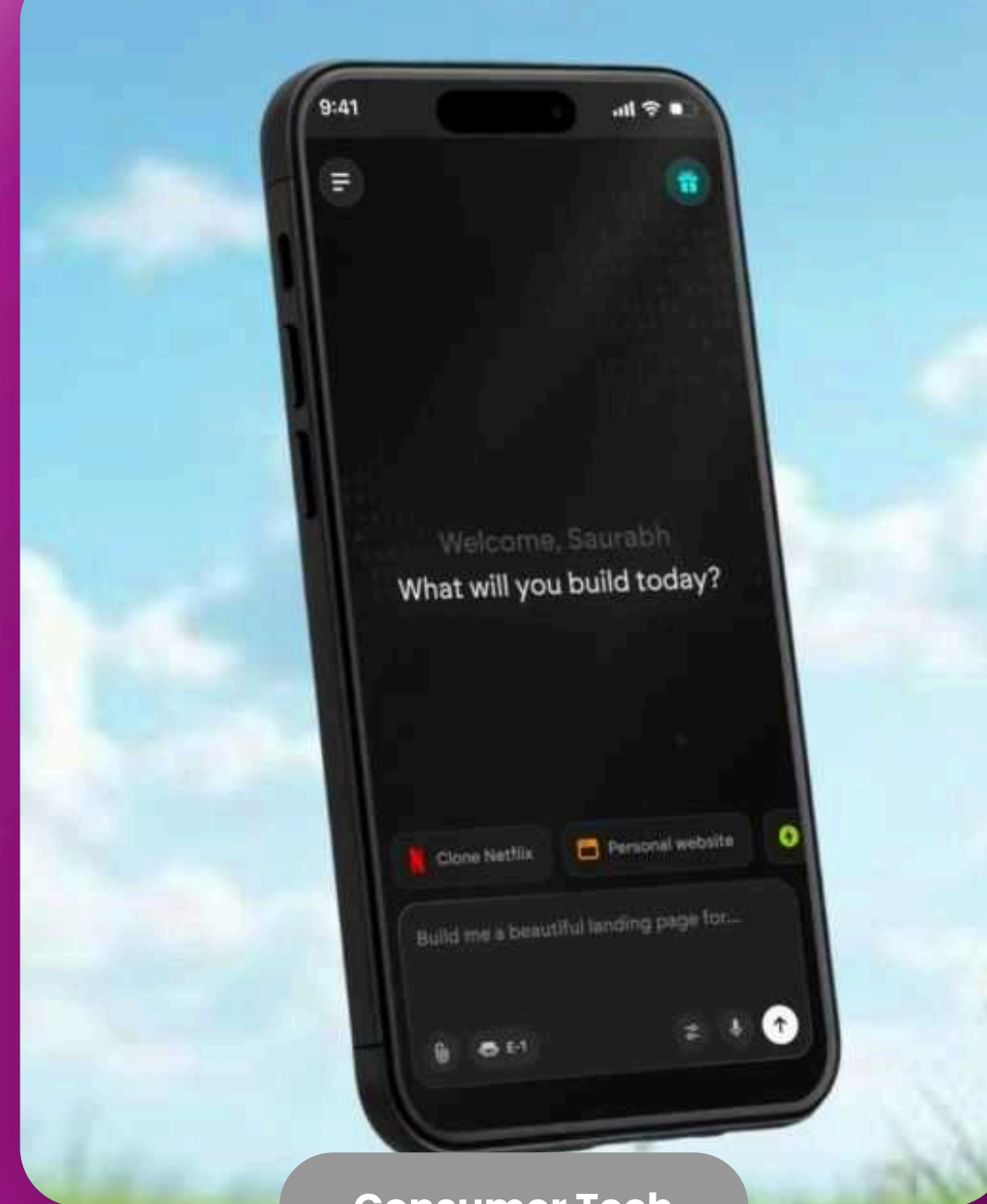
Trend Overview

- For 30 years, **building software required a skill set that most people don't have**; that changed in early 2026.
- In February and March alone, Emergent crossed USD 100M ARR with 6 million users building business apps in plain language, Nothing Technology baked vibe coding directly into a consumer smartphone, and Gizmo turned mini-app creation into a social feed, attracting 600,000 installs in weeks.
- The opportunity for your brand is not just efficiency. It's the moment when your customers stop using your product and start building on top of it.



84%

of developers worldwide now use or plan to use AI tools in their workflow, up from 76% in 2024, per the Stack Overflow Developer Survey.
([Stack Overflow, 2025](#))



Consumer Tech

 February 2026

Emergent reaches USD 100M ARR as non-developers build 7 million apps

San Francisco and Bengaluru-based startup Emergent crossed USD 100 million in annual recurring revenue in February 2026, just eight months after launch. Its vibe-coding platform lets small businesses and non-technical users build custom software, primarily CRMs, ERPs, and inventory tools, by describing what they want in natural language. The company now has more than 6 million users across 190 countries, with 150,000 paying customers and over 7 million applications created.

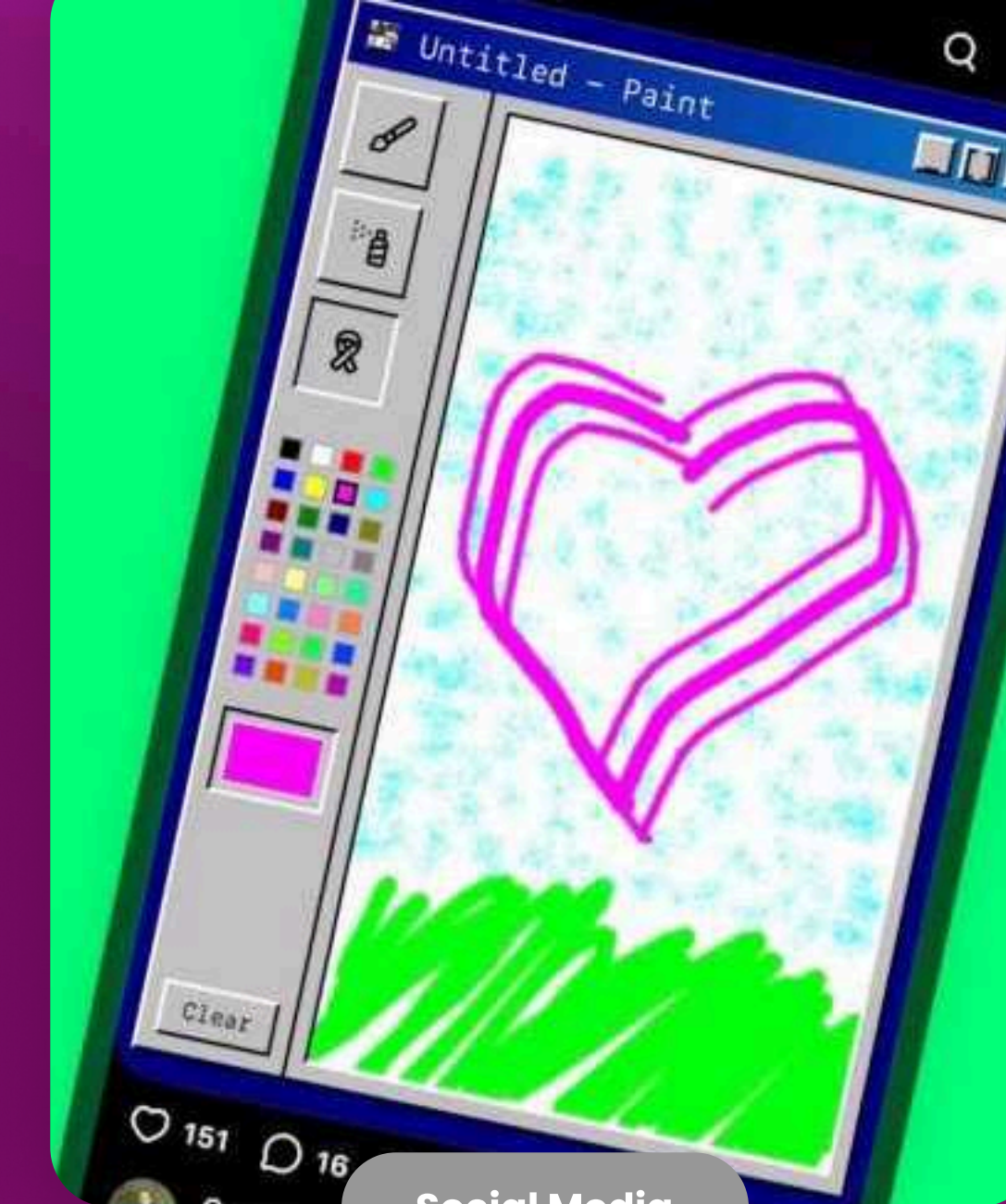


Consumer Tech

 March 2026

Nothing Technology puts vibe coding on the consumer smartphone

London-based Nothing Technology launched Essential Apps in beta in February 2026, a feature that lets anyone build personalised widgets for their phone by describing what they want in plain language. Users can create glanceable apps for sports scores, image slideshows, or custom dashboards, then download or share them directly from Nothing's website. The company framed its ambition as 'one billion apps for one billion people.'



Social Media

 February 2026

Gizmo turns mini-app creation into a social feed

New York startup Atma Sciences launched Gizmo in February 2026, a mobile platform where the feed is made entirely of interactive mini-apps created by other users, not videos. Anyone can build a gizmo by describing it in plain language; the platform generates the code, tests it, and publishes it to the feed. Within weeks of launch, the app had attracted approximately 600,000 installs.

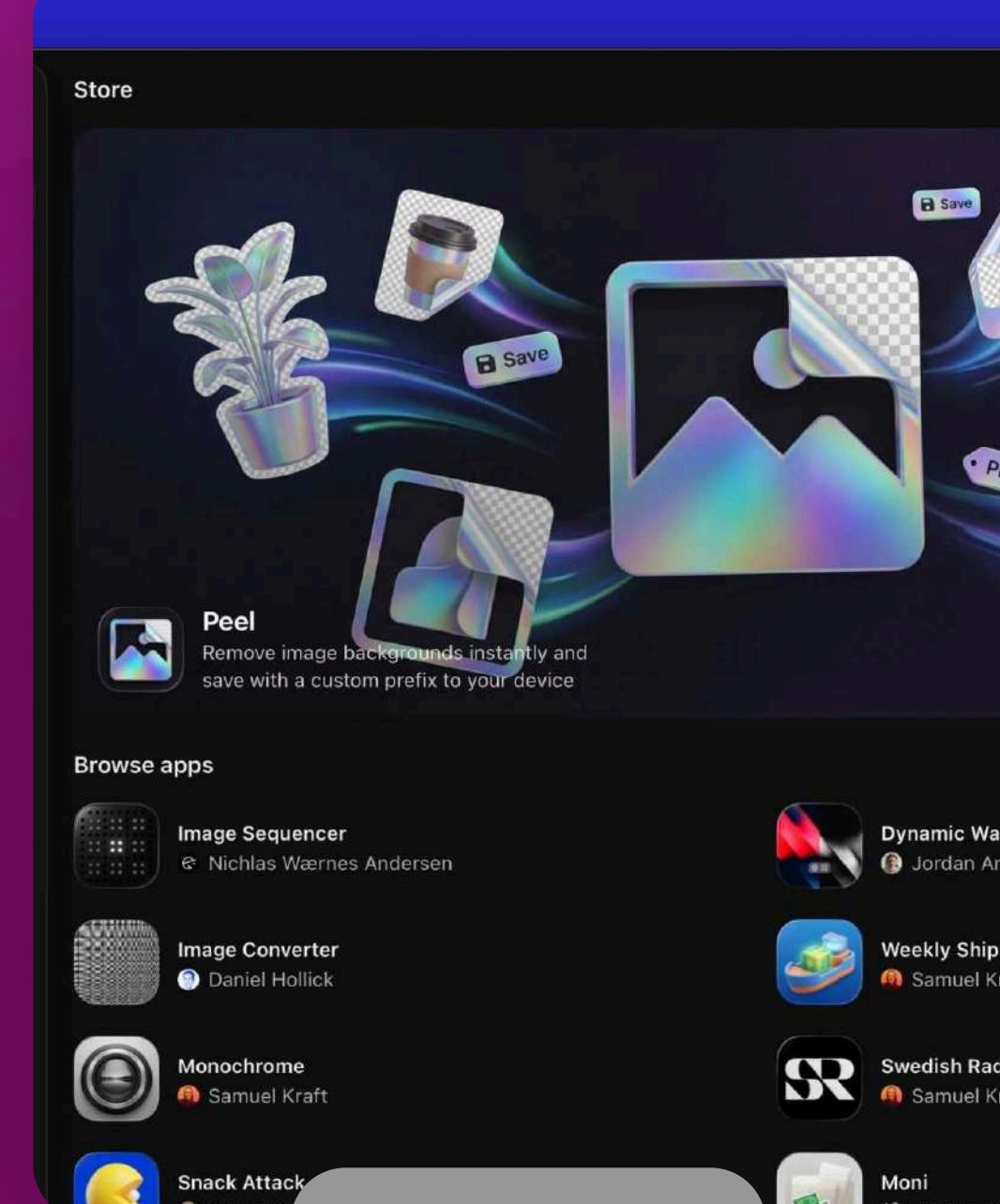


Financial Services

 March 2026

M-PESA bundles AI app-building tools into an Ethiopian mobile wallet

M-PESA Ethiopia partnered with AI platform Gebeya Inc. in February 2026 to launch the Dala AI Bundle, a subscription product embedded directly inside the M-PESA mobile money app. Subscribers can build apps, design games, and generate content using Gebeya's Dala Studio tools, with full support for local languages including Amharic and Oromo. Payment happens within M-PESA, removing the need for international payment credentials.

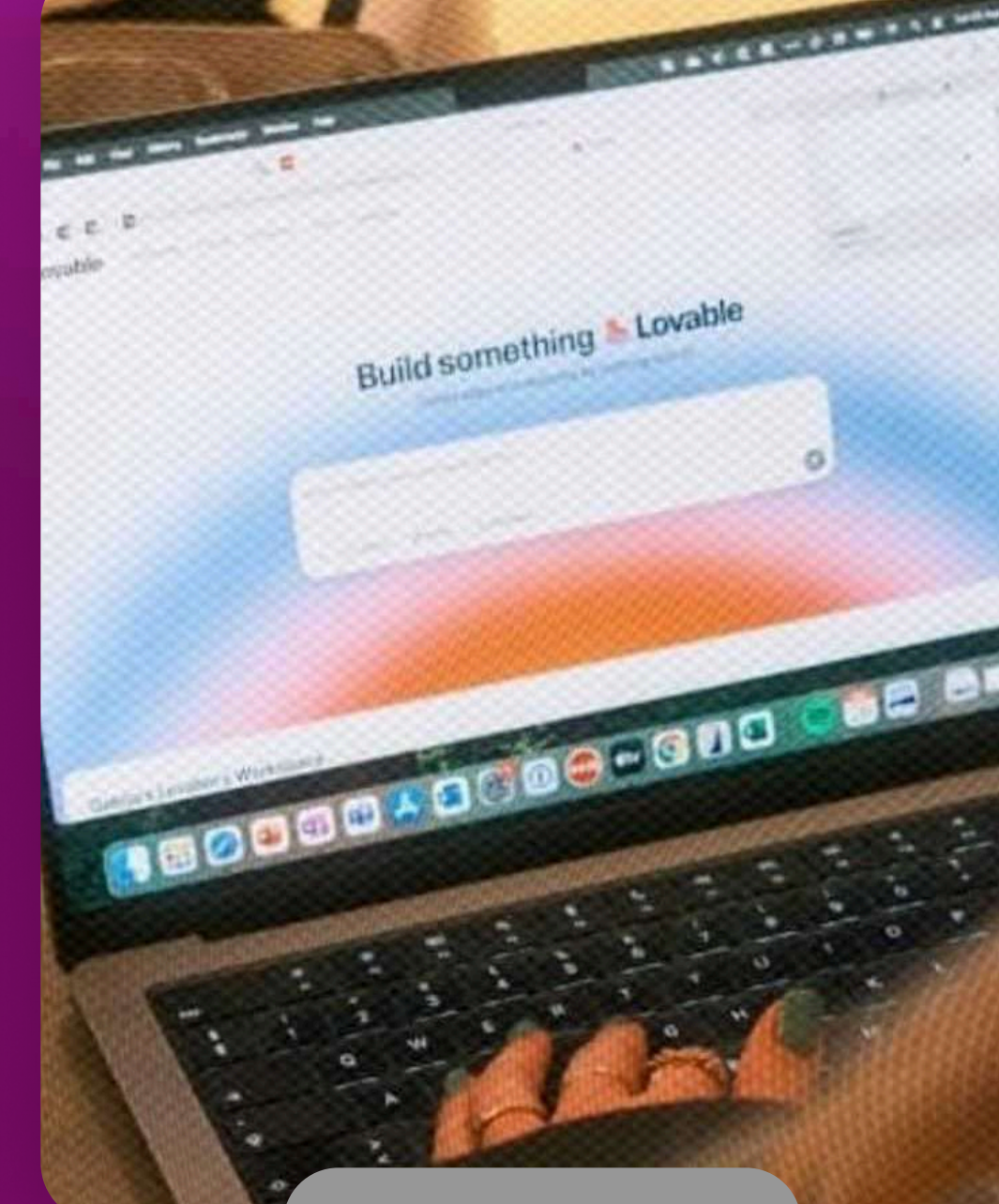


Consumer Tech

 March 2026

Raycast launches Glaze to let Mac users build and share apps without code

Raycast, the company behind a popular Mac productivity launcher, released Glaze in March 2026, a platform that lets users with no coding experience build, use, and share small software applications by describing what they want in a text prompt. Glaze handles cloud storage, design, and API integrations automatically, using models including Anthropic's Claude Code and OpenAI's Codex. A companion Glaze Store lets users discover and modify apps built by the community.



Work & Education

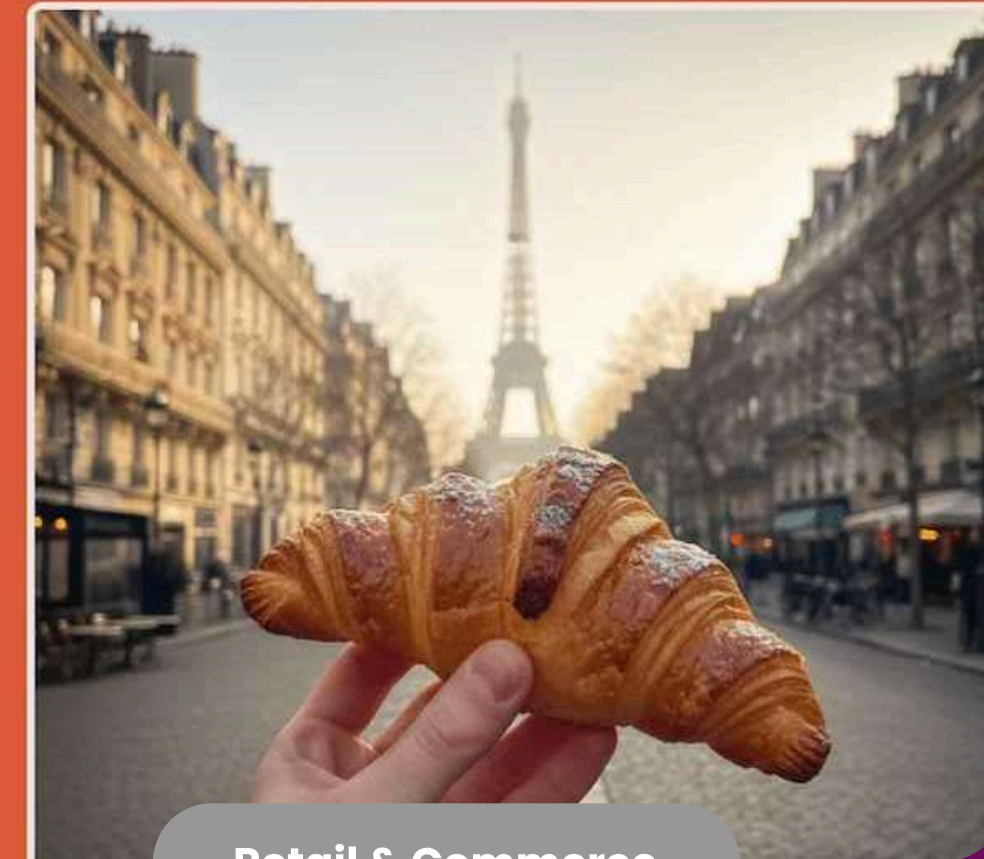
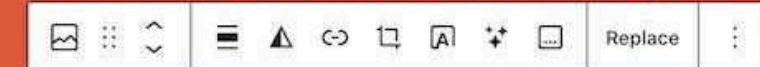
 March 2026

Lovable opens its AI app builder free for 24 hours across 17 countries

On International Women's Day in March 2026, AI app builder Lovable made its platform free for 24 hours under the SheBuilds initiative, in partnership with Anthropic and Stripe. Each participant received USD 100 in Claude API credits and USD 250 in Stripe fee credits, covering both build and payment infrastructure at zero cost. Over 30 in-person community events ran across 17 countries, with a global online track running in parallel.

About

This website is dedicated to identifying and evaluating the finest croissants available throughout France. Drawing on extensive professional patisserie experience, each croissant is assessed with a focus on technical precision, product



Retail & Commerce

 February 2026

WordPress brings natural language editing to 43% of the web

WordPress rolled out an AI assistant in February 2026 that lets users edit and manage websites using plain text prompts, integrated directly into the site editor and media library. Capabilities include text editing, translation, image generation, page creation, and font changes, all triggered by tagging '@ai' in a content block. The update builds on an AI website builder WordPress launched the previous year, with AI tools now enabled by default for sites created through that route.

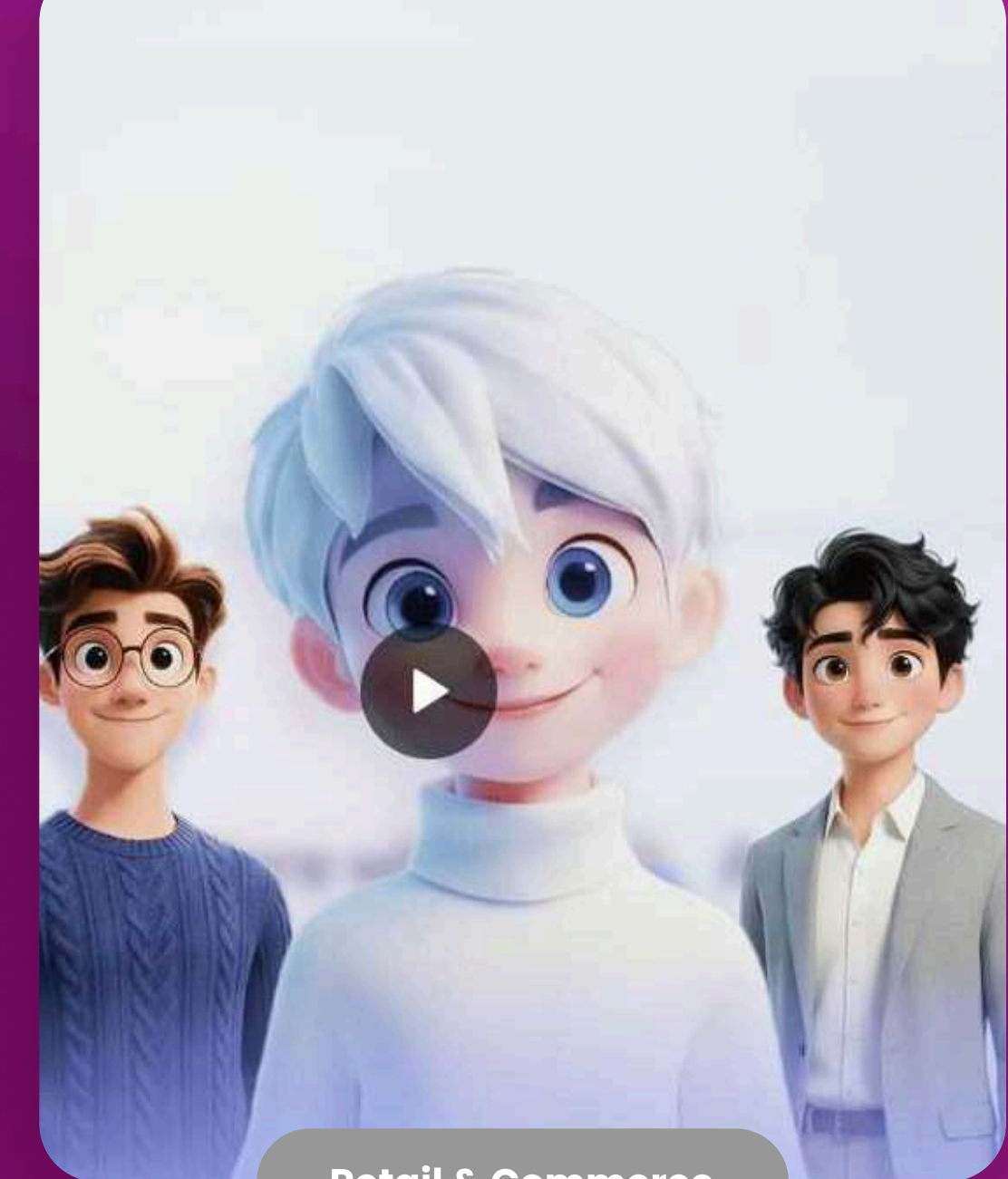


Entertainment

 February 2026

Roblox opens 3D object creation to 380 million users with an AI beta

Roblox launched its AI-powered 3D creation tool in open beta in February 2026, enabling creators to build fully functional, interactive objects using predefined schemas. Where its earlier Cube 3D tool generated over 1.8 million static items, the new system produces objects with working parts: cars that drive, planes that fly. Users can test creations inside a game called Wish Master before publishing them to the broader platform.



Retail & Commerce

 February 2026

Genstore deploys AI agents to build and run online stores autonomously

US-based startup Genstore launched in February 2026 with a platform that uses autonomous AI agents to build and operate complete e-commerce storefronts for creators and small merchants. Rather than requiring users to configure tools or manage workflows, a virtual team of AI agents analyses product information, market trends, and design patterns to generate a ready-to-sell store automatically. Ongoing operations, including updates and management, run the same way.

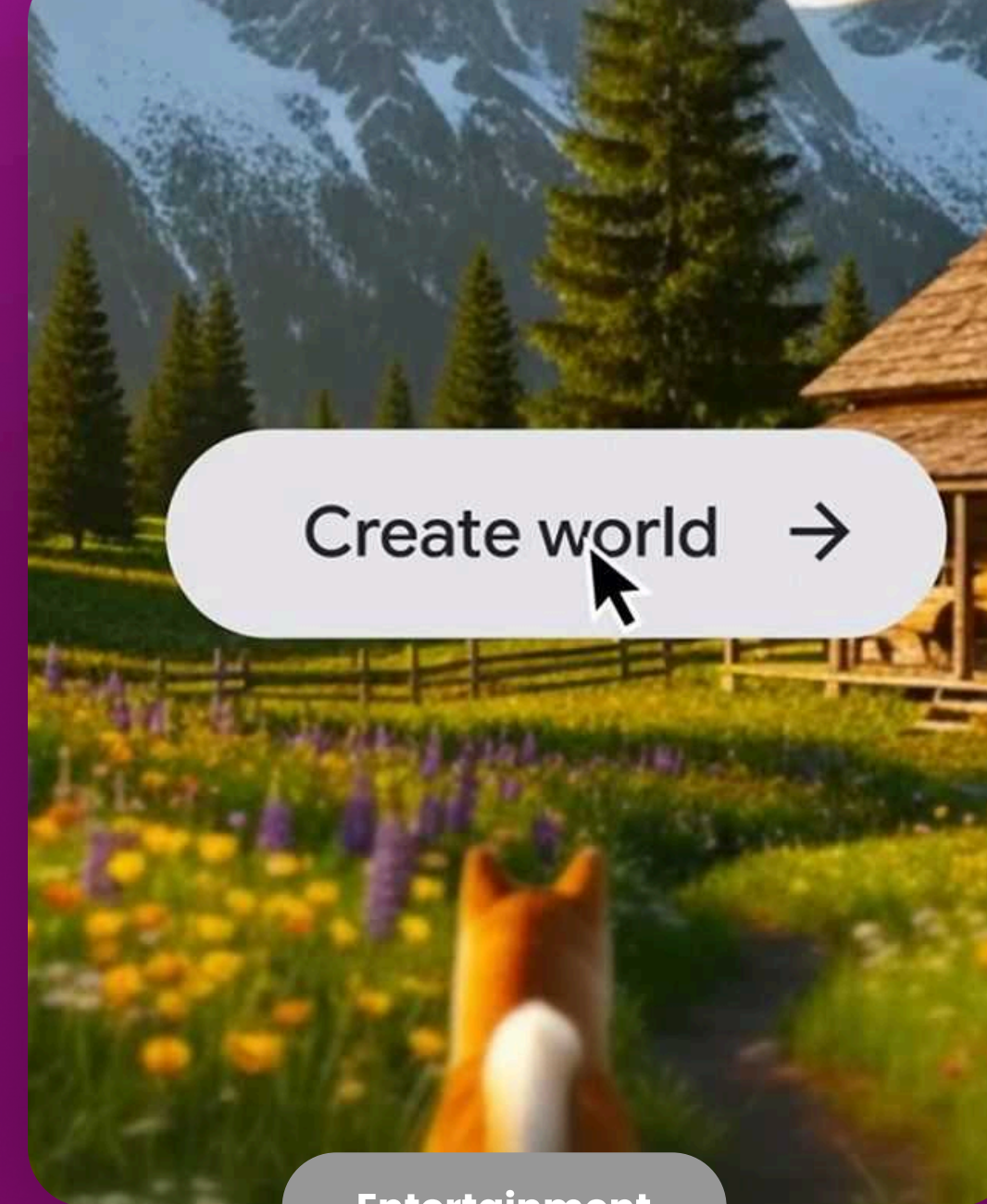


Consumer Tech

 March 2026

Cursor automates multi-agent developer workflows with trigger-based dispatch

AI coding company Cursor released Automations in March 2026, a system that lets software engineers configure AI agents to launch automatically based on triggers, including new code commits, Slack messages, or timers, without manual prompting at each step. The company already runs hundreds of automations per hour internally, covering use cases from security audits on new code to automated pull request reviews.



Create world →

Entertainment

 February 2026

Google DeepMind lets anyone generate playable 3D worlds from a single prompt

Google DeepMind launched Project Genie in January 2026, an AI tool that generates fully explorable 3D environments from a text prompt or a single image. Powered by the Genie 3 model, the worlds render at 720p and can hold their structure for several minutes of navigation. A child's drawing can become a playable level; a photograph becomes a navigable scene. Access is available through Google Labs.



Consumer Tech

 March 2026

Alibaba bundles rival AI models into a single low-cost coding tool for developers

Chinese technology company Alibaba launched Tongyi Lingma in February 2026, an AI coding tool available through its cloud unit at an introductory price of CNY 7.9 (approximately USD 1.1) per month. The subscription provides access not only to Alibaba's own Qwen 3.5 model but also to models from local competitors Zhipu AI, Moonshot AI, and MiniMax, with users free to switch between them. The tool supports complex, multi-step agentic coding workflows, not just simple code completion.

Opportunity Spaces

Branded creation layers inside existing products

The most compelling vibe coding moves of early 2026 were creation features embedded inside products people already use, from Nothing's phone OS to WordPress's CMS to M-PESA's wallet. The opportunity for your brand is to identify the most friction-heavy moment in your product experience and ask whether a natural language build layer would collapse that friction entirely.

Non-technical founder infrastructure for emerging markets

Emergent's fastest growth is outside North America and Europe, and M-PESA's Ethiopia move shows that the distribution lever in emerging markets is existing financial infrastructure, not new app stores. The white space here is a bundle that pairs vibe coding access with local language support, local payment rails, and community scaffolding, the three things that Lovable's SheBuilds campaign demonstrated actually convert access into adoption. Any fintech, telco, or FMCG brand with large emerging market distribution has a credible path to owning this.

Creation as a retention mechanic for gaming and media platforms

Roblox and Gizmo are both demonstrating that giving users the ability to create,, dramatically extends time on platform. The untapped version of this for media and entertainment brands is enabling creation within existing IP universes: tools that let fans build levels, mini-games, or interactive experiences using brand assets, all without touching a line of code. The franchises that open their canvases first will find that fan creation becomes their most cost-effective content engine.



Turn MASS BUILDERS into your next winning service

The platform's AI x Ideation Playbook will help you turn this trend into tangible product ideas — in under 30 minutes.

Open the Playbook, open your AI assistant, and follow the instructions. You'll generate on-trend concepts, user-test them against synthetic consumer personas, visualize the actual experience, then package everything into a brief ready to share with your team or clients.

It runs entirely inside your own AI assistant — be it ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude or Copilot. True trend-driven innovation.

TrendWatching's Trends x AI x Innovation Playbook

One trend, three new winning products or services. All yours, in just 30 minutes.

Innovation Autonomy

Spotting and curating trends. Dreaming up new products and services. Prototyping them at speed, alongside synthetic users and expert agents, and sending them straight to digital or physical shelves.

We're not quite there yet. But as AI gets smarter, faster, and more agentic, the puzzle pieces are snapping into place. We call it Autonomous Innovation, and yes, it may just flip entire organizations, industries (and maybe the economy) on their heads.

3

Each instruction.

Stage 2 Stage 3 Stage 4

3 steps to make your products come alive

Your products have survived user testing. Now, let's make them off. In this step of the ideation process, your products into on-brand imagery that your stakeholders instantly get it. The process is just one prompt, you will:

Set your tone Choose your approach (photographic, illustrative)

PROMPT F

Copy and paste into your AI Assistant.

ROLE You are a senior consumer insights strategist helping to build a detailed synthetic user profile for testing.

CONTEXT You have the trend, organization details, industry context, region, basic demographics, and you need deeper audience understanding to generate realistic synthetic personas.

TASK ## Ask 6 dynamic questions Generate 6 multiple-choice questions about the target audience. Ask the questions one at a time. Cover: - Demographic patterns - Psychographic traits - Behavioral tendencies - Cultural context - Pain points and frustrations - Aspirations and desires ## Synthesize the profile After receiving all 6 answers, generate a short summary (150-200 words) of the target audience. Ask me to confirm this summary before proceeding. (Wait for confirmation.) Once complete, say: "Audience profile confirmed. Please return to the Playbook."

RULES - Ask questions one at a time - Provide 4-5 multiple-choice options based on earlier context - Always include "Something else (please specify)" as the final option - If I select "Something else," ask me to elaborate briefly (1-2 sentences) - Make questions specific and relevant to the organization, industry and target audience - Wait for confirmation on the summary before moving forward

4 VISUAL STYLE PROMPT

ROLE You are a strategic communications specialist packaging innovation concepts into a presentation.

CONTEXT We've completed the full innovation process: for the three ideated products, we've conducted ideation, persona testing, feedback integration, and visualization. Now I need you to create a clear, copy-paste-ready format.

TASK ## Generate presentation content Create content for a stakeholder presentation. Structure it as follows: **INTRO SLIDE** - Project title - Trend name and one-sentence summary - Organization, region, and target audience context **FOR EACH OF THE 3 PRODUCT IDEATIONS, GENERATE 4 SLIDES** **Slide 1: The tension** - What friction or unmet need does this innovation address? - What's the problem from the trend perspective? - Why does this matter for the target audience? **Slide 2: The innovation** - Ideation title - Description paragraph - The 3 key components explained clearly - [Indicate: Add your saved visualization here] **Slide 3: User feedback** - What resonated with the personas? - What surprised them?