

Ubisoft sets sights on VR, AI shakeups in future of gaming

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Now, ahead of the 2024 release of Apple's Vision Pro headset, Ubisoft chief executive Yves Guillemot is ready to make another bet on the future of gaming -- that virtual reality is around the corner.

French videogame titan Ubisoft is eyeing artificial intelligence and

virtual reality as the next big things in gaming, its chief executive said, especially ahead of the release of Apple's new mixed reality headset.

Ubisoft has long been known to take chances on new gaming innovations—the company launched an early partnership with Nintendo on its 2006 sensation the Wii console.

Now, ahead of next year's release of Apple's Vision Pro headset, Ubisoft [chief executive](#) Yves Guillemot is ready to make another bet on the future of gaming—that [virtual reality](#) is around the corner.

After a decade that saw the revolutionary rise of free-to-play [smartphone games](#) and titles streamed directly from the [internet cloud](#), Guillemot thinks VR is likely to be the next major industry disruptor.

"VR is eventually going to happen," he told AFP Monday at a company showcase event in Los Angeles.

"Apple investing massively in the field is fantastic for all of us," he added.

With Vision Pro, Apple joins Facebook's Meta, which had been the [driving force](#) behind VR video games, in lobbying studios to adapt versions of hit titles for its virtual reality Quest device.

"Apple's commitment and investment will take that industry to a new level," said Guillemot, and Ubisoft "for sure" envisions developing games for the Vision Pro one day.

"It's going to come," Guillemot said, as soon as enough of the \$3,500 headsets are in users' hands.



A videogame spun from the blockbuster 'Avatar' film franchise is on the way from Ubisoft.

Expanding horizons

Designing games for new platforms "doesn't always work out perfectly," warned consumer behavior analysis firm Circana's executive director of videogames Mat Piscatella.

"But, by supporting new market entrants, Ubisoft is usually well-positioned should that new product or service type succeed, and placing many bets seems to have generally worked out pretty well for the company over the years," the analyst said.

And in an era of consolidation in the [game industry](#), Piscatella praised Ubisoft's diversification strategy as the company broadens its entertainment offerings.

CEO Guillemot said Ubisoft would continue to expand into film and TV streaming content.

Ubisoft is behind the AppleTV hit "Mythic Quest," a comedy series set—naturally—in a [video game](#) studio.

And on Monday, the company announced that its animated series "Captain Laserhawk: A Blood Dragon Remix" will debut on Netflix later this year.

The series is set in "a dystopian, cyberpunk version of 1992" and features versions of characters from Ubisoft games.

"The goal here is to make sure that our brands can reach more players all over the world," Guillemot told AFP.

"Being on Netflix or Amazon Prime or other networks can make those brands better known and let everyone in the world participate in our creations."



An anime-inspired television series featuring Ubisoft videogame characters is on its way to Netflix.

At the Los Angeles event Monday, Ubisoft also announced a free-to-play version of its blockbuster "Assassin's Creed" franchise, along with a virtual reality version of the [game](#) compatible with Meta's Quest gear.

In addition, Ubisoft teased a video game spun off the blockbuster "Avatar" movies as well as a "Star Wars Outlaws" title made with LucasFilm.

AI games

Also on deck to shake up the world of video games is [artificial intelligence](#), said Guillemot.

He said he sees generative AI as a "fantastic opportunity," especially given how eagerly users have taken to the technology since the Microsoft-backed ChatGPT bot was released late last year.

"It's like inventing the mouse for the personal computer, it changed everything," Guillemot said.

"Games are going to be more intelligent; as creators of games, we have to see how close we can get to what exists in real life."

For example, a game might use generative AI to tap into computing power stored in the cloud, giving every character in its universe a spontaneous life of its own—players could encounter these personalities the same way they might meet a stranger on the street in the real world.

"Video games (are) a \$200 billion industry today because we've always surprised gamers with new things," Guillemot said.

"Gen AI and VR and cloud will make the industry even more attractive and fun."

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