

# HOW AI IS RESHAPING ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN & VISUALIZATION IN 2026

Architizer and Chaos are releasing the results of our fourth comprehensive industry survey, this time focusing on the use and impacts of AI in the architecture profession.

Architizer +

chaos

**Architizer and Chaos are releasing the results of our fourth comprehensive industry survey, this time focusing on the use and impacts of AI in the architecture profession.**

## RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED:

How is your firm using (or avoiding) AI tools in design and visualization?

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At which stages of the project workflow are you using, or wanting to use, AI the most?

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What benefits or drawbacks are you realizing from implementing AI in architectural practice?

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Nearly 800 architects and designers worldwide participated, revealing how they are (and aren't) using AI, if they're seeing any time savings, and how they feel about AI in the profession.

Major themes in the responses included:

AI use is popular, but is still primarily used for exploration and experimentation.

-

Nearly all architects using AI have experienced time savings, with some medium to large firms reporting major efficiencies.

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The primary unmet need identified in architectural AI visualization software is greater control over creating the exact images designers want.

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Satisfaction with AI in the architecture and design fields is highly mixed.

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Many architects are taking a conscientious, measured approach to integrating AI into their workflow.

20  
26  
SURVEY

# ABOUT THE SURVEY AND RESPONDENTS

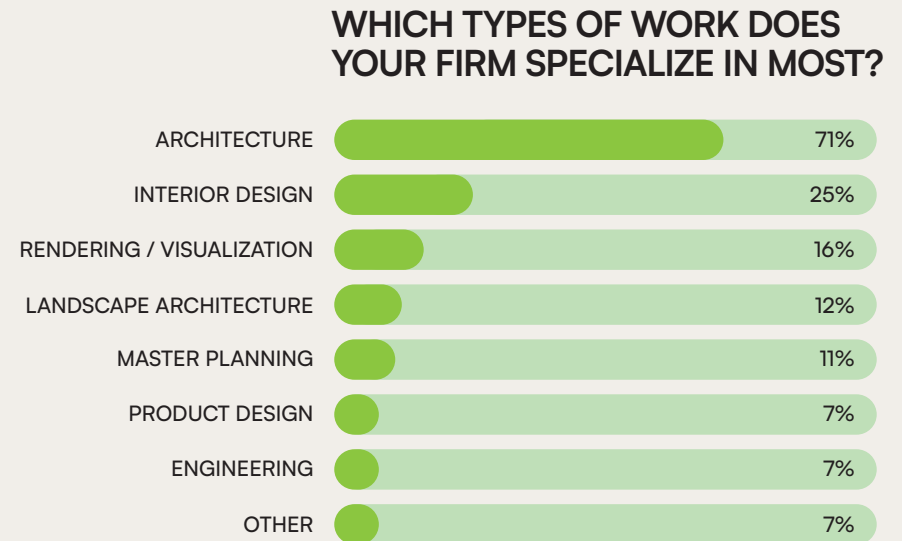
The survey was conducted in November 2025, with analysis taking place during December 2025 and January 2026. The survey was conducted fully online, with Architizer members, Chaos users and the wider AEC community invited to participate.

More than half of survey takers (60%) represented firm sizes from freelancers up to 19 employees. About a quarter (27%) were from medium-sized firms (20-99 employees), and 13% of respondents hailed from firms of 100 or more. This

breakdown is similar to that seen in Chaos' previous survey on this topic, "[The State of AI in Architecture](#)," in 2024.

An even 50% of respondents were based in North America, nearly a quarter (22%) in Europe, and 10% in Asia.

Single-digit percentages were seen from Africa, South America, and Pacific/Oceanic nations. A majority (70%) of respondents specialized in architecture, 25% in interior design, with the remainder specializing in planning, landscaping, and engineering.





# HOW MUCH ARE ARCHITECTS USING AI?

# AI USE IS POPULAR, BUT MOSTLY JUST IN EXPERIMENTATION.

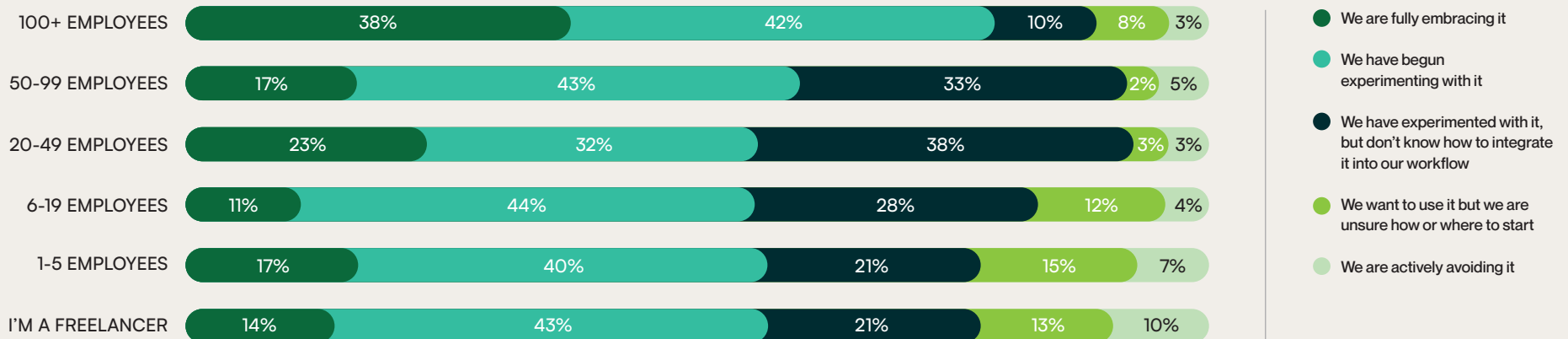
When asked how their firm is handling the emergence of AI in architectural visualization, the two most popular choices indicated

64% of all respondents have experimented with AI, with 38% of that group having trouble integrating it into their workflow. Of

everyone surveyed, 20% are fully embracing AI. In general, the larger a firm is, the more likely they are to be utilizing AI —

38% of firms with over 100 employees are “fully embracing AI”, compared with just 17% of small firms with 5 employees or less.

## HOW IS YOUR FIRM HANDLING THE EMERGENCE OF AI IN RELATION TO ARCHITECTURAL VISUALIZATION?



## THERE'S A STRONG MARKET OF ARCHITECTS & DESIGNERS INCREASINGLY USING AI.

Not surprisingly, a majority of the respondents who are fully embracing or have experimented with AI

indicated they're likely or very likely to increase their use of it over the next year. What is surprising, though,

is the size of this majority, ranging from 73% to 93%, far outweighs those unlikely to increase their use. Even

among those actively avoiding AI, a full 10% admitted they were "likely" to increase their AI use.

### HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO INCREASE YOUR USE OF AI TOOLS IN YOUR ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?



## THE NUMBER OF ARCHITECTS USING AI CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE INCREASING IN THE NEAR TERM.

AI-assisted / AI-generated renderings was the most popular response to the question “What is your firm looking to invest more in

in the next 12 months?”, picked by 36% of all survey takers. Meanwhile, the other AI-focused option, “AI-Assisted / AI-generated

video” was selected by 16% of respondents. “Photorealistic visualizations” and “architectural animations” fell between

these two (33% and 21%, respectively), pertaining to visuals produced using more traditional (non-AI) workflows.



**WHAT IS YOUR FIRM LOOKING TO INVEST MORE IN IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?**



# HOW ARE ARCHITECTS USING AI?

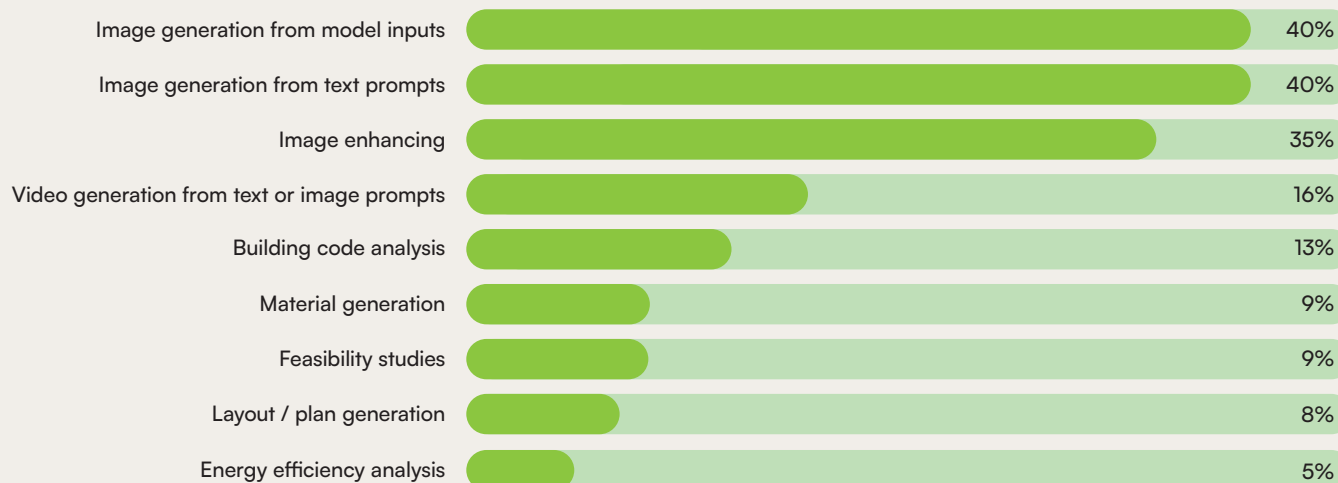
# IMAGE GENERATION OR EDITING IS AI'S MOST POPULAR USE, AND VIDEO IS STARTING TO MAKE A SPLASH.

Among the 60% of survey respondents who indicated they were fully embracing or experimenting with AI, the three most popular uses were

image generation from text, image generation from models, and image enhancement. "Video generation from text or image prompts" was cited

by 16% of respondents to this question, and while only about half as popular as the top three, it's still the next most popular response after

them. As AI-powered video generation tools were an emerging technology in 2025, this AI use case is expected to grow over the coming year.



**WHAT AI CAPABILITIES ARE YOU INTEGRATING OR EXPERIMENTING WITH IN YOUR DESIGN WORKFLOW?**

# THE STRONGEST NEEDED FEATURE FOR AI IN ARCHITECTURE IS GREATER CONTROL OVER CREATING THE EXACT IMAGES DESIGNERS WANT.

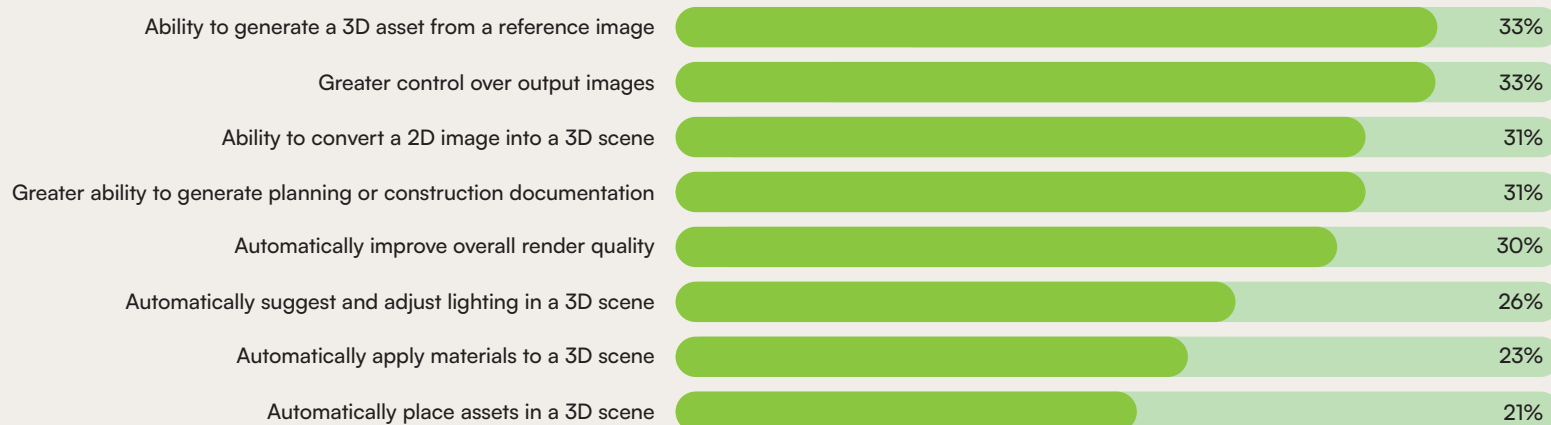
The top response to what advancements current AI users would like to see in AI-powered visualization tools was tied at 33% between “greater control

over output images” and “ability to generate a 3D asset from a reference image”. A close third place (31%) went to “ability to convert a 2D image into a 3D scene”,

while features that would automatically place assets, apply materials, or suggest lighting in a 3D scene were all cited by 20% to 26% of respondents. This suggests

architects primarily want AI’s help in building their own renderings with traditional 3D modeling tools, which tend to offer detailed control over output.

## IN RELATION TO RENDERING & VISUALIZATION, WHAT ADVANCEMENTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN AI-POWERED TOOLS?



# ARCHITECTS SEE AI'S VALUE MOST IN EARLY, EXPLORATORY PROJECT PHASES, THOUGH THERE'S A NOTICEABLE PREFERENCE FOR ITS APPLICATION IN LATER, MORE DOCUMENTARY PHASES.

“Conceptualization and pre-design” was the most popular project phase respondents would like to see improved or enhanced by AI, cited by 43% of current AI users. However,

construction documentation was a close second (35%), and the ability to generate planning or construction documents also received a healthy 31% of responses to the question “what

advancements would you like to see in AI-powered tools?”. This implies that many designers, some of whom have already seen significant productivity gains from AI in

concept design (as indicated in another question), believe the tedious, repetitive tasks inherent to construction documentation are ripe for automation, and want to see that capability in AI tools.



**WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING PROJECT STAGES WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO SEE IMPROVED OR ENHANCED BY AI TECHNOLOGY?**



# HOW WELL IS AI LIVING UP TO ITS POTENTIAL FOR ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS?

## SATISFACTION WITH AI IN THE ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN FIELDS IS HIGHLY MIXED.

A solid majority (69%) of current AI users said they were “somewhat” satisfied with the results produced by AI tools. Those unsatisfied made up only 11% of responses, with a very small 1% reporting they

were “very unsatisfied”. The relatively small proportion of unhappy AI users is notable when compared to almost twice as many (19%) stating they’re “very satisfied”. When cross-referenced

against how they’re approaching AI, a majority of those who answered “very satisfied” (62%) also indicated they’re “fully embracing” AI by more than double the rate they picked any other answer.

AI experimenters make up strong majorities of those “somewhat” or not satisfied, supporting the notion that designers who are more AI-forward are more satisfied with the results.

### HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE RESULTS PRODUCED BY AI TOOLS?

**19%**

Very satisfied - the results meet or exceed expectations

**11%**

Not very satisfied - the quality often falls short



**1%**

Very unsatisfied - they are not currently fit for purpose

**69%**

Somewhat satisfied - they're useful, but inconsistent

## THE BIGGEST PROBLEM DESIGNERS ARE FACING WITH AI IS ACCURACY AND RELIABILITY.

When asked “What are your biggest obstacles when trying to use AI tools in your design process?” the most popular response was “poor output quality or unreliable results”. This option was selected by nearly half (48%) of respondents. This finding isn’t surprising when viewed against the similarly popular need for “greater control over output images” found in Section 2.

Nearly three-quarters (70%) of current AI users also said that AI-assisted visualizations reflect their design intent somewhat well but “require supervision”. Indeed, a full 60% stated that AI “enhances some aspects” of their design workflow “but introduces new errors or inconsistencies”.

### HOW WELL DO YOUR AI-ASSISTED VISUALIZATIONS ACCURATELY REFLECT YOUR DESIGN INTENT?

**70%**  
Somewhat well - but they require supervision



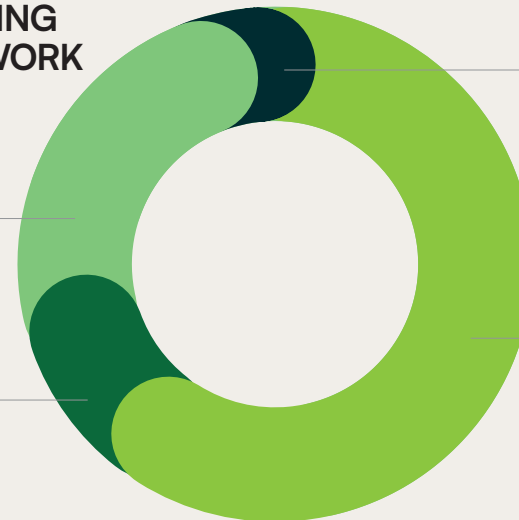
**13%**  
Not well at all - the results are often misleading

**17%**  
Very well - they're clear and controlled

### WHICH BEST DESCRIBES HOW AI IS AFFECTING THE QUALITY OF WORK IN YOUR STUDIO?

**29%**  
Positive - It is improving accuracy, efficiency, and overall output quality

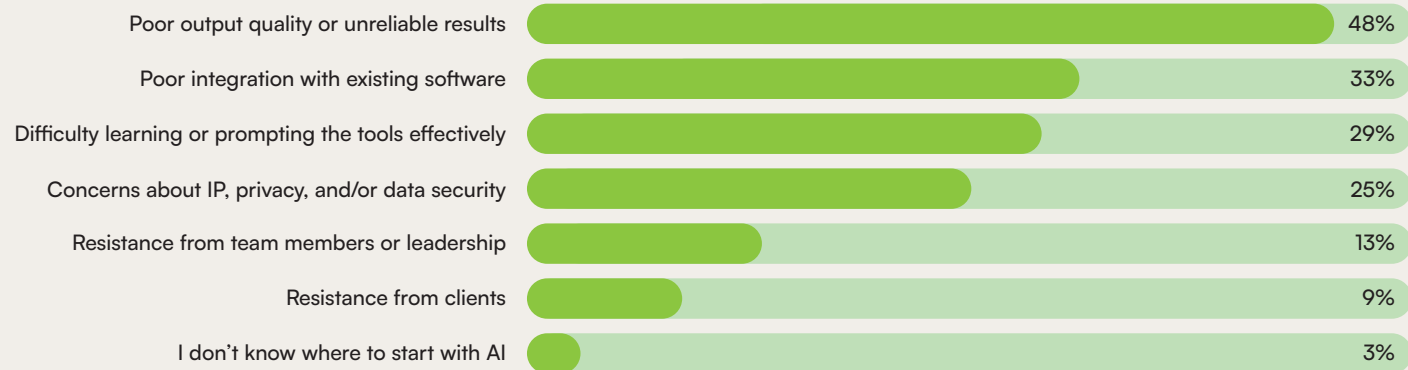
**8%**  
Too soon to tell



**3%**  
Negative - It reduces control and lowers the quality of final deliverables

**60%**  
Mixed - It enhances some aspects but introduces new errors or inconsistencies

## WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST OBSTACLES WHEN TRYING TO USE AI TOOLS IN YOUR DESIGN PROCESS?





# WHAT BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS ARE ARCHITECTS SEEING FROM AI?

# NEARLY ALL ARCHITECTS USING AI HAVE EXPERIENCED AT LEAST SOME TIME SAVINGS.

The overwhelming majority of respondents, 86% of current AI users, reported AI has “saved time on certain

tasks” or “significantly sped up our workflow”. The breakdown between those two (55% and 31%,

respectively) illustrates that, while a majority are consistently reporting modest benefits, a sizable

minority of users are realizing major efficiency improvements.

## HAS AI SAVED YOUR TEAM TIME IN VISUALIZATION AND DESIGN TASKS?



## ARCHITECTS ARE SEEING THE MOST TIME SAVINGS FROM AI IN EARLY DESIGN PHASES.

Tracking with the finding from Section 2 that conceptualization and pre-design is the project stage where architects

see the most value for AI, “concept design or ideation” is also the area where the most respondents (48%) reported the biggest time

savings using AI. “Image enhancement” was the next most popular area (40%), more than 10% ahead of any other response, tracking with

another finding that image generation or editing is the most popular use of AI in architecture.



**IN WHAT AREAS HAVE YOU SEEN THE BIGGEST TIME SAVINGS THANKS TO AI?**

## A NOTEWORTHY SUBSET OF AI USERS ARE EMPLOYING ADVANCED AI WORKFLOWS.

About 25% of respondents currently using AI cited “material selection” or

“asset generation” as the AI workflows where they’ve seen the biggest time savings.

This indicates a noticeable minority are integrating AI into traditional visualization

workflows, increasing the utility of rendering software that they are already familiar with.

# MEDIUM-SIZED FIRMS, AND THOSE DOING ADVANCED RENDERING AND ANIMATION, ARE REALIZING THE GREATEST TIME SAVINGS FROM AI.

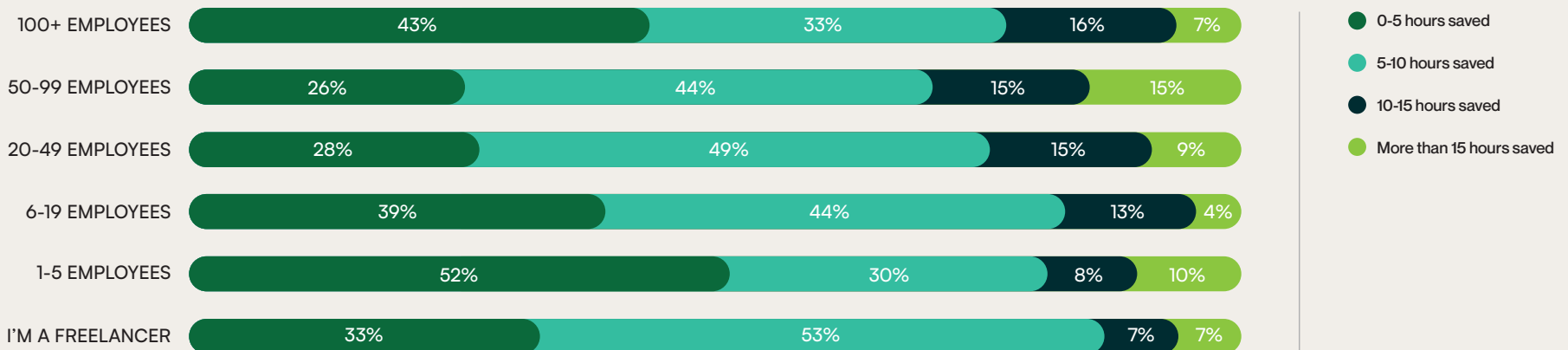
More than half of current AI users (59%) are saving at least 5 or more hours per week from using AI. In general, the larger the firm, the more time savings they're seeing per week, but this is not perfectly linear. The size of firms saving

10-15+ hours per week from AI increases steadily from freelancers up through firms of 50-99 employees, more than doubling from 14% to 30%, but dips back down to 23% for firms of 100+ employees.

When cross-referenced against the visualization activities where firms are seeing the biggest time savings, a notable standout is video editing. Firms using AI for video editing are 10% more likely than any other

respondents to be saving at least 10 to 15+ hours per week. This could reflect that even marginal time savings in this area due to AI use accumulate significantly over the course of a single animation or video production project.

## HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU ESTIMATE YOUR TEAM HAS SAVED THANKS TO AI TOOLS?



# SOFTWARE INTEGRATION ISSUES ARE A SIGNIFICANT IMPEDIMENT TO AI ADOPTION.

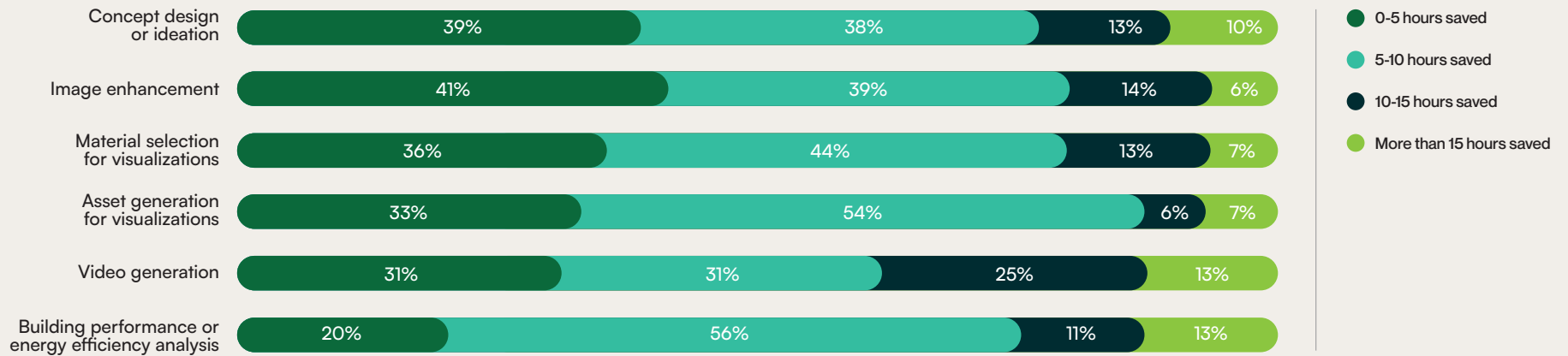
Software workflows for architects and designers often rely on specific features of different programs coming together in an assembly line-

like process to produce final renderings. Knowing this, it is little surprise that 33% of current AI users cited “poor integration with existing

software” as their biggest obstacle to using AI. This barrier is proving persistent, with 38% of respondents to the 2024

Chaos AI survey selecting “Integration with existing software” as the top challenge faced when adopting AI tools on architectural projects.

## HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU ESTIMATE YOUR TEAM HAS SAVED THANKS TO AI TOOLS?





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How AI is Reshaping Architectural Design and Visualization in 2026

# HOW DO ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS FEEL ABOUT THE RISE OF AI IN THE PROFESSION?

## MANY ARCHITECTS ARE TAKING A CONSCIENTIOUS, MEASURED APPROACH TO INTEGRATING AI IN THEIR WORKFLOW.

Of the respondents that indicated they are not currently using AI, a clear

majority of them (61%) reported feeling pressure to adopt the technology, due

to either general industry pressure or internal leadership expectations. However,

a notable minority (35%) indicated they'll adopt AI tools "only when they add value".

### ARE YOU FEELING PRESSURE TO ADOPT AI TOOLS IN YOUR WORKFLOW?

**42%**

Somewhat - general industry pressure

**35%**

No - we'll adopt AI tools only when they add value



**3%**

Yes - clients expect it

**16%**

Yes - internal leadership expects it

**4%**

We're actively resisting the AI trend

# ARCHITECTS AVOIDING AI DO SO FOR IDEOLOGICAL REASONS.

When asked why they weren't using AI, answers can be grouped into practical concerns (accuracy of output, lack of resources to adopt, etc.), or concerns of an ideological nature (belief that AI risks cheapening the

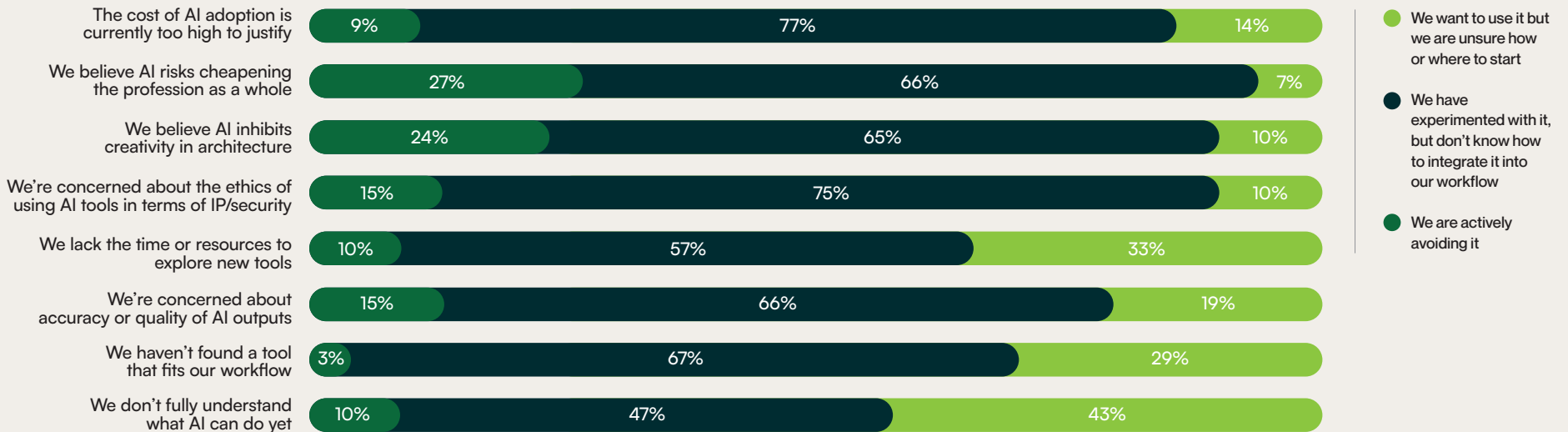
profession, inhibiting creativity, etc.). Both groups of answers fell within a reasonably tight band of popularity, ranging from 19% to 29%.

Cross-referencing this group against how they're

approaching AI shows those who are actively avoiding it (only 5% of total survey respondents) primarily felt it cheapens the profession or inhibits creativity. Those who are unsure where to start with AI or are struggling to

integrate it into their workflow (35% of total respondents) mostly cited high adoption costs, insufficient time or resources to explore new tools, or that they haven't found a tool that fits their workflow.

## WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS YOUR FIRM HAS NOT YET STARTED USING AI TOOLS IN DESIGN OR VISUALIZATION



# CLIENT PREFERENCES TO ADOPT AI MAY BE REFLECTED THROUGH GENERAL INDUSTRY PRESSURE.

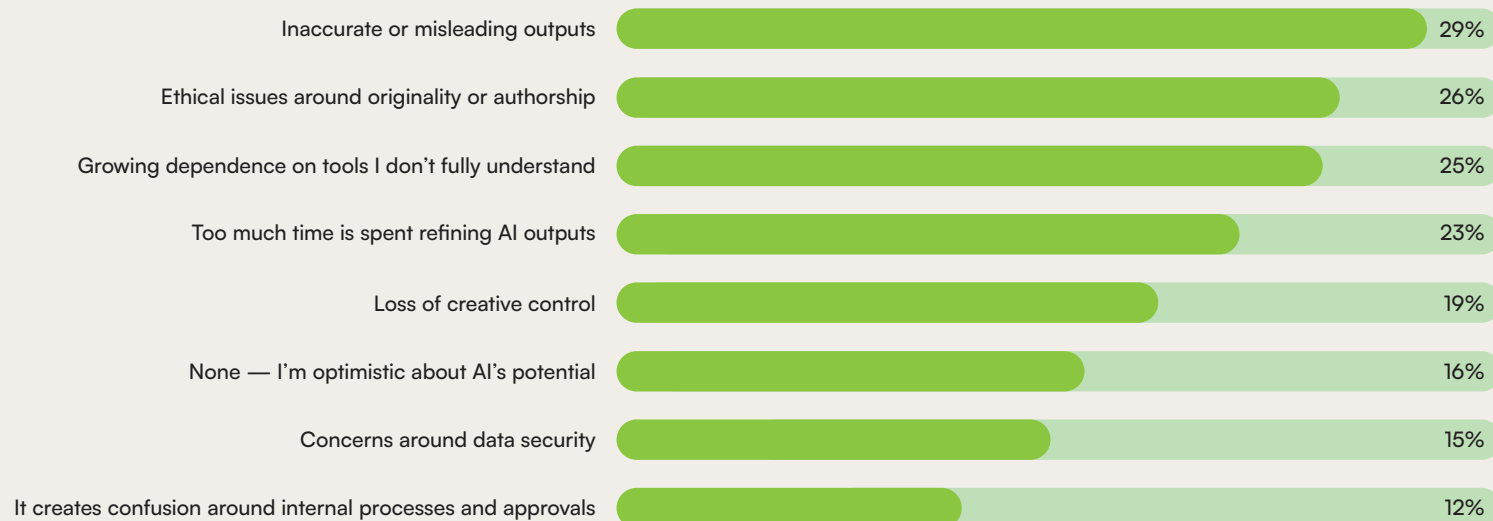
Very few non-users of AI (only 3%) indicated that clients expect the adoption of AI tools in their workflow. Meanwhile, among AI

users, only 9% reported resistance from clients as an obstacle to using AI, illustrating a seeming lack of client AI interest. Because

clients often see only the end product of the design process, indirect pressure from them to lower prices or produce work faster could

be reflected in the “general industry pressure” to adopt AI that 42% of non-users of AI reported.

## WHAT'S YOUR GREATEST CONCERN ABOUT USING AI IN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AND VISUALIZATION?

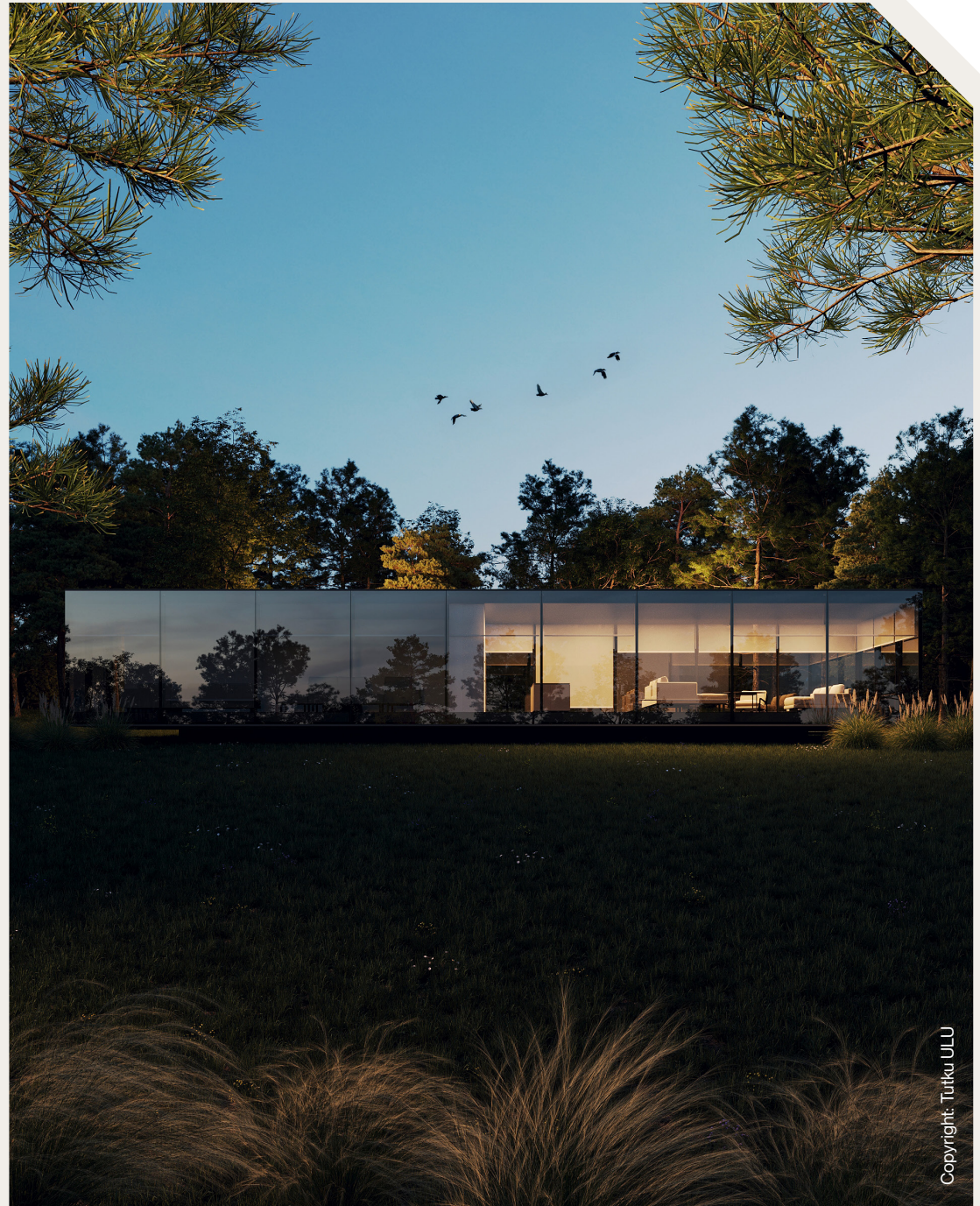


# A SIGNIFICANT DROP WAS SEEN IN CONCERN OVER ETHICAL ISSUES SURROUNDING AI USE.

26% of all survey respondents expressed concern over “ethical issues around originality or authorship”, while 19% reported concern over “the ethics of using AI tools in terms of IP/ security”. However, these numbers are significantly lower than Chaos’ 2024 AI survey, in which 74% of respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that “ethical guidelines or standards should be put in place for the use

of AI in architectural design”.

In the 2024 survey, only 46% of total respondents were current AI users, whereas 60% were AI users in this survey. This suggests many designers’ ethical concerns over the use of AI in architecture diminished once they started using it, and even those not using AI aren’t seeing their worst concerns regarding AI being realized.



# CONCLUSION

The survey indicates that a majority of current AI users in architecture are taking a pragmatic, slow-but-steady adoption approach. The overall trend among this cohort was 20%-40% reporting consistently enthusiastic or positive views about the rise of AI, while only 5%-15% were consistently negative. Of the 40% of survey respondents not using AI, most cite practical limitations for not adopting it, such as time and money constraints and challenges relating to workflow integration.

As Chaos and Architizer were among the first platforms to track behavior and usage of AI in architecture, we have a more accurate picture of trends over time. Year-over-year data suggests that the popularity of AI in architecture surged on its debut, then dropped, but is now holding steady and rising again slowly. This pattern, following the [“Gartner hype cycle”](#),

was seen in the evolution of responses to questions on AI use in surveys conducted in 2023, 2024, and this survey in 2025. Across all surveys, those who have begun experimenting with AI started at 33%, increased to 44%, then dropped slightly to 39%. Meanwhile, those fully embracing AI started at 22%, dropped to 10%, then rose back to 20%.

Overall, this paints a picture that the AI familiarity gained from exploratory use in architecture and design typically turns into broad acceptance, with the potential for real enthusiasm. This supports the notion that a growing proportion of architects are deciding to experiment with AI, leading some of them to fully embrace it, while the rest are content to ride the wave, replacing old ways of working with new ones when their value becomes undeniable.



chaos

## ABOUT CHAOS

Founded in 1997, Chaos is a leading global visualization technology company.

Chaos offers accessible tools, simplifying and accelerating workflows, and empowering visual storytelling for artists, architects, designers, and other creative professionals. Chaos' portfolio of visualization technologies for architecture and design includes:

- V-Ray, a physically based renderer that has been honored with an Academy Award and an Engineering Emmy;
- Enscape, a high-quality real-time rendering and virtual reality plugin;
- Corona, a high-performance photorealistic rendering engine;
- Veras, an AI-powered visualization plugin and web app.

Headquartered in Karlsruhe, Germany, Chaos has offices in 11 cities worldwide. For more information, visit [chaos.com](https://chaos.com)



## ABOUT ARCHITIZER

Home to the world's largest community of architects online, Architizer's core mission is to celebrate the world's best architecture and the people that bring it to life.

Powered by continually evolving technologies, we serve architects with the inspiration and information they need to build better buildings, better cities, and a better world. We advocate for a more sustainable, resilient and ethically designed built environment.

We provide design professionals and building-product manufacturers with a global platform to promote their work through awards, competitions and engaging content.

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