

Press release

From hype to reality: Three in Four Photographers Now Use AI as Standard Practice

Saal Digital survey shows that artificial intelligence has moved from a digital tool to a creative partner in the photographic workflow

Röttenbach, October 27, 2025 – While the world marvels at ChatGPT and DALL-E, a quiet revolution has already reshaped the photography industry: artificial intelligence has become a valuable partner, gaining importance across almost every area of work. A comprehensive Saal Digital survey of 724 professional and hobby photographers in Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the UK provides concrete figures on AI usage across Europe's photography sector

AI Use Is Now Standard

The integration of AI into photographic workflows is part of everyday practice for most European professionals and enthusiasts. Beyond its dominant use for editing and retouching (77%), 31% also use AI for image generation—such as creating backgrounds or individual visual elements. Nearly one in four (21%) rely on AI-powered tools for workflow and organization. Only 14% say they do not use AI at all

“The results show how quickly AI has taken root in photography,” says Uwe Glander, Managing Director of Saal Digital. “AI is no longer a topic for the future; it is an integral part of many photographers' daily work. This changes not only workflows but also the photographer's creative role”

AI as an Efficiency Accelerator

The primary motivation is pragmatic: saving time and costs tops the list for 60% of respondents. In a field where post-production often takes longer than the photo shoot itself, AI tools promise significant efficiency gains

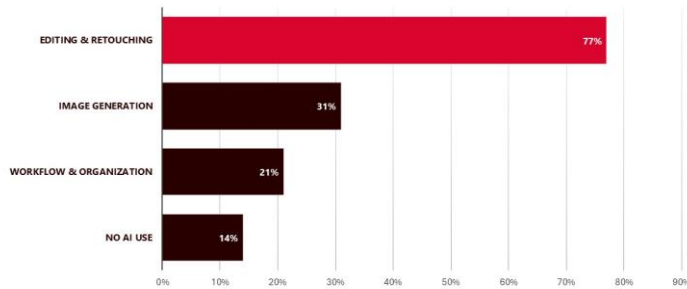
But AI is more than a productivity tool. For nearly one in two photographers (45%), it opens up new creative possibilities—from innovative effects to entirely new visual styles. Product photographers, for example, use AI to generate alternative backgrounds for e-commerce shoots; architectural photographers can subsequently adjust lighting moods or depict buildings at different times of day and in different seasons without reshooting. Technology is thus becoming an increasingly creative partner, not just an assistant.

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AI Use Is Now Standard

How have you integrated AI into your photography business?



Caption: 77% of amateur and professional photographers use AI for editing and retouching, according to a recent Saal Digital survey, one of Europe's leading suppliers of premium photo products. © Saal Digital

About the survey

In September 2025, Saal Digital surveyed a total of 724 photographers. The questionnaire was sent to subscribers of the Saal Digital newsletter—both professionals and amateurs—and was completed in German, English, French, Italian and Spanish, depending on the participant's country of origin. The survey covered AI integration, transparency, new business models and authenticity in photography. The study was conducted by Saal Digital

About Saal Digital

Saal Digital is one of Europe's leading platforms for high-quality photo products. Founded in 1981 by Reinhard Saal, the company has evolved from a photo lab into a digital innovation hub. With more than 150 employees at its headquarters in Röttenbach, Germany, Saal Digital offers professional photographers, advanced hobbyists and creatives an end-to-end solution—from intuitive design software to premium products such as photo books and large-format wall art

Saal Digital photo books, in particular, stand for the highest quality: images are exposed on genuine photographic paper, ensuring brilliant colors, razor-sharp details and impressive longevity. Thanks to the unique layflat binding, pages open completely flat, enabling spectacular panoramic spreads to be presented seamlessly and without a distracting gutter—a true highlight for anyone who wants to showcase their images at their best. This passion for quality goes hand in hand with a strong commitment to sustainability: an in-house photovoltaic system covers up to 100% of the company's energy needs, and resource-efficient production processes make Saal Digital a climate-neutral company certified by TÜV Rheinland. With short delivery times, innovative technologies and a dedicated team, Saal Digital sets benchmarks for everyone who expects the very best for their photos

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