

India Showcases Creative and Technological Might at WAVES 2025

Discussions at WAVES on AI, Social Media and Advertising reflect India's expanding footprint in the Digital Media sector

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The inaugural session of WAVES 2025 was graced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who officially opened the summit at the Jio World Centre in Mumbai. In his keynote address, PM Modi emphasized India's rich storytelling heritage and its potential to become a global hub for content creation. He highlighted the convergence of content, creativity, and culture as the pillars of the 'Orange Economy,' urging creators worldwide to "Create in India, Create for the World." The Prime Minister also paid tribute to Indian cinema legends by releasing commemorative postage stamps. He called upon global creators to explore India's diverse narratives, stating that every street, mountain, and river in India carries a story waiting to be told. The session was attended by dignitaries from over 100 countries, industry leaders, and renowned artists, marking a significant step in India's journey to becoming a creative superpower.

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AI and Creativity: Adobe and NVIDIA Chart the Future

Shantanu Narayen, CEO of Adobe, highlighted India's emergence as a global hub of creativity powered by digital tools and generative AI. With over 100 million content creators and 500 million OTT consumers, Narayen described India as "the world's next creative superpower." He showcased Adobe's Firefly AI models and stressed ethical AI, content authenticity, and creator attribution as vital for sustainable growth.

In a fireside chat, Richard Kerris and Vishal Dhupar of NVIDIA explored how AI is revolutionizing the creative pipeline—allowing content to be generated, localized, and personalized at scale. "India has long exported talent. Now it can export culture," Kerris declared, emphasizing AI's ability to amplify regional voices and transform India into a storytelling giant.

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YouTube to offer more support to boost the Creator Economy

YouTube CEO Neal Mohan announced a 850 crore investment to accelerate India's creator economy, citing over 15,000 Indian channels with more than 1 million subscribers. Joined by global creators Mark Rober and Gautami Kawale (Slayy Point),

Mohan underlined YouTube's role in taking Indian stories global. "India isn't just leading in music and film—it's now a Creator Nation," he said. Kawale shared how regional Indian content, when rooted in culture, has universal appeal, while Rober spoke about the power of STEM content crossing borders through AI-enabled dubbing and localization.

WPP and the Advertising Renaissance

Mark Read, CEO of WPP, described the advertising industry's \$1 trillion global footprint and its shift towards AI-led storytelling. He unveiled WPP's open video production platform and shared a campaign featuring Shah Rukh Khan to demonstrate hyper-personalized content creation using motion AI. "AI is not replacing creativity—it is expanding it," Read said, outlining the role of MSMEs and digital tools in democratizing access to quality advertising.

Global Collaboration: UK-India Cultural Pact

In a keynote that blended diplomacy and personal heritage, Lisa Nandy, UK Secretary of State for DCMS, emphasized the cultural bridge between India and the UK. She announced a Bilateral Cultural Federation Agreement to strengthen ties across cinema, museums, and performing arts. "From Manchester to Mumbai, we must empower the next generation of storytellers," she urged, citing the legacy of figures like Sophia Duleep Singh and modern UK-Indian creatives.

Panel Highlights: AI, Culture, and Influence; Two panel discussions deepened the discourse:

"India M&E @100: The Future of Media and Entertainment" featured leaders from Eros Now, Jetsynthesys, and GroupM. They emphasized that India is in the fourth wave of disruption, where AI-led IP creation and Gen Z consumption patterns are reshaping the industry.

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"The Business of Influence", moderated by YouTube's Gautam Anand, showcased creators like Chef Ranveer Brar, ChessTalk's Jeetendra Advani, and Japanese YouTuber Mayo Murasaki. From chess to agriculture, they demonstrated how digital platforms are taking Indian knowledge global while preserving cultural authenticity.

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