

Adobe

Navigating the age of content abundance

The future of marketing with GenAI

September 2024

Uncharted territory

The age of content abundance is upon us

The rise of generative AI (GenAI) has introduced a new digital era where enterprise teams can generate vast amounts of content at unprecedented speed. But this age of content abundance presents a crossroads for marketing leaders working in lockstep with creatives.

Will brands capitalize on GenAI to drive competitive advantage and brand relevance at scale, or will they fall victim to homogenous content that dilutes their brand and erodes consumer trust?

To this end, Adobe conducted research between April and June 2024 to serve as a foundational guide for marketing and creative executives who are seeking to maximize the benefits of GenAI in the age of content abundance and drive sustained growth and competitive advantage.

“ GenAI is a cross-functional superpower that will drive the future growth and performance of an enterprise.”

*Scott Belsky
Chief Strategy & Product Officer, Adobe*

GenAI can unlock unparalleled potential, accelerate creative output, and achieve previously unattainable marketing goals, such as true 1:1 personalization. In fact, according to the CMO Council's [2024 CMO Intentions report](#), marketing and industry leaders believe content creation and optimization will be the greatest value-add of GenAI applications.

However, GenAI will both empower individuals to create while also unleashing a flood of content, making it a double-edged sword. Below are two possible scenarios organizations may find themselves in:

Enhanced brand differentiation and growth

Enterprises can leverage GenAI to produce content that is tailored to their brand, engages customers uniquely, and supports the dynamic needs of modern marketing. A thoughtful use of GenAI for content creation will help drive marketing goals, including personalization and speed-to-market, while ensuring the brand and its core message is elevated.

- **Creative acceleration:** 79% of creative professionals believe that GenAI will expedite less creative tasks and allow more time for creativity.
- **Content relevance:** 68% of consumers look forward to GenAI allowing them to receive instant, tailored offers, and 67% look to GenAI to help deliver personalized experiences, such as curated retail recommendations.

or

Homogeneous content that dilutes the brand

If left unchecked, GenAI can result in mass-produced, generic content. This so-called "sea of sameness" will limit a brand's ability to stand out and drive engagement. Moreover, consumers state that AI-generated content that is inaccurate, biased, or lacks attribution to creators could impact trust and ultimately purchasing behavior.

- **Content homogeneity:** 63% of creative professionals are concerned that GenAI will lead to homogeneous content that does not stand out, and ultimately limits their ability to drive marketing results.
- **Trust erosion:** 70% of consumers say they will be much less likely to purchase from brands where content does not accurately represent products, and 63% state the same if brands share content that is biased or insensitive.



“ GenAI is going to flood the market with content and make it hard to find the real gems.”

*Johannes Saam
Senior Creative Technologist & Futurist, Framestore*

Navigating the age of content abundance

Five significant themes shaping the future

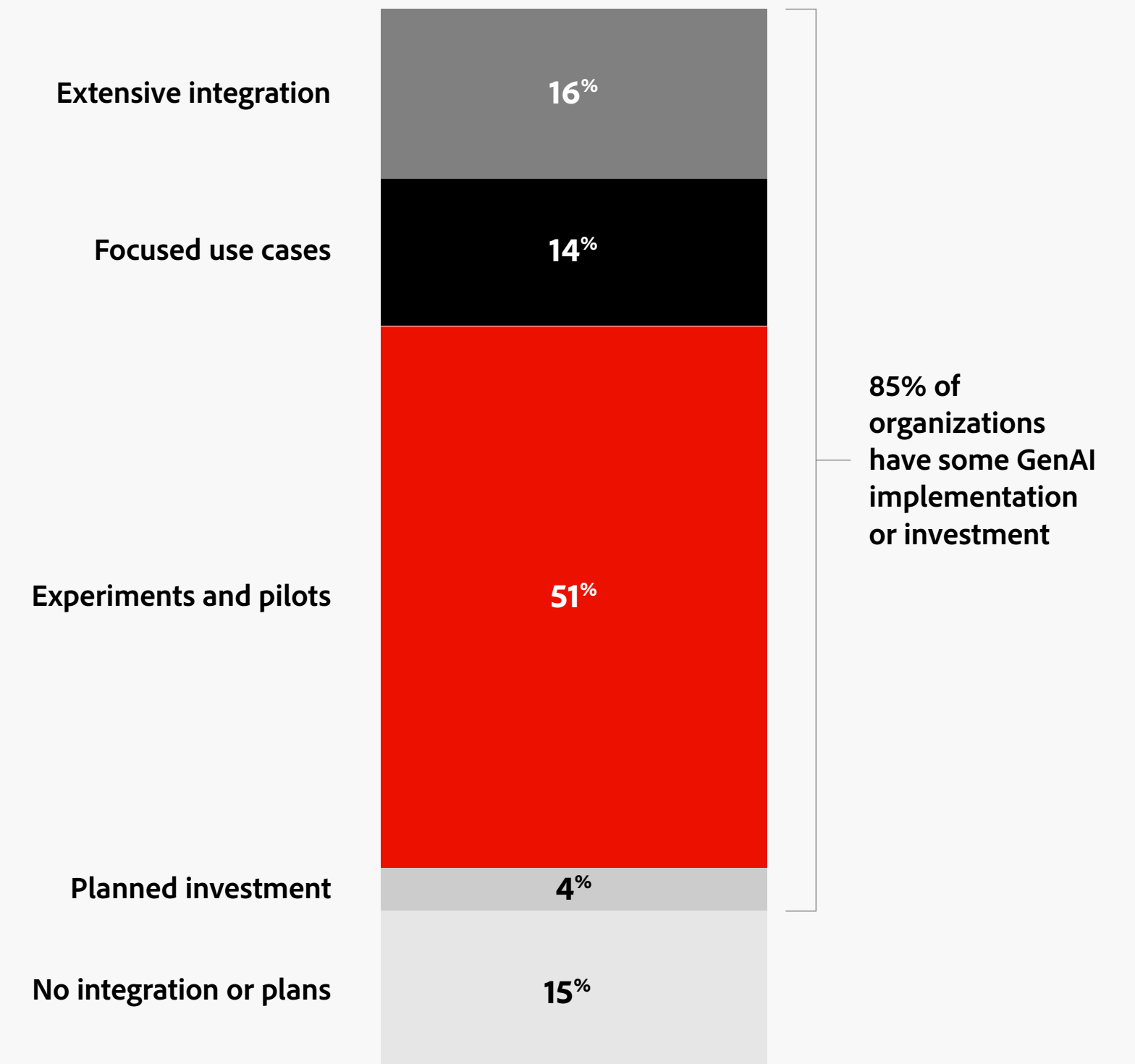
While the age of content abundance is widely anticipated, the adoption of GenAI in marketing, especially for content creation, has been inconsistent. Most organizations report that they have some level of implementation or planned investment (85%), yet only 16% of creative professionals see AI extensively integrated into their day-to-day work. Why the gap?

GenAI has immense potential to scale creative content, yet not all organizations ready to fully embrace it. This is due to challenges in end-user adoption, concerns about brand and IP protection, and perceived risks to the brand and business. To close this gap, enterprises must think long-term about the people, process, and tech required for this transformation.

We found five themes that can guide creative and marketing leaders in how to leverage GenAI to drive scale and speed, as well as brand differentiation, and customer engagement.

1. Evolving the role of creative teams
2. Avoiding brand dilution and driving differentiation
3. Integrating human ingenuity and creativity with AI
4. Managing trust and loyalty
5. Redefining ROI beyond productivity

How creative departments are using GenAI



1. Evolving the role of creative teams

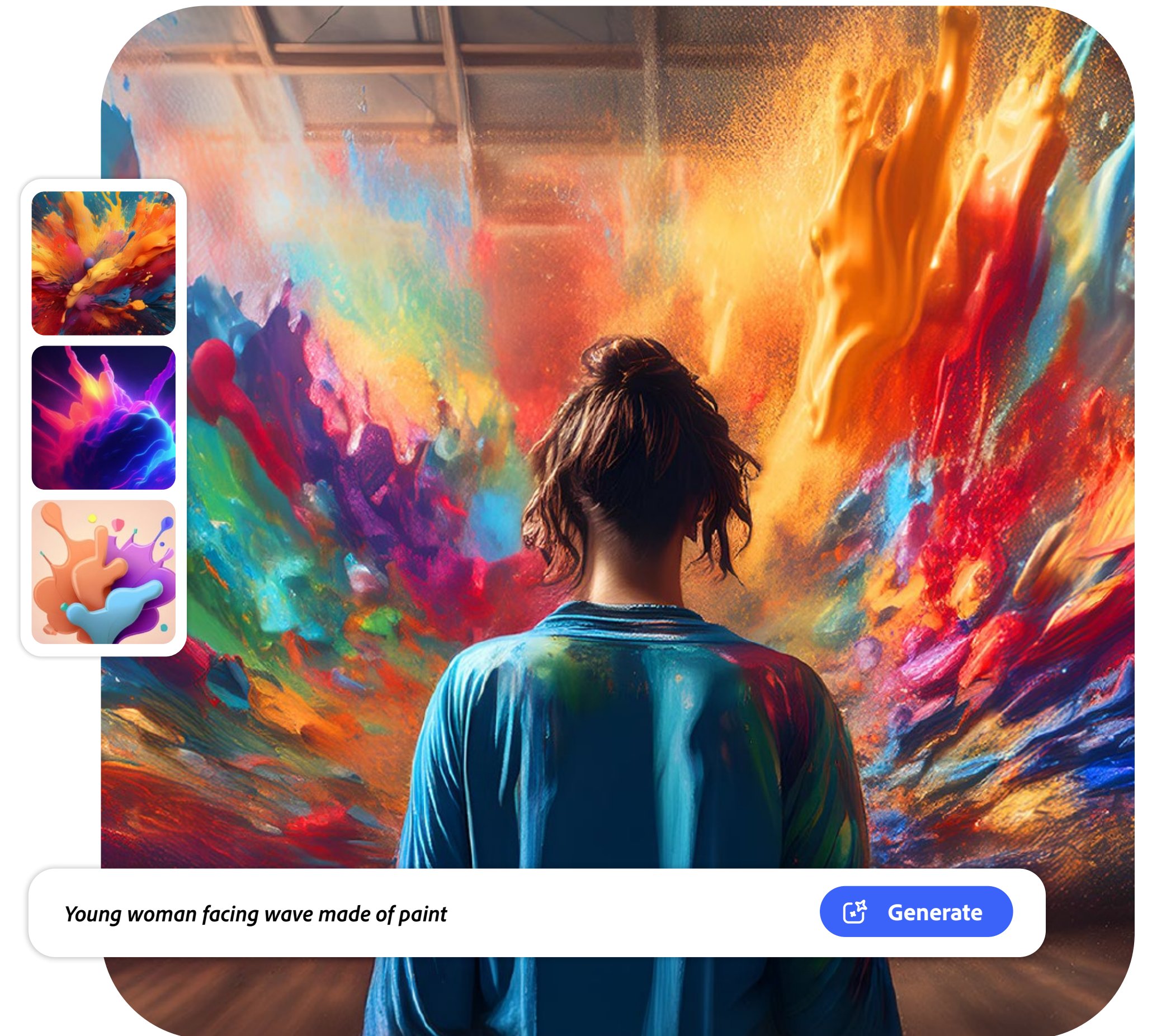
Creative professionals anticipate the proliferation of GenAI to be a major inflection point for their role in content creation. With **81%** of organizations already using GenAI in these processes, creatives teams are poised to re-invent themselves.

Immediate impacts will be a marked reduction in traditionally rote tasks, increasing speed and efficiency and freeing them to embrace more strategic responsibilities, such as curating fresh ideas and cultivating brand identity. As part of this, creatives will be empowered to design net-new systems and processes that will scale the creation and production of content across teams.

These foundational systems, which include shared templates, robust libraries, custom models, and enriched brand kits, will play a crucial role in how organizations create, adapt, and edit content with GenAI. Initially built for creative teams, these systems will scale across the organization and ensure consistency, brand alignment, and efficiency.

Our research shows that **61%** of creatives are already shifting away from pure asset creation and are instead focusing on developing scalable design tools, standards, and processes that support content creation at scale.

In short, creatives will evolve from purely creating assets, to also creating systems that will drive future content strategies.

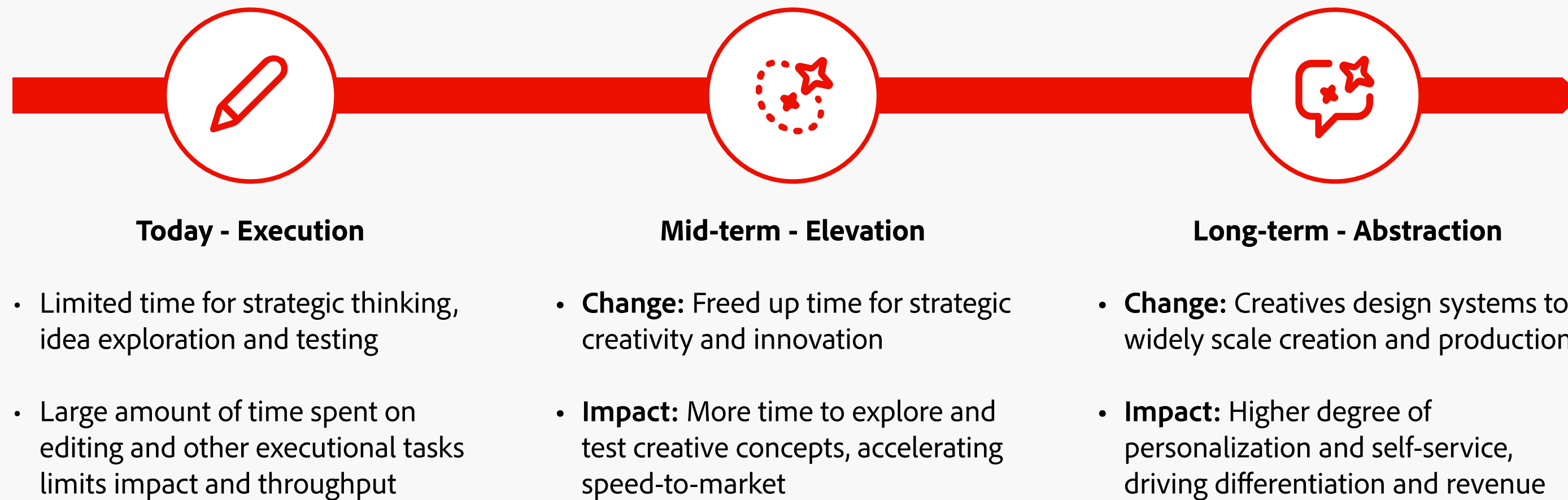


Young woman facing wave made of paint

 **Generate**

With GenAI, creative teams will also see an elevation in their roles toward innovation and driving strategy. Time freed up from manual creation and editing will allow them to focus on higher-value work, such as exploring new concepts, optimizing performance, and working with stakeholders on evolving priorities. Strong interdepartmental collaboration between marketing, legal, and IT alongside advanced tooling will power the next era of compliant, hyper-personalized, and on-brand content at the moment of experience.

Anticipated evolution of the creative team in the age of content abundance



“ We need to lift up to a higher level of abstraction and design the rules of the system rather than design the specific words, images, and pixels.”

*Olof Schybergson
Chief Design Officer, Accenture Song*

We also expect creative professionals to begin serving as coaches to “citizen designers.” As non-creatives begin scaling creating and editing content with new tools and systems, many will want support from people who know what good (and great) looks like. Of creative professionals interviewed, **64%** reported that they are eager to help guide others by sharing their storytelling and brand expertise.

2. Avoiding brand dilution and driving differentiation

As mentioned earlier, GenAI can exacerbate content homogeneity as competing brands leverage the same technology and even potentially the same datasets and models. This can result in brand dilution, lower resonance, and audience disengagement.

“When combined with human creativity, GenAI will unlock groundbreaking ideas, new forms of expression, and revolutionize how we bring brands to life.”

*Heather Freeland
Chief Brand Officer, Adobe*

Conversely, GenAI can elevate a brand's unique expression and qualities. For example, tailoring GenAI models to a brand's specific style, imagery, or campaigns can strengthen brand identity and memorability, as was the case with IPG's use of custom models for a new [Studio Rx](#) campaign and brand identity.

Successful brand elevation will hinge upon an organization's ability to tap into the most human talents—taste making and strategic thinking—as part of GenAI enablement.

Consumers are excited for GenAI's ability to personalize content and experiences. As one customer said, 'If [GenAI] can demonstrate how a product could work personally for me, then the potential is limitless,' making it crucial for brands to responsibly integrate GenAI and gain the advantage.

Tactics to guide your GenAI content creation strategy:

- **Scaling brand identity:** Empower creative professionals to easily and seamlessly integrate brand-specific training into GenAI models, consistently amplifying brand identity while scaling content creation across the organization.
- **Establishing ongoing checks:** Include creative professionals in rigorous, routine testing protocols to maintain quality control, ensuring that content production aligns with their vision through reliable ideation and review workflows.
- **Managing new systems:** Enable creative and brand teams with ways to easily distribute, manage, govern, and continuously improve new design systems, such as custom models, locked templates, and brand kits.
- **Leveraging performance insights:** Capture real-time content performance data at the attribute level, and share with creative teams to optimize models, systems, concepts, and outputs over time.

3. Integrating human ingenuity and creativity with AI

“Ironically, the human will shine through more, because everyone will be looking for something with meaning in a world that’s littered with stuff from every brand.”

*Scott Belsky
Chief Strategy & Product Officer, Adobe*

Few organizations want to produce more content simply for the sake of volume—most, if not all, seek to deliver the right content at the right time to meaningfully connect with customers. Central to this is the irreplaceable role of human creativity in content creation. [Forrester](#) reports that **40%** of US marketing executives view improving the creativity of marketing content as a benefit of incorporating GenAI in their marketing efforts.

While GenAI excels at scaling content production, human creativity ensures that content remains distinctive and avoids the "sea of sameness" that AI-generated content alone might produce. The human touch is crucial for brands to differentiate themselves in an increasingly saturated market and create authentic experiences that resonate with consumers.

Going forward, human creativity and ingenuity will play an outsized role in the most strategic parts of the creative process.

While GenAI removes some significant roadblocks in content creation, like limited capacity and technical training, simply generating high-speed, low-cost content is not enough. Content without the human touch will not enable brands to stand out amongst the ensuing noise. Human ingenuity will be the driving factor for campaign differentiation in the age of content abundance.

For early-stage creative processes, GenAI will become a partner for creative professionals to help them expand the canvas for idea generation and instantly visualize concepts for feedback and curation. Lars Bastholm of Bastholm Creative Consulting explains that these tools are “starting to become really good sparring partners.” **GenAI should amplify the human creative vision, not replace it.**

For later-stage creative development, specifically high-frequency tasks within production, GenAI will become an execution agent, supporting 1:1 personalization, translation, localization and tagging. **63% of all creative professionals surveyed use GenAI tools to perform simple, repetitive tasks, helping to accelerate human productivity.**

With GenAI comes an opportunity to expand upon the ingenuity of creative professionals. According to the creative leaders we interviewed, retaining human agency over the most strategic portions of the creative process will be paramount.

4. Managing trust and loyalty

A significant factor for enterprise adoption of GenAI lies in its potential impact on consumer attitudes and behaviors. Beyond brand differentiation and relevance, what other concerns are likely to impact how consumers relate to your content in the age of AI? Is the impact substantial? In a word, yes.

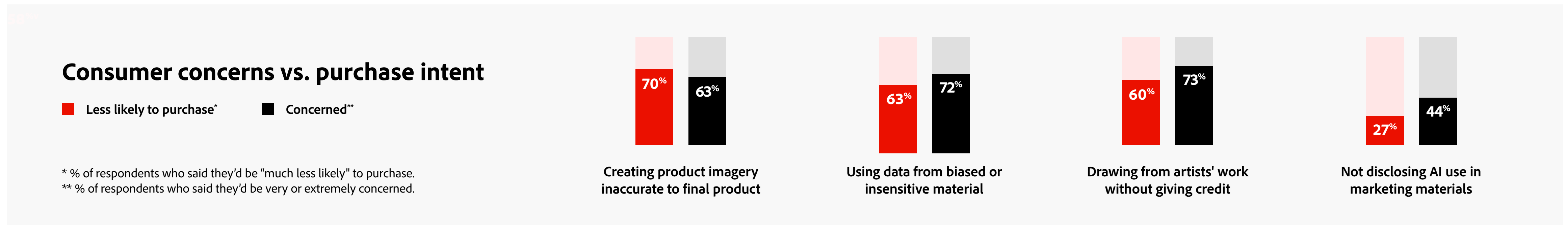
While consumers are excited about GenAI’s potential to redefine interactions with brands, some concerns are pervasive. Purchase intent, for example, will be significantly impacted when the scenario directly relates to their personal experience, such as inaccurate images or insensitive, racially biased content.

Inaccurate content is the most detrimental to consumer trust—**70%** of consumers say they would think twice about continuing to purchase from a brand if the AI-created images inaccurately reflect a product or service. Biased and insensitive content was reported as the next largest concern, with **63%** of

consumers stating they would be far likelier to walk away from future purchases if a brand produced biased or insensitive content.

Trust can also be eroded if consumers feel the original creators are receiving proper attribution for their works. Here, consumer purchase intent is also impacted—**60%** of consumers state they would be much less likely to purchase from a brand that used GenAI to draw from the works of creators without proper compensation or acknowledgment.

Brands need to walk this tightrope carefully—pushing forward on innovation while mitigating any negative impacts on brand perception and loyalty will be critical. The brands that can balance these factors will come out on top in the age of content abundance.



5. Redefining ROI beyond productivity

In a recent report, [Accenture](#) found that **94%** of companies are focusing on GenAI to enhance productivity and efficiency—ultimately boosting the bottom line. While productivity gains remain a lucrative driver of GenAI adoption, focusing solely on cost reduction and speed to market will not drive differentiation or competitive advantage in the long term.

The same Accenture report found that organizations reinvesting productivity gains to deliver consumer value will see **25%** revenue growth over organizations merely focused on productivity alone. Brands that reinvest the savings of GenAI for content creation into growth initiatives rather than simply being satisfied with cost savings will stand to benefit the most.

For example, [IBM](#) leveraged Adobe Firefly as part of its “Let's Create” social media campaign last year. While productivity gains were impressive (1,000 asset variations created in minutes and **60%** faster speed to market), the campaign also drove **26x** higher engagement than internal benchmarks, and higher quality leads for the target audience.

Ultimately, reinvesting productivity gains into growth-focused initiatives can lead to better-informed insights, more impactful A/B testing, expansion into more channels and markets, and even the creation of new platforms or experiences.

**“
What do we do with the extra time
GenAI gives us? We reinvest it to
produce higher quality content
and grow the brand.”**

*Mauro Porcini
Chief Design Officer, PepsiCo*

Future-proofing content creation in the age of AI

Three practical steps to prepare for the age of content abundance

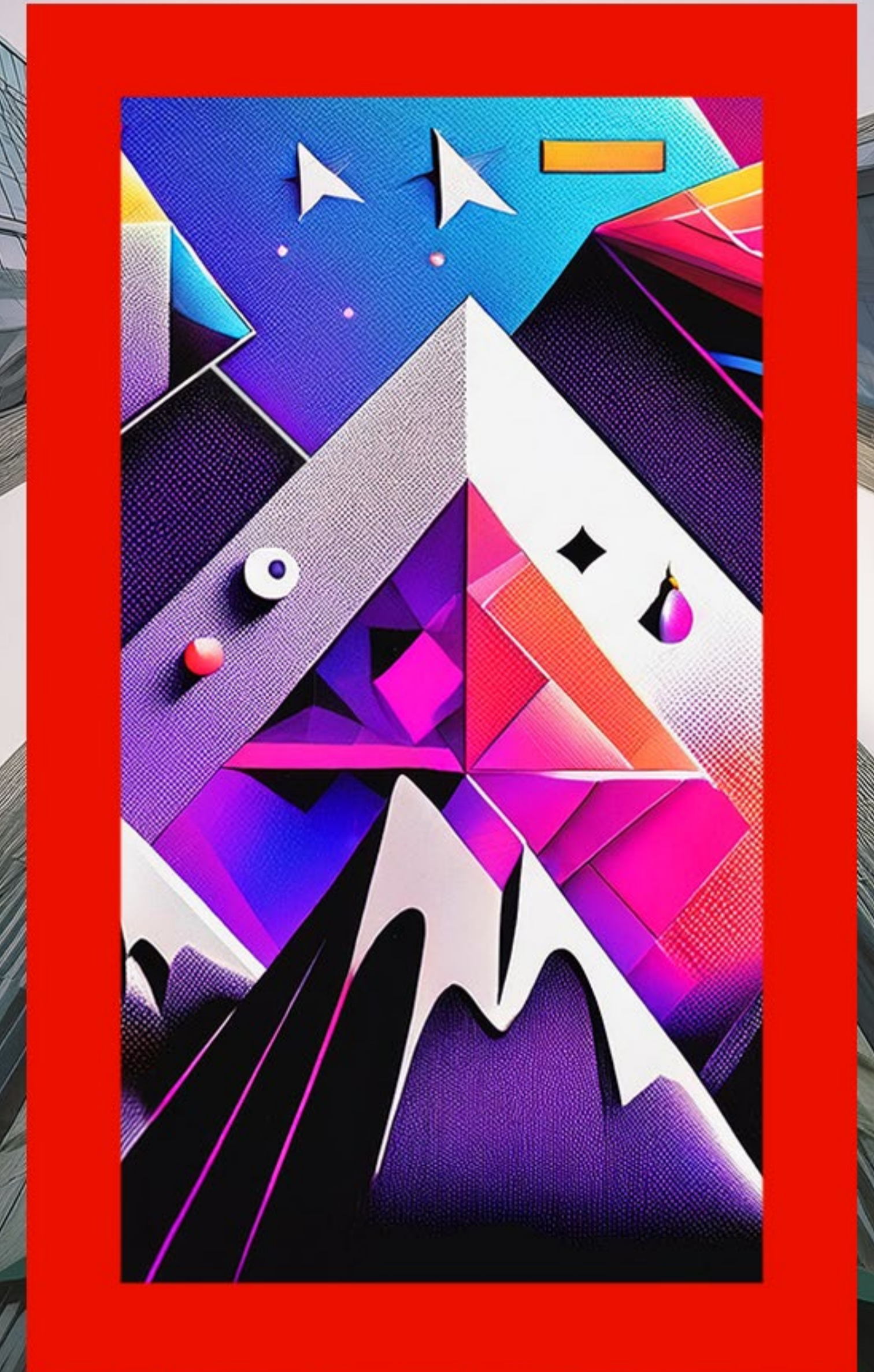
1. Set clear rules of engagement

Deploy GenAI governance

Clarifying where and how GenAI can be used within your organization will be foundational to capitalizing on its use in content creation.

Successful leaders will:

- **Create clear rules and guidelines** that define acceptable GenAI use cases for content creation. This includes clarifying permissible users and their respective roles and responsibilities and ensuring awareness of unacceptable applications of the technology.
- **Implement access controls** so that only authorized personnel can modify GenAI systems, models, and processes. Then, clarify how teams downstream can leverage these capabilities to create purpose-fit content that helps drive impact and achieve their goals.
- **Enforce risk mitigation principles** when selecting, building and deploying GenAI for content creation, inclusive of, mitigating IP risk, ensuring transparency, protecting copyrights, and adhering to ethics and responsibility principles.
- **Work towards a unified and long-term vision for GenAI integration** into the content creation process, anchoring on an implementation roadmap that guides enterprise efforts.



2. Design the systems for success

Tailor GenAI to your brand

As the speed of content creation accelerates, it will be critical to ensure that underlying systems and processes are configured to your brand's unique expression and needs.

To capitalize on this opportunity, leaders should:

- **Leverage freed up creative capacity** to create design systems that will boost content creation with GenAI while maintaining quality, control, and brand adherence.
- **Enable content differentiation at scale** by customizing GenAI models to their brands and democratizing their use, along with artifacts such as asset libraries, brand kits, and templates.
- **Establish guardrails to mitigate undesirable outcomes** that could impact the consistency of the brand's style, imagery, or campaigns. This includes clarifying the role of newly created design systems and even the usage of GenAI by non-creatives.
- **Innovate collaboration models and workflows**, such as instituting regular touchpoints between creative, legal, and IT to power new creative systems and redefine pathways to enable swift responses to evolving market demands.



3. Remain human-centered

Expand human creativity with GenAI

Marketing and creative leaders can maximize the value of GenAI in creative ideation, editing, and production processes by continuously integrating human review and input strategically.

To achieve this, organizations should:

- **Integrate human taste and discretion** into key areas that enhance differentiation, allowing creatives to focus on storytelling, taste making, and facilitating emotional connectivity with the content.
- **Cultivate diversity of experience in creative teams** by building a team of varied skillsets and thinkers to collectively evolve application of GenAI in content creation and ensure novel and robust outputs.
- **Optimize content with data and insights** through dynamic monitoring and feedback loops that regularly assess performance. Insights on content at the attribute level should empower teams to refine strategies and grow the impact of creativity in the enterprise.



Created with Adobe Firefly

Conclusion

When wielded strategically, GenAI represents a transformative force for enterprise content creation, offering unprecedented opportunities for brand differentiation and business value in the age of content abundance.

The full realization of this promise will hinge on executing a balanced strategy led jointly by creative and marketing leaders, integrating human ingenuity and brand identity to utilize GenAI to deliver tailored experiences that stand out. By setting clear rules of engagement, designing systems for success, and remaining human-centered, enterprises can mitigate the risks of the age of content abundance and instead reap its benefits.

Thank you

For more information:

[Contact us](#)

Research was conducted by Adobe in April-June 2024 and included both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Study with 104 creative professionals, roughly split 50/50 between agency and in-house creative roles, including: creative, marketing and art directors, graphic designers, copywriters, and content and brand strategists. Quantitative research also included 147 consumers based in the UK and the US.

Qualitative – In-depth interviews with creative luminaries spanning different industries (Retail, Media & Entertainment, Consumer Goods, Technology) and roles (Marketing/Brand, Creative Design, Production/Operations, and Technology/Innovation).