

GenAI empowers creative and marketing teams with content creation and personalization at scale. Embedded GenAI tools will help automate tasks, but addressing trust, authenticity, and brand consistency will be key to successful adoption.

Beyond Human Limits: The Future of Creative Content with GenAI Inside

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Driving Factors for Creatives and Marketers to Adopt Generative AI

Creative and marketing teams are finding themselves in a dynamic environment where established methodologies and emerging technologies are colliding. Old ways of working will transform radically with GenAI entering the scene. One crucial challenge creatives and marketers face is the content avalanche: the ever-increasing volume of content needed to drive campaigns and value across various channels, formats, and languages. Creative asset production has become a bottleneck as traditional workflows struggle to keep up with this demand. IDC's July 2023 *Future of Customer Experience Survey* found that 28% of enterprises globally report that expanding data volume will have the most impact on their customer experience strategy — one which creative and marketing teams are often measured against. The previous era of digital transformations has led to a dramatic increase in a brand's investments in customer data to power personalization, resulting in a substantial need for more content. According to IDC's 2024 Global DataSphere, the amount of data and content generated is growing at 24.4% per year, reaching 394EB in 2028. This data and content explosion necessitates innovative solutions for the creative marketers responsible for content generation to meet consumer demands and seize the opportunities presented.

GenAI presents itself as a powerful tool to address these production challenges. By automating repetitive tasks, such as content variations, GenAI frees up valuable time for creatives and marketers alike to focus on higher-level creative endeavors such as ideation or creating high-quality 3D models for customers to virtually interact with to understand a product's features better. Engaging content translates to higher conversion rates, faster campaign execution, and the ability to personalize experiences at scale. Marketers are increasingly seeking ways to unlock GenAI's potential for a competitive advantage. Forward-thinking leaders view GenAI as a tool that can drive both top-line revenue growth through increased conversions and bottom-line optimization through productivity and speed-to-market gains. They must also strategically select and implement high-quality, controlled AI technologies that prioritize ethics, security, and scalability to drive effective marketing initiatives while adhering to robust governance frameworks.

AT A GLANCE

KEY STATS

- » By 2026, IDC predicts GenAI will assume 42% of traditional marketing's mundane work and boost marketing productivity overall by 40% by 2029.
- » According to IDC research, 79% of marketers already use GenAI for content tasks.
- » IDC found that 30% of organizations estimate a 2x ROI on their AI investment and 40% estimate 3x or higher ROI.

Boosting ROI with GenAI-Powered Content

The world of marketing is undergoing a significant shift with the rise of GenAI. GenAI offers a powerful new approach to content creation and management, empowering creative teams to streamline workflows, personalize experiences, and ultimately drive business growth. Manually crafting custom content has been expensive and time-consuming. The once elusive goal of 1:1 personalized marketing is within reach with GenAI. GenAI, embedded directly into creative workflows, promises a treasure trove of benefits with a strong business case. IDC predicts GenAI will boost marketing productivity by over 40% by 2029, impacting areas such as web marketing, advertising, and content creation — a direct return on GenAI investments. IDC's *GenAI ARC Survey* found that 70% of organizations estimate a 2x return on investment (ROI) for every \$1 spent on AI projects, with 19% of them expecting higher than 4x ROI. Areas where GenAI can have immediate benefits include:

- » **Accelerated production:** One of the proven benefits of GenAI is its ability to generate high-quality, brand-consistent content at scale. GenAI has already been found to automate creative tasks in bulk such as variations for personalization, localization, channels/sizes, generating product descriptions, social media posts, and basic ad copy. IDC found that 79% of marketers already use GenAI for content tasks, and more adventurous teams are using GenAI to automate time-intensive visual tasks such as removing backgrounds, filling and resizing digital media, recoloring, adding frames to a video, or changing lighting. This frees up valuable time for creatives to focus on ideation, developing innovative concepts, exploring new avenues of digital media, or testing concepts before committing to large effort production. In addition, GenAI accelerates content through the supply chain, enabling quicker product reviews and purchases, thus enabling marketers to capitalize on fleeting market opportunities. In today's fast-paced business environment, speed is critical. GenAI helps creative and marketing teams be more agile and responsive, giving the brand a competitive edge.
- » **Content personalization:** GenAI's ability to personalize content at scale can lead to significant increases in awareness, consideration, conversion, and customer lifetime value. Teams will want to use GenAI to tailor content for specific audiences and channels while ensuring brand voice and messaging remain consistent. When targeted messaging resonates with customers, it drives engagement and conversions. For example, relevant content on social media platforms increases click-through rates, conversion rates on landing pages soar with personalized content, and customer lifetime value climbs when customers feel truly understood. GenAI allows the brand to optimize marketing efforts based on data rather than guesswork. For example, audience-tested advertising generates multiple variations of ad copy and visuals for A/B testing and identifies the messaging that resonates most effectively with the target audience. This data-driven approach to content creation ensures that teams can use GenAI to create personalized content in real time, allowing content production, creativity, and data-driven marketing to work in tandem like never before.
- » **Brand protection:** Transparency and brand protection are paramount concerns in the digital age. Fortunately, a thoughtful approach to GenAI has the potential to also address these issues. Industry leaders are developing methods to watermark and credential AI-generated content, fostering trust and clarity regarding the source of the material. This ensures proper attribution and helps mitigate the potential for misinformation. Furthermore, some GenAI providers have embedded practices and capabilities tied to detecting and removing potentially harmful or offensive content. This safeguards brand reputation and fosters a positive online environment for everyone. Finally, companies are keen to invest in technologies that allow them to create content specific to their brand while

protecting their intellectual property. Secure custom models and brand-specific style kits guarantee that generated content, even in bulk, adheres to brand standards and guidelines.

GenAI Tackles Age-Old Challenges and Introduces New Ones

While GenAI has many benefits for the creative marketer, its adoption is not without its challenges. Marketers remain concerned about trust and authenticity when using AI tools. Legal liabilities, brand control, data privacy, and potential ethical biases in AI models are all valid concerns that marketers need to address. Ensuring transparency and control over AI-generated content will be crucial for the successful adoption of GenAI across marketing tasks. The following are some considerations when beginning to plan a GenAI content transformation:

- » **Authenticity and trust:** In a landscape that is becoming saturated with AI-generated content, ensuring brand authenticity and building trust with customers is paramount. In its August 2023 *GenAI ARC Survey*, IDC found that 80% of organizations globally are exploring GenAI in some form. The potential for enhanced customer experiences and content creation drives this surge in adoption, with 22% of enterprises making significant investments. The survey identifies two key challenges that enterprise leaders must navigate:
 - **Maintaining brand authenticity:** Customers crave genuine connections with brands. The fear is that GenAI, if not implemented thoughtfully, could lead to generic, indistinguishable content, making it difficult for brands to stand out and forge emotional connections. This homogenization could erode trust and brand loyalty. Leaders must find ways to leverage GenAI while preserving their unique voice and values that define their brand.
 - **Data security and control with public models:** The August 2023 *GenAI ARC Survey* highlighted concerns surrounding data privacy, particularly when training public GenAI models. Over one-third of organizations utilize these models for experimentation and testing, potentially exposing their proprietary data. This is a major concern, especially for regulated industries such as finance and healthcare. The August survey also reveals that 36% of organizations are opting for private versions of GenAI models trained on public data, while a cautious 26% choose models trained solely on their own data to maintain complete control. Either approach ensures data privacy but may limit the capabilities of the AI without enough content to train it on. Organizations have also raised concerns about copyrighted material being used to train public models. If new content is generated from copyrighted material, can the creator be sued? Policies and regulations around this topic are still in discussion. At a minimum, leaders must find a balance between leveraging public models for efficiency and safeguarding their intellectual property and competitive advantage through private data-driven custom models.

Key takeaway: Enterprises must develop robust data governance frameworks to ensure data privacy and establish clear guardrails for using GenAI. IDC suggests that building successful AI capabilities starts at the data layer. This includes protecting the brand's data as well as ensuring that user preference data collected at the point of experience to generating personalized content is used responsibly.

Prioritizing data quality and compliance may be a new remit for creative teams as they embrace GenAI tools. There are two types of data that can bridge the gap between marketing and creatives — training data and preference data. Utilizing both can help the creative team move away from creative briefs and lean into the GenAI tools that build content based on user preference and the high-performing content on which the model was trained. As a

result, leaders should invest in building private models that leverage their own business data. According to IDC's August 2023 *GenAI ARC Survey*, 83% of enterprises reported that GenAI models that leverage an enterprise's proprietary/internal business data will give that organization a significant advantage over competitors. This increases the need for precision and accuracy of the custom model outputs. Transparency about AI usage and clear communication are essential for maintaining customer loyalty in the age of GenAI.

- » **Transforming daily tasks:** GenAI is also disrupting content marketing's daily work tasks, which is a traditionally resource-intensive domain. As discussed previously, GenAI's ability to dynamically generate content variations based on real-time customer interactions addresses the challenge of crafting diverse content for various channels, formats, and audiences. Teams can leverage GenAI to create new content from existing pieces or briefs, generate images from text descriptions, or transform existing visual assets into different formats. GenAI's capabilities extend beyond creating and personalizing content, tailoring timing and channel, and messaging for each audience segment. GenAI can even translate entire content libraries into culturally relevant and grammatically sound languages.

Key takeaway: This technology fundamentally alters the marketing landscape, presenting both a challenge and an opportunity for creative teams that will need to transform their ways of working. Upskilling initiatives, optimizing organizational structure, and reevaluating in-house versus outsourced content creation are critical steps. GenAI unlocks a new era of content marketing, demanding a new breed of "creative scientist" roles that can leverage its power. These teams will need to adapt their daily tasks, transitioning from content creation to strategic storytelling, scaling capabilities across the organization, and driving exceptional customer experience design.

Considering Adobe Firefly: A Safe and Scalable GenAI Platform for Creative Content

Adobe Firefly is a comprehensive GenAI platform designed to revolutionize content creation for creative teams, marketers, and enterprises at large. It tackles challenges such as generating endless content variations and maintaining brand consistency, freeing up teams to focus on new initiatives and empowering non-designers to create on-brand content. Adobe Firefly models are accessed via several Adobe tools and offerings (e.g., Creative Cloud apps like Photoshop, marketing tools like Adobe Express and Adobe GenStudio, APIs such as Firefly Services, and Firefly Custom Models).

Developed responsibly, Adobe Firefly is trained on licensed content and adheres to ethical AI principles to avoid bias and promote diverse representation. Adobe Firefly prioritizes security and transparency, with content credentials adding provenance details to the AI-generated output. Further, brands can train their custom versions of Firefly with their own assets and imagery in a private controlled training environment that ensures privacy and intellectual property protection.

For large organizations, Adobe Firefly offers scalability to generate content in bulk and streamline production, with visible benefits across different teams. Marketers can self-serve content creation while maintaining brand consistency and controls through the use of brand/style kits and custom models. Operations teams can benefit from automating workflows for content production in bulk and faster time to market. By combining creative freedom with brand control, as companies embrace GenAI, solutions such as Adobe's will accelerate production while safeguarding brand identity.

Challenges

Several factors can hinder the adoption of Adobe's GenAI solution, particularly in creative fields. Organizations may lack policies to govern the responsible use of GenAI outputs, thereby limiting the adoption of tools such as Adobe Firefly. In addition, creatives themselves express concerns about potential job displacement due to automation. Depending on the desired features and usage level, cost considerations associated with Adobe Firefly may pose a barrier for some creative teams.

Furthermore, trust in originality and provenance of AI-generated content in general remains a hurdle. Even with assurances from Adobe regarding training data and privacy, organizations continue to be cautious about security and copyright risks. To address this concern, Adobe has stated: "If you get sued on a Firefly-generated output, we'll step in as part of our enterprise agreement and indemnify you. What are we going to indemnify? We'll indemnify Firefly's output if it looks like someone else's work and is a copyright infringement because we know where we got it."

Conclusion

GenAI solutions are revolutionizing content creation. To thrive, companies need a three-pronged approach. First, they need to build and empower a diverse team to create content that drives the brand forward. Storytellers provide vision, designers craft engaging experiences, marketers capture interest, and creative scientists bridge the human-AI gap. Second, organizations need to choose the right technology and prioritize tools excelling in quality, control, and precision while ensuring ethical AI models and secure data handling. These technologies will drive scale and enable key marketing initiatives, such as personalization and optimization of content. Finally, organizations must establish clear governance policies that ensure responsible use of AI, transparency, copyright protection, and brand risk management.

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GenAI empowers creatives, nontechnical marketers, and designers to build content, but brand consistency and control are crucial. Capabilities such as style guides, access controls, and locked templates are used to make sure content adheres to brand standards. This balance is key for successful content marketing. Furthermore, GenAI adoption should be customized. Techniques such as fine-tuning models, leveraging private data sets, or customizing models can enhance the fit for the organization and provide confidence in the results. Training custom models ensures brand consistency, and shareable artifacts such as style kits empower broader teams to create fresh, on-brand content.

Adobe empowers broader creative thinking and streamlines the production of personalized content at scale. Adobe Firefly is attractive to creative and marketing teams that need to address the challenge of delivering targeted, engaging content across channels while maintaining brand consistency. IDC believes that GenAI is not a replacement for human creativity but rather a powerful tool that can augment human capabilities. To the extent that Adobe can maintain a strong governance model and price/performance value proposition with Adobe Firefly in this evolving GenAI market, the company has a significant opportunity for success to assist organizations in unlocking a new era of content authenticity, personalization, and brand engagement.

About the Analyst



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Marci Maddox leads IDC's worldwide research on persuasive content and digital experience technologies and coleads IDC's Customer Experience practice for content, campaign marketing, customer data platforms, advertising, and the future of customer experiences research. Leveraging over two decades of experience in building and marketing digital experience applications, Ms. Maddox's research helps vendors and buyers understand the changing market dynamics of creative tools, customer communications, digital experience platforms, interactive media, generative AI, and digital accessibility, showcasing the impact it has on experience-orchestrated digital business strategies.



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