MUSE VOL.2

The Real Impact of AI on the Creator Economy



billion,dollar,boy

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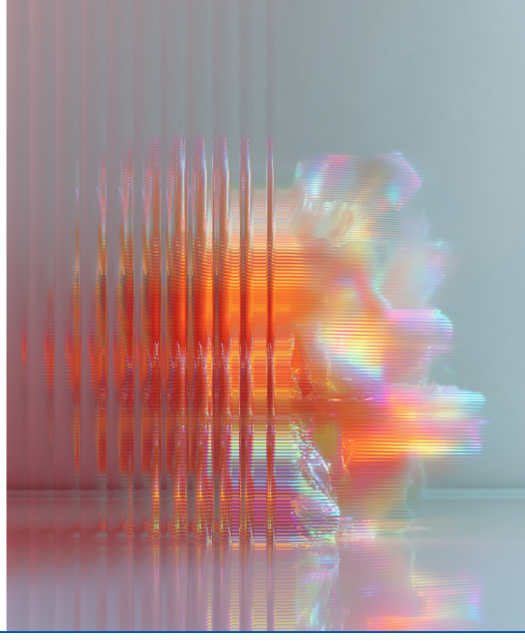
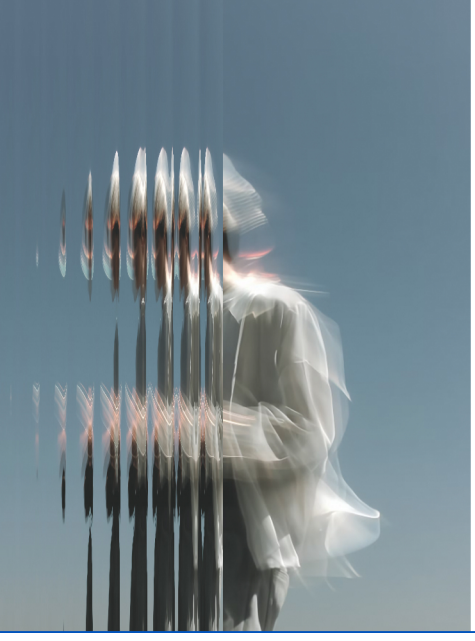
INTRODUCTION

Two years have passed since generative AI first truly emerged as a disruptive force in the creator economy. In response, Billion Dollar Boy launched its innovation unit, **Muse** in 2023, supported by an independent research-led report to explore **“How Generative AI is Influencing the Creator Economy”.**

Since then, AI has shifted from experiment to infrastructure. Marketers are betting big, creators are scaling faster, and budgets are flowing toward AI-driven content. But consumers? Their early excitement is cooling.

What started as novelty is now a test of trust. Audiences are pushing back against “AI slop” and challenging emerging synthetic creator identities, like digital twins. They are quick to disengage when content feels lazy, low effort, or manipulative - and they demand higher standards of authenticity and craft.





The question now isn't whether AI can scale content creation, it already is, democratizing access to powerful production tools once out of reach. The question is whether the industry can scale it responsibly: not just with cultural relevance, but with genuine purpose, originality, and creative craft at its core.

This report decodes how industry opinions on AI have evolved and how it continues to reshape the creator economy today: where it's driving ROI, where it's fracturing trust, and what brands, creators, and platforms must do to protect originality and keep human creativity at the heart of influence.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHAPTER 1: GENERATIVE AI'S NEW REALITY IN THE CREATOR ECONOMY

Generative AI has shifted from novelty to necessity in the creator economy. Brands and creators are moving beyond experimentation, using AI as a core tool to drive efficiency, creativity, and growth.

But as adoption accelerates, audiences are growing more discerning - rewarding authenticity and rejecting low-quality, formulaic content.

This chapter explores how leading brands and creators are integrating AI with intention and craft - proving that success lies in combining human creativity with machine capability to produce work that earns trust, engagement, and impact.

CHAPTER 2: THE NEW AI CONTENT STACK

Generative AI is transforming not just how content is made, but what it means to create. The new AI content stack blends automation with human creativity to drive not only speed and scale but emotional depth.

Pushing the boundaries is "vibe marketing": AI-powered storytelling that captures brand 'feel'. It helps brands combat creative fatigue, explore ideas faster, and connect with audiences on a more human level.

But when authenticity can't be automated, how can brands ensure they use AI as a creative partner to prompt human emotion and imagination meaningfully?

CHAPTER 3: THE FUTURE OF CREATOR IDENTITY IN THE POST-AI ERA

AI is transforming creator identity - from virtual influencers to digital twins and deepfakes - offering scale and creativity while challenging trust and authenticity.

Virtual influencers can amplify brand reach and digital twins can extend creator presence, while deepfakes highlight the risks of misuse. The key to success is responsible use. Explore how transparency, governance, and human oversight can lead on the future of creator identity.

CHAPTER 4: RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION

AI's huge potential is matched in scale by the risks: misuse, IP infringement, and misinformation. Speed and efficiency cannot come at the cost of originality, consent, or authenticity.

This chapter highlights the gaps in governance and protections, and the need for clear labeling, transparency in AI use, and safeguards for creator rights and IP.

Responsible innovation is not about limiting creativity - it's about ensuring AI enhances, rather than undermines, human connection.

CHAPTER 1

Generative AI's New Reality in the Creator Economy

Where We Were: 2023

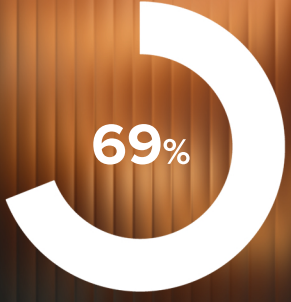
In 2023, generative AI was in its honeymoon phase; a buzzy innovation disrupting the creator economy with promises of efficiency, scale, and creativity. Creators were curious.

Marketers were cautiously optimistic. Consumers, largely unfamiliar with the technology, were intrigued. Our 2023 research showed positive early signs for experimentation:

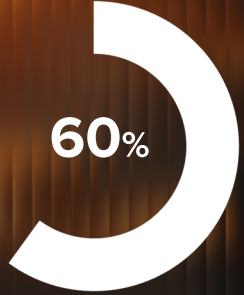
In 2023 AI was seen as a creative muse; a tool for expression and productivity. But it hadn't yet fully transformed how campaigns were built.



of **marketers** had increased creator spend that used generative AI



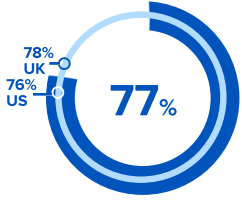
of **creators** predicted that AI would positively disrupt the creator economy



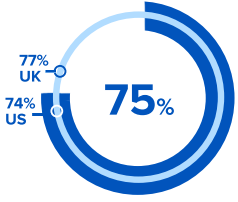
of **consumers** preferred AI creator content over traditional creator content

Where We Are Now: 2025

Fast forward two years, and the use of generative AI in the creator economy has now evolved beyond the experimentation phase and become an essential part of workflows and strategies.



plan to divert a greater proportion of advertising budgets from other marketing channels to AI-generated creator content - **up from 65% in 2023**



of marketers agree AI creator content is more cost-efficient than traditional creator content

Decoded

AI is delivering hard business results in the creator economy - speed, scale, and savings. For brands under pressure, this is becoming a common and dependable production model, not just an innovation project. The perceived efficiencies are encouraging marketers to re-direct ad spend from other marketing channels - especially in the UK where favorability among marketers is higher.

From Theory to Practice: L'Oréal Uses AI to Elevate its Revitalift Laser Peptide Serum

Billion Dollar Boy partnered with seven innovative creators that use tools including generative AI to promote L'Oréal Paris Skincare's new Revitalift Laser Peptide Serum.

The creators combined their artistic lens with the technology to create bold and disruptive content, bringing their unique creativity and imagination to highlight the new Laser Peptide Serum and make audiences excited about the product's innovative solution.





Ad Spend Surge

79%

4 in 5 marketers have increased ad spend on generative AI creator content over the past 12 months

79%

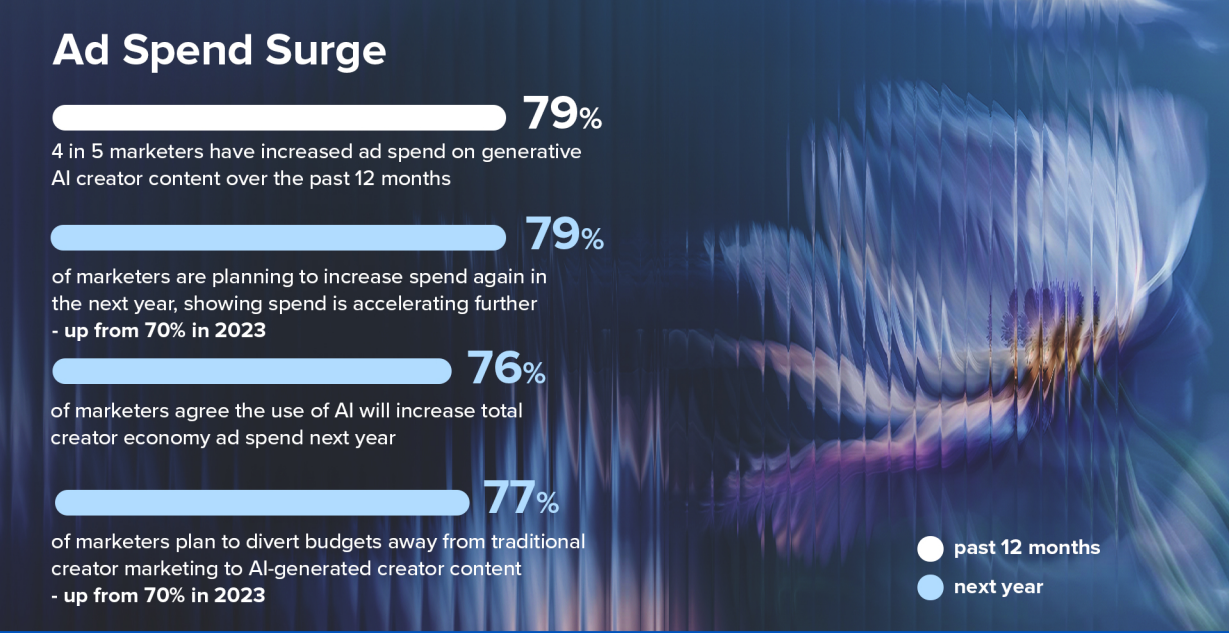
of marketers are planning to increase spend again in the next year, showing spend is accelerating further **- up from 70% in 2023**

76%

of marketers agree the use of AI will increase total creator economy ad spend next year

77%

of marketers plan to divert budgets away from traditional creator marketing to AI-generated creator content **- up from 70% in 2023**



Decoded

This isn't test-and-learn anymore. Marketers have moved beyond exploring AI in creator marketing as a novelty for quick, short-term wins. They're now betting on it to unlock new ROI through greater reach, faster content production and stronger performance. And, with **three-quarters (71%) of US marketers and half (52%) of UK marketers now investing in excess of $1M annually in creator marketing**, we're talking about a significant allocation of ad spend to AI-enhanced and AI-generated creator content.

And while the scale of investment may feel inflated amid some consumer skepticism, the rationale is clear: this spend isn't about flooding feeds with synthetic filler. It's about optimization, effectiveness, and expanding creative potential in ways that traditional production can't keep up with.

From Theory to Practice: Diageo Uses AI for Marketing Budget Efficiencies

In 2024, Diageo increased its use of AI throughout its marketing campaigns to enhance efficiency across its £2.7 billion ($3.7 billion) marketing budget. That year, the company launched a virtual content studio enabling it to produce assets for 34 of its leading brands globally.

Rather than building entirely new campaign concepts, Diageo applies AI tools like Pencil, Grip, CreativeX, and Vizit to adapt existing creative, fine-tuning background, lighting, local language, and cultural nuance.

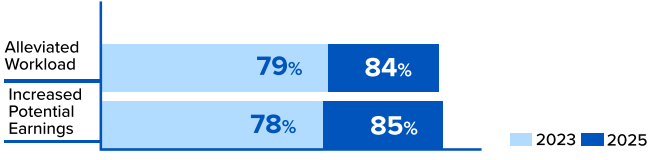
Between 2024 and 2025, the proportion of budget spent on development or production dropped from 21% to 14%.
Diageo now aims to push that figure down further, to just 10%.

Diageo's example shows why marketers are pouring more spend into AI: it isn't about pushing out cheap volume it's about re-engineering billion-pound budgets: cutting costs, optimizing production, and scaling creative across markets in ways traditional methods can't match.



Creator Adoption

Creators are also taking advantage of AI efficiencies and opportunities. They overwhelmingly agree that AI has alleviated their workload and increased their potential earnings:



And creators are responding by shifting their content production habits. A majority of creators have increased AI-generated content output over the past 12 months and into the next 12 months:



AI is alleviating pressure for creators, but great work is never simple. Craft, creativity, and storytelling remain vital, and they can't be shortcutted.

The New Brand Expectation: Innovation and Integration

When asked which agency capabilities will be most important by the end of 2026, Billion Dollar Boy research found that brand marketers identified **'emerging technology integration and innovation' (33%)** above all - with **'content creation tools like generative AI and virtual influencers'** identified by **more than half (51%)** of all brands as ***the*** most important innovation for agencies to offer.

With **one in three (31%)** brands citing a **'lack of innovation'** as a leading reason why they would consider switching agencies, the stakes couldn't be higher for marketers and creators to embrace emerging technologies in order to maintain a competitive edge.

That pressure has ensured that generative AI is now critical to today's creator marketing infrastructure, reshaping not just how content is made, but how it's funded, judged, and valued.

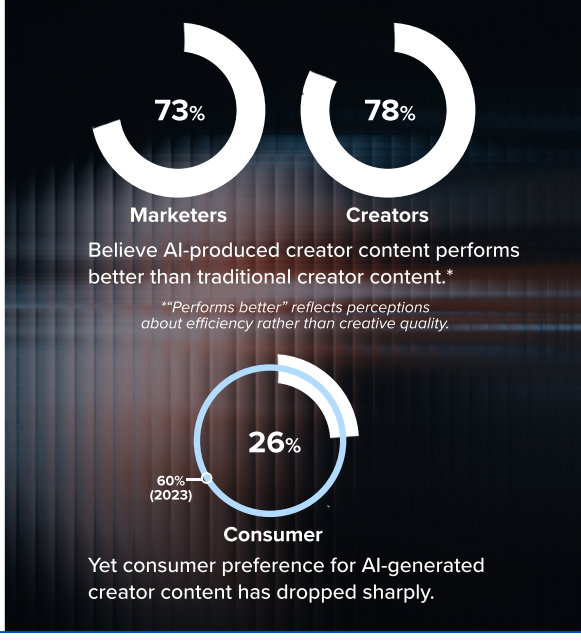
Yet while **marketers** are diverting more budget to AI creator content and **creators** are increasingly adopting the technology - even optimizing their workflows and career strategy around it - **consumer** enthusiasm is fracturing, signaling the end of the novelty effect.

Performance Gains vs Consumer Skepticism

The most notable shift is the collapse in consumer preference. This sharp decline appears to reflect the sudden flood of low-quality “AI slop” in feeds, driving audience polarization.

For **professionals**, AI is prized for efficiency and its ability to unlock higher production value through tools once out of reach. Early performance signals have reinforced that confidence.

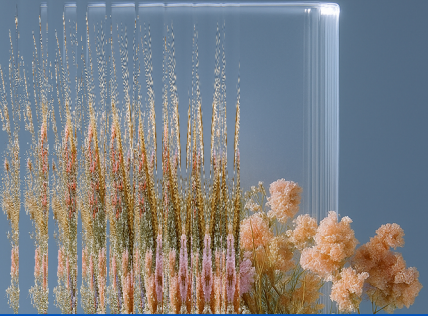
For **consumers**, however, low-effort, repetitive, or emotionally thin content has begun to crowd out more meaningful creative work. Bad work is easy to spot, while well-executed AI output often blends in as simply “good content.” **Consumers aren’t rejecting AI outright - they’re rejecting the slop.**



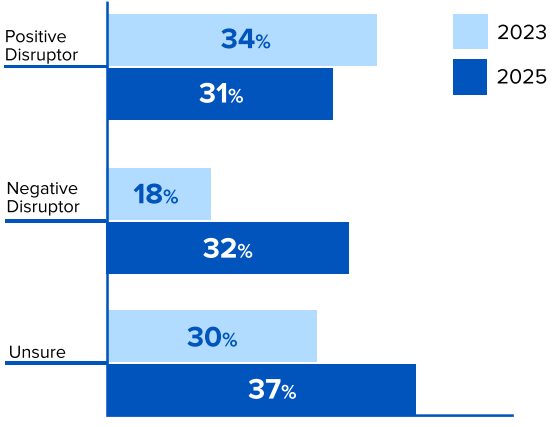
Consumer Optimism Split

This content backlash reflects a broader sentiment shift.

Consumer opinion on AI's role in the creator economy has fractured.



How Consumers See Generative AI as a Disruptive Force in the Creator Economy



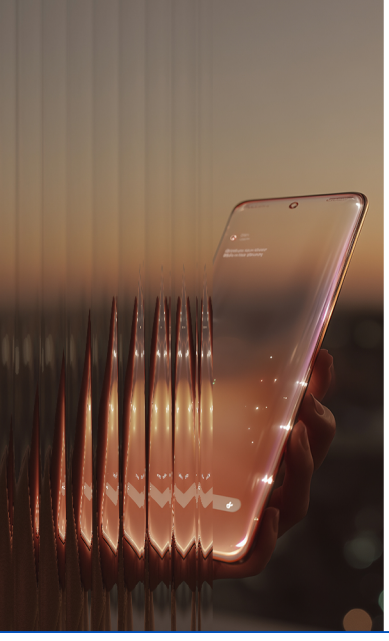
Decoded

In contrast, professionals remain more bullish: creators have grown more positive **(73% vs. 68% in 2023)**, while **marketers** have dipped slightly **(70% vs. 75% in 2023)** but still show overall strong confidence in AI's impact.

The divide is widening: industry confidence in AI is holding strong while consumer sentiment is cooling and splitting apart.

This may simply be a moment of consumer correction before attitudes stabilize and normalize. It's also a reminder that human craft and genuine utility remain the foundation. While some AI output falls short, many brands and professional creators continue to apply the technology responsibly, keeping quality at the centre of their work.

That growing scrutiny is now pushing platforms to respond with new guardrails and transparency measures, attempts to reassure users and protect originality, even as innovation accelerates.



The Platforms Are Responding

There are signs of hope as platforms work to protect quality and discourage low-value output.

- **YouTube** is tightening monetization rules to block mass-produced, low-effort formats while continuing to allow original, value-adding AI work.
- **Pinterest** is labeling AI-modified images and rolled out gen AI controls to allow users to **limit how much AI content they see.**
- **TikTok** is auto-labeling AI-generated videos and requiring creators to disclose realistic AI content.
- **Meta** has rolled out “AI info” labels across its apps, though accuracy and clarity remain a challenge.

These interventions suggest platforms are attempting to safeguard originality, yet this sits alongside an ongoing rush to develop AI-native formats and tools, singaling a tension between quality control and rapid innovation.

That tension is most visible in Meta's latest experiment: Vibes, a short-form AI video feed within the Meta AI app that allows users to create, remix, and share AI-generated videos.

The launch highlights a wider race among platforms to capture the next wave of AI-native engagement - one echoed by projects like **OpenAI's Sora 2**, which are expanding the creative possibilities of AI video.

While some interventions point toward protecting the balance of human and AI-generated content, Vibes raises the question of whether audiences will embrace AI entertainment at scale, or whether it risks accelerating the very oversaturation that consumers are already resisting.

As with any new format, time will tell. Platforms may shape the tools and the policies, but ultimately success depends on whether consumers choose to adopt and love these experiences.





Content Quality & Diversity

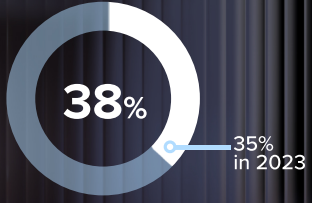
Amid the polarization, there are clear signs of progress. Generative AI is expanding creative possibilities, making production more accessible, and opening the door to more diverse content.

For **creators**, it's a way to elevate craft and broaden storytelling. For **marketers**, it's proof that quality and variety can scale.

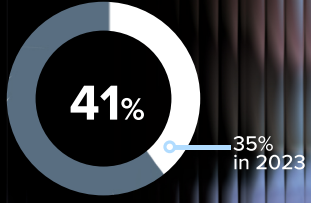
And most notably, after earlier declines in consumer sentiment, this is one of the few areas where we now see a positive lift: **consumers** themselves reporting improvements in both quality and diversity of creator content.

Content Quality & Diversity

CONSUMERS



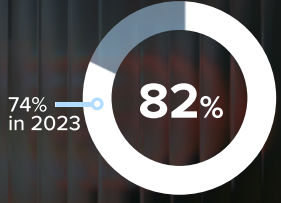
say AI has improved the quality of creator content



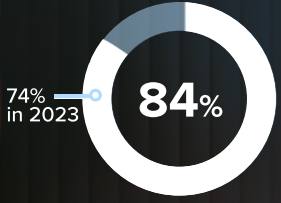
say AI has improved the diversity of creator content

Content Quality & Diversity

CREATORS



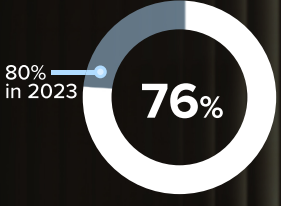
say AI has improved the quality of creator content



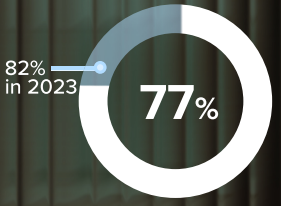
say AI has improved the diversity of creator content

Content Quality & Diversity

MARKETERS



say AI has improved the quality of creator content



say AI has improved the diversity of creator content

Decoded

The consumer uplift is telling. The quality of AI-generated creator content is improving because enhanced and accessible production tools are raising the baseline of what creators can deliver. And diversity is widening because creativity can now stretch as far as a creator's imagination, unbound by old production limits.

This is the key: generative AI's positive disruption in the creator economy isn't about more volume - it's about richer creativity, greater accessibility, and more varied storytelling.

Summary

Generative AI has moved from novelty to necessity in the creator economy - no longer a gimmick, but part of the core toolkit.

Marketers and creators are doubling down on it for its ability to scale and speed content production, while consumers are cooling: their early curiosity has shifted to skepticism as “AI slop” floods feeds.

What’s changed is that consumers no longer give AI a novelty pass - they now hold AI-driven content to the same standards of intention, craft, and emotional intelligence they expect from all creator work.

The creator economy’s next challenge isn’t learning how to use AI. It’s learning when not to use it, or how to ensure its use enhances, rather than erodes, trust and originality.

AI success lies in balancing human creativity with machine capability to produce work that earns attention, builds trust, and achieves what neither could alone.



KATRINE RASMUSSEN

CMO of Pixelz

"Content is being digitalised, whether we like it or not. But AI is not a magic button we just push, and then something fantastic comes out. It's a tool. And for that tool to work, we need really skilled people behind it, creative people. We need AI artists."



OMAR KARIM

Creative Technologist and AI Filmmaker

"It's been a multiplier for my creativity. It's allowed me to create far beyond any boundaries or budgets, or any confines of normal filmmaking.

What's really fascinating about this technology becoming ubiquitous is it feels like the camcorder. When the camcorder came out, we didn't suddenly get a thousand new Steven Spielbergs. It still required technical and creative vision to keep moving things forward."

CHAPTER 2

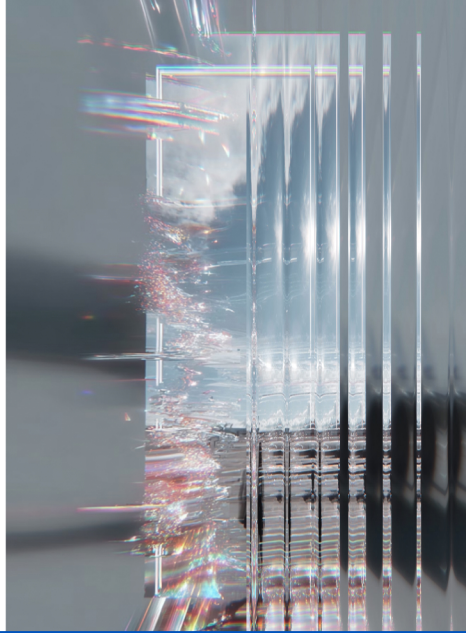
The New AI Content Stack

The Context

Generative AI isn't just making more content, it's reshaping the entire content mix: from high-volume product assets to emotionally resonant creator storytelling.

Some content depends on human creativity, cultural fluency, and emotional intelligence - the places where creators still hold the pen. Other formats thrive on automation: functional assets that need to be produced quickly, in multiple formats, across multiple markets. Together, these forces form a new creative system:
The AI Content Stack.

It's a spectrum that runs from creator-led artistry at one end to AI-first automation at the other, and everything in between.



The Three Categories of AI in Creator Marketing Today

1. AI-DRIVEN CONTENT: FULLY SYNTHETIC
Content made entirely using AI and exclusively featuring AI: virtual creators, synthetic films. Experimental, sometimes polarizing, but defining what's next.

2. AI-ENABLED CONTENT: VISIBLE AI
When creators use AI to push creative boundaries: 3D world-building, virtual styling, generative-enhanced visuals. It's recognizably AI-influenced but the creator is still central.

3. AI-ASSISTED CONTENT: INVISIBLE AI
Content which is inconspicuously supported by AI: editing, scripting, ideation, voiceover, localization, and optimization. Often unseen, but almost everywhere now.

In practice, most creator content today sits in the second two zones.

The opportunity for brands is to find balance - using AI to enhance creator output and unlock creativity (categories 2 and 3), while experimenting selectively with full AI production (category 1) when it aligns with brand purpose and adds real value.

The New AI Content Stack

AI is no longer a bolt-on. For forward-thinking brands, it's becoming part of the creative infrastructure. The question isn't whether to use it, but how to design the stack with intention.

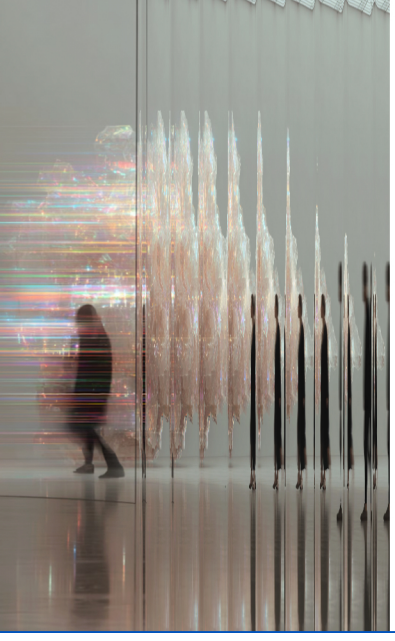
A well-built AI stack balances efficiency with creativity, and function with feeling. Each layer plays a distinct role in how brands and creators now work together:



ARTISTRY ↑

UTILITY ↓

CATEOGRY	EXAMPLE	VALUE
	THE EXPERIMENTAL LAYER	
AI-ENABLED & AI-DRIVEN	The innovation lab. Where brands and creators test new formats. Not every idea belongs in-market, but this work shapes what comes next.	**The Artist:** Use selectively for innovation storytelling and R&D.
	THE EXPLORATION LAYER	
AI-ENABLED & AI-DRIVEN	This layer is sometimes referred to as 'vibe marketing'. AI is entirely the focus. Generative AI artists and filmmakers use the technology to build imaginative worlds and create emotionally resonant, brand-aligned content that captures tone, mood and meaning.	**The Amplifier:** Where AI and human imagination merge to capture not just what a brand sells, but what it stands for: bold, dreamy, nostalgic, relaxed, excited.
	THE INNOVATION LAYER	
AI-ENABLED	These creators use generative AI to visibly innovate content production - but it's not dominant, the creator remains central to the content. AI is used to build new aesthetics and campaign ideas that couldn't exist without AI.	**The Collaborator:** Where AI becomes a creative medium for distinction and originality. Brands tap this layer for distinctive storytelling, creative impact and bold ideas.
	THE APPLIED LAYER	
AI-ASSISTED	Creators use AI to speed up editing, scripting or localization.	**The Assistant:** Efficiency meets human storytelling. Builds career sustainability for creators and offers brands agility through faster, higher-quality output.
	THE ENGINE LAYER	
AI-ASSISTED	Scaled AI-led functional assets: ad variations, translations, product imagery.	**The Executor:** Built for reach and repetition but limit reliance to avoid fatigue.



Diagnosing Your Content Mix

For most brands, the goal isn't to live at one layer, but to design a connected system where each part supports the next - automation powering volume, creators adding context, and emotional storytelling providing distinction.

But, as AI skills and capabilities evolve to increasingly reshape production, the brands breaking through will be those that use it not just to make more - but to make people feel more.

Within this system, two creative zones are shaping the future:

- **The Innovation Layer:** where creators use AI to tell product and brand stories that blend function and feeling.
- **The Exploration Layer:** the experimental edge, where AI and human creativity merge to push artistic and emotional boundaries.

What Is The Exploration Layer?

Where AI and human creativity meet to evoke feeling and identity - and, ultimately, to build distinction in a world that's saturated with content.

Some refer to it as **'Vibe Marketing'**, but its definition is still being resolved.

What's new here isn't just the use of AI, it's how it's changing what's possible creatively.

Brands and creators use AI to translate emotion, tone, and atmosphere and produce content in a way that used to be unthinkable. And that accessibility matters because it means that distinct, emotionally intelligent creative with high-end production is now in the hands of those who 'get' human story telling and emotional connection. It's not just reserved for the production studios who could afford legacy technology.

The result is a new kind of work, more expressive, more immersive, more felt. In a cluttered social landscape, emotion has become a differentiator. It's what helps content cut through, and what audiences remember.

The Creators Leading The Way

An emerging field of AI-native creators is setting the creative pace in **The Exploration Layer.** Building audiences around their mastery of generative tools and redefining what ‘originality’ looks like. They’re expanding the frontier of storytelling powered by generative AI.


Image from: @joooo.ann


Image from: @arthur_chance


Image from: @officialshanikwa

Why Creators Matter in the Age of Slop

AI has made it easy to produce high-volume low-value content.

When we use the technology this way, we end up automating and optimising creativity to the point where everything feels the same - the same tone, the same sound, the same aesthetic, the same safe ideas.

If we ignore taste, craft, and skill, and use AI only to produce more, faster, we risk turning our feeds into a Sea of Sameness.

AI alone isn't enough to solve brand challenges. You still need intent, equity, and authorship to tell brand stories that are distinctive and connect with people.

This is where creators are leading the way: using AI to bring new depth, tone, and perspective to storytelling. Whether through emotionally charged "vibe" content or highly crafted product narratives, they're proving that AI doesn't have to strip authenticity, it can elevate it.

If your output is blending in, you're probably over-using AI for production and under-using it for exploration. **Rebalance your stack: automate the repetitive, and use creators to drive the new.**



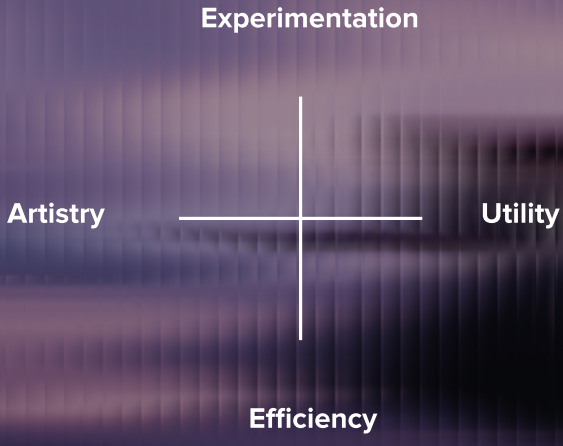
MATTHEW DRINKWATER

Head of Fashion Innovation
Agency at London College of Fashion

"When you facilitate the ability to create content, the majority of people do the same thing. My feed looks the same as everybody else's. One of the things which is most critical as we begin to think about this technology, is:

'How am I using these tools and what for?'

Then you begin to separate those who use it differently.
That hierarchy of content creation is still at a really early stage."



Each brand has a natural bias somewhere on this grid.

The Exploration and Innovation Layer isn't for every brand. Some lean hard into the Scaled and Applied layers, using AI for utility and efficiency.

While others are more comfortable with pushing AI into experimentation and artistry.

The opportunity - and the challenge - is balance:

- Lean too far into efficiency and you get ‘sameness’.
- Lean too far into experimentation and you can lose your ‘why’.

Beyond Expression: Gen AI As A Problem Solver

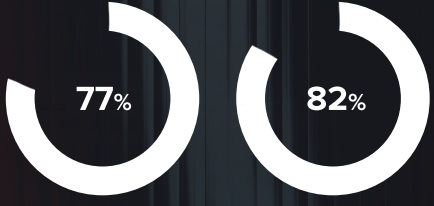
When applied intentionally, AI is already helping solve some of the biggest challenges marketers face today - from tackling content fatigue to unlocking creative depth and emotional resonance.

A TOOL TO NAVIGATE CREATIVE FATIGUE

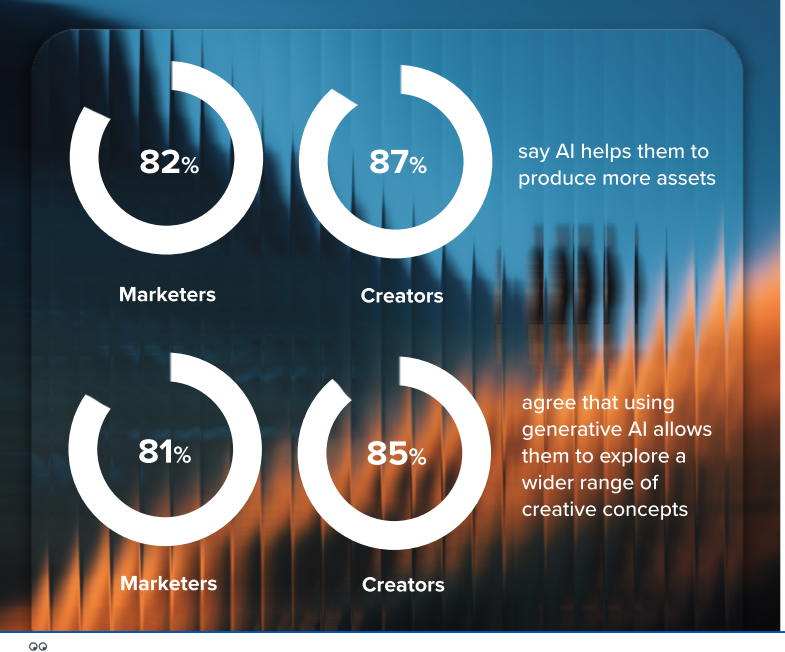
In today's fast-moving feeds, content lifecycles are shortening. Audiences tire quickly of repetitive, lookalike content - but distinctive creative holds attention for longer. Generative AI democratizes access to production tools that help marketers and creators craft more original, high-quality assets that stay interesting over time, without always needing to increase volume - across both product and brand campaigns.



Two thirds **(66%)** of marketers and creators frequently experience the challenge of creative fatigue among online audiences.



agree generative AI helps them to combat creative fatigue.



AI PROVIDES A WAY TO EXPLORE MORE IDEAS AND PROTOTYPE THEM

AI removes production barriers and enables rapid creative prototyping, letting teams test, refine, and visualise ideas early in the process without heavy investment.

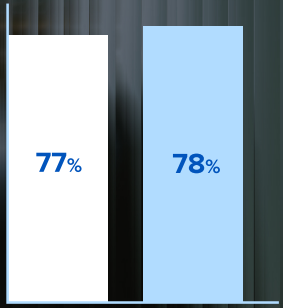
AI DEEPENS BRAND EXPRESSION

AI helps brands translate identity into layered creative - adding tone, texture, and feeling to deliver distinctive, emotionally intelligent brand storytelling.



Marketers & Creators

of marketers and creators agree that AI effectively interprets and captures brand personality.



77% of marketers and 78% of creators say AI is effective at crafting emotionally resonant content.

EMOTION BECOMES A PERFORMANCE DRIVER

Attention alone doesn't build brands - emotion does.
Creators instinctively know how to provoke feeling AI can help scale and measure that emotional impact.



Percentage of marketers and creators agree that it is important for marketing assets to be emotionally resonant with its audience.





SIMON HARWOOD

Global Effectiveness Director at Billion Dollar Boy

"Recently, attention has taken centre stage as the new marketing metric in town. And of course, you need attention to get on the radar in the first place.

But to be encoded to long-term memory and unlock future demand, you also need to provoke an emotive reaction. Making the viewer feel something makes it easier for your brand to come to mind the next time your audience is in the category.

We can now evaluate the emotive response of content through facial coding, tracking the viewer's real-time reactions and mapping them to key emotions - and this could be game changing.

The best shortcut to emotion is to entertain. Creators already know instinctively how to entertain their audience. With the right guidance from the agency, we can deploy creators as brand entertainment that locks in memorable associations for the long term"



CONSUMERS ARE CAUTIOUS, BUT CURIOUS

- **33% of consumers** agree that generative AI is effective at producing marketing assets that resonate emotionally with them compared with **27%** who disagree. **40%** are unsure.

- **26% of consumers** agree that creator content that uses generative AI resonates with them emotionally more than traditional creator content compared to **36%** who disagree. **38%** are unsure.

Consumer trust is still catching up. Audiences are curious about what AI can do, but wary of what feels synthetic or mass-produced.

Creators are tastemakers. They bring credibility, tone, and cultural intelligence. As AI-generated media becomes ubiquitous, creators will be the difference between content that feels automated and content that feels valuable.

Be transparent about when AI is used - and lead with creator-led authenticity to keep trust high.

Making It Work: When to Use Generative AI

USE AI WHEN:

- **You want to enhance what's already working:** scripting, editing, or testing new formats faster.
- **You want to push creative boundaries:** exploring visual worlds, alternate concepts, or moods that aren't possible with traditional production.
- **You need volume and variation:** repurposing creator content across formats or markets.

AVOID OVER-USING AI WHEN:

- **You're communicating** sensitive, emotional, or identity-based themes, where cultural nuance and lived experience matter most.
- **The tech becomes the subject** instead of the story; when audiences notice how it was made more than what it means.

RULE OF THUMB:

- **Use AI to scale** what works and to stretch what's possible, but never to replace the creator's voice.

AND MAKE SURE ITS USE IS USEFUL FOR ALL:

- **For creators:** it should unlock creativity or efficiency.
- **For brands:** it should make storytelling more adaptive, distinctive, or unique.
- **For audiences:** it should make content more enriching, entertaining, and resonant, not just more frequent.

Summary

Social media is a busy space, consumers want more value from brands and creators to earn their attention. They want nuance, creativity and connection.

When used intelligently and with taste and intent, generative AI becomes a powerful performance multiplier; it strengthens impact across the funnel, from awareness to conversion, helping your entire content mix work harder together.

Integrated into your wider content ecosystem - across social, creator collaborations, display, and digital brand-building campaigns - AI-enhanced assets can elevate the effectiveness of everything around them.

But brands must be wary: AI is not about automating authenticity. It's about unlocking new opportunities across creativity, experimentation, distinction, and agility.

The best results will come from creators who use AI as a partner, not as a substitute.

AI can accelerate creative content. But only people can give it purpose.

CHAPTER 3

The Future of Creator Identity in the Post-AI Era

The Context

We're entering a new era where creator identity is increasingly augmented, and sometimes entirely synthetic. But where AI personas can drive impact, they can also damage trust.

To help unpack the findings, **Billion Dollar Boy convened an AI Council**, bringing together a diverse group of brand leaders, creators, academics, legal experts and AI specialists across the US and UK who are shaping how this technology shows up in our culture, content and conversations.

The goal for this Council was to gather a wide range of perspectives, critically interrogate the AI data, share honest opinions and provide informed perspectives on where the innovation is headed - all of which are presented in this chapter alongside the findings.

Three AI Persona Formats

Format	What is it?	Key Risks	Key Benefits	Consumer Reaction
Virtual Influencers	Fully fictional AI personas with no real-life counterpart.	Ultra-realistic personas raise concerns around consumer wellbeing - particularly in industries like beauty, where they risk reinforcing unattainable standards.	Allow more brand control, consistency, and compliance. Operate without human limitations, delivering innovative content that still feels anchored in recognizable reality.	Largely positive.
Digital Twins	AI-generated replicas of real creators, often used in videos, livestreams or ads - with the real person's permission.	Blurred lines of trust and identity raise questions of transparency and authenticity.	Enable creators to scale their presence without always being live - reducing burnout while unlocking new, sustainable revenue streams.	Cautious / resistant, with curiosity.
Deepfakes	Deceptive use of someone's likeness, often convincingly mimicking a real person's appearance, voice, or behavior - without the real person's permission.	Carry risks of deception, misinformation, manipulation, and exploitation - eroding audience trust.	As deepfakes are used without consent, there are no benefits associated.	Overwhelmingly negative.


VIRTUAL
INFLUENCERS



Virtual influencers aren't new. Fictional digital characters like **Lil Miquela, Noonoouri,** and **Imma** have been engaging with audiences and partnering with brands for years.

But, until recently, they remained niche - limited by high cost, long production times, and complex creation processes, as well as the intensive labor required to maintain their online profiles.

AI has changed that:

- Generative AI tools have made it faster to build virtual influencers.
- New creative tools allow for real-time rendering, synthetic voices, and infinite content.
- But, as more hyper-realistic virtual influencers emerge - think **Mia Zelu**, who 'appeared' courtside at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships 2025 - it begs the question: **should photorealism really be the goal?**

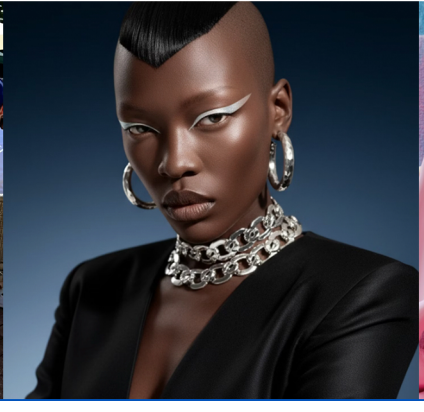
Virtual Influencers Can Take Many Forms

Photo realistic
Nearly indistinguishable from real humans

Stylized but humanesque
Human features but clearly animated, with artistic flair

Highly stylized
Cartoon-like characters, not aiming for realism







WHAT THE DATA TELLS US

TRUST IS BEING REDEFINED

Virtual influencers can generate both intrigue and skepticism. Consumers trust virtual influencers to inform product recommendations **(76%)** and purchasing decisions **(68%)**. They're establishing a level of authority but only when used intentionally and with clear purpose. Audiences accept them when they feel relevant and meaningfully integrated, not when they're simply inserted for effect.

Brands interested in investing have to build trust progressively, beginning with limited virtual influencer initiatives and scaling only if responses are positive.

Transparency is non-negotiable. Educating audiences about the technology and creative process is paramount, as is clearly disclosing when virtual influencers are used.

MARKETERS ARE DRAWN TO CONTROL AND SCALE

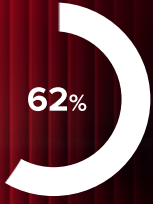
Virtual influencers offer marketers:

- **More creative control** with lower brand risk
- **Boundary-pushing content** unrestricted by human limitations
- **Seamless integration** for global campaigns

They're attractive tools, not emotional storytellers. That's key to their value and their limit.

Success depends on using them intentionally - only when they align with brand identity and genuinely enhance the creative output.

They also perform best when targeting top-of-funnel results. They're used to drive awareness because, when implemented well, they're memorable. Deeper-funnel activity, such as conversions and loyalty, still heavily relies on human authenticity. Audiences still want to see real people, real results and real recommendations.



of creators are concerned about increased competition as a result of virtual influencers



of creators are concerned that virtual influencers oversaturate consumers' content feeds

NOT A REPLACEMENT - JUST A REMIX

Although three in five creators feel at least in some way threatened by the rise of virtual influencers, they can and should never replace humans.

Traditional creators still deliver what virtual influencers can't:

- **Human spontaneity**
- **Emotional storytelling**
- **Real-world lived experience**

Brands should consider virtual influencers as supplements to human creators, not replacements.

The best use cases are often hybrid campaign models, where real creators are supported by virtual influencers, unlocking compelling outcomes while preserving the intimate relationships that real influencers can build with audiences.



LEWIS DAVEY
Co-Founder of Pixel.ai

"Initially, it felt like there was a real rush for brands to get something out in the wild in this space, the credit came from being the first to do it.

But now that wave is over, I think there's more emphasis on understanding some of the performance capabilities of AI influencers and what they can do for brands, alongside human influences."



MARY BEKHAIT
CEO, YMU

"The cream always rises to the top no matter what. And I think, even if it is an AI-rendered person, there still needs to be creativity and skill behind. There still needs to be effort, there still needs to be consistency."



DANAE MERCER
Journalist, Speaker and Content Creator

"As a mom, and as a creator who talks to a lot of women who struggle with body image, mental health, different things that real women struggle with every single day, I am so terrified of AI influencers."

From Theory to Practice

Billion Dollar Boy partnered with global fashion brand, H&M, and humanesque virtual influencer, **Kuki**, to promote its Innovation Metaverse Design Story collection in the US. The collection showcased the latest styles and inspiration for all seasons.

- H&M saw an **11X increase in ad recall** with a mix of virtual influencer content and campaign video, compared to ads with campaign video only.
- There was a **91% decrease** in cost per person recalling seeing ads with a mix of virtual influencer content and campaign video, compared to ads with campaign video only.
- There was a **38% decrease** in cost per person recalling seeing ads with a mix of virtual influencer content and campaign video, compared to previous video ad campaigns with the same audience.



From Theory to Practice

Meanwhile, Vogue Magazine and SheerLuxe have faced backlash for featuring more photo-realistic virtual influencers.

Vogue Magazine featured an **AI-generated model** for the first time as part of an ad by the brand Guess in its August 2025 print edition in the US.

While, SheerLuxe launched **Reem**, an “AI-enhanced editor” with a Middle Eastern heritage.

Critics argue that such uses of the technology risks putting talented humans - from models to journalists - out of work, while perpetuating unrealistic beauty standards.



Summary

The high level of enthusiasm from consumers raised important questions among our AI Council, including: Could this be a repeat of what we saw in 2023, where initial excitement eventually stabilized as AI became more normalized?

The consensus was yes. And while virtual influencers can be appealing to advertisers due to brand awareness, more brand control, freedom from human limitations, and adaptability across markets, human creators should not be overly concerned about rising competition.

Even though technological advances have lowered the barrier to entry, virtual influencers remain resource intensive, often requiring full teams of skilled creatives for world-building and developing compelling narratives.

For brands choosing to move forward with virtual influencers, it's important to deploy them with clear labeling, creative integrity, and industry safeguards. **When done right, they don't dilute creator culture, they have the potential to expand it.**


DIGITAL
TWINS



Unlike virtual influencers, digital twins are based on real people. They're AI-powered replicas of creators and celebrities, built using their likeness, voice, and personality, typically with their consent. The idea isn't to create fictional characters, but to extend a real creator's presence through scalable, synthetic means.

Think:

- Creator-identical avatars that can keep business running as usual when their human counterpart is traveling or on vacation
- Translated versions of human creators for global audiences
- Synthetic co-stars for branded content

What the Data Tells Us

THE INDUSTRY'S ADOPTION IS SELECTIVE

McKinsey **analysis** indicates the global market for digital twin technology - digital replicas of physical objects, persons, systems, or processes, contextualized in a digital version of its environment - will grow by about **60%** annually over the next five years, reaching a value of **$73.5 billion by 2027.**

This projected growth aligns with our own research. But, from conversations with our AI Council, we learned that marketers' willingness to embrace digital twins is **context-dependent.**

Marketers see digital twins as scalable extensions of real creators and time-saving tools for evergreen or localized content. But, they're most open to using them when faced with challenges like travel limitations, budget pressures and high performance demands, making digital twins a solution worth considering. To them, it has to be solving a problem to warrant investment, otherwise, the preference is always to use the creators themselves.

DIGITAL TWINS CAN OFFER CREATOR CAREER SUSTAINABILITY - IF USED CORRECTLY

Creators, meanwhile, see career potential - 85% are open to creating a digital twin with a brand for marketing purposes. For many, a digital twin isn't a threat to identity - it's a clone that pays the bills.

At a time when more than half **(52%) of human creators have experienced burnout** due to career demands, leading nearly **two in five (37%)** to consider leaving the profession due to burnout, the technology can help alleviate workload while increasing revenue streams.

But, while digital twins can help creators grow their reach and income, partnering with too many brands can dilute their personal brand equity. Creators who participate need to be selective with brand partnerships to ensure their likeness continues to hold value.



PHIL HUGHES

Partner at Lewis Silkin,
Consultant at Eleven Advisory,
Founder & CEO

"AI is great for increased distribution. If I'm a creator and I do something in English and I can automatically translate it into different languages and reach more fans directly, that's great. But the idea of using a digital twin to be in eight places at once, producing different campaigns, I think it can be a good thing but there's a real risk of overexposure there. There's a bit of short-termism outweighing long term strategy. What's it going to do to the creator's pricing and value return if they are over exposed, for example? What's it going to do to the consumers' view of them?"



ASH XU

Videographer and Creator

“If you use your likeness too much it becomes a really slippery slope, because at what point does your likeness stop holding value?”



JO BURFORD

Former Head of Creators, TikTok

“Because of supply and demand, if you're not going to have a digital twin, eventually your price will go up because there is no other world version of you. So if you’re a creator in a very saturated market, like beauty, you would say, hold your nerve, you'll be more valuable in a year's time. And there's some brands that would really value that.”

CONSUMERS AREN'T YET CONVINCED

The data shows that consent does not guarantee acceptance:

- Consumers trust fictional virtual influencers more than digital twins - only **31% of consumers are in favor** of creators and brands partnering to create digital twins.
- Digital twins blur the line between what's "real" and what's "performed" - leading **57% of consumers believing digital twins erode trust** in creator content.

What the AI Council proved is that audiences respect creator effort, and respond poorly to work that feels "effortless". In this case, when creators use digital twins instead of showing up themselves - it might risk leaving consumers feeling duped or lacking in interest.

A CREATIVE OPPORTUNITY - IF HANDLED WITH CARE

When used strategically and under the right circumstances, digital twins can unlock:

- Always-on presence
- Translated/localized storytelling
- Experimental formats that don't exhaust the real creator

But, they require tight governance, story-first thinking, and transparency. Without these, they risk feeling deceptive.

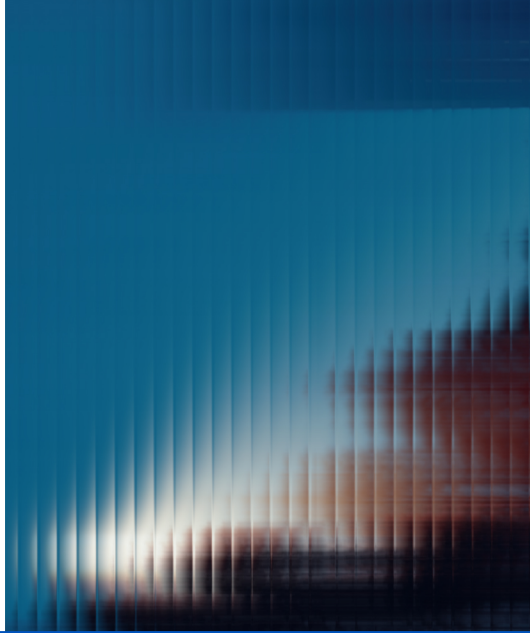
The key is to treat the digital twin not as a stand-in, but as a creative co-pilot.

PIONEERS OF THE TECHNOLOGY ARE VERTICAL-SPECIFIC

Fashion has been the first mover in this industry. **H&M** partnered with 30 models to create AI-generated digital twins.

The brand was transparent with its ethical approach: the models retained ownership of their avatars and were able to license them to other brands.

Not all industries are suited to digital twin technology. In particular, the fashion industry is a good test bed for digital twins, and other interested industries should watch how it develops carefully in the sector.





The Platforms Are Responding

TikTok: **Symphony Digital Avatars** allow creators and brands to deploy digital characters that can sell products 24/7 via TikTok live streams.

According to **MIT Technology Review:** “With just a few minutes of sample video and $1,000 in costs, brands can clone a human streamer to work 24/7.” TikTok has already leveraged the concept in China on sister-app Douyin, where digital avatars sustain long livestreams - actor and singer Calvin Chen’s clone famously ran a 15-hour broadcast.

Meta: However, there is still resistance in western markets as Meta **scrapped** its AI-powered celebrity character accounts after users criticized them as ‘creepy and unnecessary’.



ASH XU

Videographer and Creator

"People are drawn to effort. So, the fact that digital twins aren't real, the content isn't something that actually happened, and it wasn't captured by a real person, it has the potential to feel deceptive. In certain instances, digital twins can certainly be effective and well-received, like as catalogue models, where the goal is simply to sell clothes."

"But, when consumers follow a creator they love and have built a level of trust with them, the perception of effort is really important. If the creator could have stepped in front of the camera but didn't, and instead the audience sees a digital recreation of the creator that required no real effort from the creator, they might ask: 'If the creator isn't putting in the effort to show up and be authentic, why should the audience stay and engage?"

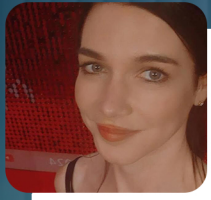


KATRINE RASMUSSEN

CMO of Pixelz

"A lot of brands only have maybe two weeks to react to a new trend. And in fashion, it's really hard to pull off a photo shoot in two weeks. But with digital twins, there's a lot of flexibility, a lot of new opportunities out there. It's what makes digital twins so powerful. But with all new technology comes new challenges."

"Consumer awareness and education is important.
A lot of people don't yet know what a digital twin or an AI model is. And I think that can lead to a lot of distrust and consumers feeling misled. I think what's important is that this is not about replacing creativity. It's really about trying to unlock creativity and flexibility at scale. And transparency is definitely one of the things that can help build trust if brands are going to do this."



ZOE CLAPP

Founder & ex-MD YouTube Creative Studio

"A lot of the creatives I work with are interested in using GenAI to make content that they can't otherwise produce, either for speed, quality, or to extend what is possible. It can be used as a partner to your own creativity.

A fast growing area of YouTube is "faceless channels", where creators can share their stories without having to show their faces on screen, if that's something they're not so comfortable with. This could be through animation, using GenAI tools, or through live footage with voiceovers."

Summary

Digital twins can hold genuine value, unlocking new forms of storytelling, new creative possibilities, access to new markets, and additional income streams for creators.

But, in an industry built on transparency, audiences remain cautious. Brands must go slow, educate their audiences, and provide clear labeling in order to preserve consumer trust. **Because, a clone without content and without a clear purpose is simply noise without substance.**


DEEPFAKE



As AI accelerates content creation, deepfake has emerged as the cautionary symbol of what happens when innovation outpaces responsibility.

Deepfakes are AI-generated impersonations of real people, using real voices, faces, and mannerisms, often created without consent, and increasingly difficult to detect.

For our industry, they mark the tipping point where AI shifts from a creative asset to a credibility risk.

But this isn't just about deepfake. **It's an industry wake up call to prepare, protect, and govern digital identity before trust is eroded.**

WHAT THE DATA TELLS US

DEEPFAKE IS A TRUST STRESS-TEST

Deepfake challenges everything that makes creator marketing effective and powerful: authenticity, emotional connection, and human storytelling.

They're widely rejected by the industry and shows us how quickly trust can collapse when AI crosses the line:



44% **of marketers** agree deepfake is damaging trust in creator content



54% **of creators** see deepfake as a widespread challenge

IF WE DON'T SET BOUNDARIES, AUDIENCES WILL

Deepfake reveals a deeper tension: How do we ensure we're remaining ethical while experimenting?

With generative AI evolving rapidly - from avatars to voice cloning to video dubbing, and more - these questions are becoming more urgent. Especially as:

65% of consumers say deepfake negatively affects trust in creator content.

Now is the time to draw the line - brands, agencies and platforms must responsibly govern AI use, ensuring no AI-generated likeness is used without consent or collaboration. If we don't, audiences will, and likely not in favor of AI.

OPPORTUNITY DEMANDS OVERSIGHT

We can't control the bad actors abusing technology, but we can take steps to mitigate damage so the creator economy can protect itself while innovating responsibly:

- **Protect creator IP: 58% of creators** are interested in copyrighting their voice, face, and likeness)
- **Build guardrails** for implementation and define acceptable uses label synthetic content clearly
- **Invest in training,** not just tools
- **Hold partners to high ethical standards**

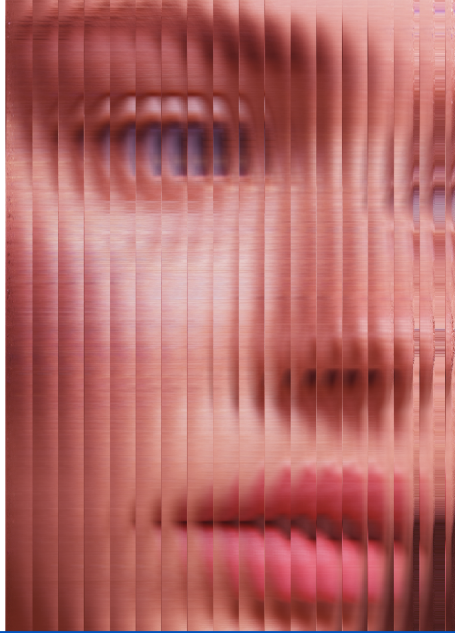
When brands invest in AI, they also take on the responsibility that comes with it. The brands that set clear rules, protect trust, and lead with transparency won't just stand out for innovation; they'll win the most loyal audiences.

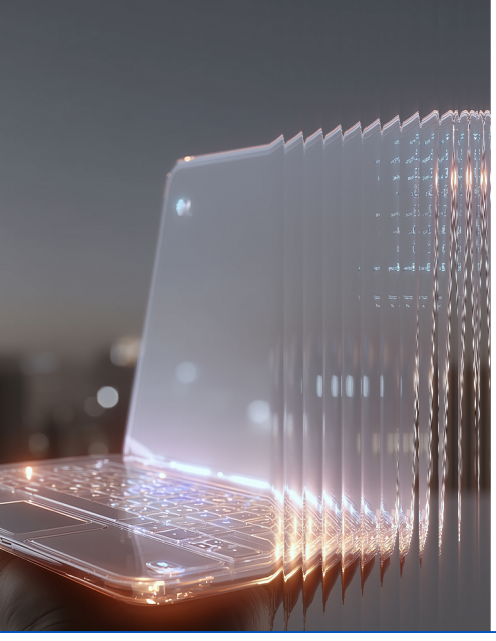
From Theory to Practice

Celebrities including Taylor Swift, Selena Gomez, Joe Rogan, and Elon Musk have all had their likenesses cloned and used in convincing online scams - misleading fans, risking data theft, and causing potential financial harm.

And it's not just celebrities. Beauty and wellness influencer, **Arielle Lorre**, discovered an Instagram ad from Korean skincare brand Skaind featuring an AI-generated replica of her to promote its products in a fake podcast interview.

Not only is the technology damaging to consumers, it's also the very reputations creators and celebrities work to build. As Lorre described the incident: "Not only is it illegal, but it also dilutes my brand and affects the trust that I've been building with my audience and community for years on end".





The Platforms Are Responding

YouTube **announced** the expansion of its likeness-detection feature for all YouTube Partner Program creators helping them detect, manage, and request the removal of any unauthorized AI-generated videos using their facial likeness.

Summary

AI isn't the risk, how we use it is. Deepfake is a symptom that reminds us of what's at stake when innovation moves faster than responsibility.

The future of creator marketing won't be written by AI alone, but by the people who decide how it shows up in culture, content, and connection.

Let's get it right.

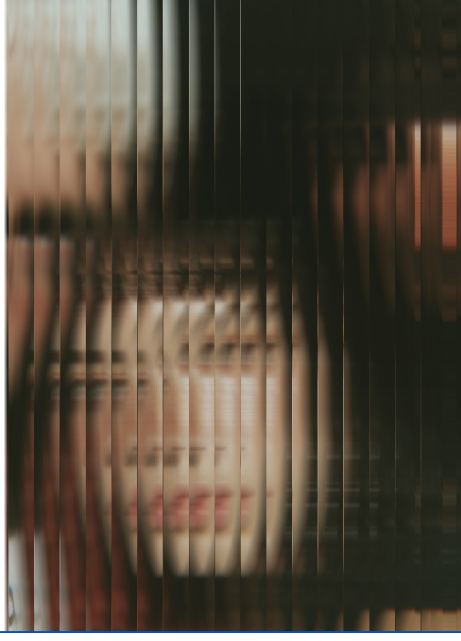
CHAPTER 4

Responsible Innovation

Scaling AI With Confidence

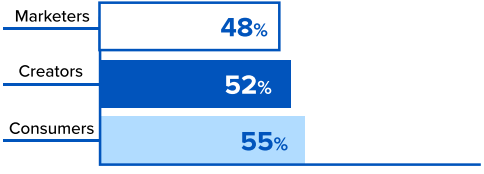
With regulation lagging and internal governance inconsistent, creators are increasingly vocal about their rights, safety, and ownership. The challenge ahead isn't just creative - it's structural.

Can the creator economy scale AI while prioritizing and respecting consumer trust, originality and creator consent?

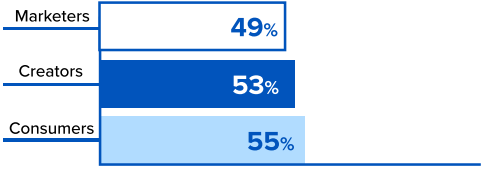


Trust Gaps Are Growing

Percentage of marketers, creators and consumers that agree generative AI has **decreased consumer trust** in creator content:



Percentage of marketers, creators and consumers that agree generative AI has **increased misinformation** in the creator economy:



Less than half (45%) of consumers are confident they can identify when creator content has been produced using generative AI.

Three in five (60%) creators admit their content that uses generative AI has breached industry regulation:

- More than one in four **(27%)** due to mislabeling or not labeling content correctly
- And **(27%)** due to misinformation

Decoded

The results are a wake-up call. For the creator economy, which stakes its reputation on authenticity and trust, failing to transparently disclose the use of AI could harm the effectiveness of creator content and the tech's future sustainability in the sector.

Marketers and creators need to narrow the gap with consumers who are more acutely aware of the misinformation risks posed by generative AI.

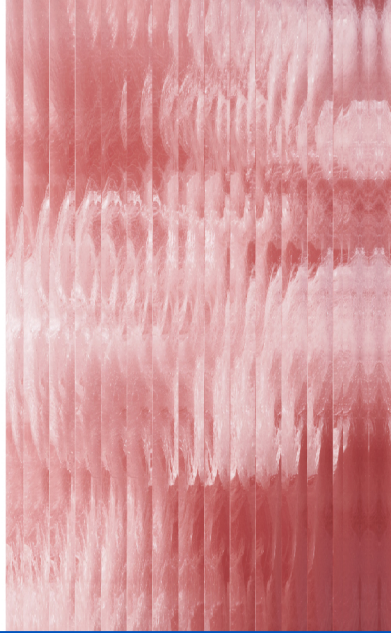
The findings don't mean that consumers are against AI. But it does show that, as they become more familiar with the technology, they're also becoming more critical, expecting high standards of transparency - as they should.

Marketers and creators need to proactively restore trust by demonstrating responsible use of the technology.

Reassurance Through Regulation

As we have seen in Chapter 1, platforms are responding with AI content detection tools, but AI misinformation is a collective challenge shared by the industry.

In a sector maturing as rapidly as the creator economy, legislation has to evolve fast to keep pace. Governments and industry regulators have reacted quickly to share clear guidance on the use of AI.

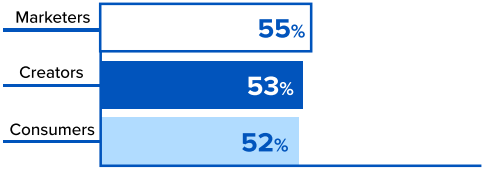


Current Industry Regulation*

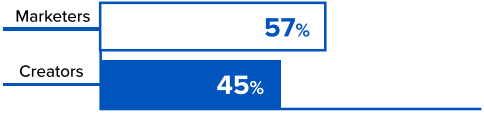
US	**FTC** High-profile legal **enforcement** actions on AI tools designed to trick, mislead, or defraud people.	**BBB / CARU** Compliance **warning** for AI in kids' content.	**SAG-AFTRA** New **contracts** require consent and compensation for digital replicas.	**US Copyright Office** Released an Artificial Intelligence Report to clarify that the outputs of generative AI can be protected by copyright only where they have been recreated by a human hand	**FCC** AI generated voices in robocalls **banned.**
UK	**Online Safety Act 2023** Places duties on platforms to reduce illegal/harms (including certain synthetic content) Requires risk assessments, and imposes takedowns and stronger moderation obligations for regulated services.		**Ofcom** Ofcom has published practical **toolkits** and **research** designed to help the industry detect and manage synthetic/deepfake	**Platforms** Meta and TikTok are encouraging users to use their built-in tools for disclosing AI content Meta has made this mandatory for ads about social issues, elections or politics.	

**As of November 2025*

These restrictions bring much needed clarity and reassurance for industry stakeholders and consumer safety but, as with all fast-developing technologies, there is more to be done as new threats emerge.

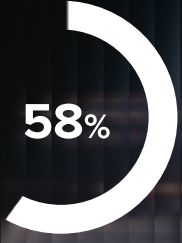


Percentage of marketers, creators and consumers who agree that generative AI has led to more copyright infringement and IP theft in the creator economy.



Percentage of marketers and creators who agree agree that creators have adequate protections of their IP in place to safeguard them against unauthorized use of their face and voice for AI-generated content.

New Governance Gaps Are Appearing



of creators are now interested in exploring copyrighting their face/identity/voice.

Decoded

As the creator economy professionalizes and creators increasingly see the value of their IP for long-term career sustainability, the growing prevalence of deepfake and AI technology poses an ever greater risk.

The majority of creators are now interested in exploring legal protections to preserve the integrity of their content and their likeness, and more than half feel current protections need to be improved as we brace for the unknown future of this technology.

There are promising signals from regulators: the 'No Fakes Act' is a proposed bipartisan US federal legislation aimed at protecting individuals from unauthorized, highly realistic digital replicas of their voice and likeness.

Concerningly though, there remains a significant perception gap between marketers and creators when it comes to the potential risks that gen AI presents and the robustness of the protections in place, especially for creators' careers.

Could this gap create licensing opportunities for bad actors to take advantage of creators and misuse their cultural influence?



MARY BEKHAIT
CEO, YMU

“The problem is that it's impossible to stop the tide of AI - technology moves faster than regulation. We are going to have to find a way to engage and not just rely on the platforms. There needs to be a way that someone's image can’t just be taken and used indiscriminately. It's dangerous on so many levels.”



KELSEY FARISH
Media Lawyer

“Creators might see digital twins as fine to use, but editing out a scar or changing skin tone might be crossing a line.

Understanding more about where people draw their own personal boundaries about how far to take modifications or edits to their likeness enables us to write better contracts to protect not only their preferences, but their dignity, too. Hopefully this will also inform the big tech companies on what is acceptable when it comes to digital twins.”

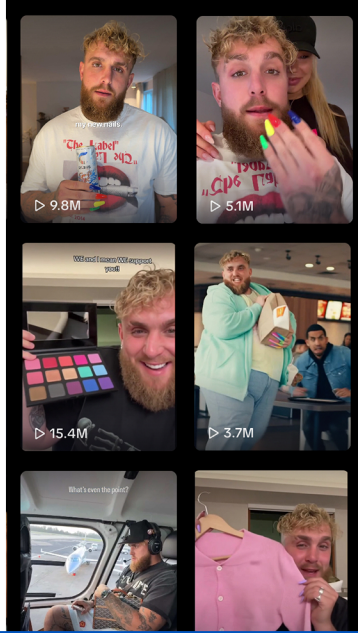
From Theory to Practice

Following the release of Open AI's **Sora 2** in September 2025, many social media users found their feeds flooded with AI videos of influencer and boxer, Jake Paul, doing makeup routines and outfit hauls.

But this wasn't an interesting new career pivot from boxing to beauty, it was user-generated copies of Paul's likeness enabled by AI. Why? Because he'd opted in to a Cameo request (OpenAI's Sora feature where creators can license their likeness for AI-generated appearances). Overnight, he became an example of how fast the fire can spread when you share your likeness.

And while Paul took the content gracefully with his own posts playfully addressing the fake AI content, it does however raise a wider question beyond misinformation.

If anyone can generate anything, how do brands and creators safeguard what makes their ideas and identity valuable? This has to be resolved before AI can be fully, and responsibly, adopted.



Risks and Impacts

The growing use of AI in the industry is creating new threats that aren't just about deepfakes or deception - they now include:

Consideration	Example	Who's Impacted
IP Misuse	Using a creator's voice/face without consent	Creators
Audience Deception	Not disclosing AI-generated content	Consumers, brands, agencies
Creative Homogeny	Overreliance on AI tools leading to bland, repetitive content - 'slop'	Brands, creators, agencies, consumers
Unconscious	AI-generated content reinforcing stereotypes or lacking nuance	Consumers, underrepresented groups
Regulatory Lag	Platforms and marketers acting with the technology and its advancements faster than governments can respond	Entire industry

Creator Rights

AI is changing the role of creators, now that they're adding 'technologist' to the many hats they already wear.

But creators are clear when it comes to responsible AI governance: **they want control, co-ownership, and creative agency.**

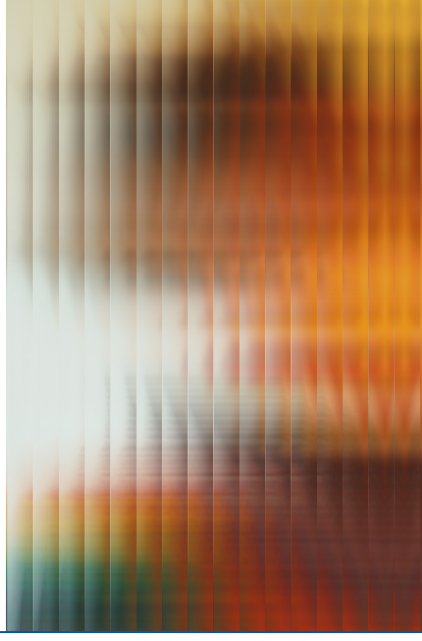
Brands and platforms that align with this and support licensing, training, and transparent use of AI will build deeper, longer-term trust both with valuable creator partnerships and consumer audiences.

Restoring Trust

This isn't about over-regulating creativity; it's about protecting the core of what makes creator marketing work: human connection.

Here's where forward-thinking creators, brands and agencies are focusing:

- **Clear labeling:** Synthetic content should be marked - not hidden
- **AI usage transparency in briefs:** Agencies and platforms disclosing what's human vs machine
- **Content authenticity benchmarks:** Test content for emotional clarity, not just efficiency. If it feels fake without adding value, content engagement will probably fail
- **Creator-first consent models:** No AI-generated likeness without formal approval or co-creation
- **Creator IP education and protection:** Help creators protect their digital voice, image, and tone



Summary

Creativity can scale, but trust must lead. AI has unlocked massive potential in the creator economy. But its long-term success depends on more than speed and savings. It depends on trust between creators, brands, platforms, and audiences.

The real test of AI in the creator economy isn't how much it can produce. It's whether the industry can build frameworks that protect originality, respect consent, and preserve emotional truth.


CONCLUSION

Generative AI has moved from novelty to necessity in the creator economy.

In just two years, it has redefined how content is produced, how brands connect, and what audiences expect. But as the tools mature, so must the thinking.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

1. INTENTIONAL USE

Build your AI stack with purpose

Automate scale, not creative judgment

It has to be genuinely useful to all parties to make sense

2. RESPONSIBLE USE

Be transparent and get consent

Protect face, voice, likeness

3. DISTINCTIVE USE

Use AI to build mood, tone, world

Vibe is the new brand asset

AI has transformed the creator economy - but its lasting impact will be measured not by what we automate, but by how we elevate creativity, connection, and trust.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

GENERATIVE AI

Generative AI creator content.

Media - including text, visuals, audio, video - which are produced using AI tools to help creators generate, edit, and repurpose material.

AI PERSONAS

A fully synthetic, AI-generated character or identity, encompassing virtual influencers, digital twins, and deepfakes - whether based on real people or entirely fictional.

VIRTUAL INFLUENCERS

Virtual Influencers refer to computer-generated characters or personas - often designed with AI and 3D modeling - that exist only in the digital world. Unlike digital twins or deepfakes, virtual influencers are not replicas of real people but entirely original creations with their own look, personality, and storyline. They are managed by creators, brands, or agencies and interact with audiences as if they were real individuals. In the creator economy, a virtual influencer may:

- **Appear on social media platforms** with curated content, photos, and videos.
- **Partner with brands for campaigns**, endorsements, or product placements.
- **Engage audiences through storytelling**, livestreams, or interactive experiences.

DIGITAL TWINS

Digital Twin refers to a virtual replica of a real person - often a creator, influencer, celebrity or brand ambassador - created using AI technologies. This digital version can look, sound, and behave like the original person, and can be used in content, campaigns, or interactions across digital platforms. In the creator economy, a digital twin may:

- Appear in videos, livestreams, or ads instead of the real person.
- Be used to scale a creator's presence without needing them to appear live.
- Interact with audiences in personalised or automated ways using AI.

DEEPFAKE

Deepfake refers to synthetic media - such as images, videos, or audio - created using artificial intelligence to convincingly mimic real people's appearance, voice, or behaviour. These AI-generated materials can make it appear as though someone said or did something they never actually did. In the context of marketing and the creator economy, deepfakes may include:

- AI-generated videos of influencers or celebrities.
- Synthetic voices or avatars in ads or branded content.
- Virtual influencers that look and act human but are entirely AI-created.

METHODOLOGY

Between June and July 2025, Billion Dollar Boy commissioned Censuswide to execute a study of 4,000 nationally representative consumers (aged 16+), 1,000 content creators and 1,000 senior marketing decision makers in the UK and US.

Censuswide abides by and employs members of the Market Research Society which is based on the ESOMAR principles.

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