

FRONTIER
CMO

The CREATIVITY Edition

Notes from creative leaders on AI,
ambition, and what's possible now



Think with Google

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Foreword

Falling for the magic

I was six years old when I fell in love with advertising. I had just bought a packet of Pacers candy — famous for their green and white stripes — and fully expected those stripes to magically appear on my shirt, just like they did in the TV commercials. I had been completely taken in by the ad. Yet, that love affair with the magic of storytelling stuck. Fifty years later, the opportunity for game-changing creativity is more critical than ever.

Lately, it has been easy to view AI as the death of marketing and creativity. But it isn't. The exact opposite is true.

Beyond the 'stage play' phase

Recently, Robert Wong at Google's Creative Lab reminded me of a historical parallel. When film cameras were first invented, directors simply pointed them at a fixed stage, as if filming a traditional play. It took years to invent the true language of cinema — the crane shot, the close-up, the jump cut. A similar evolution is happening with AI right now.

We are still in the early stages, but the novelty phase is ending. No one gets a gold star just for *using* AI anymore.

Looking at the work at Cannes, we are finally seeing how creatives use these tools to power new forms of storytelling and unlock super-intelligent growth engines. That is what great creatives do: They take new tools and invent the unimagined.

Igniting a creative explosion

Consider the smartphone camera. Putting a lens and an accelerometer in everyone's pocket sparked an explosion of innovation, giving rise to Instagram, Uber, and Google Lens. AI is poised to ignite a similar explosion. We are past asking what AI will do to us, and finally focusing on what we can do *with* AI. This report explores how we move past using AI merely to automate old tasks, and instead use it to power a bold, uncharted era of advertising.

To bring this to life, we spent time with more than 20 of the world's most passionate expert leaders — marketers, creatives, and technologists mastering their new instruments to open up a bigger, brighter future for creativity.



Josh Spanier

Vice President
Marketing, Google

Chapter 1

IMAGINATION

WITHOUT

CONSTRAINTS

Make what you couldn't



Make what you couldn't

For decades, creative ambition had to negotiate with production reality.

Every creative learned to carry a small producer in their head, constantly asking: *What can we really afford? What can we really make?*

Our interviews made one thing clear: AI changes that equation. The gap between what we can imagine and what we can bring to life is shrinking, removing the ceiling on our imagination.

Faster prototyping, fewer explanations

First, AI solves a classic agency pain point: the "pitch tax."

Instead of creative teams spending absurd amounts of time explaining an idea, AI fosters a culture of prototyping. It offers a faster, richer way to make an idea tangible, letting a room *feel* the concept before it fully exists.



Bypassing traditional production limits

Once approved, the work no longer has to shrink to fit traditional production models.

Things that once felt too complex or expensive — impossible shots, lost eras, new worlds — can now be tested in minutes. Production becomes fluid; the work doesn't have to lock so early, leaving more room for the idea to evolve.

Crucially, the real breakthroughs happen when brands use AI to solve a creative impossibility, not just a production inconvenience.

The human edge

What remains unchanged is the need for instinct.

[As Wyclef Jean reminded us:](#) *"There's one thing that you have over the AI: a soul. And there's one thing that AI [has] over you: the infinite information. The combination of both is invincible."*

That is the ultimate takeaway: using these new instruments to power a bold era of creativity, with human imagination at the heart.

What can't we do anymore?

Working closely with Google Creative Lab, you've been among the first to work with Flow — helping to co-develop [Flow TV](#). What does a tool like this tell you about the relationship between AI and human craft?



Miguel Espada

Co-Founder & CEO
SGX

Miguel: There's going to be a renaissance of new techniques where reality is mixed with AI. Prompting won't be the only way to generate images and video; you can shoot footage yourself, or animate by hand, then transform it with AI.



▲ Flow TV channels



Aaron Duffy

Co-Founder,
SpecialGuest

What's changed about what feels possible?

Aaron: The idea of "can't" is becoming quite weak. We have to push ourselves to rub up against what we can't do. When prototyping and realizing ideas is so much more possible, what can't you do, actually?

Miguel: Video-to-video transformation, like you can do in Flow with Omni, is going to give us more control than is currently possible. I also love that creators can build their own tools inside Flow.

One of our directors has a tool that gives him 20 different shots of the same scene. Interfaces become more organic as they evolve along with each user.

When everyone creates bespoke tools and sees others' tools, evolution becomes a connected, collective thing. I like that.

Prototypes do the talking



▲ Mr. Fuzzy AI "auditions"

What's an example of AI prototyping changing how a creative decision got made?

For [Mr. Fuzzy's Big Adventure](#), our spot demonstrating the generative AI tools in Gemini, the prototype had a bunny in it. There were IP issues, and we had to cast a new character.

Normally, that could have slowed everything down. Instead, AI made the question much more playful: What if it was a sloth? An elephant?

Which one made the scene land harder? We could try each character and judge the only thing that mattered: which one was funniest.

In the end, the creative directors were wrong. The sheep, which a designer had suggested, was the funniest option. And because everyone could see it, everyone could believe it.



How has prototyping changed how you work with collaborators?

For [our Vanilla campaign](#) where we poke fun at the "sea of sameness" among smartphones, we brought a high-fidelity AI-generated prototype to the directors.

Honestly, we were a little anxious they would find it limiting, like we had already over-defined the world. But they had the opposite reaction. They said, "This is great. Now we're clear on what's in your head and the world you want to build. We can focus on casting, setting, and elevating the story."

The prototype did not close the creative process. It opened it and gave them the room to create what became our favorite scene — a moment that was not in the original prototype at all.



Robert Wong

VP

Google Creative Lab



Slice Soda: AI tech for '90s radio nostalgia

"The brief was nostalgia, modernized. Short of a time machine, AI gave us the next best thing: a way to take people back to the sound and spirit of the '90s, then twist it for today.

"AI let us reimagine an entire decade in a way that would have been fundamentally impossible before."



Tim McCracken

SVP, Creative & AI
BarkleyOKRP



▶ AI-generated album art

The highlights:

To relaunch the beloved '90s soda brand Slice, [BarkleyOKRP](#) used [Gemini](#), [Imagen](#), and [Veo](#) to build 106.3 [The Fizz FM](#) — a fully AI-generated radio station with more than 40 original songs, two synthetic DJ personalities, band histories, album art, and three hours of programming — then ran it on real Los Angeles airwaves.

120 Over 120 million total impressions

5% 5% lift in aided awareness within the target Gen Z audience

#2 Became the No. 2 soda in the Natural Healthy Beverage market

The Salvation Army: Advertising what's already gone

"The Salvation Army is full of great finds, but every find is one of one. A win for the person who gets it. Instant FOMO for everyone else.

"So we turned the inventory moving in and out of stores into a live data set — and let that data generate the ads themselves."

Tim McCracken

SVP, Creative & AI,
BarkleyOKRP

The highlights:

To get more shoppers through the door, [BarkleyOKRP built a Gemini-powered pipeline](#) that turned real-time sales data into advertising.

The moment an item sold, Nano Banana transformed its back-of-house inventory photo into highly stylized, editorial fashion imagery, automatically dropped into localized ads and served precisely in the city where the item sold, showing people the one-of-a-kind find they'd just missed.



2.6X 2.6X higher click-through rate vs. benchmarks

58% 58% of clicks led straight to a **store-location search**, turning curiosity into intent

10%+ **Record-breaking monthly sales** immediately after launch, topping previous highs by more than 10%

▲ Nano Banana was used to transform stock images into high-quality creative

Notes from the frontier

Paul: Use AI for the cool stuff. If you put a big AI-generated ad on TV, I think that's the most unimpressive use case for this technology. What are the things that you couldn't do before?

Could you make a thousand TV commercials? Could you make a new TV commercial every day that adapts to the world around us? That's the stuff that I'm really excited about.



Paul Aaron

Co-Founder,
Addition
an R/GA company

Aaron: If you were doing a marketing plan based on what was possible to create before, that plan needs to be rethought, because the means are different.

If you thought you couldn't do something and you can, the plan needs to change.



Aaron Duffy

Co-Founder,
SpecialGuest

Ali: As owners of the agents, we set the floor. The ceiling, or the sky? That's up to our talent.



Ali Amarsy

Chief Strategy Officer
Digitas NA

Ryan: Creativity used to be so heavily tied to executional scarcity. If something was difficult to make, the difficulty in itself kind of became part of the value equation.

AI and emerging tech is now challenging that general assumption. Fighting that muscle memory of dismissing or minimizing a good idea for fear of it being too hard to make is something where you give pause.

You're like, "Oh, actually, no — I actually think this might be possible."



Ryan Chong

EVP, Head of
Creative Production
& Innovation
**Le Truc & Publicis
Groupe US**

Ancesta: When the 'unmakeable' becomes real

Matthew Carey, Executive Creative Director, Google Creative Lab

There are ideas that exist at the edge of what is technically possible. And then someone makes them anyway.

[Ancesta](#) — Eliza McNitt's short film about a mother and a child who is born with a hole in their heart — is that kind of film.

[Built in collaboration with Darren Aronofsky's Primordial Soup and Google DeepMind](#), it is a demonstration of what happens when human imagination is given new instruments to work with. Matthew Carey, ECD at Google Creative Lab, takes us inside the making of it.

On making the impossible

The team imagined an opening sequence that no traditional camera could capture: one continuous movement from a hospital room, into a mother's brain, through her body, into her womb, and finally into the heart of her unborn child. It is the kind of shot that sounds impossible because, technically, it is.

You cannot put a camera inside a human body. You cannot film memory from the inside. You cannot travel from biology to emotion to cosmology in a single physical take. AI opened a way to go to the places cameras could not.

On the expanding definition of 'fixing it in post'

For years, "we'll fix it in post" was the line that made producers nervous. Now it may take on a more expansive meaning. We used to spend an hour moving lights out of the shot.

Now we can focus on capturing the truly precious thing — the performance — and use AI to rebuild, extend, or clean the environment around it later.



▲ *Ancesta* used Google DeepMind's state-of-the-art generative AI models, tools and capabilities, including Veo



▲ *Stills from Ancestra*

Creative equation unlock

The old production model asked teams to lock everything before the shoot.

Every angle.
Every plate.
Every setup.

AI begins to make production more fluid. Capture the human truth. Capture the world around it.

Then keep shaping the story with new angles, variations, and possibilities after the camera stops rolling.

Practically, this means less upstream creative compromise.

Practical tip: to avoid feeling generic, prompt laterally

The most original images in *Ancestra* did not come from prompting "the Big Bang" or "the cosmos." That would have led straight to the visual average.

Instead, we asked: "How do we push these models to get to places that create images we haven't seen before?" We went back to sci-fi filmmakers who used practical visual effects — smoke and mirrors, colored oils. We prompted shots of the cosmos using descriptions of specific microscopes, lights, and liquids. Some shots of the universe did not mention the universe at all.

That is the new art direction: not asking AI for the obvious image, but finding the lateral route to a more original one.

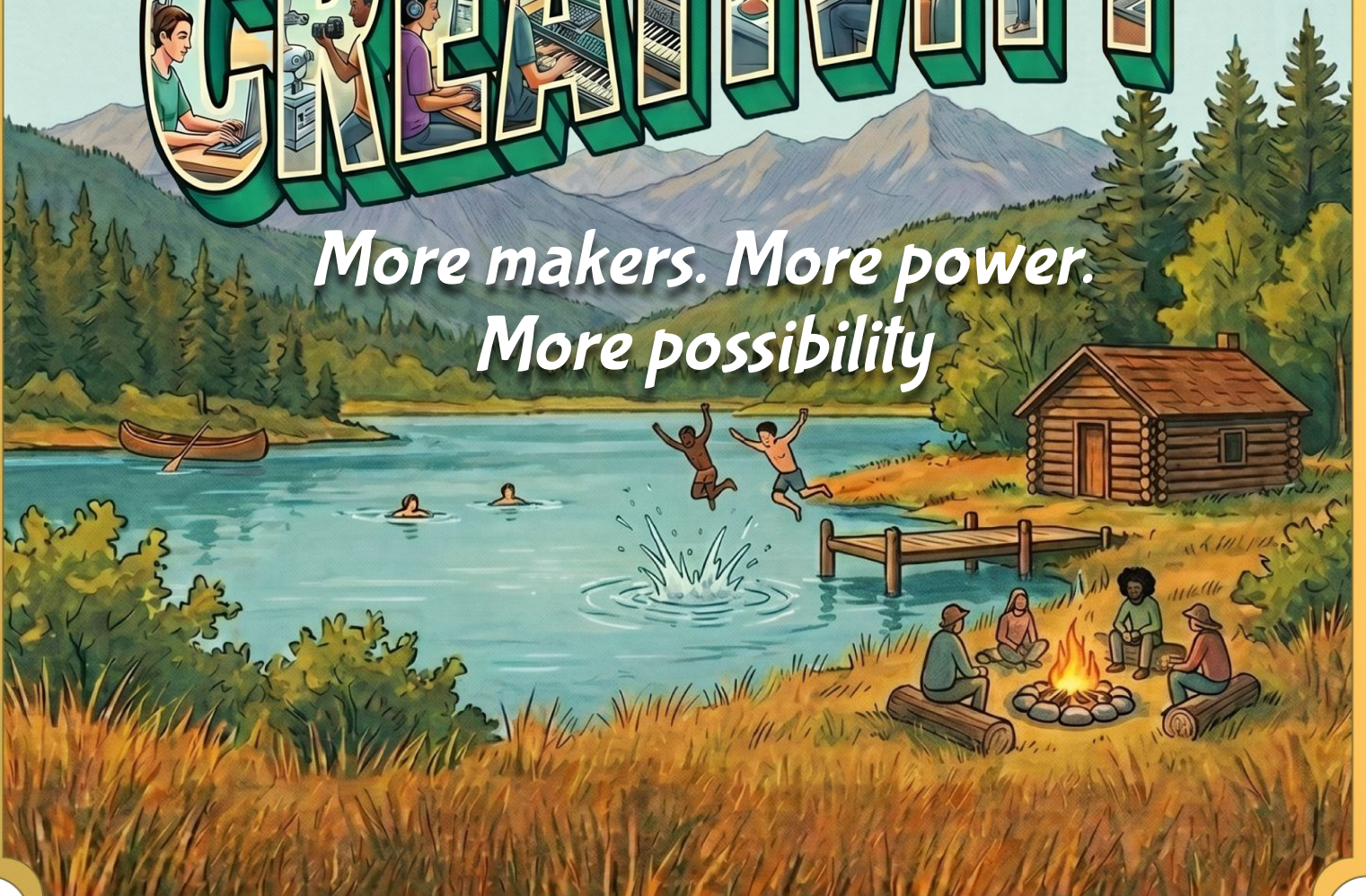
Chapter 2

DEMOCRATIZATION

of

CREATIVITY

*More makers. More power.
More possibility*



More makers. More power. More possibility

For a long time, great creative suffered from resource constraints. Impactful work required massive machinery: big budgets, large teams, and specialized editors, designers, and producers.

A resounding theme from our interviews is that AI is fundamentally shifting who gets to create. With these tools, smaller teams can produce work with a level of craft and speed that used to require far bigger budgets. Any ambitious business can now challenge legacy brands, and a solo founder can turn a rough idea into a full campaign in minutes. By making creation less intimidating, these tools do more than lower the floor — they invite everyone in.

Conversational creativity

One of the most powerful shifts is deceptively simple: Making has become conversational. Creators can start with a sentence, an image, or a feeling, and then ask, refine, and remix.

This gives people the confidence to experiment before mastering every technical step. As a result, the best ideas win, not just the best-resourced teams, bringing to life work that would never have existed before.

Decentralizing with control

For years, organizations restricted creative freedom because scaling production meant risking brand drift. AI fixes the control model. By embedding brand guardrails directly into the software, companies can safely grant more teams the access and autonomy to create.

The curation advantage

However, practitioners emphasize that creative instinct remains the ultimate differentiator. AI can give you a hundred directions, but it cannot tell you which one deserves to live. When anyone can make anything, the advantage belongs to those who can spot the hit, and twist the obvious into something sharper and more emotional.

The democratization dream is not infinite content. It is world-class creative no longer being reserved for the biggest budgets.



The Art of Possible: Telling more stories



▲ AI-generated assets

The highlights:

Creative Theory Agency created [The Art of Possible](#), a documentary telling the story of Dr. Marian Croak, a trailblazer in STEM, Bell Labs pioneer of VoIP, inventor of text-to-donate, holder of 200+ patents, and current VP of Responsible AI at Google.

For scenes where there was no recorded footage, the team generated AI vignettes using Veo and Nano Banana. Critically, [Dr. Croak was involved in this process](#), offering feedback until each scene lived up to her memory.

The film debuted on International Women's Day in 2026.

"We had to use AI to recreate scenes where there was no existing footage.

"Seeing Dr. Marian Croak react to those vignettes of her childhood, her and her sister, her and her father ... that to me is what AI is for. When it can touch someone like that."



Gary Williams Jr
Chief Creative Officer,
Creative Theory Agency

▼ AI-generated asset



▲ Archival documents

A Playspace for all makers



**Nishat
Akhtar**

Chief Creative
Officer
Instrument

AI is driving the greatest democratization of creative ambition. What does that look like in practice?

These tools can get anyone started and help them go a long way, but it's still possible to hit a wall and need a design or code expert to help push things forward. Someone gets as far as they can and says, "Now what?" — and a teammate unsticks them.

That back-and-forth conversation, collaboration and mentorship is how things have always worked for us, but now the pool of participants doing the making has widened to anyone who is inspired enough to get an idea started themselves. With new tools, everyone is invited to the making.

Instrument shares a lot of work freely for anyone to explore and remix. What's behind the instinct to put your own discoveries out into the world?

[Playspace](#) is Instrument's evolving, public archive of creative tools and scrappy builds. We started by creating a type animation tool, [Typ-o-matic](#), to solve the persistent need to help our non-designers make presentations that felt like us.

Then we thought: What if we made it accessible to the public? We shared it, and the feedback and support for it was instant. Now every time we roll out a tool onto Playspace, we see just how much everyone is excited to play with these tools themselves.

▶ *Typ-o-matic, a generative animation tool*



◀ *Concentric, an interactive 3D animation tool*



Notes from the frontier

Matthew: There are some unicorns who have something to say, who have great visual sense, who these tools have just totally liberated.

Having a tool that opens accessibility to more storytellers, more diverse points of view, to be able to put their stories forward, is how you get to breakthrough ideas.

Gary: AI is not going to give you taste. It's going to expose whether you have it or not. Taste is knowing what to leave out. Because AI is going to give you everything if you ask it.

It's just like a musician — I could give you drums, but if you don't know how to tastefully play those drums, it's going to sound horrible.



Matthew Carey
Executive Creative Director,
Google Creative Lab



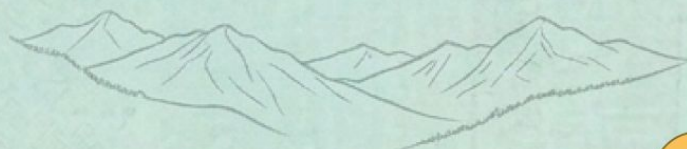
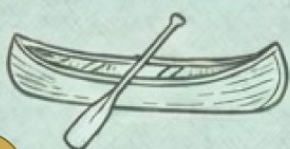
Gary Williams Jr
Chief Creative Officer,
Creative Theory Agency



Ryan Chong
EVP, Head of Creative Production & Innovation
Le Truc & Publicis Groupe US

Ryan: Going back to orchestration and being strategic, being able to make more is only half the equation.

Being able to make things that actually speak to the right audiences, and that actually work and are measurable, that's the other half.



Shelter Island South Ferry: Bringing centuries—old stories to life

Democratization also means giving a 200-year legacy the visual richness and the craft it deserves, at a cost that makes sense.

For [The Small Brief](#), an initiative bringing together ad industry icons and their favorite local business, Tiffany Rolfe chose a subject close to home: the Shelter Island South Ferry, a historic five-minute crossing run by the same family for more than 200 years.

Using Veo and Flow, she animated the family's archival photographs and artifacts into moving film, and drew on Google's regional mapping data to render how the coastal landscape evolved over time — production values that would once have demanded a special-effects budget far beyond a small business's reach.

"What has been truly magical is taking their family archives from as far back as 1833 — an old photo of the founder, a picture of their first rowboat — and animating them into vivid, moving film. Their modern ferries are named after those ancestors, so we're quite literally connecting their past to their present."



Tiffany Rolfe

Global Chief Creative Officer
R/GA



▲ AI-generated assets



▲ Archival documents

Chapter 3

CAMPAIN

to

SYSTEMS

*Intelligent creative
turns momentum into growth*

Intelligent creative turns momentum into growth

Shattering the campaign loop

For a long time, marketing moved to the slow, sequential rhythm of the campaign: brief, make, launch, measure, learn, and repeat. By the time brands understood what was working, the cultural moment had passed.

AI is finally closing this gap between creativity and performance, giving rise to a dynamic era of "intelligent creative." While the old model relied on one idea traveling broadly and hoping it would land, intelligent creative lets a single strong concept flex dynamically across different assets, contexts, and signals — all while remaining entirely on-brand.

Advertising as a living system

By turning data into real-time relevance, AI transforms advertising into a living system that is continuously fed by insights and refined while still in market.

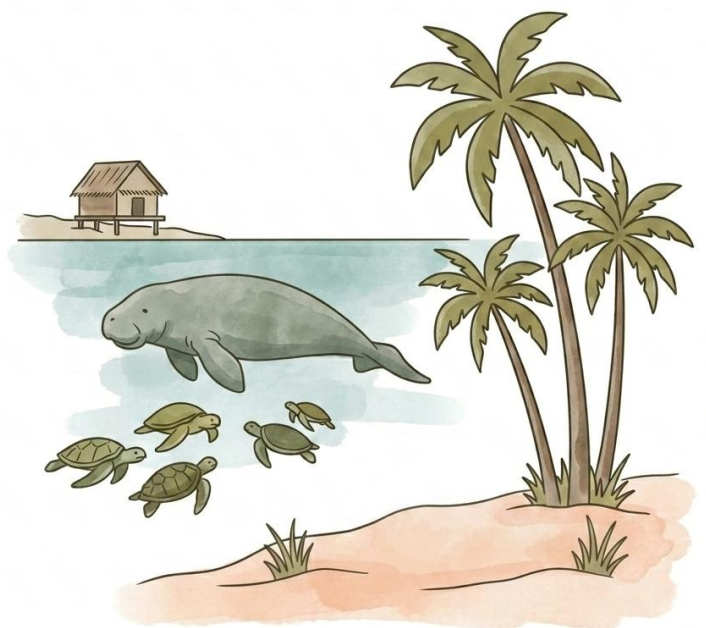
Because of this, the most valuable asset a brand can build is no longer a single big launch. A campaign ships once, whereas a system compounds. By building the engine instead of individual assets, brands turn a one-time creative fix into an ongoing business advantage.

Real-time optimization

When the measurement loop is built into production, the system learns while the work is live. Within days, teams can see which tactics are working, where brand consistency is slipping, and where to shift budget. This gives creative teams faster evidence, so stronger ideas travel farther.

Data now powers instant relevance, allowing cultural context, personal intent, or live events to shape the work in the moment.

Ultimately, campaigns no longer have to end when the media flight stops; they can grow into permanent engines for business growth.



Working in the open with WPP Open

What does WPP Open change in the creative process?

Rob: The biggest shift is the combination: media, creative, and technology coming together in ways that are mesmerizing.

We've seen a significant improvement in pitch conversion since we've started using WPP Open.

How does that change your relationship with clients?

Elav: We have different environments where we can co-create campaigns together. We can brainstorm with the client, test against simulated audiences, and create assets together.

Rob: It helps us avoid the "ta-da." It used to be: take a brief, go away for a month, and come back with a giant pomp-and-circumstance presentation. We never loved that game.

Now clients can be inside the process earlier. Within [WPP Open](#), we have a tool called Canvas, where we can brainstorm with the client. That builds confidence. And it makes the work better.



Rob Reilly
Global CCO, WPP



Elav Horwitz
Global CIO, WPP



▲ WPP Open workflow visualizations

What talent does this require?

Elav: A new kind. Three years ago, we couldn't find the right talent to bring ideas to life with AI.

So we started a school in the basement of WPP headquarters in London.

We brought in people from different industries, and trained them for nine months on AI, technology, marketing, and storytelling.

We now have 50 creative technologists. They sit with creative teams and help turn ideas into things clients can actually experience.

What new work has emerged that's exciting for you?

Elav: The beauty is the spectrum of creativity unlocked with AI. We've done work with Lexus and Verizon, where we can create pixel-perfect assets at speed and scale.

And AKQA launched the Generative Store, which builds completely bespoke interfaces in real time for each person as they shop.

Rob: The one that's probably saved a few marriages: [what VML did for Coral paint](#).

They took the exact accuracy of 2,000 colors and built it into the prompting process, structured for AI with the color name, code, and visual instructions, so you can see a color on your actual walls before you commit.

It sounds simple, but it's magic. I love utility — things that are genuinely useful and magical at the same time.

Do you have any advice for CMOs out there?

Elav: The conversation is changing from efficiency to value. It is no longer only: "How do we reduce cost?" It is: "How can we reimagine everything we do with AI? What new value can we unlock?"

Rob: I do not need a CMO to be an expert at AI. But they should be actively curious about its potential.



▲ AI-ready prompts for every Coral color eliminate paint-selection guesswork

The future of brand content is intelligent

How are consumer behaviors evolving?

People are used to interacting through conversation now. So a website that feels like an early-2000s experience — clicking through pages to find what they need — doesn't work anymore. If conversation is the new modality, every conversation is unique.

That's personalization on steroids, one-to-one — which means brands need systems that can create, remix, and calibrate content at a scale they've never faced.

How does that work in practice?

Most big brands already have a lot of content. The opportunity is to atomize it: Break existing knowledge into meaningful modules, then remix those modules around what someone actually wants. If I'm looking for "an electric car that doesn't look like a mom van," I'm not searching the way a car company categorizes its vehicles.

I'm using my own words — and the brand needs to answer in my language.



**Anda
Gansca**

Co-Founder & CEO
Knotch

Where does human creativity enter the system?

AI is incredible at translating existing knowledge into conversational knowledge. What it's not great at is reassembling that knowledge in a way that carries the energy of the brand. That's where you need people — the facts, the brand ethos, the human signals. What feels right? What's technically correct but somehow wrong? The system has to learn that, too.

What should CMOs build first?

Find where your knowledge lives — CMS, DAM, social, YouTube, all of it. Atomize it. Build the semantic layer, the conversational ledger, so it can be retrieved and reassembled. Then build the brain that makes it conversational in a way that feels like your brand. That's a whole new kind of creativity: responsive, helpful, and precise to each client's very specific needs.

The last mile keeps shrinking

What's a marketer's dream that gen AI is finally able to turn into a reality?

Historically, personalization at scale was too costly, too slow, too complex. Now we can plug data in and tell stories with a level of context and sequencing that just was not getting done and fully reinvent the customer experience. I've pitched that promise many times. It hasn't been consistently delivered on — because the teams and the tech couldn't get there. This technology finally can.

You've worked with a lot of brands on AI. What do the brands getting this right have in common?

The brands getting AI right have one thing in common: They have done the hard work of codifying what the brand actually is. At Monks, we're building what we call "Brandscapes" to do this. These are brand-specific knowledge bases that give AI agents the full picture: guidelines, photo shoots, commercials, performance data, combined with creatives and strategists who define the "feeling" of the brand. When we give AI agents a brief with the context of a Brandscape, the work that comes out is on-brand and on-brief.



Wesley ter Haar

Co-Founder & Chief AI Officer
Monks

And when you can deliver work that is on brand, on brief, and done in real time, you've already solved 80% of a brand's challenges.

What's something you want marketers to recognize about the pace of change in AI?

Something that wasn't possible yesterday can be possible tomorrow — that's how fast the models are improving. You can make a thing that doesn't work yet, wait, and it might work with the next model release. The last mile keeps shrinking.

Build your workflow now, monitor the last mile, and expect it to keep getting smaller. What costs 40% of your effort today might only cost 10% tomorrow. It is a steady, iterative move up the pyramid — and the pace is only accelerating.

Boomtown: Making festival magic hyper-personal

Wesley ter Haar, Co-Founder & Chief AI Officer, Monks

We wanted to [extend the joy of the Boomtown music festival into a magical customer moment](#). So we channeled the excitement from the experience of the festival and ended up creating thousands of personalized videos, one for each attendee, based on their unique experience.

This wouldn't have been possible without the use of AI. Boomtown had a lot of historical data, but it was too costly and too slow to activate.

In this case, it was a really fun way to offload complexity to a large language model, to use tools to speed up our own coding ability, and build this experience in about four weeks.

What's even more exciting? It turned into Boomtown's biggest pre-sale ever!

The highlights:

77k

77,000 attendees,
76,000+ different films,
assembled in 72 hours

88%

88% average video
completion rate

40%

40% of viewers
downloaded
or shared the video



▲ AI generated personalized recap films for 76,000+ individual festival-goers

General Motors: When a brand learns to scale itself

General Motors — with multiple brands, hundreds of global markets, and an endless content appetite — brought in Monks as their orchestration partner to help consolidate their content supply chain, [using Monks.Flow to coordinate talent, technology, and creativity](#).

Change was harder than it looked

The early days weren't easy. As General Motors' CMO shared: "One: It turns out cars are very hard to render in AI. You're talking about 20 million CAD data points per car.

"Two: The AI doesn't know your brand, and it took significant re-work to get images to be on-brand. There were some moments where someone said, 'I think I can literally take a picture faster than this.'"



▲ AI-scaled assets

The breakthrough: a system capable of staying on-brand at scale

GM and Monks co-developed Metropolis, a proprietary AI platform trained on GM's data — including brand guidelines and vehicle specs — to quickly generate high-resolution images and video.

It became a brand-compliant database that allows GM's marketing teams to produce contextually relevant content across markets.

The highlights:

The Cadillac LYRIQ national campaign: **100+ finished assets in 18 business days**, from briefing to delivery

Bespoke vehicle imagery generated for any environment or season

For instance, taking existing footage of a car shot in spring and rebuilding it in snow, on a beach, at dusk, without going back on location

Fox One: When advertising moves at race speed

"Fox is all about being live, and the feeling of live. The thinking was: What does 'live' advertising look like? We created a system where AI watches live games — literally watches live sports — and in real time narrates and contextualizes the drama you're missing out on, and pushes that out into advertising."

The highlights:

For Daytona 500, AI literally watched the race, identifying moments of drama like a crash, a lead change, or a potentially historic moment, and turned it into ads in real time.



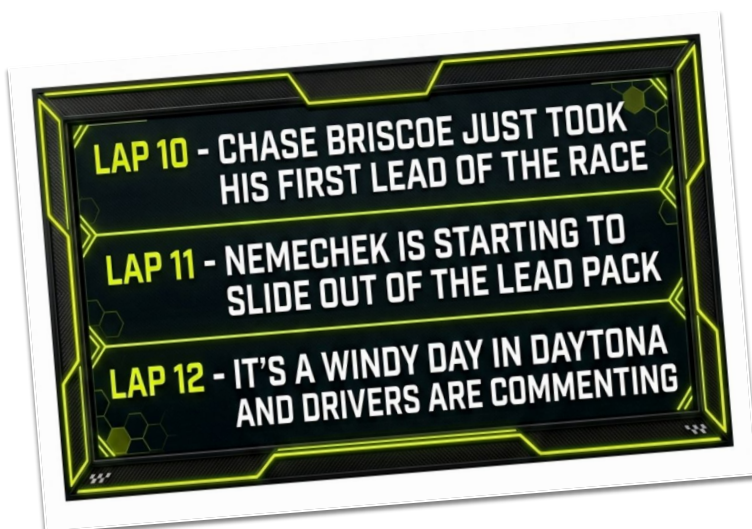
Paul Aaron
Co-Founder
Addition
an R/GA company



214 214 unique ads generated across 200 laps

60s Headlines from race events went live in paid media within 60 seconds

6X 6X click-through rate compared to non-AI generated ads



▲ AI generated dynamic headlines based on real-time race events

Woolworths: Turning a creative bottleneck into a growth pipeline

"On its own, a model is lightning in a bottle. The creative engine is the harness around it, the backbone that understands your marketing context and turns that raw power into usable work.

"Put that harness in place and you don't just clear a production bottleneck; you unlock what the whole business can become."

The highlights:

For more than two years, a creative bottleneck left Woolworths running the same static assets, hampering growth.

Pencil's AI creative engine, built on Google Veo, Nano Banana, and custom Gemini agents, took two legacy assets and a single product feed and turned them into a continuous source of new work, keeping campaigns stocked with fresh creative.

AI remixed legacy assets and a product feed into 70+ new static and video variations ►



Tobias Cummins

Chief Operating Officer
Pencil

30x

30x faster asset generation

+93%

+93% higher CTR across Demand Gen campaign

+185%

+185% interaction rate



The math and magic of next-gen marketing

Adapted from [a conversation on the Frontier CMO Podcast](#)

How does L'Oréal think about the relationship between AI and creativity?

We want to flex the dual muscle, with both creativity and technology. We have to build this next generation of marketers who are very comfortable with the math, but actually want to create the magic.

How do you make that scale across a global organization?

We have taken the whole organization and broken it down into more than 500 different skills. We upskill thousands and thousands of marketers with what we call Augmented Marketing and Communications University every year. We take particular skills and create communities around those skills.

People come together every month and share what's working — so there's a constant learning mechanism within the company. In 2025, almost 30,000 people were upskilled within that university, and more than 70,000 on the internal L'Oréal LLM.

CreAltech empowers L'Oréal's marketers to generate on-brand images, texts, and videos ▶



Asmita Dubey

Global Chief Digital & Marketing Officer
L'Oréal

What does that system make possible?

We are seeing a democratization of creation. Thousands can now create with their own unique authenticity and perspective. As a result, content creation models will change; today, someone sitting at a laptop can create a big idea, backed by a production "factory" that can adapt it incredibly fast.

At L'Oréal, we have a culture of seizing what is starting. When we see a new product and a new way of brand building and creating, we want to use it first. Today, more than 5,000 to 7,000 L'Oréal marketers use CreAltech — our internal generative AI platform — day-to-day, generating millions of images across brands.



Building desire at scale

Adapted from [a conversation on the Frontier CMO Podcast](#)

Across 400 brands and hundreds of markets, there's a paradox in “desire at scale”: desire tends to be exclusive, not scalable. To scale it, you need technology. AI lets you build the process and the systems to scale that desire.

The last mile is human

A machine can catch the observation behind [Vaseline's Love Hurts campaign in South Africa](#) — parents putting Vaseline on their kids' faces before school. But the insight, that the ritual is a proxy for love, is essentially human. Only humans understand what these rituals mean. There's poetry in that last mile, translating the observation into emotion.

Big ideas need engines. Engines need big ideas

You need a big idea, then the scale of content to help it spread. Our best work now uses human creativity to unlock big cultural moments, then backs them with an engine of content at scale so the idea lasts. With only one or the other, it dies in three days. With both, it compounds. [Vaseline Verified](#) is that principle in action — a big idea paired with creator-driven scale.



Leandro Barreto

Global Chief
Marketing Officer
Unilever

From brand guidelines to brand intelligence

At Unilever, we connect brand positioning to cultural signals with Brand DNAi. It mixes the old guidelines, what the brand stands for, with technology that flexes those guardrails in response to what's happening out there. It draws on social listening to understand the conversations and the communities that matter, and how they track back to the brand. The result is a new definition of brand identity: not only what the brand stands for, but also how it shows up online.



Electronic Arts: From brand book to brand system

When [Instrument, the digital-first design agency, helped Electronic Arts rebrand](#) from venerable game publisher to a broader entertainment brand, the deliverable wasn't a brand book. It was a brand system.

The work expanded EA's iconic visual language into something more dimensional and adaptable: The Electronic Arts Display typeface grew into a full family of serif, mono, and text styles, and a wider color palette that kept the signature blue while reflecting the energy of play.

But the real shift was what came with it.

Their agency Instrument embedded AI-powered tools directly into the system — automating work like cropping IP imagery into brand shapes, generating logos and color styles, and extending motion, so any team could apply the brand consistently, at scale.

EA walked away not with guidelines to follow, but with a living platform built to keep pace with how fast entertainment moves.



▲ Instrument built AI tools to help EA's marketers scale the rebrand flexibly and intelligently

Notes from the frontier

Amy: To survive the sea of sameness, marketers must shift their focus from micromanaging the outputs to obsessing over the inputs. When you connect creative performance directly to business profitability, it stops being a subjective cost center and becomes a predictable growth driver.



**Amy
Crowther**

President
Incubeta

Anastasia: Creatives bring the least data to a room where data is the currency. So we use data to help them win the arguments they were losing to subjectivity — showing them they're not losing power, they're gaining it. The best CMOs of the future will treat creativity as an operational system. In the age of AI, the companies that win will be the ones that build an organizational intelligence layer they own and control and stop being anecdotally driven.



**Anastasia
Leng**

Founder & CEO
CreativeX

KMac: The opportunity isn't to generate endless creative variations. It's to generate creative that stops consumers from scrolling and inspires action. To do that, you need creative that is adaptable, scalable, and still unmistakably true to the brand.

AI can scale creative but it does not build brands. The brands that stand out are the ones with the clearest identity and most disciplined brand systems.



KMac

(Kristin MacGregor)
Global Chief
Commercial Officer
Smartly

Craig: The goal isn't to replace creative judgment — it's to give creative teams better evidence, faster, so their ideas can travel farther and perform stronger, regardless of the path to production.



**Craig
Coblenz**

Co-Founder
& VP, Strategic
Partnerships
Vidmob

***Explore our latest AI
partnerships, models, and tools:***



ai.google/creativity

***Put your creative to work with Google's
AI-powered ad solutions:***



[The ROI Essentials](#)