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The 2025 Marketer's Guide to

AI & Creative Impact Measurement



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Executive Summary

The 2025 Marketer's Guide to Creative Impact Measurement provides key insights into how marketers are using AI to drive creative execution strategies and measure effectiveness. Based on a survey of 350 marketing leaders across diverse industries and regions, this report highlights both the potential and the challenges of AI integration into marketing.

AI Transformation in Business

The Plus Company survey, powered by Statista, revealed that while AI's potential in creative ideation and strategy is widely recognized, actual integration remains slow.

Despite 89% of marketers acknowledging AI as a valuable tool, only 54% have fully implemented AI into their processes. This delay is creating a competitive gap, with companies that embrace AI gaining a significant advantage through real-time feedback and optimized creative strategies. The slow pace of adoption leaves many brands missing out on valuable insights and opportunities to refine their campaigns more effectively.

Evolving Intelligence and Strategy

There is a significant disparity in AI adoption between large and small companies. While 60% of larger organizations (those with over 2,500 employees) have embraced AI-driven measurement tools, only 24% of smaller companies have made similar strides.

This widening technology gap is putting smaller businesses at a distinct disadvantage, limiting their ability to stay agile and make data-driven decisions. Additionally, 60% of marketers reported difficulties in adapting to rapidly changing market conditions, further emphasizing the need for more dynamic, AI-enhanced market intelligence solutions.

Resistance to change is another major barrier to AI implementation, with 45% of marketers identifying it as a significant hurdle, and this figure rises to 71% in smaller companies. This reluctance to adopt new technologies, combined with the inconsistency in enthusiasm across different organizational levels, is holding companies back from transforming their strategies. Mid-level professionals exhibit the most excitement for AI, with 57% rating it as "very helpful," but at the VP level, that enthusiasm drops to just 49%, largely due to concerns about costs.

This disconnect between leadership and on-the-ground teams could be hindering the broader adoption of AI across businesses.

Changing the way we produce, measure, and evolve creative work

While 75% of respondents said they still rely on outdated, time-consuming research methods to generate new campaign concepts, we know that AI-driven solutions offer a way to streamline this process.

Traditional methods—such as competitive analysis and social media monitoring—are slowing down creative development and reducing competitiveness. Additionally, 58% of marketers cited the lack of real-time data as a critical challenge in adapting creative strategies on the fly. AI can bridge this gap, allowing for faster, more responsive campaigns that meet market demands with greater agility.

The lack of confidence in measuring creative impact is another pressing issue, with only 36% of marketers expressing high confidence in their ability to measure the effectiveness of their campaigns. Many still rely on traditional metrics like brand tracking, sales analysis, and campaign performance metrics, which are proving insufficient in today's fast-paced market. AI can revolutionize this area by providing real-time insights and more accurate data on audience engagement, enabling marketers to make more informed decisions that drive better results.

This comprehensive survey underscores the importance of adopting AI to transform business intelligence, strategy, and creative processes. Companies that fully embrace AI-driven solutions will be better equipped to produce high-performing campaigns, adapt to changing consumer behaviors, and measure creative impact with greater precision. By evolving their approach to both strategy and creative development, brands can stay competitive in an increasingly dynamic market.

75% of respondents said they still rely on outdated, time-consuming research methods to generate new campaign concepts

Introduction

AI democratizes a world of insights and possibility, if we can organize ourselves to wield it.

Today, artificial intelligence (AI) presents a significant opportunity to move beyond the traditional siloes of strategy, analytics and content creation and embrace more advanced strategies and processes. Brands who can do this, effectively unlock a new connection between insights and creative, one that transforms their way of working and drives real business impact.

We conducted a focused survey of 350 marketing leaders, including Vice Presidents and senior decision-makers, to understand how AI is influencing the connection between creative strategies and impact measurement.

The results revealed that while 89% of respondents view AI as helpful for creative ideation and strategy, only 54% have fully integrated AI into their processes.

This gap highlights a critical challenge in the industry: although the potential of AI is widely recognized, many marketers struggle to leverage it effectively.

This report explores the complexities of AI adoption barriers. It also addresses the disparity between marketers using AI for specific tasks, such as identifying target audiences, and those who have implemented it comprehensively across their workflows.

By improving the ability to measure creative effectiveness, marketers can make more informed decisions, optimize performance, and drive better results.

Ultimately, AI represents the growth hack to closing the creative effectiveness loop, driving more business value but also improving the quality of experience for customers.

The results revealed that while 89% of respondents view AI as helpful for creative ideation and strategy, only 54% have fully integrated AI into their processes.

MICHAEL COHEN
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Co Authors

45%

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45%

AI transformation in your business

Resistance to change is a major hurdle in AI adoption, with 45% of marketers citing it as a barrier to AI implementation—a figure that jumps to 71% in smaller companies.

AI transformation in your business

The AI Integration Imperative

AI implementation lagging: Marketers risk falling behind

Despite the overwhelming consensus among marketers—89% acknowledge AI as “very” or “somewhat” useful for creative ideation and strategy —just 54% have fully integrated AI into their processes.

This slow pace of adoption leaves many companies vulnerable, as those delaying full AI integration are missing out on the competitive advantages that early adopters are already leveraging to boost creative processes and marketing strategies.

Without comprehensive AI integration, brands are forgoing valuable insights and optimization opportunities that could enhance their campaigns. For example, AI can help brands be more predictive and responsive to market shifts, trends and competitor moves, offering a new level of marketing adaptability.

The divide in AI adoption is even more pronounced when comparing companies by size. Larger organizations (those with 2,500+ employees) are much further along in their AI adoption journey, with 60% using AI-driven tools for creative ideation and strategy. Smaller companies, however, are lagging significantly, with only 24% having fully embraced AI.

This disparity underscores a growing gap in technology adoption between large and small businesses, putting smaller companies at a competitive disadvantage due to a lack of resources or expertise.

Slowing adoption from the top?

Mid-Level AI Enthusiasm Faces Roadblocks

Despite AI’s growing role in creative ideation and strategy, a noticeable enthusiasm gap is emerging across different levels of seniority. While 89% of marketers recognize AI’s value, the excitement seems to dwindle the higher up the corporate ladder you go.

Among mid-level professionals, 57% rated AI as “very” helpful—the highest level of satisfaction. However, at the VP level, that enthusiasm drops to just 49%.

This lack of enthusiasm at the executive level might be tied to concerns about cost. VPs are more likely to see high costs as a barrier, with 45% flagging it as a challenge to implementing AI for tasks like target market identification, validation, and engagement, compared to only 25% of mid-level marketers. The proliferation of new technology, the costly AI-feature upgrades on core workspace platforms and the difficulty to roll out mass access to all employees continues to pose very tangible challenges for leaders to manage.

Embracing New Technology

Looking at the challenges survey respondents are facing in the current environment, it is possible to conclude that the best solution is to embrace new technologies: most notably AI and advanced analytics. AI, crucially, offers alternative solutions for extracting audience insights to inform segmentation strategies.

39% of survey participants had notably also shown concerns about the costs of AI-driven approaches, but notably this was held far more frequently at VP level (45%) than amongst employees at professional/mid-level (25%)

who were most likely to be at the forefront of AI-driven work processes. With AI-driven segmentation targeting being far more efficient and precise than more outdated, conventional methods, a shift towards AI represents the best step forward for addressing industry concerns.



So WHAT?

These disconnects between leadership and ground-level employees could be slowing AI adoption within companies, potentially hindering more widespread and effective implementation. If this gap isn't addressed, companies risk stalling in their efforts to fully leverage AI's potential in marketing.

Crucially, there are AI-driven approaches that are not dependent on personally identifiable information (PII), which allay data privacy concerns held by close to half of survey participants (47%).

So... HOW?

For those hesitant to fully commit to AI, the key to overcoming this challenge may lie in partnering with external experts who can help bridge the gap.

Think of this as an opportunity: Defining the best transformation strategies, and applying them in waves across the organization requires a high degree of vision, change management, and wisely sequenced investments.

By starting with specific use cases that demonstrate clear value, companies can build confidence in AI's benefits, facilitating a smoother and more effective transition to full integration.

60%

Evolving Your Market Intelligence and strategy

60% of respondents said their difficulties in target market identification lie with rapidly-changing market conditions

Evolving Your Market Intelligence and strategy

Adapting to Rapid Consumer Shifts

In today's fast-paced market, identifying and connecting with the right audience is becoming more challenging than ever. As consumer behaviors evolve in response to economic shifts, social trends, and technological advancements, traditional tools and methods are struggling to keep up.

According to our survey, while 95% of companies recognize the importance of accurate target market identification, half (50%) are still grappling with challenges due to unreliable data sources.

This gap between intent and execution raises critical concerns about the effectiveness of current market research approaches.

Though many marketers continue to rely on conventional methods to discover new customer segments, these tools are proving inadequate in a landscape that demands real-time insights. With 60% of respondents citing rapidly changing market conditions as a key obstacle, it's clear that marketers are struggling to stay relevant without the real-time data needed to adapt to these shifts.

To remain competitive, brands must find more agile solutions to navigate the complexities of today's dynamic market.

Missed Opportunities

One of the key challenges uncovered in our survey is that marketers are hitting a wall when it comes to target market identification. By continuing to focus on the same segments, many are missing out on broader opportunities for growth.

In fact, more than 4 in 10 marketers (42%) admit that their struggles with target market identification are preventing them from expanding their reach.

Part of the challenge around identifying new growth opportunities is that the primary way companies discover new segments is by mining existing customer data (93%). This leads to the risk of navel-gazing—focusing too much on existing segments—limits brand growth and reduces the potential to tap into new audiences.

66% of respondents expressed concern about their ability to target the right segment, leading to fears of misaligned marketing messages.

So WHAT?

In order to outsmart, rather than outspend, brands are realizing the importance of a more responsive approach to building and activating a brand in this dynamic market. Brands who understand the shifting competitive and industry landscape while efficiently supporting customers are enjoying outsized performance.

So... HOW?

Brands should adopt AI-driven tools that can automate and accelerate research processes, freeing up time for more strategic work. By moving away from these labor-intensive methods,

As 58% of marketers struggle with the lack of real-time data, as an important first step, it's critical to integrate tools that provide immediate insights into customer behavior. AI solutions can bridge this gap, helping marketers adapt their creative strategies quickly and efficiently.

By incorporating real-time data, brands can ensure their campaigns are responsive to current trends, allowing them to stay relevant and engage audiences effectively in a rapidly changing marketplace.

36%

Changing the way we produce, measure and evolve our creative

Only 36% of respondents revealed that they were “very confident” in their ability to measure the impact of their creative effectively.

Respondents said they were measuring creative through:

- Brand tracking and/or lift studies
- Trend analysis on sales/revenue
- Campaign performance metrics
- Media Mix Modeling
- Attribution modeling
- Incrementality testing

Changing the way we produce, measure and evolve our creative

In the drive for creative effectiveness, many marketers are neglecting a key element: the measurement of creative content impact.

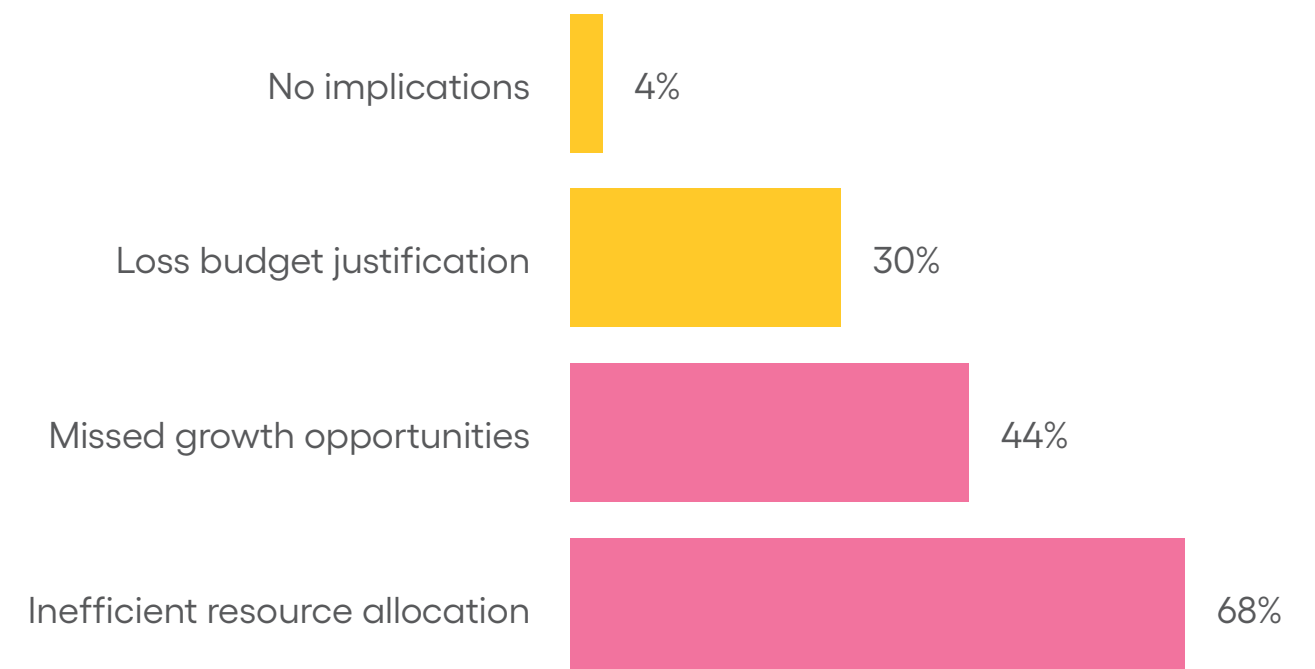
While 90% of companies acknowledge the importance of tracking creative performance, only 36% express they were 'very confident' in their ability to do so effectively.

This gap poses a significant risk, as brands may miss out on crucial insights that could shape future campaigns and optimize performance.

The survey also highlights the continued reliance on outdated methods of measurement, which are inadequate for today's fast-paced marketing environment. Respondents told us they were relying heavily on methods such as Brand tracking and/or lift studies, Trend analysis on sales/revenue, Campaign performance metrics, Media Mix Modeling, Attribution modeling, and Incrementality testing.

As a result, 68% of marketers report that difficulties in assessing creative output lead to inefficient resource allocation, and 44% cite missed opportunities for growth.

How do the challenges of creative impact measurement affect your company's outcomes?



Accelerating Creative Speed to Market

Overcoming the Bottlenecks

An overwhelming 89% of marketers stress the importance of producing responsive content, yet the path to achieving this is filled with obstacles. One of the biggest roadblocks? A staggering 75% of respondents still rely on outdated, time-consuming market research and analysis to generate creative ideas for new campaigns.

This labor-intensive approach not only slows down the creative process but also risks missed opportunities and reduced competitiveness in an increasingly fast-paced market.

Additionally, 58% of marketers cite a lack of real-time data and insights as a key challenge, hindering their ability to adapt creative strategies on the fly.

In an age where responsiveness is crucial, this gap in real-time access can seriously impact a brand's ability to stay relevant.

Our survey also exposes an inconsistency in AI adoption for content production. While 88% of marketers recognize AI as a valuable tool for generating responsive content, only 52% have fully integrated it into their workflows. A common barrier? User adoption, with 43% pointing to this as a challenge.

So WHAT?

To keep pace with industry trends and meet market demands, it's clear that marketers need to fully embrace AI-driven solutions. By moving away from traditional, slower research methods and adopting AI, brands can make faster, more informed decisions—allowing them to stay agile, competitive, and ready to respond to market shifts with precision and speed. Relying too heavily on existing customer data can limit a brand's growth potential, as seen with 42% of marketers missing out on new opportunities by focusing on the same segments.

So... HOW?

AI solutions present a promising path forward. By incorporating AI into creative impact planning, marketers can gain real-time feedback and deeper insights into audience engagement, enabling more informed decision-making and improved outcomes. The future of creative impact measurement lies in embracing AI-driven tools to stay competitive and agile in an ever-evolving market.

Companies should explore new research methodologies and data sources to uncover untapped markets. Expanding the focus beyond current customers will help marketers broaden their reach and ensure they deliver relevant messages to a wider audience, avoiding misalignment in their campaigns.

With expectations on employees to incorporate AI tools into their workflows, many are feeling overwhelmed by the time required to onboard new tools in order to use them successfully. Organizations should prioritize new solutions that offer a conversational / chat experience that allows employees to quickly access the information they need without mastering a complex UI.

Conclusion

This survey on creative impact measurement underscores both the immense potential of AI in marketing and the lag in its adoption.

Currently, only 54% of marketers have fully integrated AI into their creative ideation and strategy workflows, leaving many companies behind in capitalizing on the competitive benefits—such as optimized strategies, real-time feedback, and enhanced audience engagement—that early adopters are already enjoying.

A key barrier to progress is resistance to change, coupled with concerns about cost and complexity. Executives worried about the financial investment in AI should focus on holistic solutions that can scale across planning, measurement, and optimization workflows. End users, increasingly overwhelmed by the influx of new technology, should prioritize AI tools that offer a conversational UI, making the experience more intuitive and accessible.

In the areas of creative planning and measurement, AI presents a critical opportunity for transformation. Seventy-five percent of marketers still rely on outdated methods like competitive analysis and trend reports to inform campaign ideas—approaches that are slow and hinder responsiveness to market dynamics.

AI-driven solutions can eliminate these inefficiencies by providing real-time insights into audience engagement and campaign performance, enabling marketers to optimize strategies with greater precision and speed.

To stay competitive, brands must move beyond resistance and invest in AI tools that unlock deeper insights, provide actionable recommendations, and streamline processes. By embracing holistic AI solutions, businesses will not only keep pace with the market but also unlock new levels of creativity and growth, and ensure a strong return on investment.

Authors



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Michael Cohen is the Global Chief Data & Analytics Officer at Plus Company. He is a globally recognized AI, data, analytics, and predictive intelligence leader. He specializes in transforming data into actionable insights for businesses and is an expert in bringing ML and AI-driven consumer data technologies to market. Focal use cases for these technologies include, Marketing Operations, Automated Decision Activation, Measurement and Analytics, Info Security and Privacy.



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Methodology

Quantitative survey among marketing decision-makers and practitioners

This report highlights current trends in AI usage in marketing and offers actionable insights on leveraging AI tools to drive success. We believe marketers have long been underserved by technology, but AI has now advanced to tackle previously insurmountable business challenges. With the right combination of data and technology, marketers can be empowered in any role. Our goal was to gather insights from decision-makers and practitioners to understand their experiences, challenges, and expectations regarding AI in their marketing initiatives.

To achieve this, we conducted a comprehensive survey from July 19th to August 16th, 2024, engaging 350 marketing professionals, including Vice Presidents of Marketing and senior decision-makers. The survey spanned four regions: the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Germany. Participants represented organizations with over 1,500 employees across various industries, such as Manufacturing, Financial Services, Retail/e-commerce, and Automotive, among others. Additional sectors, including Transport/Logistics and Telecommunications, were also covered to ensure a well-rounded industry perspective.

Source: Telephone survey for Plus Company (08/2024)

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