



“The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on the Creative Process of Marketing Professionals.”

Cecília Correa Dias

National College of Ireland

MSC in Marketing

Submitted to the National College of Ireland, August 2025

Abstract

This study examines the interaction between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and human creation, aiming to draw a map of its impacts in the Marketing Industry by researching how promotional texts are being created and how the creation process has changed with the emergence and popularisation of generative Artificial Intelligence tools. As AI is in rapid growth, both in technology and public awareness, this study presents itself as a thermometer for a Market in an accelerated shifting process, and an ethical guideline for the responsible use of said Technologies.

In the light of this context, the research places the point of view on the copywriter (i.e., the profession responsible for crafting promotional texts), instead of analysing the quality of the final product itself and the consumers' perspective on it. By qualitatively analysing semi-structured interviews conducted with copywriters through the lenses of both classical literature, especially on the field of ethics, and current work, the objective is to not only identify the AI tools being used in the creative process of copywriting, but also how it affects efficiency; the general relationship between creator and creation; and the self-perceive effects of the use of such tools.

The findings reveal that the impact of the AI tools in this sector is felt by marketers in a paradoxical manner, where they do not fully understand the change being lived, but are rather trying to catch up on the practical aspects of it.

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

National College of Ireland
Research Students Declaration Form
(Thesis/Author Declaration Form)

Name: Cecília Correa Dias

Student Number: 24117315

Degree for which thesis is submitted: Master of Science in Marketing

Title of Thesis: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on the Creative Process of Marketing Professionals

Date: 18/08/2025

Material submitted for award

- A. I declare that this work submitted has been composed by myself.

- B. I declare that all verbatim extracts contained in the thesis have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information specifically acknowledged.

- C. I agree to my thesis being deposited in the NCI Library online open access repository NORMA.

- D. ***Either*** *I declare that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.
Or *I declare that the following material contained in the thesis formed part of a submission for the award of

(State the award and the awarding body and list the material below)

National College of Ireland

Project Submission Sheet

Student Name: Cecília Correa Dias

Student ID: 24117315

Programme: Master of Science in Marketing **Year:** 2025

Module: Dissertation

Lecturer: Maurice Fitzgerald

Submission Due

Date: 15/08/2025

Project Title: Dissertation

Word Count:

I hereby certify that the information contained in this (my submission) is information pertaining to research I conducted for this project. All information other than my own contribution will be fully referenced and listed in the relevant bibliography section at the rear of the project.

ALL internet material must be referenced in the references section. Students are encouraged to use the Harvard Referencing Standard supplied by the Library. To use other author's written or electronic work is illegal (plagiarism) and may result in disciplinary action. Students may be required to undergo a viva (oral examination) if there is suspicion about the validity of their submitted work.

Cecília Correa Dias

Signature:

15/08/2025

Date:

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Please attach a completed copy of this sheet to each project (including multiple copies).
2. Projects should be submitted to your Programme Coordinator.
3. **You must ensure that you retain a HARD COPY of ALL projects**, both for your own reference and in case a project is lost or mislaid. It is not sufficient to keep a copy on computer. Please do not bind projects or place in covers unless specifically requested.
4. You must ensure that all projects are submitted to your Programme Coordinator on or before the required submission date. **Late submissions will incur penalties.**
5. All projects must be submitted and passed in order to successfully complete the year. **Any project/assignment not submitted will be marked as a fail.**

Office Use Only	
Signature:	
Date:	
Penalty Applied (if applicable):	

Dissertation

“The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on the Creative Process of Marketing Professionals.”

Your Name/Student Number	Course	Date
Cecília Correa Dias / 24117315	MSC in Marketing	18/08/2025

This section is a supplement to the main assignment, to be used if AI was used in any capacity in the creation of your assignment; if you have queries about how to do this, please contact your lecturer. For an example of how to fill these sections out, please click [here](#).

AI Acknowledgment

This section acknowledges the AI tools that were utilised in the process of completing this assignment.

Tool Name	Brief Description	Link to tool
ChatGPT	Multimodal AI/ Large Language Model	
Grammarly	Text Corrector	

Description of AI Usage

This section provides a more detailed description of how the AI tools were used in the assignment. It includes information about the prompts given to the AI tool, the responses received, and how these responses were utilized or modified in the assignment. **One table should be used for each tool.**

Grammarly	
To help identify typos and misspellings. It was sometimes used to aid in punctuation placement. No suggestions that would alter the phrase or its meaning were taken.	
There's no prompt usage with this tool.	
[Insert Sample prompt]	[Insert Sample response]

ChatGPT

It was used to aid in data analysis (more details described in text, chapter 4); in research for synonyms, for specific secondary sources, to kick-start research in certain themes; to aid in the alphabetical organisation of bibliography; and to take directions and instructions on the usage of certain tools. There was no use of this AI to collect information directly presented in this paper, since the outputs were mainly leading to another source (e.g., journal article, academic paper).

How can I make something a title on word so it can be successfully included on a table of contents

1. Apply a Heading Style

1. Select the text you want as a title.
2. Go to the **Home** tab on the ribbon.
3. In the **Styles** group, choose a heading style:
 - **Heading 1** → main title / top-level heading
 - **Heading 2** → subheading
 - **Heading 3** → sub-subheading
4. The formatting will change automatically, but you can customize it later if needed.

2. Insert a Table of Contents

1. Place your cursor where you want the TOC (usually at the beginning of the document).
2. Go to the **References** tab.
3. Click **Table of Contents**.
4. Choose an automatic style (like *Automatic Table 1*).

Word will pull all text with Heading 1, 2, and 3 styles into the TOC automatically.

3. Update the TOC (after edits)

- Right-click on the TOC → **Update Field** → choose **Update entire table**.
- This ensures new headings appear and page numbers are correct.

	<p>Tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid manually formatting titles and expecting them to appear in the TOC; only heading styles are recognized. • You can modify heading styles (font, size, color) via Home → Styles → Right-click Heading → Modify without breaking the TOC.
<p>Can you give me synonyms for types?</p>	<p>Sure — here are some synonyms for "types", depending on the context you're using it in:</p> <p>General meaning ("kinds" or "categories")</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kinds • categories • classes • varieties • sorts • groups • forms • styles • genres • breeds • species <p>Technical/academic context ("classification")</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • archetypes • models • prototypes • formats • patterns • subcategories • groupings • taxonomies <p>If you tell me your context — for example, marketing, academic writing, or everyday conversation — I can tailor the list so it feels more precise and natural.</p>
<p>can you please indicate me classical texts on creativity?</p>	<p>Foundational Psychological & Cognitive Works</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graham Wallas – <i>The Art of Thought</i> (1926)

- Introduced the now-famous four-stage model of the creative process: Preparation, Incubation, Illumination, and Verification.
- 2. **J. P. Guilford – “Creativity” (1950 Presidential Address, APA)**
 - Sparked modern psychological research into creativity, distinguishing between convergent and divergent thinking.
- 3. **E. Paul Torrance – *Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking* (1966)**
 - Not a “book” per se, but a seminal set of tools for measuring creativity, influencing decades of research.
- 4. **Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi – *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* (1996)**
 - Merges his concept of *flow* with an in-depth study of how creative people work and live.

Philosophical & Artistic Perspectives

- 5. **Arthur Koestler – *The Act of Creation* (1964)**
 - Explores creativity as a process of “bisociation” — linking two previously unrelated ideas.
- 6. **Henri Poincaré – *Science and Method* (1908)**
 - A mathematician’s reflections on intuition, problem-solving, and the unconscious mind in discovery.
- 7. **Rollo May – *The Courage to Create* (1975)**
 - Existential psychologist’s take on the inner struggles and bravery required for true creativity.
- 8. **Jacques Hadamard – *The Psychology of Invention in the Mathematical Field* (1945)**
 - Draws on interviews with Einstein and other scientists

	about their creative mental processes.
	<p>Influential Modern Guides</p> <p>9. Edward de Bono – <i>Lateral Thinking</i> (1970)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practical tools for breaking out of conventional patterns of thought. <p>10. Betty Edwards – <i>Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain</i> (1979)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Uses visual perception training as a gateway to unlocking creative abilities. <p>11. Twyla Tharp – <i>The Creative Habit</i> (2003)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A choreographer’s pragmatic system for making creativity a daily practice.
	<p>Bonus Cross-Disciplinary Classics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Cleese – “Creativity in Management” (1991 Lecture) – Humorous but deep on the role of play and openness. • Donald Schön – <i>The Reflective Practitioner</i> (1983) – Focuses on creativity in professional problem-solving.

Evidence of AI Usage

This section includes evidence of significant prompts and responses used or generated through the AI tool. It should provide a clear understanding of the extent to which the AI tool was used in the assignment. Evidence may be attached via screenshots or text.

Additional Evidence:

As the use of AI was a part of the Research Methodology for this Dissertation, a series of prompts and outputs were exchanged on the matter. As it is too long to add in here,

I'll provide the link to the full "chat" below. Considerations provided by AI were taken as suggestions and aided in the creation of themes for the thematic analysis.

Link: <https://chatgpt.com/share/689ca4bb-bc04-8011-be07-209c7b3138fe>

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, this is for my brave mother, all of it. For never letting me forget the importance of knowledge and who walked these paths so I could follow her trail. She might disagree, but I truly feel gifted for being her daughter.

A huge thanks to my lovely grandparents; without them, I wouldn't be here. To my wonderful dad, for coping with endless hours of phone calls and listening to my findings exhaustively. To my amazing aunt Carú, for always being there. To my fantastic supervisor, Maurice, and his bottomless calm.

And to my dear boyfriend, who'd manage to dissociate every time he heard the word "dissertation," but still held me for the whole tears part of the "sweat and tears", fought my fights by my side, and encouraged me in every moment of self-doubt.

A smaller, but still grateful, thanks to my six brothers and sisters. Being the oldest sibling is character-building. I'd never be able to conclude such an endeavour hadn't they taught me patience, resilience, and love.

:)

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	17
	1.1 Background Information	17
	1.2 Academic Justification	18
	1.3 Methodological Approach	19
	1.4 Research Objectives	20
2.	Literature Review	21
	2.1 Chapter Introduction	21
	2.2 Human Creativity and Artificial Creativity	21
	2.2.1 Standard Definitions of Creativity And The Human Creative Process	21
	2.2.2 Machine Creative Process (Output Generation)	23
	2.2.3 Differences Between Human And Artificial Creativity	24
	2.2.4 New Concepts of Creativity	25
	2.3 Augmented Creativity	26
	2.3.1 What Is Augmented Creativity	26
	2.3.2 Frameworks For Human And AI Interaction In Creativity	27
	2.4 Practical Aspects of AI Adoption on Creative Processes	29
	2.4.1 AI Tools Utilized By Marketers	29
	2.4.2 The Tasks In Which AI Tools Are Employed	30
	2.4.3 Prompting	31
	2.5 Ethical Considerations	32
	2.5.1. Advantages and Concerns	32
	2.5.2. Authorship	33
	2.5.3. Machine Bias	33
	2.5.4. Transparency Issues	33
	2.5.5. Job Displacement	34
	2.5.6. Algorithmic Aversion	34
	2.6 Research Gaps	34
	2.7 Chapter Conclusion	35
3.	Research Questions	37
	3.1 Research Questions	37
	3.1 Research Objectives	37

4.	Research Methodology.....	39
4.1	Chapter Introduction.....	39
4.2	Research Philosophy	40
4.3	Research Approach.....	41
4.4	Methodological Choice.....	41
4.5	Research Strategy.....	42
4.6	Time Horizon.....	43
4.7	Data Collection	43
4.7.1	Participants And Sampling	43
4.7.2	Measures And Apparatus.....	45
4.7.3	Procedure	46
4.8	Data Analysis	47
4.9	Ethics.....	49
4.10	Chapter Conclusion.....	50
5.	Findings And Analysis.....	51
5.1	Chapter Introduction.....	51
5.2	Human and Artificial Creativity.....	51
5.3	Creative Process and AI	52
5.4	AI Usage And Prompting	54
5.4.1	AI Usage	55
5.4.2	Proficiency With AI Tools	57
5.5	About The Quality.....	59
5.6	Ethical Concerns	60
5.7	Chapter Conclusion.....	62
6.	Discussion	63
6.1	Chapter Introduction.....	63
6.2	Discussion of The Findings.....	63
6.2.1	Mentor of The Machine	63
6.2.2	The Paradoxical Notion of AI As Active Or Passive Agent.....	64
6.2	Contextualization of The Findings.....	65
6.3	Limitations and Further Research	67
6.4	Chapter Conclusion.....	68
7.	Conclusion.....	69
8.	Bibliography.....	71
9.	Appendices.....	77
9.1	Appendix 1 – Interview Questions.....	77

9.2 Appendix 2 – Verbal Consent Request Sample	77
9.3 Appendix 3 – Consent Form Sample	77
9.4 Appendix 4 – Reasons For AI Use	78
9.4 Appendix 5 – Explaining AI	79

1. Introduction

1.1 Background Information

The popularisation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has taken a central place in the discussions of our decade, with such fast development, that it is hard to follow. It is a moving target for researchers, a hot topic full of misinformation and mysteries for the general public, and even hard users of the marketing industry find it difficult to follow all the tools and possibilities surfacing (Canva, 2025). This is often compared to previous technological breakthroughs, but with a core distinction that is the central reason for its importance: differently from other revolutions humanity faced, AI is not a machine to increase human mechanical abilities, such as the Industrial Revolutions, nor is it a machine that aids in spreading knowledge (e.g., the printing press in the Information Revolution), AI's realm of action is in the human thought, it is already changing how we process information (Fang, Tao & Li, 2025).

AI machines are able to mimic the cognitive capacities of the human brain, such as learning, reasoning, decision making, and problem solving, relying on complex codes that utilize data, logic, and mathematical models (Liu *et al.*, 2025), which means it can, to an extent, mimic human creativity, that has always been a defining characteristic of humanity (Garcia, 2024), with artificial creativity, rising both fundamental problems and concerns, and opening an unimaginable amount of new possibilities.

As this research seeks to understand the intricacies of the use of AI by professionals working in marketing-related areas (e.g., social media management, copywriting, performance marketing, advertising, content marketing, design, customer service, etc.), and how it affects their creative processes, the varieties of AI to be considered in this paper are the ones relevant to this context: GenAI, or Generative AI, is an model of AI that is based on machine learning (ML) to generate, arguably, new content semi-autonomously (Garcia, 2024), including mainly GenAI focused on text (*i.e.*, Large Language Models (LLM)); image, video, and audio; Multimodal AI, meaning the AI models that are able to process and produce different kinds of media; Predictive & Prescriptive AI, that can analyze data and make predictions based on that (*i.e.*, most of what is popularly called “social media algorithms”, and Google Ads Smart Bidding, both fundamental for content marketing and online advertising); and the most recent Agentic

AI, that can take action, involving planning and decision-making, towards a set goal (*i.e.*, automated audience segmentation tools that act in databases to generate personalized outreach).

While agencies and brands try to implement AI, with all its perks and challenges, marketers try to unravel the optimum use of these systems, which points to a direction of co-creation and augmented creativity (*i.e.*, when AI and artificial creativity are used to increase human creativity) (Cui, Liu & Yuan, 2025), with the aid of AI models that can learn patterns and conventions within a certain area and transform this information into context-appropriate outputs, offering new directions to creative expressions (Sreynich, 2023). Even when used to automate simpler tasks, AI allows humans to concentrate on the strategic and conceptual aspects of the creative process (Gonzalez, 2024).

AI has demonstrated the ability to generate content in the most diverse spheres, including marketing, storytelling, music, and art (Grilli & Pedota, 2023). AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Jasper, can collaborate on the creative process of marketers, contributing with ideas, evaluating concepts, and generating texts and images with well-defined parameters (Grilli & Pedota, 2023). However, there are concerns about the AI's potential to dehumanise creativity, detaching the process from human agency and displacing creative professionals across different sectors of the economy (Lee, 2022). Moreover, the black box nature of many AI tools, that is, the lack of knowledge on the process behind the generation of the outputs, can damage essential aspects of the creative process, such as intention and self-expression (Sreynich, 2023).

The ethical problematics associated with the use of AI in creative activities include authorship, potential biases, and the lack of diversity in AI outputs (Grilli & Pedota, 2023). Some scholars argue that AI systems should be projected to be transparent and understandable in an attempt to preserve human agency (Sreynich, 2023).

1.2 Academic Justification

To emphasise the importance of AI use by this sector, in 2024, 99% of marketers attested to using AI to some degree (Marketing AI Institute, 2024). Even with 17% of the respondents still in the exploration phase of AI, the lowest on the scale of integration of

these machines into workflows, the number has reached 100% in 2025 (Marketing AI Institute, 2025). Even with other sources presenting different numbers for the use of AI by marketers, such as 85% (Foundation Inc, 2024) and 91% (GPTZero, 2025), it is still the sector where it is most common to find those machines implemented (McKinsey & Company, 2024), making it imperative to understand how complex interactions develop between human and machine in this context, especially regarding creativity, which marketing is depend on and used to be an hability exclusively human.

However, there is a scarce source of research material on the matter. The few that can be found aim to create frameworks (*e.g.*, Pagan & Wind, 2025; Gonzales, 2024), evaluate the technical quality of the final product, such as copy (*i.e.*, a piece of advertising writing), or focus on a single area (*e.g.*, Advertising), both seen on Hunt & Kerr's (2025) work, for instance. It also concentrates majorly on the ability of AI to automate tasks and increase productivity (Grilli & Pedota, 2023; Provasi, 2023). Cui, Liu & Yuan (2025) brilliantly explore the co-creative relationship between humans and machines, but overlook the professionals' view and understanding of the process. Moreover, ethical, bias, and authorship themes have been discussed in the literature (Sreynich, 2023; Tafesse & Wien, 2024), but not how marketers approach those questions in their activities. Academic articles from the realm of the arts (*e.g.*, Garcia, 2024; Liu et al., 2025) and psychology (Tulver et al., 2023; Agnoli, 2024) will be explored in the Literature Review and Findings and Analysis chapters to provide proper literature background and sustenance for the findings of this research.

The present research fills the need for a broader view from the marketer's perspective, looking to expose not only the circumstances for the use of AI systems and how it is being implemented in their creative process, but also how marketers view this complex relationship of co-creation and the self-perceived impact of said systems in their profession. It leaves aside the experiments and seeks to understand the phenomena in their natural environment, shedding light on the theory's shortcomings when analysing the day-to-day practice.

1.3 Methodological Approach

The methodological backbone of this research is based upon Braun & Clarke's (2022) work on thematic analysis, the chosen method to analyse the data collected from semi-

structured interviews conducted online among six marketing professionals, who have AI systems implemented in their creative workflows in varying degrees. They are also from distinct backgrounds and are in different stages in their careers. Primarily contacted through the networking connections of the researcher, the snowball sampling technique allowed for a greater diversity.

As the focus of this research is the subjective interpretations of the participants, the methodological approach chosen was qualitative, with a constructivist post-positivist epistemological base. Through interpretivism, both the views and perceptions of the participants and the researcher are relevant considerations for the findings and discussion.

1.4 Research Objectives

- To understand the marketer's point of view in the discussion of artificial and human creativity.
- To comprehend if marketers have clarity in which stages of their creative process AI is being used and how.
- To assess the level of interference AI have in their productions and how they perceive it.
- To analyse qualitatively for which tasks AI is employed and how marketers communicate with those tools on the day-to-day workflow.
- To identify how ethical issues affect their AI usage.
- To assess the self-perceived impact on the quality of their creations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Introduction

Creativity used to be a mark of the human capacity (Garcia, 2024). Now, with the advent of AI and the sophistication of its algorithms, increasingly becoming closer to the abilities of humans, it is mister to reevaluate the concepts of creativity and what makes it so vitally human. Moreover, this distinction is not enough for maketers to be using the AI tools as co-creators in the most varied types of tasks, enjoying more effectiveness and the perks of machine objectivity.

2.2 Human Creativity and Artificial Creativity

2.2.1 Standard Definitions of Creativity And The Human Creative Process

As the understanding of how human creativity (*i.e.*, from a psychological source) and artificial creativity (*i.e.*, from an AI machine source) interact is of utmost importance for this research, it is necessary to clarify not only the differences between them on a deeper level, setting the ground for future discussions here presented, but also highlight which concepts and definitions are considered.

There is a broad discussion on the definition of creativity in the academic universe. Runco & Jaeger (2012) consider a bipartite definition, meaning that for something to be considered creative, it needs to be both original and effective, which goes in line with the classical Amabile (1996) definition: a work that is contextually appropriate and novel. Under a marketing context, Smith & Yang (2004) consider as criteria divergence, relevance and effectiveness. The divergence, as opposed to novelty or originality, is due to the idea that in advertising, there are certain patterns, or templates, that can be found on most successful pieces (Goldenberg, Mazursky & Solomon, 1999); and the relevance is a way to measure if it resonates. Since relevance can be fit into the idea of effectiveness or context appropriateness, and even if divergence does not necessarily mean novelty, it does require an original take that can only be accessed through creativity, this research makes no distinction between the definitions, assuming that the bipartite (Amabile, 1996; Runco & Jaeger, 2012) serves the purposes.

In order to understand the human creative process, it is important to delimitate the difference between divergent and convergent thinking. Divergent thinking is responsible for producing ideas, exploring multiple angles for a vaguely defined problem, while convergent thinking will narrow to a single solution for a well-defined problem (Mekern, Hommel & Sjoerds, 2019).

The human process of creative ideation is complex (Goldenberg, Mazursky & Solomon, 1999) and can be looked into from a variety of lenses. As this research seeks to compare and understand the correlation between artificial and human creativity, a view that represents a model with set stages that can be referenced is necessary for a better understanding. For this reason, Agnoli's (2024) take on the individual process of creativity was chosen to be represented here.

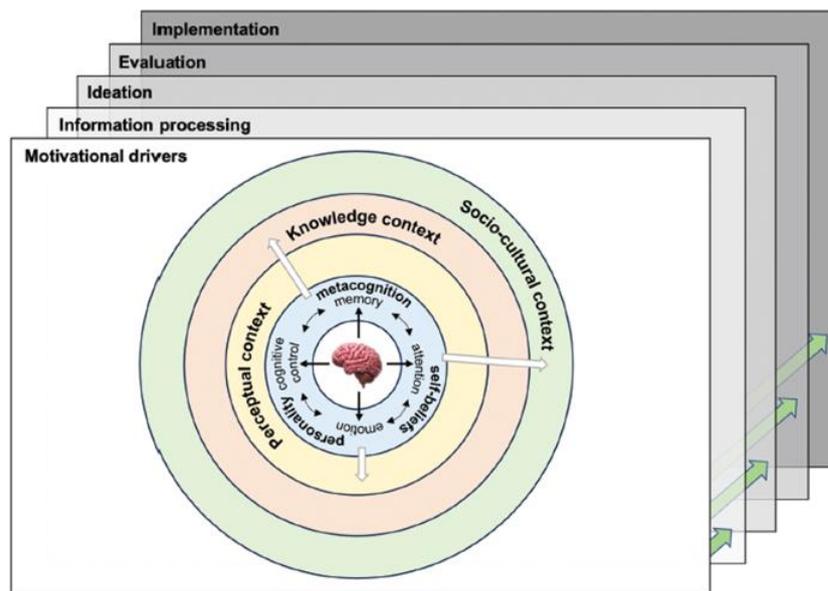


Figure 1. The Individual Differences HOListic (IDHOL) model for the creative process.

(Source: Agnoli, 2024, p. 189)

The divergent thinking, as exposed previously, is represented in this model by the Motivational Drivers, Information Processing, and Ideation Stages. Accordingly to Agnoli (2024), the Human Motivational Drivers (Layer1) are composed of the self, or ID (Freud, 1923), representing the psychobiological level that is responsible for the psychological behaviours associated with the creative process, and the contexts in which the self is inserted, being them the perceptual, the knowledge and the socio-cultural. To

form alternative ideas, the creative agent activates, consciously or not, the knowledge system (*i.e.*, Layer 2: Information Processing) that serves as the basis for Ideation (Layer 3). The originality of the ideas generated is associated with the capacity to process apparently irrelevant information for the task ahead; the bigger this capacity, the more original the ideas are (Agnoli, 2024), which connects with the original, or novel, definition of creativity (Amabile, 1996; Runco & Jaeger, 2012)

Convergent thinking is represented by Layers 4, Evaluation, and 5, Implementation, which are more conscious and rational (Agnoli, 2024), and comprise the second part of the creativity definition: effectiveness and contextually appropriate (Amabile, 1996; Runco & Jaeger, 2012).

2.2.2 Machine Creative Process (Output Generation)

Drawing a parallel from Agnoli's (2024) model presented in the previous section, an equivalent artificial creative process can be made:

The Motivational Drivers (Layer 1) presents the existence of the ID (Freud, 1923) in the human creative process, which is absent in AI, at least in its whole philosophical meaning. Still, for the purposes of creating a comprehensible comparison, the psychobiological level can be understood as the Algorithmic Drivers, which are composed with an immense dataset and complex computational models (Price, Alkire & Ahmadi, 2025), responsible for its creative-like behaviour. The Algorithm Drivers are what dictate how GenAI approach the training data, a pool of information (*i.e.*, texts, images, video, audios, etc.) where an AI model is first trained (OpenAI, 2025). The Knowledge System (Layer 2) is akin to the machine learning process, which is the part of AI responsible for gathering knowledge and learn from experiences (Bendaoud & El Mouloudi, 2024). To form new ideas in Layer 3, Ideation, AI systems draw upon the model's capacity of analysing vast amounts of data and producing a wide range of options, identifying, for instance, patterns and connections that are not obvious for humans (Deng, 2024). These three layers represent the divergent thinking of the machine.

While the convergent thinking aspect of AI creativity is also represented by the Layers 4, Evaluation, and 5, Implementation. These encompass the assessment of the outputs

against evaluation criteria and scoring systems, either pre-defined or acquired by feedback mechanics (Colton & Wiggins, 2012).

It is important to note that this is merely a model to aid comprehension. Human creativity and machine creativity operate in very different systems (Ismayilzada et al., 2024).

2.2.3 Differences Between Human And Artificial Creativity

Different authors perceive the difference, whether technical or philosophical, between human and AI creativity at different levels. This section will expose the most prominent points of view, often led by Garcia (2024), Runco (2025) and Deng (2024).

Creativity has been viewed as the epitome of humans' emotional resonance and complex cognition, although it seems that the creative abilities of AI have reached a matching point for the first time, mimicking the nuances of human creativity through its complex algorithms (Garcia, 2024). Colton & Wiggins (2012) reinforce this idea when they highlight that the convergent thinking of AI is not only determined by the settings previously input by the programmer, but also acquired through human-machine interactions, making it more human-like than ever.

However, while able to produce linguistic artefacts of creativity (e.g., poems, music, images), it still struggles with abstract thinking and creative problem-solving, producing incoherent outputs that lack diversity and originality (Ismayilzada et al., 2024).

Originality is one of the key elements of discussion, mainly for what could be described as semantic misunderstanding between the words “original”, “authentic” and “novel” being used as synonyms when referring to the definition of creativity (Amabile, 1996; Runco & Jaeger, 2012) for representing similar ideas, which was not a considerable problem before. To understand the further discussion, it is here set that “original” is used to describe something that is the first of its kind, not deriated by anything else; while “novel” is unusual, from a different approach or perspective; and “authentic” implies genuity, being true to itself (Cambridge University Press, n.d.).

With that stated, authenticity is impossible for AI (Runco, 2025), because it is attached to feelings and a real experience. Moreover, an AI output can seem to be original (Runco, 2025), maybe this is the reason why some authors state it is (Garcia, 2024; Colton & Wiggins, 2012), but AI outputs are completely built upon existing data and there is no evidence of an process that really creates something new, making AI originality a mirage (Runco, 2025; Deng, 2024). Still, an AI output can be novel because it is able to offer a different perspective or manner of arranging the information (Runco, 2025).

Another inherent problem highlighted by Runco (2025) is that AI is not able to find original problems on its own unless programmed to do so, while humans are naturally able to find, define and redefine problems creatively, more often than not, initiating the process by themselves (Runco, 2025; Deng, 2024).

Despite the disagreements, all authors here presented agree that AI is capable of doing extraordinary things and most of them understand the use of these machines in certain stages of the creative process as positive, appart form Deng (2024) who beleives that although AI can generate interesting outputs, it should not be used for representing a threat to human creativity.

2.2.4 New Concepts of Creativity

Another common point of agreement between most authors is the existence of AI creativity. As seen previously, Runco (2025) would argue that despite AI qualify as creative according to the standard definition (*i.e.*, novel (Amabile, 1996) being under the umbrella of original (Runco & Jaegar, 2012)), for the reasons exposed in the section above, AI creativity can only be classified as artificial creativity, since it cannot draw upon the same processes as humans.

Ismayilzada *et al.* (2024) posit that the core definition of creativity should be surprise. In her work, she presents the distinction between surprise from the creator in the creative process and from the spectator, and although the first one is impossible for a machine, other authors agree that AI output can be surprising (Deng, 2024; Runco, 2025). A problem with this definition is that creators can find it difficult to understand and disclose

their exact thoughts and feelings during the creative process and towards the artefact of the creation (Deng, 2024), causing an obstacle when addressing surprise.

The present moment is one of deep transformation, where the parameters of creativity are being revisited and amplified (Garcia, 2024). While a definition of creativity that separates human from machine is still being discussed, Deng (2024) draws a clear distinction, presenting the notion that only human creativity can be unique (*i.e.*, qualia: interaction between the human mind, its emotions and personal experiences; and the external world) and intentional (*i.e.*, making mindful deliberate choices).

2.3 Augmented Creativity

2.3.1 What Is Augmented Creativity

With the environmental overview of creativity in an era of artificial intelligence set in the previous chapter, with a concise understanding of the essential difference between human and machine creativity, it is now time to understand how they can co-exist and complement each other in the marketing professional's creative process. It has already been stated that AI is capable of generating human-like work with high standards of quality in a broad variety of scenarios. Many of those AI types, such as LLMs AND GenAI, have interfaces that facilitate their use by the general public (Liu *et al.*, 2025), which facilitated their spread outside the programmers and specialists to different spheres, including Marketing, where AI adoption is high (Foundation Inc, 2024; GPTZero, 2025; Marketing AI Institute, 2025).

Advertising Agencies, for instance, are adopting the use of GenAI to enhance creative ideation and boost production workflows (Cui, Liu & Yuan, 2025). The limitations of AI capabilities when it comes to creativity make it best when the artificial creative process is paired with a human creative process, and the benefits for the human side are likewise perceived: 80% of the marketers interviewed by Canva (2025) report that AI increases their productivity, and 77% say it increases their creativity. Because AI systems created for general use are equipped with natural language processing (NLP), which facilitates communication between humans and machines (Liu *et al.*, 2025), prompting (*i.e.*, the process of providing verbal instruction for AI) is accessible for non-programmers.

In those environments, where human and machine are paired in the creative process, it usually emerges from an intricate net of interaction between human and non-human actors, instead of being a single mental process. (Cui, Liu & Yuan, 2025). This represents a shift that is redefining creative as a collaborative approach between human and machine (Garcia, 2024). From that process, the name augmented creativity has emerged. It refers to the use of AI tools to potentialize creative activities, acting as a bridge for innovation in the most variable spheres of marketing, such as advertising, content production, design, etc. These tools stimulate imagination and represent new possibilities for innovative collaboration between human and artificial intelligence (Zünd et al., 2015), which is still in development.

2.3.2 Frameworks For Human And AI Interaction In Creativity

The rise of these interactions between humans and machines in creative processes has propelled researchers to understand the phenomena and organize them into comprehensible frameworks. The most relevant for the present research are the ones created by O’Toole & Horvát (2024), Cui, Liu & Yuan (2025), and Wan *et al.* (2024).

O’Toole & Horvát’s (2024) work is important to highlight the duality referring to the augmented creativity in the sense of the reliance on AI during the creative process. It is either used as a tool to support human creativity (*i.e.*, to assist human creators in exploring variations of the idea, supplying inspiration and automation of repetitive tasks), allowing humans to concentrate on the strategic and conceptual aspects of creativity (Sreynich, 2023); or a collaborative partner, where AI systems have an active part in the creative process, generating ideas, evaluating concepts, and even creating texts. This second interaction between humans and AI leads to a process of co-creation, where both parts contribute to the final result (Cui, Liu & Yuan, 2025; O’Toole & Horvát, 2024; Wan *et al.*, 2024). This duality will permeate the analysis of the other two models and take a central spot in the Findings and Analysis chapter.

The DesignAid, for instance, utilizes LLMs to assist designers in the exploration of new ideas using as a base the descriptions developed by the user (O’Toole & Horvát, 2024), demonstrating that augmented creativity does not limit itself to the assistance of human

creativity, it also presents new considerations, testing, as seen, the traditional concepts of creativity (Garcia, 2024).

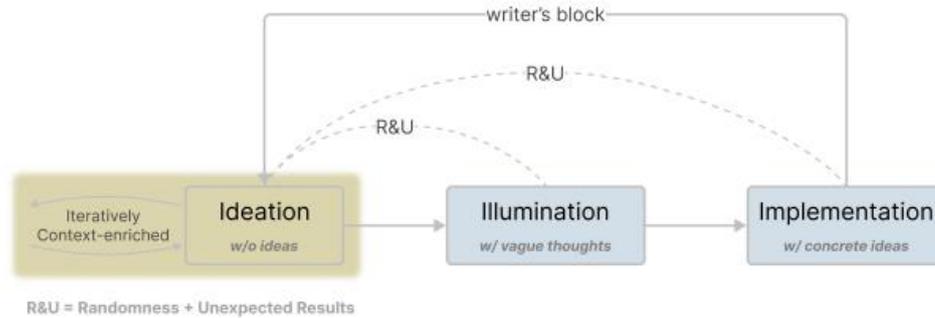


Fig. 1. The Human-AI co-creativity process that exists during prewriting when collaborating with LLMs.

(Source: Wan *et al.*, 2024, p.7)

When conducting a test to understand how LLM could be used in the pre-writing process (*i.e.*, formation of the first draft), Wan *et al.* (2024) identified three stages of the creative process in which AI was used: Ideation, used when participants had no or vague ideas. Illumination, when they had more thoughts on the matter, preferred to use AI to organise existing thoughts rather than using LLM for ideation. This is the only one of the three stages that characterises the use of AI as a tool (O’Toole & Horvát, 2024), but as either Ideation or Illumination culminated on the third stage, Implementation, which is also co-creative, since the idea articulated during the first stages was used to prompt the AI to write it down. The fact that most participants went through the three stages linearly also threatens O’Toole & Horvát (2024) distinction, hinting that it is possible that it can be made in different stages of the creative process, but when analysing the whole, it is likely that the distinction is not so clear and the co-creational use of the AI is prevalent.

Similarly, when interviewing professionals in the advertising industry, Cui, Liu & Yuan, (2025) found three main components in the framework created by analysing text-to-image GenAI interferences in the creative process of advertising agencies: co-inspiration, marked by the dialog between human and machine to explore and expand creative possibilities; co-generation, in which human and machine iteratively enhance each others creations through outputs; and co-calibration, where humans refine and contextualize AI output. When comparing with Wan *et al.*’s (2024), this framework is completely co-

creational (O'Toole & Horvát, 2024). Moreover, the co-inspiration component can fit the Ideation and Illumination proposed by the second research, while the Implementation is equivalent to co-generation. As *Wan et al.*'s framework restricts itself to the pre-writing phase, it is expected that no co-calibration equivalent was proposed. Still, they present enough similarities to infer that, whether it is text-to-text or text-to-image, two of the most important assets to marketing, GenAI, the creative process is the same.

2.4 Practical Aspects of AI Adoption on Creative Processes

2.4.1 AI Tools Utilized By Marketers

AI is becoming an essential part of professionals in marketing-related areas, offering new ways of aiding these professionals in the content creation, copywriting, and design, for instance. This section draws from Telebenieva's (2024) work and a series of surveys to outline the most practical and tangible aspects of AI use in the context of this research.

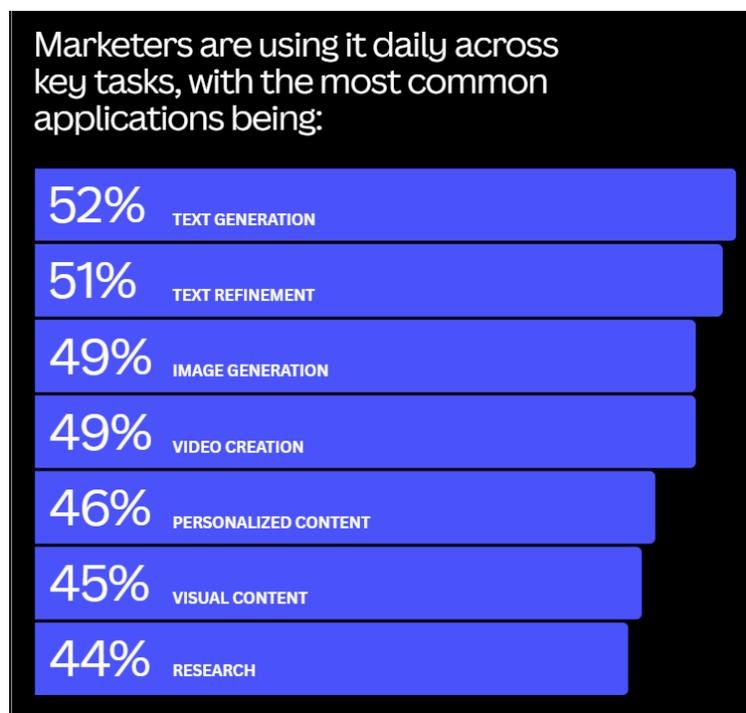
Starting with the specific tools, Telebenieva (2024) identified the main AI tools utilized in Marketing and Public Relations. Although most of these tools are not projected specifically for marketing, some AI-based platforms are highly relevant for this area. ChatGPT is the most popular tool among marketers, used by over 60% of this population (Folger & O'Brien, 2024; Harpa AI, 2023). It is employed more broadly to generate texts, plan content strategies, and optimize SEO, while Jasper is more commonly used for the creation of advertisements. Frace and Fireflies help monitor the emotional tone of the brand across social media platforms and provide the possibility of reducing mechanical tasks, such as scheduling posts. Grammarly, used by 58% of marketers (Folger & O'Brien, 2024), is used to create language accuracy, offering translations and grammar optimization. Lastly, Midjourney, used by 54% of marketers (Harpa AI, 2023), is seen as a tool for creative visualization, with moodboards, for instance, which, although not directly related to writing activities, find their place in the creative process.

Other tools that make significant appearances in usage are the ones with embedded AI assets, such as Microsoft Co-Pilot and Canva (Folger & O'Brien, 2024). DALL-E is the second most used image GenAI (Harpa AI, 2023). There are so many options that marketers actually face a problem of tool overload (Canva, 2025).

2.4.2 The Tasks In Which AI Tools Are Employed

The previous section presents tools serve professionals in various tasks across the scope of marketing activities. Apart from using specific tools, AI also supports other activities related to marketing, such as research tasks, list building, audience feedback analysis and proposal development together with strategic planning and content creation (Telebenieva, 2024), even if they are categorized as “tools”, this elude to a use that makes AI both a tool and a co-creator (O’Toole & Horvát, 2024).

The most used appliances of AI in the marketers creative process are for text and image (Canva, 2025, Folger & O’Brien, 2024), but it is also important to note that one in four marketers use GenAI for ideation, such as the generation of new campaigns angles and enhancing the planning process of strategies (Folger & O’Brien, 2024). Canva (2025) also runs an extensive survey, attesting that marketers mainly use AI for text generation, text refinement, image generation, video creation, personalized content, visual content, and research.



(Source: Canva, 2025, p.17)

Another recurrent use for AI that can be less intuitive is the use of AI to overcome writer's block, appearing in several research papers on the topic of augmented creativity (Doshi & Hauser, 2024; Goke Rauf, Aluko & Olaseinde, 2023; Wan et al., 2024). Although it does not surface in any of the surveys, it is also important to note. Moreover, one of the reasons for the use of AI among marketers is the reduction of time spent on tasks and increased quality of the outcome (Canva; 2025; Folger & O'Brien, 2024).

Nevertheless, the creative process calls for human oversight with the most recent technological developments. AI can support the generation of novel ideas and text production automation, but creativity, empathy, and human comprehension are imperative for the production of efficient texts (Provasi, 2023), calling for the co-creational relationship exposed in the previous section.

2.4.3 Prompting

Prompt engineering is how humans strategically communicate with AI, formulating instructions in a way that gathers the full potential of those tools (Bakhtiyari, 2024). In more general lines, it is known that when marketers prompt, it is mainly categorized as informative prompts, meaning those which provide contextual information, but there is also a considerable amount of those with zero contextual information, being straightforwardly asking for something, especially when it comes to simpler tasks (Tafesse & Wood, 2025). The present section discusses two different ways of approaching this task when integrating the use of AI in the creative processes, mainly represented by Acar (2024) and White et al. (2023). It is also important to highlight that this theme is of utmost importance, since the quality of the prompt (i.e., the ability of the marketer in producing them) is tied to the quality of the output (Bakhtiyari, 2024).

Acar's (2024) approach to prompting takes into consideration that natural language processing (NLP) has reached a level of sophistication, so marketers do not need much effort to communicate with the machine (Liu *et al.*, 2025), once it can generate complex outputs from basic instructions (Acar, 2024). His framework approach consists of a problem-solving logic, being the first step problem diagnosis; problem decomposition, which consists of breaking complex problems into smaller sub-problems; problem reframing, referring to testing new perspectives to make it more clearly understandable; and problem constraint, which is contextualizing the problem and providing boundaries for the output.

White *et al.* (2023) approach to prompting is fairly divergent from Acar's (2024), in the sense that it is a lot more focused on the prompts themselves, systematically analyzing prompts and grouping them into cataloged clusters. One of those clusters is the "flipped interaction pattern" (White *et al.*, 2023. P6.), in which the user of LLM inputs a prompt that shifts the lead of the conversation to the machine (*e.g.* "I want you to create a mother's day post. Ask me questions that will help you accurately complete the task in a way that resonates with my brand and my audience."). Another broadly used of those clusters is "the persona pattern" (White *et al.*, 2023. P7.), used to contextualize AI in the sense of telling the software that the output should have a specific point of view from a well known figure, job occupation, type of person, etc. (*e.g.* "Act as a senior marketing manager to aid me in the development of a content strategy."). It goes well in line with Nigam (2025), who contextualises this approach for marketers, providing set templates according to different situations and needs.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

2.5.1. Advantages and Concerns

The fast integration of AI in the creative industries, especially in marketing, where its use in the creative process is widespread, is not surging without ethical complications. Tools such as ChatGPT, Jasper, and Midjourney offer marketing professionals unprecedented capacity to generate persuasive texts, create images, understand new perspectives, and automate tasks. However, these advancements come with ethical challenges that require attention. This section presents the most prominent issues related to the use of AI by professionals in the marketing related areas.

The concerns are felt by the marketers just as much as the FOMO (fear of missing out). On one side, AI is seen as a democratising force (Garcia, 2024), a co-creator who facilitates the creative process (Cui, Liu & Yuan, 2025), reduces time and enhances the quality of the work (Folger & O'Brien, 2024). From the other, 72% of marketers in diverse areas believe that AI could lead to a homogenised marketing (Canva, 2025). The consequence of this paradoxical view is the surge of complex ethical and moral questioning (Garcia, 2024).

2.5.2. Authorship

One of the main ethical concerns related to the subject is authorship and originality. As AI models are trained in big pre-existing databases, they are not capable of generating something truly new (Deng, 2024; Runco, 2025). The distinction between creation and creation is becoming increasingly ambiguous; it is now difficult to draw the line of who owns the artefact, being the candidates the programmer of the AI, the human who used the AI, the AI itself (Garcia,2024) or the owner of the data in which the machine was trained. This question is still open to debate and requires regulation, especially considering that AI is growing its integration into the creative processes (Provasi, 2023). There is an increasing need to review copyright laws and produce new legal statutes that are fair and consider the nuances of AI usage in the creative process.

2.5.3. Machine Bias

38% of the marketers attest to being concerned about machine bias (Folger & O'Brien, 2024), which is a significant concern, once the AI inherits the previous preconceptions of the database, meaning that if the database can contain harmful stereotypes, for instance, the content generated by the AI may perpetuate these in its outputs. In marketing, this can lead to offensive and/or discriminatory messages, harming the brand's reputation. Both developers and users should monitor possible biases to ensure that the AI systems are trained with diverse and inclusive data (Tafesse & Wien, 2024; Garcia, 2024).

2.5.4. Transparency Issues

Another issue in the ethical field related to artificial intelligence systems is their lack of transparency (Deng, 2024). More often than not, it is difficult to understand how the models arrived at particular responses, making it difficult to spot and fix biases (Tafesse & Wien, 2024). This "black box" nature of AI decision-making leaves open questions on trustworthiness. In marketing, where transparency is so important, the opacity of the AI systems can erode consumers' confidence. This also raises the lack of control users have over the output (Folger & O'Brien, 2024).

2.5.5. Job Displacement

The concern about the job market is a recurrent subject, while 25% of marketers are afraid of job displacement (Folger & O'Brien's, 2024), another 68% have more general worries about AI's impact on marketing roles, which causes resistance in the adoption of AI machines and a perceived devaluation of traditional skills (Cui, Liu & Yuan, 2025). Although researchers agree that AI is not sophisticated enough to substitute humans in the creative areas (Den, 2024; Runco, 2025), humans are losing their unique advantage in this field (Liu *et al.*, 2025), especially in marketing, where creativity is accompanied by templates (Goldenberg, Mazursky & Solomon, 1999) and a large set of rules. Even though, defenders of the use of AI believe that it enables them to concentrate more on the subjective pursuits and could create more job opportunities (Liu *et al.* 2025).

2.5.6. Algorithmic Aversion

Algorithmic aversion is the name given to the phenomenon of the public's negative bias when it comes to artefacts generated or co-created by AI (Liu *et al.*, 2025). It tends to occur with more noticeability in creative domains, while the opposite, algorithm appreciation, is observed when related to objective areas (Folger & O'Brien's, 2024). Liu *et al.* (2025) warn, although, that it is not enough of a force to prevent consumption of AI products and predict that if the public remains indifferent, they will become passive consumers of machine-generated creative artefacts.

2.6 Research Gaps

Although there is an extensive effort to define human and artificial creativity (Deng, 2024; Runco, 2025; Garcia; 2024), there is no indication of how marketers understand this difference and how it affects their day-to-day creative tasks at work.

A lot of the ground on the co-creational process evaluated from the researcher point of view, without taking marketers impressions and feelings into consideration, the few that brush on the subject are from the artistic universe (e.g. Garcia, 2024; Liu *et al.*, 2025). Although there's no real distinction between artistic creativity and the creativity required for marketing, they are fairly distinct realms and their artifacts serve distinct purposes,

making it still important to evaluate phenomena applied to specific field. A copywriting text, for example, is fundamentally different from a poem, for example. Moreover, there is a scarcity of material on the matter, the few that can be found aim to create frameworks (e.g., Pagan & Wind, 2025; Gonzales, 2024), evaluate the technical quality of the final product, such as copy (*i.e.*, a piece of advertising writing), or focus on a single area (e.g., Advertising), both seen on Hunt & Kerr's (2025) work, for instance. It also concentrates majorly on the ability of AI to automate tasks and increase productivity (Grilli & Pedota, 2023; Provasi, 2023). It is also important to analyse the difference between the AI use as tool or as a co-creator from a marketer perspective and understand how they view this difference and how this affects their sense of authorship. Cui, Liu & Yuan (2025) brilliantly explore the co-creative relationship between humans and machines, focusing on tex-to-image GenAI, but overlook the professionals' view and understanding of the process, being this the major gap addressed by this research.

When it comes to the practical aspects of AI use in the creative process of marketers, (Telebenieva, 2024) creates an extensive list of tools, but most of the tasks in which they are employed are covered by surveys (Canva, 2024; Folger & O'Brien, 2024), lacking an academical view of the process and qualitative input from the marketers that are using these tools on a daily basis. Moreover, the sources presented in prompting, when applied to the marketing context, are instructions, rather than evaluations of how marketers approach the matter. Nigam (2025), although, looks into prompts shared by marketers in social media platforms, but himself flags that this might not represent the average marketer, once for a person to be posting about it, this needs to be a theme of high interest of them.

Lastly, ethical, bias, and authorship themes have been discussed in the literature (Sreynich, 2023; Tafesse & Wien, 2024), but not how marketers approach those questions in their activities and how relevant it is for them, instead of being relevant for the academic discussion.

2.7 Chapter Conclusion

The integration of AI in the creative fields, especially marketing, has opened new pathways to innovation. AI can be both a support tool, by doing research and automating

simpler tasks, and a co-creator in the process of writing. The concept of Augmented Creativity highlights AI's potential to complement, instead of substitute, human creativity, ensuring that creative professionals can concentrate on the strategic and conceptual tasks, but also work on them with the interaction with AI.

Even with this positive side, the growing use of AI in the creative industries brings ethical complications, including authorship, biases, and transparency. Although the content generated with AI can optimize marketing efforts, it lacks intentionality and human emotional intelligence, for instance, essential to an impactful narrative and connection. The challenge is to develop AI systems that are not only powerful, but also ethically responsible in the sense of allowing humans to understand and interfere in the decision making.

Another barrier to research in this field is that AI is still growing and changing at a faster pace than academic research can follow, which means that the integration between copywriter and AI is still evolving.

3. Research Questions

Driven by the theory presented beforehand and using the research gaps setting as guidance to approach the goals of this research (Rouse *et al.*, 2025) and generate relevant content for the academic discussion, the aim is that these questions help to produce knowledge necessary and add to the discussion on the use of AI by marketers in creative contexts, guiding so the research methods in the next session (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

3.1 Research Questions

The main research question is:

- How is the impact of the AI tools in the creative processes perceived by marketers?

Other questions this research seeks to answer:

- Do marketers fully understand the interference of AI in their creative processes?
- Is AI use part of the daily work-life or circumstantial? If the second, in which circumstances is it used?
- How do marketers self-evaluate the quality of their work with and without AI aid?
- Is AI used as a tool or an active collaborator in the creative process of marketing?
- What is the general feel towards AI tools in the marketing creative context from the professionals' perspective?
- How do marketers approach prompting?

3.1 Research Objectives

The main objective of this research is to understand how AI tools are being used in practice by marketers in the process of creating images, texts and generating ideas and their impressions on this process.

Objectives breakdown:

- To understand the marketers point of view in the discussion of artificial and human creativity.
- To comprehend if marketers have clarity in which stages of their creative process AI is being used and how.
- To assess the level of interference AI have in their productions and how they perceive it.
- To analyse qualitatively for which tasks AI is employed and how marketers communicate with those tools on the day-to-day workflow.
- To identify how ethical issues affect their AI usage.
- To assess the self-perceived impact on the quality of their creations.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological aspects of the present research and is structured following the guidelines from Saunders *et al.* (2023)'s "research onion" and Braun & Clarke (2022)'s guide for thematic analysis research. It is set from the outside to the inside, comprising the following chapters: Research Philosophy, Research Approach, Methodological Choice, Research Strategy, Time Horizon, Data Collection, Data Analysis, and Ethics.

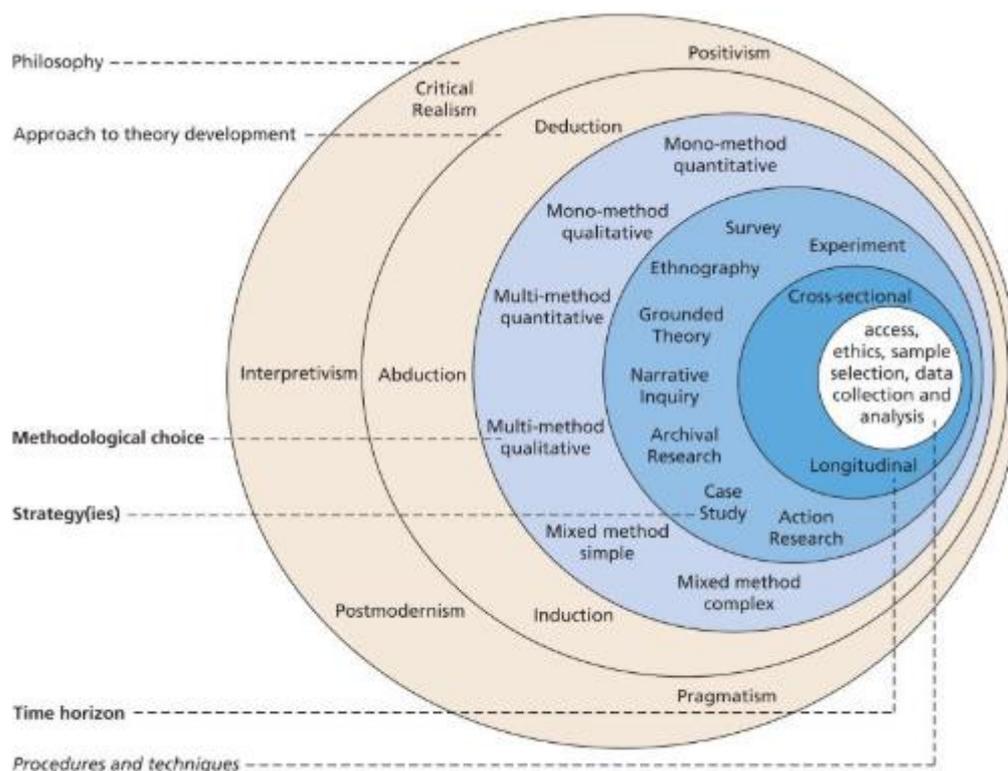


Figure 5.1 The research onion
Source: © 2022 Mark NK Saunders; developed from Saunders et al., 2019.

4.2 Research Philosophy

The epistemological basis for this research is constructivist, as it recognises that knowledge is a dynamic and continuous process, shaped by social and professional interactions, industry patterns, practical experiences, and broader discussions (Bryman, 2016), which is exactly what the objective of this research seeks to understand, practical experiences of the marketers when applying AI in their creative processes. Specifically, as stated by Bryman (2016), constructivism postulates that knowledge is socially constructed by human interactions, language, and shared experiences, which aligns with Creswell & Poth (2018), emphasising that knowledge is built through human interaction and social experiences. This is particularly important when the angle of this research is to comprehend how marketers see themselves in this setting of an evolving phenomenon, and how the external environment applies to the internal conceptions.

Therefore, as highlighted above, the research is going to focus on the subjective interpretations of the participants regarding their interactions with AI tools in their creative process, excluding the possibilities of a realist, critical realist or materialist ontology; idealism and pragmatic ontology are also not accurate, because this research comprises the point of view of diverse participants and the research, recognising the existence of multiple realities, which is accepted only in the relativists ontology, the one chosen for this context (Al-Ababneh, 2020). Moreover, it will adopt an interpretative perspective, acknowledging the point of view of the copywriters over their own activities, recognising that their comprehension of the role of the AI tools shapes their understanding of the role of AI over copywriting (Bryman, 2016). With that, implying that this research adopts a big-Q approach as opposed to a small-q, once the first emphasises interpretation and rejects purely positivist, small-q assumptions (Nicmanis & Spurrier, 2025). Clarity on this positioning is particularly important, since moving forward, AI will be utilised to assist in data analysis, and philosophy behind the research is crucial for the tool to understand the views of the researcher and produce relevant output (Nicmanis & Spurrier, 2025).

4.3 Research Approach

This research is exploratory and employs an inductive approach, building the findings through the participants' narratives (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2023), matching the research objective that is to understand how AI tools are being used in practice by marketers in the process of creating images, texts and generating ideas and their impressions on this process. It also aligns with the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022), since this type of data analysis takes as its source the point of view of the participants, as it was important to remain open to the insights and unexpected subjects that emerged from the interviews. A deductive approach would employ an existing hypothesis or theory to be tested, which was not the case (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2023).

4.4 Methodological Choice

This research will adopt an exploratory qualitative methodology to investigate how marketers integrate AI in their creative workflow and how AI influence is perceived by them in their practices. Given the relatively recent evolution of the AI influence in copywriting, a qualitative approach is particularly appropriate. As highlighted by Creswell & Poth (2018), qualitative research is especially useful for exploring complex phenomena in a natural ambient, allowing for a deeper comprehension of the lived experiences of the participants, and allowing for the necessary flexibility required to capture emerging subjects and new perceptions. Moreover, it is consistent with the chosen philosophy and approach for the research, emphasising a deep analysis instead of the breadth of participants.

As much as quantitative research would not be the correct methodology to grasp on the nuances of the research questions, this dissertation does recognize that qualitative research a) Requires flexibility for insights throughout the process (Rouse *et al.*, 2025); b) the inherent openness of the qualitative research can make it difficult to produce knowledge that is clear, accurate and applicable to other contexts (Rouse *et al.*, 2025).

The Measures and Apparatus section holds a more detailed description of how this research aims to navigate the problems described. Furthermore, the research question implies that we can now understand something about the relationship between marketers and AI, and creatives and AI, that we couldn't before.

4.5 Research Strategy

The interviews follow the semi-structured methodology, as they are a flexible tool to generate a deeper understanding (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018), which aligns with the purpose of the research, since it allows direct interaction with the participants, and the researcher can explore their experiences in detail, as stressed by Creswell & Poth (2018). Differently from quantitative questionnaires, which restrict the answers to previously defined categories, interviews can offer a better fit to explore complex developments in their natural ambient (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). As stated by Brinkmann & Kvale (2018), interviews are guided by a set of previously defined questions, but the interviewer has the freedom to further discuss some topics, allowing for questions and clarifications, adapting to the answers of the interviewee. Among the types of interviews, the semi-structured was chosen by combining the advantages of both unstructured (*i.e.*, depth) and structured (*i.e.*, facilitation of the data analysis) (Surawy-Stepney *et al.*, 2023), and the focused group interviews would not fit the time constraint for this research, apart from being prone to domination by certain participants or influenced by group biases, which could compromise the capture of the individual experiences of marketers (Gill *et al.*, 2008).

The semi-structured interviews provided a platform for the participants to articulate their real processes of work, decision-making strategies, and personal experiences with AI integration, which also aligns with Belina (2022), in which is stated that this kind of interview is useful to hold a detailed comprehension of the opinion and experience of the participants; and Creswell & Poth (2018) with the utilization of multiple data sources.

4.6 Time Horizon

The research follows a cross-sectional time horizon, capturing participants' views at one point in time, considering the fast development of the context (i.e., how marketers use AI machines in their creative process)(Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2023).

4.7 Data Collection

4.7.1 Participants And Sampling

The research uses a combination of criterion sampling and snowball sampling (Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024).

Inclusion criteria:

- Practical experience with AI tools in professional copywriting (e.g., ChatGPT, Jasper, Copy.ai).
- Active involvement in strategic decisions regarding copywriting.
- Representation of freelancing, agency, and in-house contexts.

Snowball sampling will be used to expand the pool, while initial participants will be recruited via LinkedIn and professional networks. To mitigate bias, the first three participants will be chosen from distinct professional backgrounds.

Target sample size: 10–15 professional copywriters, with the final number depending on data saturation (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

The emphasis of this research on thematic analysis brings some particularities to the process of selecting participants. As highlighted by Braun & Clarke (2022), there's no ideal sampling strategy; what matters most is the coherence in design thinking related to the research itself. Still, according to the authors, the sample should be chosen by its alignment with the reflection of how relevant sources of information are in terms of representation of the total possible participants, the population.

Therefore, the participants of the research were recruited using a combination of criteria and snowball sampling (Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024).

The criterion sampling regards specific criteria that the participants need to meet to be included in the study. For this research, the criteria are:

- Practical experience on the use of AI tools in a professional context of marketing activities. These tools can include, not exclusively, ChatGPT, Jasper, and Midjourney.
- Represent the professional contexts of freelancing, agencies, and/or in-house.

This criterion ensured that the data collected is relevant and trustworthy because it comes from direct experience and knowledge in the intersection between AI and marketing in creative processes(Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024).

The snowball sampling was adopted in association with criterion sampling to expand the group of participants who met the criteria of the research, by identifying participants and asking them to signal to other potential participants with similar characteristics (Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024).

The target was to interview 10 professionals in marketing-related areas, selected to capture a broader spectrum of the activity and perceptions on the AI integration with copywriting.

The decision on the sample size was based on the Braun & Clarke (2022) text, from which it can be drawn the fact that studies with a broader aim tend to require the inclusion of more data and participants. Still, from the same authors, it is described that research is rarely conducted under perfect circumstances, and matters such as time should involve negotiating competing priorities. Therefore, despite the target, this research analysed the data collected from 5 interviews, which were within the possibilities of the researcher during the period of the data collection, considering time, skills available and difficulties met. Initial recruitment took place through the researcher’s professional network and spread through snowball sampling.

Participant	Position	AI usage frequency	Employment Context
#1	Owns a company that provides AI marketing solutions for businesses.	Everyday	In-house

#2	Senior, social media.	Everyday	Agency
#3	Junior, social media.	Everyday	Agency
#4	Senior marketing strategist.	Everyday	In-house
#5	Junior, designer.	More than once a week.	Agency, Freelancer

4.7.2 Measures And Apparatus

Semi-structured interviews were the main data collection tool, projected to obtain detailed and useful insights, keeping the focus on the objectives of the research. As highlighted by Brinkmann & Kvale (2018), in those types of interviews, the meaning is constructed by the interviewer and interviewee, with answers being negotiated and shaped by human interaction during the interview. To aid in this, questions were created following the research objectives, as seen in Appendix 1 Interview Questions. Goke Rauf *et al.* (2023) explored some of those topics in quantitative research, although said questions were developed for a qualitative questionnaire.

The interview questions of the present research were previously discussed among marketing professionals, and a test interview was run. The most interesting adaptation was question number six, which was initially designed to evaluate whether marketers were aware of a co-creational structure similar to that proposed by Cui, Liu & Yuan (2025). It was viewed as too complex, so the question evolved to O'Toole & Horvát's (2024) division between tool and co-creation. That was also difficult to illustrate without interfering in the answer of the respondent, so it came to a final version that exposed passive and active participation of AI tools in the creative process.

All Interviews will be recorded in audio, transcribed, and kept in a safe space to ensure the quality and integrity of the data.

4.7.3 Procedure

In this section, it will be discussed how the following procedures occurred.

- Recruitment of participants: Potential participants were recruited primarily from the researcher's professional network, being evaluated on the criteria established above and receiving information about the research before providing informed consent. This primary recruitment was followed by the snowball sampling methodology, which indeed implies a certain homogeneity of the group and facilitated the creation of themes. Knowing that this also might induce bias from a certain group, as interviewees usually indicate someone they are close to and might have similar views, the first three participants were chosen from different backgrounds.

The primary participants were #1, #2 and #4, and the snowball sampling has shown itself to be both ineffective and time-consuming, since the research had to wait for an interview to reach the next person, who would schedule the meeting in a week's time.

- Interview: The questions were open and clear, elaborated according to Brinkmann & Kvale (2018) (Appendix 1), with complementary questions through active hearing techniques. The collection of the data initially would take place remotely through digital platforms, such as Zoom or Google Meet, to facilitate global participation while keeping the face-to-face format of the interview, aligning with the digital context of the research. Although researches were conducted through Teams, since the platform provides a simultaneous transcription through an AI appliance, which facilitated the process of data analysis. Furthermore, scheduling problems with time zones happened more than once and two interviews needed to be rescheduled. At first contact, all potential participants demonstrated interest in participating, but four of them never attended the meeting, nor provided any explanation.

In practice, many interviewees decided to leave their cameras disabled, and the duration time varied from 12 minutes to 60 minutes, not due to the interest in the subject, but the proficiency with AI tools. Those who understood more of the context took longer interviews.

- Data security: All the recordings will be transcribed in full and the personal

information removed. Participants will receive the transcribed version for approval and analysis.

4.8 Data Analysis

The analytical strategy chosen for this research is the Thematic Analysis, which, accordingly to Braun & Clarke (2022), is especially adequate for research trying to understand the perspectives of particular groups in a certain context about specific phenomena. Considering the research questions, it is possible to infer that the particular group of marketers, in the context of their work activities related to creativity, is being studied on the use of AI tools and their development.

It is important to note that Thematic Analysis also includes the philosophical meta-theoretical views of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Li et al, 2025), and that the Big Q nature of this analysis makes the mere induction of facts through data impossible (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Furthermore, this represents the major flaw of this strategy, because it is inherent to the author's interpretation. Still, this was the chosen methodology for representing the most adequate solution for what the research is trying to achieve.

The data collected from the semi-structured interviews were analysed through a thematic analysis approach following the six-phase model by Braun & Clarke (2006), which offers a systematic and flexible approach to identifying and interpreting patterns in the data from the interviews. It is important to highlight that this process is not linear, but recursive, allowing for movement between the phases as necessary.

The six phases are:

1. Familiarisation with the data: Revolving around the immersion in the data to obtain a broad comprehension. In the context of this research, this means repeatedly reading the transcriptions and taking notes on initial observations. During this stage, the researcher would read the transcriptions provided by Teams AI while listening to the interview recording, fixing any mistakes and reflecting upon the narrative of the interviewee.

2. Coding: Labels were attributed to significant aspects of the data that are relevant to the research questions, capturing interpretations. They've formed a list of direct quotes under the same label, such as "Tool vs. Co-creation" and "Accuracy of AI".
3. Searching for themes: The themes were identified as coherent patterns within the data and labels, also relevant to the research questions. It started with the labels being prompted to ChatGPT, which organised the first draft of the themes.
4. Reviewing themes: This was applied to ensure precision on the coded excerpts and the whole data. The process evaluates if the themes tell a convincing story about the data and defines the nature of each theme and was especially important for this research, since the first themes were generated by AI.
5. Defining and naming themes: Detailed analysis of each theme and identifying the essence of each to attribute precise names. This stage was done against the research objectives.
6. Writing up: As an essential part of the analytical process, writing encompasses the combination of narratives with representative transcripts to present a unified report, contextualised by the existing literature.

To assist in the analysis of the data and the creation of themes, ChatGPT was employed accordingly to the framework presented by Hitch (2023). Nicmanis & Spurrier (2025) also propose six questions to ensure that the use of AI is adequate (p.6), which can be applied to this research in the sense that it aligns with the logic of the framework. Moreover, considering the post-positivist nature of this research, AI can be considered as another lens to analyse the data, taking into context the social biases acquired through AI training processes (Nicmanis & Spurrier, 2025). The same text also raises concerns about the ethical use of AI in research, which will be discussed in more depth in the ethics session of this chapter.

Furthermore, Braun & Clarke (2022) consider thematic analysis an art, instead of a science, highlighting creativity as the main tool for this process, which is a match to the research itself, once it analyses the creative processes when assisted by AI tools.

🌸 Suggested Themes from Your Codes

Below is a table proposing **candidate themes** based on your coded labels and patterns in the data. I've grouped and interpreted your codes into clusters that tell a cohesive story aligned with your research questions.

Candidate Theme	Related Labels	What It Captures
1. Blurred Boundaries Between Human and Machine Creativity	Creativity, Tool vs. Co-creation, What Changed with AI	Participants often describe AI as a tool, but use it in ways that resemble co-creation. This theme explores how the notion of authorship and creativity is evolving.
2. AI as a Practical Aid in the Copywriting Workflow	When and Where AI is Applied, Frequency of Use, Approach to Prompting	How AI is embedded into everyday routines, particularly to improve speed, organize thoughts, or assist in content generation.
3. Prompting as a Professional Skill	Approach to Prompting, Proficiency with AI Tools	The sophistication of prompt usage and participants' learning curve reflects a new kind of literacy in creative work.
4. Ambivalence Around Quality and Control	Accuracy of AI, Quality of Work, What Changed with AI	Mixed views about the quality of AI output and the degree of human oversight still required. Trust is conditional and effort to "fix" outputs is common.
5. Tensions Around AI's Ethical and Professional Role	Ethics, Consciousness Level, AI Inside the Companies	Concerns about job displacement, transparency, hype, misinformation, and corporate responsibility. This theme captures participants' ethical reflections and industry-level anxieties.
6. AI as a Strategic Asset in Advertising and Performance	Advertising, When and Where AI is Applied	Specific to performance marketing and media buying—AI's role in optimizing ads, creating data-driven creatives, and delivering performance at scale.

(Sample answer from ChatGPT)

4.9 Ethics

A central consideration in the ethics of the research is the respect for participants' agency (Li, Furlong & Lester, 2025), offering informed consent both in written and verbal form. The researcher strongly believes that all participants understood the terms of participation and were aware of the content of the interview, since no problems in this sphere occurred. The limitations presented by the participants were respected without questioning (*e.g.*, refusal to turn the camera on for the interview).

It is important to note that the thematic analysis does not require an extensive ethical discussion (Braun & Clarke, 2022), especially considering that all participants in the interviews were adults and not in vulnerable situations. No sensitive data was shared with third parties, and anything that could be classified as sensitive information was removed from transcripts before sharing with AI for thematic analysis (Nicmanis & Spurrier, 2025). Still on the matter of AI use, it is known that they lack creativity, personal style, and the qualia necessary to interpret data; therefore, it was used as an initial step in the creation of themes (Hitch, 2024).

4.10 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter is structured through Saunders' (2023) framework, under a constructivist philosophy, an inductive approach, qualitative design, semi-structured interviews, and thematic analysis. It is also described how participants were recruited, the intricacies of data collection and the analytical strategy employed, also addressing the ethical considerations.

By integrating planning with execution, flagging obstacles faced where possible, this chapter provides a foundation for the presentation of the findings below.

5. Findings And Analysis

5.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter holds the key findings from the data collected, matching the information to the research objectives presented above. The collection of these sections answer the research question “How is the impact of the AI tools in the creative processes perceived by marketers?” in a multilevel manner, taking into consideration the granularity of the informations and unexpected findings that aids in answering this question in a more broad manner. It was found that due to the fact that marketers are living this change, there is still not much philosophical preoccupation, at least, not more than the concern with more practical matters. All the participants, however, have a generally positive view of the implementation of AI in their creative workflows.

5.2 Human and Artificial Creativity

One of the research objectives of the present dissertation is to understand the marketer's point of view in the discussion of artificial and human creativity. In Runco (2025)'s research, it is suggested that human creativity and artificial creativity can be confused, even though they are fundamentally distinct — as discussed previously in this paper. The findings of this research are in agreement with that. While all interviewees recognise the importance of human creativity, their understanding of what differentiates it from artificial creativity is blurred.

Interviewee #1, for instance, says that creativity is inherently human, but describes creativity as “the ability to connect ideas to create something unique”, soon saying that “there’s no better tool to connect ideas than AI”, implying that the distinction is not clear for him.

Another clear example of that is the use of the word “insight” as an adjective to the machine output. Insight is defined as a new understanding of a situation that suddenly comes to one’s mind and is accompanied by surprise and a positive feeling (Tulver et al., 2023), implying that it is both an unconscious process and related to feelings, making it impossible for AI. It could have been taken as a mere misconception from interviewee

#1, if interviewee #3 hadn't used the same word in a very similar context. With that stated, taken as premiss that a machine is not able to have an insight, it is possible to rise the hypothesis that the insight is felt by the human operating the machine, triggered by the novelty of the output and the lack of their own conscious thought to achieve that understanding, evoking the positive feelings associated to insight as if the output was produced by their own mind. The very use of the word "insight" further adds to the sense that it is hard to separate human creativity from the artificial creativity conceptually. Tulver et al (2023, p1.) also use "seems correct" to characterise an insight, which is very close to a machine output in the sense that it is made to seem correct, but not necessarily is.

Besides these examples, there were no signs of deeper thought on the matter, highlighting a hypothesis hinted at in the Research Gaps section that, although this discussion is highly relevant academically, in the practical world, it was sufficient for the participants to have the perception that their abilities were superior to the AI, without getting too attached to the intricacies of what determined this superiority in a deeper level.

5.3 Creative Process and AI

The second objective of this research (*i.e.*, to comprehend if marketers have clarity in which stages of their creative process AI is being used and how) is addressed in this section, and the answer for that is more complex than a simple yes or no could comprise. In summary, the participants seem to understand how they use AI in practice and in which stages of the creative process when realising different creative tasks, but they are not fully aware of the processes taking place and do not correctly distinguish the use of these machines as a tool or co-creator (O'Toole & Horvát, 2024). This research aimed at testing Cui, Liu & Yuan, (2025)'s co-inspiration, co-generation, and co-calibration framework, but very soon, in the testing phase of the interview questions, it was flagged as being too complex. The confusion of the participants facing the dual tool or co-creator only confirms that the decision was asserted.

The answer interpreted by the researcher to this matter is that AI is used, by all interviewees, as both a tool and co-creator, pending to each of the two in degrees that vary from each person. Interviewee #1 illustrated mainly the use as a tool, but also

described situations where AI depicted a co-creator role; #4 demonstrated a balance between the two uses; #2, #3 and #5 described a fully co-creational process, with very little display of it being used exclusively as a tool. Interestingly enough, though, when explicitly asked if they used Artificial Intelligence as a tool or as a co-creator, all of the participants answered that they use it as a tool.

Interviewer #4 described “I use AI to generate ideas (for copywriting pieces and pitches) and then use it (the output) as template, making some changes” which is an example of co-creation, because they used the text generated by the AI as a template and changes some parts, imbuing this text with their own thoughts and ideas, but still keeping something from the machine.

The same happens with interviewee #3, who expresses “[...] But several times I ask for text to use as a template, and then do the possible corrections.” “It (ChatGPT) ends up being a work colleague, as if I were talking to a co-worker to say, ‘tell me what you think about this.’ And it comes with suggestions. “It (ChatGPT) is a thinking assistant.” All of them, examples of the use of AI as a co-creator.

Interviewee #2 attests that they use AI as a tool, but in several moments of the interview, they described processes in which the AI is the one doing of the thinking as well, such as “I used to find it very difficult to understand a concept. What I can do nowadays with AI is ‘look, I have this idea and I want to fit that into this concept.’ and ChatGPT ends up doing it for me.”, very similar to interviewee #1 using AI to connect ideas, being this the only example of use of AI as co-creator from this participant.

Participant #5 provides the clearest insight on the matter, because he provides his creative process as a step-by-step framework that can be analysed in contrast to his answer. It will be divided into parts to facilitate explanation

a) The answer to the explicit question on the forms of AI use: “I use it (AI) as an assistant, not a co-creator. I am the one who creates and thinks about it. It only generates what I thought.”

b) The creative process explained:

1. “Generally, I have a briefing from the copywriters, they put their ideas, references and some text. From that, I’ll create a visual image in my mind.”

Following the logic from part a, the participant himself could be taken as merely an assistant, once the core idea came from the copywriters, and the briefing is akin to a prompt that is given to AI. Some other interviewees, as will be seen ahead, describe the prompt in the same way #5 described the briefing, and even he says something similar on step 3. It is clear that human has a much more intricate and layered response to a briefing than an AI has to a prompt, but the machine, as well, has its biases and memory related to the user and uses it to produce the output. This reveals a much more complex co-creational relationship, as it involves the copywriter, the designer, and the machine. They all have a part, in varying degrees, in the final product.

2. “I evaluate if this image is something I can find on a stock database. Usually, it is not.”

3. “I go to ChatGPT, probably with some reference to what I want. Camera position, angle, image ambience, light and shadow, and I try to describe it the best as I can to ChatGPT and ask it to generate the prompt to MidJourney.”

This is yet another stage where AI interferes with the creative process, because the prompt that will be used on the second software is now imbued with information from the first, making it a prompt co-created by the human and the machine.

4. “I put the prompt in MidJourney, but it normally won’t be exact. So I always have to make some adaptations (with Photoshop)”

Again, AI is taking a central role in the creation by providing the base image, even if it is later altered by the designer.

Thus, this section also attends to the research objective “to access the level of interference AI have in their productions and how they perceive it”, being a paradoxical relationship where they describe a high level of AI interference in their creative processes, but perceive it as tool, with far less interference than the situations narrated.

5.4 AI Usage And Prompting

This section comprehends the research objective “To analyse qualitatively for which tasks AI is employed and how marketers communicate with those tools in the day-to-day

workflow.” The tasks that surfaced from the interview were: research, ideation, generation of the artefact, and tool. Moreover, the participants are communicating with these machines in a natural manner and the process of learning how to create prompts was natural and by doing so.

The section will be divided into two subsections: AI Usage, and Proficiency with AI Tools.

5.4.1 AI Usage

There is nothing essentially new about the tools used by the participants. ChatGPT, mentioned by all 6; Gemini, mentioned by #4 and #1, AIGantics models, mentioned by #4, Midjourney, mentioned by #5, Firefly, mentioned by #5 and custom-made AI software, mentioned by #1. The unexpected finding was that interviewees #1, #2, #3 and #4 demonstrated some preference for the software paid for or licensed by the companies they work for, which shouldn't be surprising, but it is also something noticeable that the companies for which they work are influencing their decisions.

Interviewee #2: “I mainly use ChatGPT, which is the one the agency pays, you know?”

On the application of AI, it was expected to find some specific triggers for the punctual use of the software, like as finding inspiration or overcoming writer's block, which surfaced a few times in the Literature Review. Instead, this research found that the use of AI models is deeply intricated in marketers' creative workflow, with varying levels of interference among the participants' processes, closer to the symbiotic relationship suggested by Cui, Liu & Yuan (2025). For the sake of this section, the analysis will be based on the general findings organised in a) Research, b) Ideation, c) Generation of the artefact, d) Tool, and e) Reasons for the use.

a) Research

All participants mentioned the employment of AI as a research tool, which is different from the use of Google, for example, in the sense that the machine abstracts the information from several sources and organizes it for the user, who, instead of getting their sense from the primary sources directly, will form their ideas and opinions from an adited version of it, being akin to having the information of a book from a resume written by someone else, both situations are subjected to the bias and context of an outsider

source, therefore, interfering on the formation fo the final product, which can be increased it the AI id the only source of information.

Interviewee #4: “I was working on a benchmarking study to understand the solutions X banking service has that Y banking service doesn’t. So, I gave the AI a detailed prompt, and it gave me a very complete report of competitiveness.”

b) Ideation

5 out of the 6 participants demonstrated the use of AI participating on the process of Ideation, #2 and #3 using the specific term “organization of ideas”, #1 “connection of ideas”, and #5 explains the process of how he inputs a general idea for the image into a LLM so it can be organized into a prompt to be used in a Generative Vision Model (GVM). Although there are varying degrees in which AI can cause interference in the ideation process when inserted in this step of the creative workflow, it is safe to assume that there will be some interference. There was no evidence of the use of AI in the creation of concepts (i.e. the core idea), only for ideas to fit into that, demonstrating control over the contextualization.

Interviewee #3: “[...] Or to organise ideas. I have an idea of a, I don’t know, a video that I want to produce, but I need orientation for the captioning of the images, editing, and ideas for scenes. So it ends up helping me a lot with that.”

c) Generation of the Artefact

In this section, situations are described where there was little to no interference of the human in the final product.

Interviewee #5: “It’s always going to have something manual to fix (about generating images with the use of AI), a colour treatment, an element, and this you need to do by yourself.”

Although this use appeared with a smaller frequency than others, the vast majority of situations and workframes that surfaced from this research presented considerable control over the process by the human and more human contributions to the final product than those from the machine. Allowing us to infer that the co-creational balance, although existent, pends to the human side in terms of influence and ownership in most cases.

d) Tool

Examples of the use of AI as a passive tool, with little to no interference in the creative process and final product, were also not abundant. But when they appeared, they were related to areas outside the expertise of the professional. For example:

Interviewee #4: “A daily task for which I use it (AI) a lot, has to do with questions, sometimes more technical or specific about a platform that I don’t know that well.”

Interviewee #2 also uses ChatGPT to generate documentation texts, such as ones to explain to the client or other colleagues what was done. Even though this is a text mainly generated by AI, in this context, it can be categorised as a tool, because it has no interference in the final product, nor in the creative process.

The categories c and d, being the ones with the least citations during the interviews, show that human and machine creativity are laced together to a point that it is rare to find them detached in the situations narrated by the participants.

Reasons for the use of AI were not in the scope of the research, but they surfaced nonetheless and are important to note for contextualization. They were: efficiency in the process, cost reduction, and tasks outside the area of expertise (see Appendix 4).

It was expected to find matters on quality enhancement behind the reasoning, as suggested by Garcia (2024), but the subject, in the context of quality enhancement, was raised only once, by participant #2 and even in that case, not without reservations. This further adds to the case previously raised that AI is still far from a stage of independence, at least from a marketing industry perspective.

5.4.2 Proficiency With AI Tools

It is almost impossible to expound on Artificial Intelligence-related subjects, especially for the generative models or the large language models, without brushing on the subject of prompting engineering. The Literature Review presented two views on prompting: one that was supported by prompting patterns White *et al.* (2023); and another that focused on framing the problem (i.e., the task) in a way that was comprehensible enough for AI to have the information on the context, taking into account that the AI softwares are getting better every day in understanding human forms of communication (Acar, 2024).

This research found evidence of both kinds of prompting being used, but with a heavier tendency for something closer to Acar's (2024) proposition.

Interviewee #1 appeared to be the most proficient with AI software, which is based on his professional background as founder of a company that produces AI solutions for other companies, mostly in the realm of marketing, such as customer service chatbots (See Appendix 5).

Participant #4, which was the second most proficient, with years of AI use, highlighted several times during the interview the same importance of providing as much information as possible in the prompt, especially when asking the machine to produce something. Participant #2 was the only one who brought up one of the prompts described by White *et al.* (2023), particularly, the "persona pattern" (White *et al.*, 2023. P7.) Participant #3 states "my approach is very silly, because as I said, I see ChatGPT as a tool and a trainee, so I feel that I treat it more like a buddy, with slangs, nicknames. I understand that it's more able to catch my essence and translate it into a text that follows accordingly."; Participant #5 attests, describing what he wants from an image to ChatGPT so it can produce the prompt to be used in the image generation AI.

With that, it is possible to conclude that the approach to prompting is a) particular to each person; and b) tends to an informality side, with learning accomplished by trial and error and the constant use of the tool. None of the participants demonstrated the existence of a deep study on prompting engineering or the particular function of the machine in relation to communicating with humans; it was very much the opposite, participants learned to communicate with AI by doing so and understanding what brought the best results within their possibilities. Although it is closer to Acar's (2024) vision, this would imply that there's a framework process behind the communications or to formulate the prompts, for which this research found little evidence. The majority of the prompting seems to occur conversationally, without much structure to it, especially for the professionals in more Junior positions, what may not go in agreement to Acar's (2024) structure, but it does in the use of the concept that AI machines are getting better in understanding human communication, being brilliantly pointed by participant #4 when he states "You don't need to be a genius of prompting, all you have to do it give it enough information."

5.5 About The Quality

This section comprises the information gathered from the interviews on the subject of how the participants understand the quality of the artefacts with the use of AI, catering for the research objective “to access the self-perceived impact on the quality of their creations.”

Something that was interesting to note is that the user's personal technical proficiency (i.e., demonstrated technical knowledge of AI use, which distinguished the participants, once all of them had demonstrated practical knowledge) with the tool is, accordingly to this research, inversely proportional to the trust in the outputs and perceived quality of those.

Participants #1 and #4, with a larger technical background in AI use, presented harsher scepticism, showcasing a deeper understanding and a more critical view of the machine outputs, while participants #2, #3, #5, and #6 seemed more comfortable in general with AI outputs and utilising a large proportion of them in the final work.

Interviewee #3: “It was very generic (the outputs), but with time, as we chatted and trained it to truly serve certain clients, it ended up being a very well-rounded tool, right? So when I ask for it to do things, it answers quite well, and nowadays, I rarely change anything.”

Another finding is that there's a correlation between the level of seniority in the career, the proficiency with AI tools and the level of interference in the final product. It is proposed here that the higher the seniority level, the higher the proficiency with AI tools and the lower the interference in the final product. This leads to the belief that the more knowledge a person has in a subject or a situation, the harder it is for AI to match their quality standards. Although these participants seem to have a more important interconnected workflow with AI software regarding their creative process, this process also seems to be more complex than their less senior counterparts; therefore, harder to be substituted by artificial creativity.

Interviewee #4: “[...] I believe that I am so ahead in that sense (approach, concept, branding, creative process) than anything AI delivers is of a very inferior quality.”

5.6 Ethical Concerns

This section will address the ethical concerns mentioned by the participants, meeting the research objective “To identify how ethical issues affect their AI usage.”. It was found that it does not necessarily affect use, but most participants demonstrated a certain level of ethical concern surrounding the use of AI in creative industries. Although none of them displayed evidence of a deeper consideration, at least not deep enough to match the discussions currently happening in the academic world.

For the sake of the representation of the data, these concerns will be separated into categories:

a) Intellectual property rights:

Even though this is one of the most discussed subjects regarding Ethics in AI academically, only participants #2 and #4 raised the subject, both very briefly.

Interviewee #4: “They (the government) need to put more guardrails, especially in the training part (of AI). The fact that Meta illegally downloaded millions of books is like, bizarre, isn’t it?”

b) Job Market:

This can be divided into three types of concerns:

1. Concern for their own job, which is nonexistent or occurred in the initial phase of implementation of the AI in the creative workflow.
2. Concern for the job of others:

Interviewee #5 “I think that illustrators feel a lot, because, want it or not, it is a manual work and even the illustrator’s style can be registered, more or less, of some artists, and AI can do something similar. But I don’t believe it really substitutes, but it gives access.”

3. Concern for the health of the job market in general, which is nonexistent as well.

Interviewee #4 “For me, this idea that it will steal jobs from designers, for example, reminds me a lot of the taxi drivers complaining when Uber first came out, or a lot of those disruptive technologies that affect the market. But they are positive, in my opinion, for the progress of humanity.”

This lack of concern for the job market is due to the fact that none of the interviewees, even the ones in entry positions, believe AI could completely overtake their work. Oversight is practised, in varying levels of intensity, by all of the participants. It also has its roots in the way they view the use of AI in general. In the previous sections, we understood that, although not consistent with the description of how they implement AI machines in the creative workflow, all participants believe that to be a tool that needs critical oversight from humans.

c) General Public's view:

Interviewee #3 "People don't really understand yet, so a few customers ask, 'Oh, do you use AI?'" and I try to explain how it works in the agency. But I believe that, yes, people still find it hard to understand that it is a tool. They think it's too artificial."

The situations related are in a bigger volume, pointing to the side that the general public has a negative bias towards creative content produced by AI and even a concern that it is being used in their company's materials, as noted by participant #3.

d) Government regulation:

Interviewee #5: "I believe that, because it is something new and we don't have any legislation, like laws that are still adapting to this new thing. It is important to educate the public and make people aware because, nowadays, it is easy for someone to take a picture of you and do something evil to it, do you understand?"

e) The use of AI by companies:

Under this topic, participants understood that there are types of companies for which the AI use in the final product (i.e., copy, design, advertising, etc) is ethical and those that are not, taking into account the budget and the affinity with technology. Participant #4 highlights that some of the companies that thrive with the AI use are new tech companies that need to "move fast and break things". Those often don't have enough budget to hire the required staff, or even have it, although not in the fast-paced production, it would be required. For those companies, it is not important that a few of the advertising pieces are not totally accurate with the brand or present mistakes, because the brand is still being built and being known fast, before someone else creates a similar technology, is more important, highlighting that a similar situation would be impossible for a more

conservative company. Participant #5 reminds us that AI gives access to things that wouldn't be accessible before, because small marketing firms can't afford a large range of professionals, having AI to fill the gaps and make the team's idea possible within the budget of the client. But he considers unethical, for example, that a company that would have the budget to hire an Illustrator, to use AI instead.

5.7 Chapter Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, findings were presented accordingly to the themes that surfaced from the thematic analysis and accordingly to the research objectives. Although the answer and, for the most part, exceed the realm of the research objectives. The most important finding is that, while all interviewees recognise the importance of human creativity, they do not fully understand the process that they are undergoing

6. Discussion

6.1 Chapter Introduction

Throughout the previous chapter, the findings were presented against the research objectives of this dissertation. This chapter seeks to provide more context to the specific information discovered through the interviews, reflecting on them, and applying the most relevant information to a bigger societal context.

6.2 Discussion of The Findings

5.2.1 Mentor of The Machine

More than once throughout the interviews, a curious relationship surfaced, which is well painted by participant #3 “But still, AI is something that people see as non-creative, right? I don’t believe they understand that there’s a team that comes up with the idea, thinks, produces the prompts, and develops the idea in the background.” Garcia (2024) describes a similar process inside the realm of the arts, where artists become mentors or instructors of these machines, guiding them through the process until they are satisfied with the outcome, but their hands are not the ones producing the artworks. Here, AI is described as being used at the final stage of the creative process, the implementation. The parallel with marketing practices was hinted at by the same person when using the phrase “It is like I have an intern,” when referring to AI use, suggesting a form of co-creation where the human is the one to think — therefore, owning most of the creative process of coming up with the general idea — and execution of the final product goes to the AI. Interestingly enough, this could be characterized as AI being used as tool by some authors, but usually, in an ethical workplace, the ownership of said artefact would be either from the team or the person, the intern, who executed the confection process. For example, participant #5 is a designer, he receive contextual and ideation instruction from copywriter, but it would not be said that the design which he has done is owned by the copywriter.

5.2.2 The Paradoxical Notion of AI As Active Or Passive Agent

In the previous chapter, it was seen that there is a dissonance between what marketers attest their AI use to be and the situations they narrate. This dissonance implies two possibilities: a) the general hesitation of society when it comes to AI in creative contexts (LIU ET AL, 2025, Garcia, 2024) caused some sort of negative bias even among the heavy users and defenders of this technology important enough for them to refrain in admitting the real extent of its use and influence in their work; b) the difference between the employment of AI as a tool and as a co-creator suggested by O'Toole & Horvát (2024) do not resonate with the participants. Considering the full context of each interview separately, this research pends heavier to the possibility that both are correct, For instance Interviewee #2 states "I try to use it as a support, you know? Because this co-creator thing... I think it's a lot more that it doesn't create, right? It copies from other people.", supporting possibility a. When it comes to option b, this research finds the dissonance to be the power exerted over the process and output: co-creation is only seeing for what it is if both parties have the same weight in the power balance over the creation, or if it pends to the machine side, disregarding other types of conjunctions, such as the human making most part of the creative work while AI adds on with a smaller input. This situation is well illustrated by Interviewee #1 speech "as a tool (because) if you insert the AI and remove the person, it doesn't work."; and interviewee #2 " maybe, in design it is closer to co-creation, because the designer gives a command and the image is made. But could also be support, because we can take this image and manipulate with photoshop." Which showcases a clear misunderstanding: If the AI produced the image from the human prompt, it can be understood as co-creation, and when the same image is taken to Photoshop (which is a tool), the co-creational balance shifts more to the human side, but it doesn't extinguish the participation of the machine in the creative process.

The changes in the individual creative processes propelled by AI were also a subject that caused paradoxes. Most participants claimed their creative process hasn't changed with the use of AI, but it became faster and more efficient. Except for participant #5, who described that taking images from Stock and generating them with AI changed his creative process, they also described applications during the interview that would be impossible without such technology or a second person involved. This incongruity appears to have its source in the integration of AI in the marketer's workflow evolving in a natural manner, so much so that they take the process to be the same, but with shortcuts.

This natural integration can also be the cause of marketers to be using AI in an “amateur” manner, without giving it much thought, because they are trying to do the same thing they would, without exploring the full potential that the technology offers. In a parallel with that popular saying, “If I asked the people what they wanted, they would’ve said faster horses.” Arguably, by Henry Ford, marketers, especially outside seniority positions, are using AI as a faster horse, instead of a car.

Simultaneously, it is possible to look into a multifactorial reason for this phenomena. Yes, AI softwares are getting better in communicating in a more natural language for humans (Acar, 2024), But it is also possible to identify a struggle from both companies (Cui, Liu & Yuan, 2025), and professionals to successfully take advantage of AI and implement its use in their workflows (Canva, 2025). For example, a research conducted by Canva (2025), identified that 92% of marketers expect AI literacy to become a core competency in the next 2-4 years, but 34% identify a steep learning curve and 64% attest being overwhelmed by the amount of softwares available. 94% of the marketing related companies had a budget dedicated to AI in 2024 (Canva, 2025), but this more frequently aimed at paying and licensing tools, than training for the staff, as highlighted by participant #4 “My boss asked me to help her in start aiding people in start utilizing more AI, which I noticed is something that most people doesn’t know. [...] and the professionals are not to be blamed, because companies as well are still learning how to do that. The best thing you can find nowadays is a medium sized agency that gives you access to a premium tool, like ChatGPT 04, but they don’t offer much more than that, do you know? I don’t see companies that have a workflow implemented”.

6.2 Contextualization of The Findings

An underlying themes throughout the findings of this research were the paradoxical aspects with which AI is seen by the professionals working on the marketing related areas, which mirrors the views of the society in general. In this section, these conflicted ideas will be presented in a broader perspective, looking to further contextualize the findings here presented.

A recently published article at The TIMES discloses a poll run by YouGov among teenagers, revealing that almost half of the respondents use AI softwares at least once a

week and are in favour of AI generated creative works. However 59% of them are worried about AI generated misinformation, 58% deepfakes, and 47% are concerned with the future of AI trajectory in our society (Booth, 2024).

In various creative spheres, the fear of human obsolescence has spiked yet again, such as in music, art and design. The publishing industry has undergone a huge scandal involving Meta and the use of material without consent or compensation, but is also publishing books with a disclosed certain percentage of it written by AI (Self, 2025). Only 4 days later, an article published by TechRadar highlighted that in a leading freelance website, the highest growing category were communications jobs, further adding to the trend of the “AI slop fatigue” and leading to the belief that clients are willing to pay for professionals that keeps their brand emotionally resonant (Udinmwen, 2025).

We are, as a society, facing a world changing at dizzying speed, where future predictions seem vague and can be countered by some new development being announced the morning after they are published. However it may be one of the fastest revolutions, this is hardly the first time humans go through the same situation facing technology. Although, Khosla, (2024) highlights that previous technology advent, despite having the power to reshape society, were never able to alter the essence of human intellect, what changed with the rise of AI. Again, addressing a concern brought to this research under the Garcia (2024), Runco (2025), and Liu et al (2025), who tries to address the intersection between human and AI creativity focusing on the differences between them, presenting arguments that led to one of the core beliefs of this research: AI is not able to capture the nuances of human creativity; it can enhance human creativity, but it is unable to successfully mimic it. Will its logic capabilities surpass human's? Maybe. But at the moment, it is needed to remember that AI is programmed to present the most likely answer, not the correct one, however “correct” can be considered.

Khosla, (2024) also enlightens a series of paradoxical popular knowledge we have on AI, such as the possibility of AI creating a small elite that thrives while the rest of the population struggles, but also has risen discussions on a universal basic income; it is making jobs displaced, but our aging population also decreases the pool of young workers, who seem to be a target as more affected by AI (World Economic Forum, 2025); while people fear that AI could diminish creativity, others see it benefiting from it (Cui et al, 2025; Garcia 2024), opening new possibilities for human creativities, as seen in the previous chapter of this research.

While Liu et al (2025) rises the concern that if people remain indifferent to AI being behind the creation of artworks, human creativity is in danger, which also goes in line with YouGov's research (Booth, 2024), where teenagers are not against creative products being generated by AI, if we disconsider that it does not come without questionings and worry for the future. Abel & Johnson (2025), also disagree with the view that people are indifferent. In their discussion paper, the authors attest that, people favour the production of humans over AI, showcasing that when they know something was created by AI, a negative bias come into play and that it is even less valuable, in monetary terms, than those human created.

However, the negative obstacles with AI are as valid and palpable as its positive counterparts. It has caused, for example, a decrease in growth of the advertising industry, which is predicted to perdurate until it is fully adjusted to the world with this new technology (Graham, 2025). Economic Times (2025) offers another reason as to why this research did not consider prompting a imperative technical skill, stressing that the quality of the outputs comes from verification and creative experimentation, but also attests that humans are loosing these capabilities, supporting this affirmation by the MIT Media Lab recent research, that exposed that students who frequently used ChatGPT displayed a reduced memory retention and a diminished cerebral activity when facing the tests of the study, pointing to a possibility of humanity growing to a stage of mental passivity, while AI takes on the the front of the matters (Kosmyna et al, 2025; Economic Times, 2025).

In resume, both the positive and negative aspects of the AI advent are supported by strong arguments, shedding light as to the reason why the participants in this research had such divided views and opinions on the matter, since they are living everyday both sides of this balance. It was also possible to sense, from some of the interviews, a certain pressure of the market for the use of AI, especially for the time efficiency and, ultimately, economic benefits of its use.

6.3 Limitations and Further Research

This research presents limitations caused not only by the methodological decisions, but also by implications on its execution. One example of this is the fact that this research is,

and can only be, timed. It is a picture in time of how marketers perceive the influence of AI in their creative works, since it is a cross-sectional research (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2023). The dizzyingly fast-paced evolution of the theme makes it difficult to provide longitudinal insight. Although, not impossible. A longitudinal research can be conducted on the matter in terms of understanding how the marketing sector deals with such technological changes when it comes to creativity, providing information on aspects that seem to be less ephemeral.

Another limitation is the sample size. Although it seemed to achieve some level of data exhaustion in some themes, it lacked insight for different creative marketing sectors, meaning that this research may not represent the entire category of marketers even when While snowball and criterion sampling (Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024) allowed for some diversity, the findings cannot be generalized. Research that utilizes similar instruments, but expand interviews to different areas, or supports the data collection on focus groups, could generate new knowledge.

This research was aimed at capturing the marketers' point of view of the phenomena, although it would still be interesting to understand how companies are dealing with ethical complications that come with the use of AI and how marketers navigate them.

6.4 Chapter Conclusion

Although some information from the findings was presented with the aim to further develop the analysis, the main theme of this discussion is the paradoxical manner in which marketers are approaching the implementation of AI in their creative frameworks. This might be due to the fact that change is still in development and evolving fast, much so the phenomena itself is paradoxical, akin to a teenager in a growth spurt.

7. Conclusion

The literature review provided an academic landscape for the AI adoption by marketers in their creative processes. While some of the discussion might be overly theoretical, it provides a solid basis for the findings of this research, which occupy a more practical sphere.

The methodological approach of this research was qualitative, with a constructivist post-positivist epistemological base. Through interpretivism, both the views and perceptions of the participants and the researcher are relevant considerations for the findings and discussion.

The use of AI by professionals in the creative areas of AI was understood to be frequent, in the most variable contexts, and to serve distinct purposes, not only between different participants, but different applications of AI were found to be used by the same person.

That occurs because the role of AI in the creative process is considerable. Under a practical lens, the function of AI is to increase effectiveness and reduce costs, but the research and others highlight that when it comes to augmented creativity, there is a need to consider the delicate and complex relationship between human and machine creativity. Cui, Liu & Yuan (2025) separate the co-creational process into three different stages: co-inspiration, co-generation, and co-calibration, the last one making the final product a symbiosis between human and artificial creativity. In practice, what was noted in this research is that the influence of the AI in each of those stages was not equally divided: some participants started from the co-generation, others stopped in the co-inspiration. This is also dependent on the task ahead. For instance, it was found that the co-creational balance leans more to the side of AI when the task is unrelated to their field of expertise.

It was found, by the motifs exposed above, that viewing AI as a co-creator or a tool (O'Toole & Horvát, 2024) fails to encompass all the hues inside this complex relationship. Even the separation suggested by Cui, Liu & Yuan (2025) may maybe a way to codify and put order to something that is chaotic by nature. The metaphor of a co-creational balance, having human creativity in one side, and artificial creativity on the other worked better for this research because there's no limited amount of stages, in the

sense that a product that uses both kinds of creativity is the result of a symbiosis in the creative process, making it symbiotic regardless, even if one or more of the stages above was a bilateral effort (e.g. a text that was co-inspired, created by the human and co-calibrated), because once a single stage of the creational process incorporated the use of AI, it is impossible to eliminate its influence on the other stages and the final product.

When asked to self-evaluate the quality of their work with the use of AI, most participants perceived it to be better, enhanced, which is important to understand that even in the early stages of implementation, it is not only by the effectiveness and cost reduction that the professionals are benefited, but they do believe AI to be making their creative work better. This is not, although homogeneously reflected in the perception of quality of the outputs from the machine, participants find it predominantly inferior to what they could have produced themselves, being this perceived increase in quality due to co-inspiration and co-calibration.

Prompting did not appear to be as important a matter as it was expected, due to the ease with which the machine communicates with humans nowadays (Acar, 2024), especially the LLM. Participants in senior positions seemed to give more thought in the matter, but in general the influence correlating prompting abilities of the participants with perceived quality of the outputs was not found to be directly proportional, but inversely, since it was stated that the more the seniority level, the more understanding of AI functionality and the less quality was perceived in the outputs, probably by higher standards caused by knowledge and experience in their own area.

This was a research of dualities and paradoxes, and the ethics section was no different: the participants see AI through a very positive lens, but do not fail to recognise its potential for harm, although mildly, which leads to the thought that this section of society might not be as preoccupied as others.

The limitations of this research included a small sample population and the ephemerality of the findings, due to the still evolving theme.

8. Bibliography

Abel, M. and Johnson, R. (2025) *AI Bias for Creative Writing: Subjective Assessment Versus Willingness to Pay*. IZA Discussion Paper Series, No. 17646. Available at: <https://docs.iza.org/dp17646.pdf>

Acar, O.A. (2024) 'Beyond Prompt Engineering: Skills Marketers Need to Deploy Generative AI Successfully', *NIM Marketing Intelligence Review*, 16(1), pp. 18–23. doi: 10.2478/nimmir-2024-0003

Agnoli, S. (2024) 'IDHOL, a holistic model for the analysis of individual differences in the creative process', *Creativity Research Journal*, advance online publication. doi: 10.1080/10400419.2024.2325228

Al-Ababneh, M.M. (2020) 'Linking ontology, epistemology and research methodology', *Science & Philosophy*, 8(1), pp. 75–91. doi: 10.23756/sp.v8i1.500

Amabile, T.M. (1996) *Creativity in Context: Update to "The Social Psychology of Creativity"*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press

Aru, J. (2025) 'Artificial Intelligence and the Internal Processes of Creativity', *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, early view. doi: 10.1002/jocb.1530

Bakhtiyari, S.V. (2024) 'Descriptive case analysis on the application of prompt engineering in business management', *International Journal of Scientific Research in Engineering and Management*, 8(10), pp. 1–9. doi: 10.55041/IJSREM38060

Belina, A. (2022) 'Semi-structured interviewing as a tool for understanding informal civil society', *Voluntary Sector Review*, XX(XX), pp. 1–17. doi: 10.1332/204080522X16454629995872

Bendaoud, R. and El Mouloudi, M. (2024) 'Algorithms: The Driving Power and Future of Artificial Intelligence', *Journal of Artificial Intelligence in Engineering Practice (JAIEP)*, 1(1), pp. 83–90. doi: 10.21608/JAIEP.2024.289776.1000

Booth, H. (2024) 'What Teenagers Really Think About AI', *TIME*, 25 October. Available at: <https://time.com/7098524/teenagers-ai-risk-lawmaker>

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp. 77–101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2022) 'Conceptual and design thinking for thematic analysis', *Qualitative Psychology*, 9(1), pp. 3–26. doi: 10.1037/qup0000196

Brinkmann, S. and Kvale, S. (2018) *Doing Interviews*. 2nd edn. London: SAGE Publications

Bryman, A. (2016) *Social Research Methods*. 5th edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Cambridge University Press (n.d.) *Cambridge Dictionary*. Available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

Canva (2025) *The State of Marketing & AI Report*. Available at: <https://www.canva.com/marketing-ai-report/>

Colton, S. and Wiggins, G.A. (2012) 'Computational creativity: The final frontier?', *Proceedings of the 20th European Conference on Artificial Intelligence*, pp. 21–26

Creswell, J.W. and Poth, C.N. (2018) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 4th edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications

Cui, W., Liu, M.J. and Yuan, R. (2025) 'Exploring the integration of generative AI in advertising agencies: a co-creative process model for human–AI collaboration', *Journal of Advertising Research*, 65, pp. 1–23. doi: 10.1080/00218499.2024.2445362

Deng, X. (2024) *Original Creativity, Associative Creativity, and AI*. Available at: <https://www.oxford-aiethics.ox.ac.uk/original-creativity-associative-creativity-and-ai>

Doshi, A.R. and Hauser, O.P. (2024) 'Generative AI enhances individual creativity but reduces the collective diversity of novel content', *Science Advances*, 10(28), eadn5290. doi: 10.1126/sciadv.adn5290

Economic Times (2025) 'Forget jobs, AI is taking away much more: Creativity, memory and critical thinking are at risk. New studies sound alarm', *The Economic Times*, 6 August. Available at: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/magazines/panache/forget-jobs-ai-is-taking-away-much-more-creativity-memory-and-critical-thinking-are-at-risk-new-studies-sound-alarm/articleshow/123146888.cms>

Fang, X., Tao, L. and Li, Z. (2025) 'Closer to Language than Steam: AI as the Cognitive Engine of a New Productivity Revolution', *arXiv*, preprint, arXiv:2506.10281 [cs.AI]. doi: 10.48550/arXiv.2506.10281

Folger Cashion, A. and O'Brien, J. (2024) 'Generative AI Takes Off with Marketers', *AMA Marketing News*, 12 December. Available at: <https://www.ama.org/marketing-news/generative-ai-takes-off-with-marketers/>

Foundation Inc. (2024) *AI in Marketing: Research Study, Stats, Industry Trends & Data*. Available at: <https://foundationinc.co/lab/ai-marketing-results>

Freud, S. (1923) *The Ego and the Id*. Standard Edition, vol. 19. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1961

Garcia, M.B. (2024) 'The Paradox of Artificial Creativity: Challenges and Opportunities of Generative AI Artistry', *Creativity Research Journal*, pp. 1–14. doi: 10.1080/10400419.2024.2354622

Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E. and Chadwick, B. (2008) 'Methods of data collection in qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups', *British Dental Journal*, 204(6), pp. 291–295. doi: 10.1038/bdj.2008.192

Goke Rauf, O.I., Aluko, T.O. and Olaseinde, O.B. (2023) 'Usage of artificial intelligence for copywriting among copywriters in Nigeria's advertising industry', *International Journal of Nature and Science Advance Research*, 2(1)

Goldenberg, J., Mazursky, D. and Solomon, S. (1999) 'The Fundamental Templates of Quality Ads', *Marketing Science*, 18(3), pp. 333–351. doi: 10.1287/mksc.18.3.333

Gonzalez, A.B. (2024) *Content Strategy for the Refinement of an AI Copywriting Assistant*. Master's thesis. FH Joanneum University of Applied Sciences, Graz, Austria

Graham, M. (2025) 'Ad agencies' low growth will drag on as they adjust to era of AI, Barclays says', *The Wall Street Journal*, 30 June. Available at: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/ad-agencies-low-growth-will-drag-on-as-they-adjust-to-era-of-ai-barclays-says-30725b38>

Grilli, L. and Pedota, M. (2023) 'Creativity and artificial intelligence: A multilevel perspective', *Creativity and Innovation Management*. doi: 10.1111/caim.12580

GPTZero (2025) *AI Marketing Statistics: How Marketers Use AI in 2025*. Available at: <https://gptzero.me/news/ai-marketing-statistics>

Harpa AI (2023) *ChatGPT & 2023 AI Revolution in Digital Marketing*. Available at: <https://harpa.ai/blog/survey-chatgpt-in-digital-marketing>

Hunt, J. and Kerr, D. (2025) 'The hybrid formula: The essential role of human creativity in AI-generated advertising', *Journal of Brand Strategy*, 14(1), pp. 30–42. doi: 10.69554/NBYX9041

Ismayilzada, M., Paul, D., Bosselut, A. and van der Plas, L. (2024) *Creativity in AI: Progresses and Challenges*. *arXiv preprint*, arXiv:2410.17218. doi: 10.48550/arXiv.2410.17218

Joshi, N. and Vogel, D. (2025) 'Writing with AI lowers psychological ownership, but longer prompts can help', *Proceedings of the 2025 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '25)*, ACM, pp. xx–xx. doi: 10.1145/3719160.3736608

Khosla, V. (2024) 'A roadmap to AI utopia', *TIME*, 11 November. Available at: <https://time.com/7174892/a-roadmap-to-ai-utopia>

Kosmyna, N., Hauptmann, E., Yuan, Y.T., Situ, J., Liao, X.-H., Beresnitzky, A.V., Braunstein, I. and Maes, P. (2025) 'Your brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of cognitive debt when using an AI assistant for essay writing task', *MIT Media Lab*, 10 June. Available at: <https://www.media.mit.edu/publications/your-brain-on-chatgpt/>

Lee, H.-K. (2022) 'Rethinking creativity: Creative industries, AI and everyday creativity', *Media, Culture & Society*, 44(3), pp. 601–612. doi: 10.1177/01634437221077009

Li, P.-J., Furlong, D.E. and Lester, J.N. (2025) 'Perspectives from qualitative researchers: Negotiating research ethics in qualitative research', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 26(1), Art. 8. doi: 10.17169/fqs-26.1.4262

Liu, P., Chu, Y., Zhao, Y. and Zhai, S. (2025) 'Machine creativity: Aversion, appreciation, or indifference?', *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, advance online publication. doi: 10.1037/aca0000739

Maguire, M. and Delahunt, B. (2017) 'Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars', *All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 9(3), pp. 3351–3364

Marketing AI Institute (2024) *2024 State of Marketing AI Report*. Marketing AI Institute and Drift, July. Available at: <https://www.marketingaiinstitute.com/>

Marketing AI Institute (2025) *2025 State of Marketing AI Report*. Marketing AI Institute and SmarterX, May. Available at: <https://www.marketingaiinstitute.com/>

McKinsey & Company (2024) *The State of AI in Early 2024: Gen AI Adoption Spikes and Starts to Generate Value*. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/quantumblack/our-insights/the-state-of-ai-2024>

Mekern, V., Hommel, B. and Sjoerds, Z. (2019) 'Computational models of creativity: A review of single-process and multi-process recent approaches to demystify creative cognition', *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 27, pp. 47–54. doi: 10.1016/j.cobeha.2018.09.008

Nicmanis, M. and Spurrier, H. (2025) 'Getting started with artificial intelligence assisted qualitative analysis: An introductory guide to qualitative research approaches with exploratory examples from reflexive content analysis', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 24, pp. 1–14. doi: 10.1177/16094069251354863

Nigam, A. (2025) *A Taxonomic Framework of Prompt Engineering Methodologies: Systematizing Generative AI Applications in Marketing Practice*. BITS Pilani. doi: 10.2139/ssrn.5223637

Nyimbili, F. and Nyimbili, L. (2024) 'Types of purposive sampling techniques with their examples and application in qualitative research studies', *British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies: English Lang., Teaching, Literature, Linguistics & Communication*, 5(1), pp. 90–99

Oeng, S. (2022) *The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Copywriting*. Bachelor of Arts Program in Journalism (Media Studies), Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication, Thammasat University

O'Toole, K. and Horvát, E.Á. (2024) 'Extending human creativity with AI', *Journal of Creativity*, 34(2), Article 100080. doi: 10.1016/j.yjoc.2024.100080

OpenAI (2025) 'How ChatGPT and our foundation models are developed', *OpenAI Help Center*. Available at: <https://help.openai.com/en/articles/7842364-how-chatgpt-and-our-foundation-models-are-developed>

Pagani, M. and Wind, Y. (2025) 'Unlocking Marketing Creativity Using Artificial Intelligence', *Journal of Interactive Marketing*. doi: 10.1177/10949968241265855

Polimetla, T. and Gero, K.I. (2025) 'A Paradigm for Creative Ownership', *arXiv preprint*, arXiv:2505.15971

Price, C.C., Alkire, B. and Ahmadi, M. (2025) *Algorithmic Advancement in Artificial Intelligence: A Survey of Advances with Projections for the Near Future*. RAND Corporation, RR-A3485-1. doi: 10.7249/RRA3485-1

Provasi, V. (2023) *The A.I. Revolution: Evaluating Impact and Consequences in Copywriting*. Internship Report. Universidade Católica Portuguesa

Rouse, E., Reinecke, J., Ravasi, D., Langley, A., Grimes, M. and Gruber, M. (2025) 'Making a theoretical contribution with qualitative research', *Academy of Management Journal*, 68(2), pp. 257–266. doi: 10.5465/amj.2025.4002

Runco, M.A. (2025) 'Updating the standard definition of creativity to account for the artificial creativity of AI', *Creativity Research Journal*, 37(1), pp. 1–5. doi: 10.1080/10400419.2023.2257977

Runco, M.A. and Jaeger, G.J. (2012) 'The Standard Definition of Creativity', *Creativity Research Journal*, 24(1), pp. 92–96. doi: 10.1080/10400419.2012.650092

Saunders, M.N.K., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2023) *Research Methods for Business Students*. 9th edn. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited

Self, J. (2025) 'Will AI put fiction writers out of work?', *Financial Times*, 2 August. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/7ce8a0c4-f806-44e4-96f5-8cae8772c97c>

Shah, P. (2024) 'In pursuit of relevant and rigorous qualitative research in marketing academia', *Journal of Marketing Management*, 40(13–14), pp. 1114–1134. doi: 10.1080/0267257X.2024.2393369

Smith, R.E. and Yang, X. (2004) 'Toward a General Theory of Creativity in Advertising: Examining the Role of Divergence', *Marketing Theory*, 4(1–2), pp. 31–58. doi: 10.1177/1470593104044086

Surawy Stepney, N., Provost, F., Bhangu, S. and Caduff, C. (2023) 'Introduction to qualitative research methods: Part 2', *Perspectives in Clinical Research*, 14(1). doi: 10.4103/picr.picr_37_23

Tafesse, W. and Wien, A. (2024) 'ChatGPT's applications in marketing: A topic modeling approach', *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 42(4), pp. 666–683. doi: 10.1108/mip-10-2023-0526

Tafesse, W. and Wood, B. (2024) 'Hey ChatGPT: an examination of ChatGPT prompts in marketing', *Journal of Marketing Analytics*, 12(4), pp. 790–805. doi: 10.1057/s41270-023-00284-w

Telebenieva, Y. (2024) 'Development perspectives and innovative areas of artificial intelligence application in marketing and PR', *Economics & Education*, 9(2), pp. 1–10

Tulver, K., Kaup, K.K., Laukkonen, R. and Aru, J. (2023) 'Restructuring insight: An integrative review of insight in problem solving, meditation, psychotherapy, delusions and psychedelics', *Consciousness and Cognition*, 110, 103494. doi: 10.1016/j.concog.2023.103494

Udinmwun, E. (2025) 'Clients are increasingly looking for unique, human creativity: research finds demand

Zünd, F., Ryffel, M., Magnenat, S., Marra, A., Nitti, M., Kapadia, M., Noris, G., Mitchell, K., Gross, M. and Sumner, R.W. (2015) 'Augmented creativity: Bridging the real and virtual worlds to enhance creative play', *Proceedings of the 14th ACM SIGGRAPH International Conference on Virtual-Reality Continuum and Its Applications in Industry*, pp. 1–4. DOI: 10.1145/2818427.2818460.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Interview Questions

Number	Question
1.	What first comes to your mind when you hear about the use of AI in creative contexts?
2.	Can you identify creative tasks related to your work for which you use AI systems?
3.	Can you recall what your creative process like before AI and pinpoint what changed?
4.	What is the frequency of your use of AI and the circumstances for this use?
5.	Which AI software that you use daily?
6.	Do you take them for co-creational or supportive tools? (Later changed to “Do you consider them passive support to the creation process or an active part in the creation?”)
7.	How do you approach prompting?
8.	How do you think the general public sees the use of AI in the creative Industries (positively or negatively)?
9.	Do you believe the product of your work has an increased or decreased quality when you insert AI tools in the process?
10.	Is there any other question I should've asked?

9.2 Appendix 2 – Verbal Consent Request Sample

“I would like to remind you that this is a volunteer interview. You can skip any questions and end the session anytime. I’ll also ask for your permission to record this session and have it transcribed by the Teams AI.”

9.3 Appendix 3 – Consent Form Sample

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on the Creative Process of Marketing Professionals.

Consent to take part in research

- I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves an online interview, in which my narrative will be transcribed by AI with supervision of the researcher.

- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in a dissertation and inputted into AI to aid analysis.
- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in until December, 2025.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years.
- I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Signature of research participant

Signature of participant Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

Signature of researcher Date

9.4 Appendix 4 – Reasons For AI Use

1. efficiency in the process;

Interviewee #2: “It (AI) helps you to do more work in less time,”

2. cost reduction;

Interviewee #5: “You have the idea of something absurd, that would have to be made in a publicity studio and cost a lot of money to do, nowadays you end up managing to generate a prompt that will bring a result similar or close to that (of your idea).”

3. and tasks outside the area of expertise.

Interviewee #4: “I was asked to write a hero page and I, well, I’ve never had to do that before, mainly because I used to work in an agency. This was the kind of thing that the client provided. So, what I’ve done was, I found a page from Unbounce, which is a company that produces landing pages, they had content on how to produce a copy for the landing page that generates conversions, so I gave this link to ChatGPT with all the information it needed about the offer and asked it to write the hero for me. It gave me a few options, one incredibly good, the others awful. But, like, at least it works.”

9.4 Appendix 5 – Explaining AI

Interviewee #1: “ We have the refining of this AI, right? This is the finetuning. We have the RAG, which makes it search for information in documents. I make an analogy with a school kid. The prompt engineering is akin to having a blank sheet of paper on the table for that kid, for them to follow the instructions given in class. The finetuning is the education this kid has; they’ll learn how to count, how to speak, the letters of the alphabet, etc. And the RAG are the books this kid has access to, the lectures, the documents and so on. So, taking advantage of this analogy, the prompt needs to be as clear and descriptive as possible. So, for example, I don’t like using negative words, so I never use “no”, always positive affirmations. Instead of saying “do not consider this word.”, I simply don’t mention that word; on the contrary, I list the words that I want to use, for example. For me, this is something that has been working well. Another thing is to be very descriptive, so separate the types of sections and put clear rules on those sections. So, if you want something specific, you need to detail specifically the step-by-step [n1] for that to be done: what does this kid need to consider? What do they need to research? What is the logic to be followed? To build something specific, it is really like drawing, as if it were an explanation for a 5-year-old kid.”

