Exploring the Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Content Creation in Advertising

Student Name: Daria Getmanskaia
Student Number: 652760

Supervisor: Rian Koreman MSc

Master Media Studies - Media & Creative Industries
Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication
Erasmus University Rotterdam

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to investigate the influence of artificial intelligence (AI) on campaign creative creation in the advertising business. Understanding the influence of artificial intelligence on content generation is crucial as technology breakthroughs continue to disrupt the advertising industry. Understanding the impact of AI on content development is critical as technological advancements continue to transform the advertising sector. The aim of the research is to understand how AI might change the creative process inside the advertising agency. A qualitative research approach was used to answer the research question, which included in-depth interviews with advertising specialists. The qualitative research method was chosen as the most suitable approach for this study, given its objective of uncovering new practical specifics and prognoses from real experts in the field. The information gathered from these sources was thoroughly examined using coding techniques. The study's findings demonstrate a variety of positive and negative outcomes associated with the use of artificial intelligence in the advertising business for creative campaign creation. On the plus side, AI provides several advantages, such as increased efficiency, cost-effectiveness, accuracy, and decision-making abilities. However, there are some drawbacks to consider. There are certain limitations to AI-produced content. Additionally, AI-generated material may lack the human touch and originality of human emotion. Furthermore, ethical issues have been raised about the potential influence on employment, data privacy, and the possibility of AI-generated biases. The study also acknowledges the evolving nature of creativity and the significant shift in the required skill set brought about by the integration of artificial intelligence in creative campaign development within the advertising industry. As a result, the current study emphasizes the significance of doing balanced research on the benefits and downsides of the use of AI in advertising, highlighting the importance of responsible and ethical AI adoption to ensure positive outcomes for companies and customers. The results of the research can bring practical and empirical benefits to academics and the advertising industry. The research serves as a foundational framework for future investigations by academics, providing a solid base for further exploration and development in a particular field. At the same time, practitioners will utilize the insights and recommendations from this research generated from academic research to inform their decision-making and shape their strategies.

KEYWORDS: *Artificial Intelligence, Advertising, Campaign Development, Creativity*

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Introduction

Technological advancements are drastically changing the way brands communicate with their customers (Rodgers & Thorson, 2019; Venkatesan & Lecinski, 2021). Although artificial intelligence (AI) has been evolving for several decades and is actively used in different spheres, only now has humanity come closer to recognizing its application in creative content creation (Campbell et al., 2022). Now, artificial intelligence is clearly operational in the creation of music, visual art, and the film industry. Marketers began to use artificial intelligence in the development of marketing campaigns, following in the footsteps of other creative industries, in order to create exceptional new advertisements in order to attract more clients. As a result, there are more and more advertising campaigns whose creation was assisted by AI. For example, Burger King used complex revolutionary software to create more than 100 videos, which were then tested in focus groups and streamed on TV ("The BURGER KING®", 2018).

In recent years, there has been a surge of interest in exploring the potential of machine learning-based technologies and their applications within these creative domains (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2021). While there is a considerable amount of theoretical research exploring the ways of use of AI in advertising, there appears to be a lack of practical implementation and analysis of real-world examples in the academic literature. The majority of research in this domain has focused on theoretical frameworks and a general picture of the changing nature of advertising practices (Shah et al., 2020; Vakratsas & Wang, 2021). Therefore, researchers have limited knowledge, and a large number of scholars are saying that the topic of the impact of AI on the industry should be further studied (Campbell et al., 2022; van Esch & Black, 2021).

Understanding the broad implications of AI is crucial; however, there is a notable gap when it comes to connecting these theoretical insights to concrete practical instances. The absence of empirical investigations limits our understanding of how AI is currently being utilized in advertising campaigns, what challenges are being faced, and the prognosis for the future. This study aims to address this research gap by examining the perspectives of specialists actively working in the creative advertising industry and their perceptions of the impact of artificial intelligence on the creative development of advertising campaigns and

their work. The research will employ a qualitative research approach, utilizing in-depth, semi-structured interviews with highly experienced advertising experts. By engaging with field experts through interviews, the research endeavors to capture the rich variety of opinions surrounding the use of AI in advertising. These interviews will provide in-depth insights into the benefits, limitations, and potential risks associated with AI in the advertising industry, as well as its impact on creativity and the changing dynamics within advertising agencies.

To guide the research, the following research question will be addressed: What are the perceptions of professionals in advertising agencies regarding the influence of artificial intelligence on the creative development of advertising campaigns? In the context of this study, artificial intelligence (AI) refers to the application of advanced algorithms and machine learning techniques to automate and enhance various aspects of content creation in the advertising industry (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2021). Advertising campaigns refer to the process of developing and producing creative materials, such as advertisements, marketing campaigns, and promotional content, that effectively communicate messages to target audiences.

The structure of this study delves into specific aspects of AI in advertising in each chapter, building upon previous research and highlighting key considerations. The chapter with a theoretical framework provides an overview of previous research on AI in advertising, exploring changes it may bring to the structure of advertising agencies as organizations, changes in client behavior, and changes in campaign development. The next chapter discusses the research methodology employed in this study, which outlines the qualitative research approach, specifically the use of semi-structured expert interviews in the advertising industry. The rationale for selecting this method is discussed, along with considerations for participant recruitment and data analysis. The results chapter presents the findings from the interviews conducted with advertising experts. The identified clusters, including the benefits of using AI, limitations and risks, AI and creativity, and the emergence of new skills, are analyzed in depth. The chapter highlights key insights and patterns emerging from the data, providing a nuanced understanding of how AI affects the advertising sphere. Finally, the discussion and conclusion chapters build upon the findings and analysis; this chapter offers a comprehensive discussion of the implications of AI in

content creation within the advertising industry. It synthesizes the research results and relates them to existing literature, identifying areas of agreement and divergence. Furthermore, the chapter explores the practical implications of AI implementation, including its impact on advertising agencies, brand behavior, and work processes.

This investigation is beneficial not just for the marketing sector but also sheds a light on the present implementation of AI in advertising, the obstacles confronted by experts, and their forthcoming goals. The study is societally relevant as it acknowledges the ethical concerns associated with AI-generated content. By raising awareness of these issues, the research prompts discussions on responsible and ethical AI implementation, challenging a more thoughtful and conscious approach to technology adoption. Additionally, the research recognizes the evolving nature of creativity and the required skill set in the context of AI integration. While exploring the impact of AI on creative campaign development, the study contributes to the understanding of how human creativity interacts with and adapts to technological advancements, promoting a deeper comprehension of the changing dynamics in creative industries.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical chapter explores the ways in which AI is transforming the advertising industry, with a particular focus on its impact on content creation. The chapter is divided into three sections, each examining a different aspect of the topic.

The first section examines the changing landscape of advertising agencies in the digital age and how AI is changing the structure and function of these organizations.

The second section focuses on the role of AI in elevating brand marketing, exploring the possible advantages and challenges of using AI for brand marketing as well as the factors contributing to the transformative impact of AI on the marketing landscape.

The third section provides an overview of the influence of AI on creative advertising, diving into the current ways AI is used in advertising agencies and how it can be integrated into content creation. The section explores the potential of AI in content creation for advertising and discusses whether AI can produce creative output and which parts of campaign development can be done with the help of AI. Lastly, the section discusses the benefits and limitations of AI in the creative process of the advertising industry.

The theoretical framework presented in this chapter provides a structured approach to examining the impact of AI on content creation in the advertising sphere. By exploring the change in structure of advertising agencies, the demands and behavior of brands, and the shift in the work of creative advertising agencies due to the emergence of AI, this framework provides a comprehensive understanding of the potential of AI in content creation for advertising.

The Changing Landscape of Advertising Agencies in the Digital Age

The way businesses advertise their products and services has undergone a dramatic transformation, with new tools, platforms, and strategies emerging to meet the demands of an ever-changing digital landscape (Cham et al., 2022). The advertising industry has been constantly evolving at a fast pace, thanks to the swift advancements in technology and corresponding changes in consumer behavior ("How technology is changing", 2022). This constant evolution of global marketing practices has led to significant changes in the organizational structure of advertising agencies.

Traditional advertising agencies have typically followed a hierarchical structure with specialized departments for different functions such as creative, media, account management, and strategy (Horsky, 2006). However, evolving client and consumer expectations have created the need for more agile and adaptable organizational structures (Drummey, 2021). As a result, creative advertising agencies have undergone a significant shift, moving away from the dominance of 360-degree agencies capable of independently producing full campaigns and toward the formation of large networks of specialized agencies catering to diverse markets (MacRury, 2018a). These networks of agencies operate under a single brand and offer robust media contacts, production capabilities, and a wide range of services that add value for their clients. Regardless of constant changes in the business landscape, advertising agencies have always served as core institutions that connect brands, industry-related companies, and regulatory bodies (MacRury, 2018b). However, due to the introduction of artificial intelligence, the future of their organizational structure is uncertain (MacRury, 2018b).

The rapid development of AI and machine learning brings a lot of risks that could affect the structure of advertising agencies. Undeniably, AI has emerged as a promising solution to the need to deliver specifically targeted content to different audiences across multiple platforms, which can enhance the process of content creation and make it more efficient ("How technology is changing", 2022). AI can also automate routine and repetitive tasks in content creation for advertising agencies, such as generating ad copies, resizing images, and optimizing ad placements (Huang & Rust, 2021). This possibility can enable creative teams to focus mainly on higher-level tasks, such as strategy, concept development, and creative direction. However, there is a risk of significantly decreasing the size of departments in terms of human resources. The smaller the department, the less budget will be allocated to advertising campaigns and, therefore, to agencies. Additionally, the integration of AI technologies may require redefining job roles and responsibilities, which can create uncertainty and resistance among employees ("AI, Automation", 2018). Traditional roles that were once highly valued, such as copywriters and art directors, may be disrupted by AI-generated content. Furthermore, the adoption of AI may also require investments in infrastructure, training, and talent acquisition, which can strain agency resources ("AI, Automation", 2018). It is crucial for advertising agencies to carefully navigate

these uncertainties and challenges as they integrate AI technologies into their organizational structures.

The final and most unsettling question is how much there will be a need for the existence of creative advertising agencies in the future. With the availability of AI as a cost-efficient method for developing advertising campaigns, companies may become more independent and invest in the development of their own creative departments. For instance, Nike is adapting to changes by either finding alternative advertising methods or investing in technological marketing companies ("How technology is changing", 2022). Consequently, the advertising industry is becoming more data-driven than creativity-driven (Dino, 2021). However, it is crucial to highlight that, while the advertising business is shifting toward data-driven techniques, this does not always render creative ad agencies redundant. Instead, it emphasizes the need for these organizations to adapt and embrace the changing landscape in order to remain competitive.

There are considerable benefits and risks to applying AI, which will influence the organizational structure of an advertising agency. Nonetheless, research has shown that responsiveness to new circumstances, trends, and societal agendas has risen to the same level of importance as creativity in the advertising industry (MacRury, 2018b). To remain competitive and relevant, agencies need to be agile and adaptable in the ever-evolving field of advertising and marketing (Drummey, 2021). The integration of creativity, responsiveness, and a forward-thinking mindset will be key to the survival and success of advertising agencies as they navigate the changing landscape of the industry shaped by AI and other technological advancements.

Indeed, the integration of AI in advertising has brought about significant changes in the industry, including the structure and function of advertising agencies. As it was discussed earlier, the emergence of new technology is changing the way clients behave and the way they make advertising ("How technology is changing", 2022). Therefore, this influenced the demands of brands in terms of marketing as they sought to leverage the power of AI to better connect with their target audience. The next section explores these changes in greater detail. It examines the impact of AI on brands' behavior and preferences, as well as the ways in which AI is being used to enhance brand marketing.

The Role of AI in Elevating Brand Marketing

The global market is witnessing significant growth in the prevalence of AI, with a projected compound annual growth rate of 37.3% between 2023 and 2030 ("Artificial Intelligence Market Size," 2022). This technological advancement has brought about substantial changes in the advertising and media sectors, where AI solutions tailored for marketing purposes are being increasingly adopted. It is crucial to examine how AI is influencing brand marketing efforts and the evolving demands it places on advertising agencies. As businesses face budget constraints, investing in marketing strategies that deliver measurable returns has become essential. Despite challenges, advertising budgets are expected to grow by 3.8% in 2023, indicating the recognition of marketing's importance and the willingness to invest in it (Calladine, 2022).

By leveraging the power of AI, companies can elevate their brand marketing efforts and achieve better results, including increased revenue, lead generation, and improved brand reputation. AI serves as a valuable tool for marketers to maximize their advertising budgets and attain a higher return on investment in today's complex landscape. Also, it is transforming the demands placed on advertising agencies as brands increasingly embrace technological advancements. Marketing campaigns have become more crucial than ever, requiring agencies to go beyond creative ideas and delve into intricate audience research, consumer service design and management, and technology utilization (Hull, 2018; Turow, 2018). This shift in expectations necessitates a different approach from brands, where understanding and effectively utilizing AI technology is compulsory.

Opportunities and Challenges for Brands with AI Applications in Marketing

AI has gained popularity in marketing, experiencing more than a two-fold increase in usage since 2017 ("The State of AI in 2022," 2022). However, a significant number of brands have yet to adopt AI in their operations, indicating a lack of understanding and caution toward AI development (Khokhar, 2019). Despite this, AI presents enormous potential in the marketing sphere. It has been reported to increase revenue by approximately 70% and decrease costs in marketing and sales by around 28% in 2021 ("The State of AI in 2022," 2022). Brands recognize these benefits and are incorporating data-driven technologies into

their advertising strategies to create more effective campaigns that resonate with their target audiences.

Academic research explores the benefits and drawbacks of AI in marketing for brands, but no definitive answer exists. Some researchers emphasize the benefits, such as improved targeting, enhanced customer experience, and better decision-making, along with cost-effectiveness by reducing the time and effort spent on developing marketing campaigns (De Bruyn et al., 2020; Qin & Jiang, 2019). However, ethical concerns also arise. For instance, the use of AI chatbots in the customer-provider relationship can lead to co-destruction if interactions with customers fail due to the chatbot's limitations (Castillo et al., 2021). The study revealed that the use of AI in the customer-provider relationship can possibly lead to co-destruction in the case of a failed interaction between the customer and chatbot. The issue arises because customers interact with the chatbot as they would with a human without adapting to the fact that it is a robot (Castillo et al., 2021). Therefore, customer experiences can be significantly flawed, as many consumers tend to reject AI due to a lack of understanding. The audience tends to harshly judge customer experiences involving inaccurate AI actions, as there is a tension for audience members between feeling understood and misunderstood. Puntoni et al. (2021) are saying that the audience is reacting very firmly to "incorrect classification, discriminatory use of classification, or a combination of the two" (p. 138). Therefore, the human-like behavior of AI mechanisms can be both a blessing and a curse, as it can enhance the customer experience if executed well, but it can also lead to negative consequences if not properly designed and tested.

The Transformative Impact of AI on Brand Behavior

Technological advancements, including AI, have the potential to fundamentally change entire markets and disrupt the way businesses operate. The technological determinism theory suggests that technology shapes society and culture (Hauer, 2017). AI's disruptive nature may lead to a new way of thinking and acting in society, influencing human behavior and consequently affecting brands. Just as the internet shaped brand communication by empowering consumers with information, AI may similarly reshape how people perform daily tasks. It is crucial for brands to stay aware of technological changes to

remain relevant (Georgiadis, 2022). This also entails the fact that demands addressed to advertising agencies by brands will be much higher.

However, technology alone cannot solve problems, and people and processes are necessary to support its implementation. The People Process Technology (PPT) framework highlights the interconnectivity between people, processes, and technology, emphasizing the need for balance (Karlson, 2022). As AI becomes increasingly prevalent in marketing, professionals must adapt to new technology to stay relevant and successful (Davenport et al., 2019). Collaboration between humans and AI is crucial for optimizing campaign results in marketing (Huang & Rust, 2022). While AI excels in mechanical and analytical skills, human intelligence remains essential in creativity, intuition, and understanding social interaction. Striking a balance between human and AI intelligence is vital for achieving optimal marketing outcomes.

As marketing has become increasingly complex, brands now expect advertising agencies to adopt a completely different approach. It is no longer solely about creative ideas but also entails intricate research of a specific audience, designing and managing consumer service, and leveraging technology (Hull, 2018; Turow, 2018). The shift in budget allocation towards digital channels reflects a shift in audience expectations, leading brands to anticipate advertising campaigns that transcend traditional boundaries (MacRury, 2018a). By gaining a comprehensive understanding of both the advantages and disadvantages connected to the use of AI in marketing, brands can learn how to effectively use this technology to achieve their marketing objectives in the constantly changing digital landscape.

The Influence of AI on Creative Advertising

The impact of technology on creative advertising is the subject of much discussion. According to MacRury (2018a), technology has a "disruptive impact" on the creative industries. Indeed, with a wide range of technologies now used in the creative industries to produce content, the market for content-dependent businesses has changed drastically (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2021). While some tasks are easy and unconscious for humans and difficult for AI systems, such as physical motion, others, such as abstract thinking, are easier

for AI (Moravec, 1998). This means that the application of AI in the work of creative professionals has more significant implications than in the work of mechanical labor.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in exploring the creative potential of AI and its role in reshaping the advertising process alongside the ongoing digitalization. AI technology can possibly restructure all stages of the advertising process, including advertising research and strategy making, copywriting, ad production, media planning and buying, and performance evaluation ("How AI is changing advertising", 2022). However, it is crucial to acknowledge the impact of AI on the work of creative professionals and to delve deeper into the implications of its implementation. While AI-driven tools are already being used in advertising to analyze vast amounts of data and facilitate the execution of highly efficient campaigns, it is important to consider the sensitivity of the creative aspect and the potential implications of integrating AI into this particular field. In the following subsection, the current use of AI in advertising and its effects on creative processes will be thoroughly investigated, providing valuable insights into the subject matter.

Current Use of AI in Advertising

AI is already being used in some advertising industry processes, and it has already become a production norm. The most commonly used technology in creative advertising businesses is programmatic advertising, which can automate media buying (Davenport et al., 2019). Programmatic advertising algorithms use data analysis to provide website users with appropriate information, including a specific price offer or time of day. Predictive analytics is used to segment the audience into clusters based on common customer behavior characteristics (Nair & Gupta, 2021). This approach is more efficient than traditional marketing as it allows for specific advertising targeting a particular segment of the audience (Nair & Gupta, 2021).

While brands may get a competitive advantage by utilizing AI in the micro-segmenting of their advertising campaigns, creative advertising agencies encounter the challenging task of generating unique and compelling designs for each target audience segment in a limited timeframe. This not only increases the work load for all departments of a creative advertising agency but also intensifies the pressure on creatives to produce fresh and innovative ideas for each campaign. The capacity to operate efficiently and quickly has

become a crucial factor in the success of creative advertising agencies. Therefore, the process of developing an advertising campaign has already become more complex.

Moreover, natural language processing (NLP) holds great potential for marketers seeking to better understand the use of their customers' language (Hartmann & Netzer, 2023). NLP allows algorithms to understand human writing styles, extract meaning and intent, and interact with humans in a way that is both natural and grammatically correct (Chan-Olmsted, 2019). Through analysis of customer feedback, comments, and social media interactions, NLP algorithms can gain insights into customer preferences and opinions. By analyzing natural language, marketers can create targeted advertising messages that resonate with their customers' interests, needs, and desires. Additionally, the use of NLP in chatbots can elevate customer experience and engagement, streamlining communication and facilitating efficiency (Hartmann & Netzer, 2023).

As we can see, professionals in the field have already adopted certain areas of advertising development with the use of AI. However, most artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms are used as tools to analyze audience data and deliver the relevant message to consumers and are not yet used for content creation. In the next subsections, the possible applications of AI in content creation for advertising will be explored, with an emphasis on how AI is currently being used to automate copywriting, visual production, and strategy-making.

AI's Potential for Content Creation in Advertising

The advertising industry has traditionally relied on human creativity to develop effective advertising campaigns. However, the progress of artificial intelligence is now affecting the creative process of producing advertising campaigns. According to Anantrasirichai and Bull (2021), the skill set necessary for the creative development of advertising campaigns differs significantly from that required for analytical processes. Therefore, AI has the potential to revolutionize content creation in the advertising industry in terms of visual and textual content.

One area where AI is making significant advancements is in the creation of textual content. Natural Language Processing (NLP), a type of AI that is used for analytical tasks, can also be utilized to create copy for ads. ChatGPT, an NLP tool created by OpenAI, is one of the

best-known tools in this area. By learning patterns, structures, and relationships within text data from various sources like websites, books, and articles, ChatGPT can create original content for ads without the need for human intervention. While ChatGPT is gaining widespread popularity, it is causing concern among big tech corporations like Google and triggering internal code red alarms (Desk, 2023; Grant & Metz, 2022).

Moreover, advancements in machine learning have led to the development of deep learning algorithms such as convolutional neural networks (CNNs) and generative advisory networks (GANs) that are used for the production of complex visual content. CNNs are used for the recognition of images with the help of an intricate algorithm, which is now widely used for face recognition on social networks. GANs are generative models that detect new data instances that resemble the real data. These technologies can generate textual, audiovisual, and game-type content, as well as animations, augmented and virtual realities, and deep fakes (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2021). For instance, in 2018, the painting "Portrait of Edmond Belamy" was produced by GAN and successfully sold at auction. The algorithm examined portraits from the 14th to the 20th centuries to learn the aesthetics and styles of paintings ("Portrait by AI program", 2018).

Nonetheless, it is crucial to understand that machine-generated cultural products are not limited to informational goods like music or the arts (Peukert, 2019). The described technologies are actively used in the advertising business. AI-powered tools such as ChatGPT can generate original textual content and can be effectively used in the generation of copy for advertising campaigns, while GANs and CNNs models may contribute to the visual part of the campaign. As advertising creativity combines the novelty of the idea with the significance of the campaign to customers (Vakratsas & Wang, 2021), it is possible to employ AI to create advertising campaigns by taking these factors into account and implementing an algorithm. Consequently, the creative application of AI is now actively researched. Numerous companies are now trying to employ artificial intelligence in the stages of the development of advertising campaigns that involve a creative skillset, including strategy making, ad design, and copywriting. Further subsections will unravel AI possibilities in these parts of the development of an advertising campaign.

AI Application in Advertising Strategy Making.

AI is not yet widely used to generate original advertising campaign ideas, but researchers are sure of the fact that AI will change the way brands communicate with customers and therefore will change advertising storytelling (Shah et al., 2020). There have been some attempts by brands to base an advertising campaign on ideas generated by artificial intelligence. One of these attempts was made by Nike together with the creative advertising agency Wieden+Kennedy (Greene, 2019). The algorithm analyzed all ads that were released by the brand over the last seven years and came up with an original idea for a video advertisement. It was an unofficial ad campaign, as the current capacity of AI is still not advanced enough to come up with original ideas that strategists can use in official campaigns. Nonetheless, it can already help human creatives generate and polish their concepts. For instance, AI can already be used to assess previous successful advertising campaigns in order to uncover common aspects and methods that might be applied in future ads.

Even so, development does not stand still, and now a lot of practitioners and researchers are trying to make AI more creatively independent. Vakratsas and Wang (2021) suggest applying the creative advertising system (CAS) for the creative production and evaluation of advertising ideas. The proposed system consists of four steps: knowledge development and tracking, knowledge classification into styles, creative generation using traversal rules, and creative testing using evaluation rules. It emphasizes the importance of analyzing past and current advertising campaigns for evaluating novelty and generating essential ideas. The system blends human-generated rules with computational techniques to enhance creativity and and provide a systematic approach to developing and testing new advertising ideas. Therefore, this system will enable advertisers to not only revolutionize the creative process in advertising but also provide them with a roadmap for constantly coming up with original ideas (Vakratsas & Wang, 2021). At the same time, the authors also acknowledge that implementing such a system would require significant resources and collaboration between agencies, clients, practitioners, and academics (Vakratsas & Wang, 2021). The difficulty also lies in assessing the value of new templates, as there is often no past evidence to draw upon. This means that while novelty can be easily evaluated, the value of new templates is harder to assess. Therefore, it is crucial to foster collaboration

between humans and AI to develop a more effective and efficient evaluation system. Therefore, while AI has already shown its potential in assisting human creatives to generate and refine their ideas, it is still not advanced enough to come up with original ideas independently.

AI Application in Ad Design and Copywriting.

The creation of an advertising campaign includes the utilization of deep learning technologies to produce custom-made designs or materials that incorporate text, pictures, or other creative components (Qin & Jiang, 2019). For example, the brand of the alcoholic beverage Martini released an advertising campaign that consisted of nine images created by artificial intelligence (Badham, 2023). Based on detailed text about each Martini drink, Midjourney's AI platform offered nine images, which were later used for social and digital advertising assets for the brand (Badham, 2023).

Agencies are experimenting not only in terms of the visual part of the campaign. Automobile brand Lexus released their campaign for a new model with their first AI-generated script (Spangler, 2018). The IBM Watson AI was used to analyze 15 years' worth of award-winning car commercials to come up with a unique outline for the Lexus campaign. As a result, the 60-second commercial, titled "Driven by Intuition," was created, which surprised the audience with its high level of creativity. The commercial resonated well with general audiences, capturing their attention. However, it is important to note that AI built the main outline for the ad, but the whole story was finalized by Oscar winning film director Kevin Macdonald and the creative advertising team (Spangler, 2018). Once again, this proves the necessity of human assistance with the current level of AI technology development, as it can only work within the parameters set by humans and is limited by the data it is trained on.

Moreover, development in terms of language generation models is not standing still. For instance, a financial services company, JP Morgan Chase, announced a five-year deal with tech firm Persado to continue using AI-generated marketing copy for its businesses (Deighton, 2019). Persado's Message Machine system utilizes AI, machine learning, and computational linguistics to identify the best words and phrases that connect with consumers. According to conducted analysis, AI-generated copy has shown a significant

increase in click-through rates, up to 450% when compared to human-written copy (Deighton, 2019). This collaboration between JP Morgan Chase and Persado demonstrates how businesses can leverage AI to improve their marketing efforts and gain a competitive edge. However, it is important to mention that the produced copy messages were very short and tailored to a specific audience, so there were limitations to the produced content.

Exploring the Benefits and Drawbacks of AI in the Advertising Industry

As the advertising industry becomes increasingly aware of the impact of technological advancements, there have been many discussions among practitioners regarding the opportunities and obstacles that arise with the use of AI in creative advertising campaign development. In order to fully understand the role of AI in the creative development of advertising, it is essential to examine the potential advantages and disadvantages from the perspective of advertising agencies. In the following paragraphs, insights will be drawn from the perspectives of researchers and practitioners in the field in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the creative development of advertising.

The Advantages of Leveraging Artificial Intelligence in Advertising.

Application of AI has numerous benefits for the advertising agency, as it is cost efficient, provides the same level of quality performance, and works without any interruptions (Shah et al., 2020).

Optimization of a Workflow.

One significant advantage of AI is its ability to work with vast data sets, generate insights, and self-learn, enabling the automation of repetitive tasks (Shah et al., 2020). This can enable human resources to focus on more complex aspects of campaign development, such as ensuring client satisfaction, enhancing creativity, and refining strategy.

Specifically, AI has the potential to boost human creativity by identifying the most effective messaging and visual elements for specific target audiences (Chan-Olmsted, 2019). By automating decision-making processes, AI can increase workflow efficiency (Chan-Olmsted, 2019). Traditionally, advertisers followed a macro approach when constructing advertising campaign strategies, as humans could only identify large segments of the target

audience. However, with AI-enabled micro-segmentation, targeting specific and niche audiences becomes possible (Campbell et al., 2022). This approach not only increases the campaign's potential success but also enhances the creativity of the advertising team. They can now include specific customers in their campaigns and work on individual insights (Campbell et al., 2022). For example, if one audience segment finds the copy offensive, they will not be shown it, ensuring a higher possibility of understanding the brand message (Campbell et al., 2022). Moreover, AI contributes to innovation by identifying alternatives and optimizing solutions, leading to the generation of creative and innovative approaches.

The use of AI-powered tools in the development of creative advertising campaigns has been argued to streamline the content creation process by reducing production time, shortening design cycles and copywriting processes, simplifying communication with clients, and lowering production costs (Qin & Jiang, 2019). Therefore, this time-saving impact extends to all processes involved in the development of creative advertising campaigns. For instance, the briefing process can become much faster with AI-generated designs for presentations that the account management team can use to brief clients. Creatives may use AI for creating storyboards and visualizing ideas, making it easier and more cost efficient (Campbell et al., 2022). Moreover, the production process can be shortened as creatives may not need to travel to various shooting sites, and the need for on-set filming may be reduced. Additionally, the capacity of the campaign can be multiplied as advertisements can feature various scenes and higher complexity, which previously was only possible with a large budget (Campbell et al., 2022). Therefore, AI systems of this nature have the potential to boost the productivity of firms by lowering production costs or enabling the creation of a wider variety of original products.

New Job Creation.

Even with all the complicated systems mentioned above, the presence of a creative team is mandatory, as the human mind cannot compete with the possibilities of modern technologies. According to Qin and Jiang (2019), the AI-based advertising process has evolved from conventional advertising approaches but has not yet undergone a complete reengineering process. Scholars agree that in the near future, artificial intelligence can support advertising professionals rather than replace them (Davenport et al., 2019).

However, there will be a definite need to adapt to new industry circumstances. Such advancement in the use of AI in creative advertising agencies may reshape the way companies look, and the industry may shift toward the need for more technology-focused roles in creative and production departments (Campbell et al., 2022). Therefore, marketers' ability to properly employ and manage artificial intelligence solutions will become an increasingly important skill set (Shah et al., 2020). This is also the current and future challenge of finding human capital with specific skills for interaction with AI for creative purposes (Marr, 2022).

The Disadvantages of Leveraging Artificial Intelligence in Advertising.

However, while the application of AI for effective content distribution to specific audiences and market analysis is already easy to implement (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2021), the creative production of advertising is still unclear as to how AI can work alongside humans.

Job Elimination.

Currently, the advancement of AI in creative development is still "human-centric" (Anantrasirichai and Bull, 2021). However, this progress is not without its implications for certain job roles. As AI continues to evolve, there is a growing expectation that some jobs in the advertising industry may eventually become obsolete.

One of the primary advantages of AI is its ability to handle repetitive tasks efficiently. While this automation can significantly improve productivity, it also poses a challenge to certain job functions, particularly those performed by designers (Marriott, 2023). With AI's capacity to generate visuals, logos, and designs, there is a foreseeable scenario where machines may gradually take over a significant portion of the work traditionally done by designers.

It is important to acknowledge that AI's increasing role in creative development does not necessarily imply the complete elimination of human involvement. Instead, AI serves as a powerful tool that can assist and enhance the creative process. For instance, an auto-generative system like ChatGPT cannot write copy as well as a human, primarily due to the availability of the data it has been trained on, which only goes up to 2021 (Kirwan, 2023).

Therefore, it is not accurate enough to use without human modification and revision. The creator of ChatGPT recognizes the mistakes that are made and the easy detection of text produced by the AI technology, but with every update, it becomes more and more accurate.

Additionally, as the advancement of AI is developing at a rapid rate, practitioners and researchers cannot predict what kinds of jobs could be potentially eliminated. Currently, most research on applying AI at various stages of the advertising process is concentrated on introducing and explaining relevant concepts. The possible applications of AI are either theoretically deduced and predicted based on existing applications or discussed in abstract terms without conducting comprehensive research on the internal and generation mechanisms of the advertising process. As a result, there is a lack of in-depth investigation into how the traditional advertising process is affected by the implementation of AI technologies.

Content Bias and Potential Harm.

Artificial intelligence is rapidly advancing, but there is a common belief among practitioners that AI-generated visuals and text can be easily detected due to their lack of human touch (Kirwan, 2023). AI is initially trained to imitate human output, whether it be in visual or textual form, but it remains a technology that cannot form its own opinions and can only simulate an understanding of human behavior (De Bruyn et al., 2020). Midjourney, an AI image generation tool, solely relies on data to generate visual content, resulting in a combination of information from its dataset that limits its ability to produce original content and handle complex demands. For instance, a lot of experts are highlighting the inability of image-generative AI to generate a humanly appropriate image of hands. According to Professor Peter Bentley, AI lacks a full understanding of hands in three dimensions and cannot accurately recreate images that show hands in a specific context, such as holding an object or making a gesture (Hughes, 2023). Even with specific prompts, the AI-generated images still have noticeable inaccuracies when closely examined.

Another limitation of AI is its inability to fully comprehend or access the context and implications of its own output. While certain information and societal rules may be common knowledge for humans, algorithms may not possess the same level of understanding. This can lead to instances where AI-generated outputs inadvertently promote violence, criminal

behavior, harmful stereotypes, or controversial messages in general (De Bruyn et al., 2020). Due to this limitation, human intervention becomes crucial in the oversight and assessment of AI systems' outputs. Human professionals are needed to closely monitor and evaluate the results produced by AI, ensuring that they align with ethical standards, legal requirements, and societal norms.

Conclusion

The use of AI in content creation is undeniably changing the traditional methods of producing advertising campaigns. With AI-powered tools, content creators can automate tasks such as content generation, curation, and distribution, allowing for increased efficiency and scalability. The combination of human creativity and AI capabilities can result in more innovative, engaging, and diverse content for audiences. The current landscape of content creation is indeed human-centric, but the increasing application of AI in this field is undeniable (De Bruyn et al., 2020). As we move forward, it is crucial to strike a balance between the use of AI and human creativity in content creation. This will require a combination of education, investment in AI infrastructure and talent, and a willingness to experiment and find the best ways for AI applications. With the right approach, AI can help businesses achieve new levels of efficiency, innovation, and growth. However, the extent to which AI will replace humans in this process remains a question.

Methodology

Research Design and Data Collection

The research question suggests using an exploratory qualitative research design, which allows for an in-depth exploration of the environment and social phenomena in the context of modern advertising (Boeije, 2010). In comparison to other research methods, in-depth interviewing is particularly effective in obtaining rich and detailed information (Johnson, 2011). Therefore, this design is particularly suitable for answering the research question, implying the unraveling of new insights regarding the creative application of AI in the advertising sphere. The key objective of this research is to acquire a better knowledge of the current experiences of practitioners in the advertising business, with a particular emphasis on their thoughts on the future changes that AI can bring to the advertising content production. Qualitative research, particularly interviews, prioritizes in-depth understanding over statistical generalization (Carminati, 2018). Therefore, in this research, where the details about current and future use of AI in creative advertising are the main area of interest, the findings will offer valuable insights, theoretical developments, and recommendations that may be transferable to similar contexts or serve as a basis for further research.

To gather the necessary data, in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with professionals in the advertising industry. This qualitative research method was chosen as it enables a comprehensive examination of the current situation from the perspective of industry practitioners (Boeije, 2010; Johnson, 2011) and provides valuable and insightful knowledge for future research (Johnson, 2011). This research has the advantage of conducting semi-structured interviews, which allow for flexibility and adaptability during the interview process. This flexibility obtained by open-ended questions enables the researcher to dive deeper into specific areas of interest, follow-up on unexpected insights, and adapt the interview guide based on emerging themes and ideas (Adams, 2015). Given that the respondents are experienced and deeply immersed in the topic, a descriptive/interpretive semi-structured interview design will be employed to explore new perspectives not previously discussed (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Conducting interviews with experts in the field offers several advantages. Firstly, it allows for efficient data gathering as these practitioners possess insider practical knowledge relevant to the research area. Additionally,

the quality of the collected data is expected to be high, ensuring reliable academic and practically relevant results (Bogner et al., 2009). Therefore, by engaging with professionals in the advertising industry, the research can capture the nuances of real-world experiences and account for industry-specific factors that may influence the application of AI in content creation.

The majority of interviews, explicitly 6 out of 7, were conducted online, one of them in the office of the respondent. The place was chosen based on the preferences of respondents, ensuring maximum comfort, minimal distractions, and maintaining confidentiality. The duration of each interview varied depending on the participant's availability. On average, interviews lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The flexible nature of qualitative interviews allowed for organic conversations, enabling participants to expand on their responses and provide nuanced insights into the research topic.

Sampling

The sampling method employed in this study combines purposive expert sampling and snowball sampling, which strengthens the credibility and comprehensiveness of the research findings. Purposive expert sampling was chosen to ensure the selection of participants with a specific professional background and extensive knowledge of the research topic (Etikan et al., 2016). This approach is particularly suitable for investigating the relatively new phenomenon of AI in creative advertising production, where limited information is available (Etikan et al., 2016).

The sample consisted of 9 male respondents, including one interview conducted with one respondent and two of his colleagues who expressed interest in the topic. The sample size reached data saturation, indicating that further interviews would not provide significant additional information and ensuring thorough exploration of the topic. The participants were professionals employed in creative advertising and communication agencies, holding middle or higher positions within their organizations. This selection ensured that the sample included individuals with comprehensive industry understanding, substantial expertise, and involvement in decision-making processes. Their perspectives provided a broader understanding of the impact of AI on creative advertising campaigns.

To capture a comprehensive range of insights, the study targeted experienced individuals working in various departments of creative agencies, including client service,

creative, strategy, and chief executive roles. These departments play crucial roles in the development of creative campaign production and realization. By including professionals with different responsibilities and involvement in various stages of creative content creation, the study achieved a comprehensive understanding of the potential applications of AI in the field. See Appendix C for further details on the sample.

Participants were recruited through direct contact via their professional networks and personal emails. The researcher contacted most of the respondents through social networking platforms, such as LinkedIn. The websites of creative advertising and communication agencies were analyzed as well, where corporate emails were used to contact professionals. In addition to purposive expert sampling, the study also utilized snowball sampling. This method involves the identification of potential participants through referrals from experts already involved in the research (Bogner et al., 2009). By leveraging the networks of individuals who are knowledgeable and passionate about the research topic, the study aimed to uncover additional professionals who may offer unique insights and perspectives on the influence of AI in content creation within the advertising industry.

The researcher's prior professional experience in advertising creative agencies served as a valuable asset, providing a competitive advantage in conducting this study. The shared professional background between the researcher and the participants was leveraged to enhance motivation for their involvement in the study.

Operationalization

In order to conduct a thorough research study on the impact of AI on advertising campaign development, a comprehensive topic list was carefully constructed. This topic list covered key dimensions of the research topic and served as a structured guide during interviews with participants. The goal was to extract specific information and insights that would provide a detailed and comprehensive understanding of how AI influences the advertising process.

The topic list for this study was constructed to address key aspects of the research objectives and provide a comprehensive exploration of the impact of AI on content creation in the advertising industry. The main block of questions encompasses three variables: the influence of technology on advertising agencies as organizations, the change in brand

marketing strategies, and the use of AI in advertising. To gather and examine relevant insights within the sphere of interest, the sensitizing concepts approach was utilized. This approach employed an inductive method, allowing the theory to be developed based on the perspectives of the respondents (Bowen, 2019). The topic list evolved and adapted throughout the interview process, ensuring that it remained relevant and effective in collecting the necessary data.

The operationalization process was crucial to the study as it ensured that not only theoretical constructs were explored but also empirical evidence was obtained. This empirical evidence contributed to a deeper understanding of the research question and provided concrete findings. The topic list, constructed based on theoretical concepts, served as the foundation for both the data collection process and the analysis of the results.

The topic list for this study addressed key aspects of the research objectives and aimed to provide a comprehensive exploration of the impact of AI on content creation in the advertising industry. It consisted of three main blocks of questions covering the influence of technology on advertising agencies, changes in brand marketing strategies, and the use of AI in advertising.

The first topic focused on examining the changes in advertising departments and the creative process resulting from technology and digitalization. This line of questioning aimed to capture the evolving nature of advertising agencies as organizations and understand the technologies currently employed in content creation. The integration of AI has been identified as a promising solution to enhance efficiency and audience engagement by automating routine tasks and freeing up creative teams to focus on higher-level tasks such as strategy and concept development (Cham et al., 2022; Huang & Rust, 2021). Therefore, questions were designed to find out how technology is affecting the advertising agency as an organization and the creative process. For example, "In terms of technology application, how have advertising departments changed since an agency five years ago?"

The second topic investigated the shift in brand marketing strategies influenced by the integration of technology, including AI. The use of AI in campaigns has become increasingly prevalent, with clients recognizing the benefits of data-driven technologies in creating more effective and targeted advertising (De Bruyn et al., 2020; Qin & Jiang, 2019).

Therefore, the questions explored the interaction between agencies and brands, delving into changes in strategies and their impact on the role of advertising agencies. The increasing demand for the use of AI technology in advertising campaigns was a specific area of interest. The effect of digitalization on marketing and client demand for AI technology in campaigns are explored, along with the benefits and concerns associated with its use.

The third topic delved into the current use of AI in advertising agencies and their plans for applying it to content creation. Questions were asked about specific applications of AI, experiences with its implementation, and potential interactions between AI and advertising experts. Speculation about the future use of AI and its impact on consumer-brand interactions was also explored. Furthermore, the topic list addressed the skills needed for advertising professionals in the future and considered potential changes in advertising campaigns and distinguishing factors.

To ensure the validity of the operationalization process, several strategies were employed. First, the interview questions were developed based on a thorough review of existing literature and theoretical frameworks. This ensured that the questions were grounded in established knowledge and relevant to the research objectives. Second, the questions from the topic list were pre-tested to ensure clarity, relevance, and effectiveness. This pre-testing involved engaging in an online conversation with a previous colleague of a researcher, allowing for feedback and refinement of the interview guide.

For the final topic list used in the research, please refer to Appendix B.

Data Processing and Analysis

The analysis stage of the research focused on finding common patterns in the produced data. All interviews conducted were recorded, transcribed, and analysed using open, axial, and selective coding, following the thematic analysis guidelines (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

During the interviews, audio recording devices were utilized to capture participants' responses accurately. All audio recordings from the interviews were transcribed verbatim. Transcription involved converting the spoken words into written text, capturing both the explicit content and the nuances of the participants' expressions. Transcripts were carefully reviewed for accuracy and completeness, ensuring that the data reflected the participants'

original statements. Each respondent was assigned a unique nickname to ensure the anonymity of all interviewees.

Analysis using an open, axial, and selective coding approach helped to notice the common themes brought up by experts in the field and uncover hidden meanings. The analysis process included several steps. First, the data should be broken down into logical codes that will be classified according to their meanings. Open coding involved generating initial codes by closely examining the data and identifying the main patterns and themes. Then, the data was grouped according to emergent categories and themes. This step will help to get familiar with the data and explore patterns that might have been previously unknown (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Second, axial coding was then conducted to determine relationships between the discovered codes. This will help identify patterns and connections between categories, helping to explain the meaning of the data as a whole. The axial coding process facilitated a deeper understanding of the relationships between different ideas and helped to identify core concepts (Boeije, 2010). Finally, selective coding was the final phase of analysis, focusing on refining and selecting the most prominent themes that captured the essence of the research topic. This process involved identifying the central themes and organizing them into a coherent narrative that reflected the participants' experiences and perspectives (Boeije, 2010). Appendix D provides a more detailed relationship between codes with a concept mapping technique.

During the coding process of this research study, a peer debriefing technique was employed to ensure the rigor and validity of the analysis. This technique aims to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the coding process by incorporating external perspectives and insights, ultimately strengthening the interpretive process and the reliability of the study's findings.

Ethicality of the Research

The research placed significant emphasis on upholding ethical principles to ensure the protection and well-being of the participants. The following section outlines the ethical considerations specific to qualitative interviews and the steps taken to ensure confidentiality, privacy, and informed consent. See Appendix A for an example of a consent form.

Respecting participant confidentiality and anonymity was of utmost importance in this study. To safeguard the identities of the participants, all personal identifying information was removed or anonymized during the transcription and data analysis processes. Pseudonyms were used instead of real names in the research materials to maintain confidentiality. To maintain anonymity, all data, including audio recordings, transcripts, and other identifiable information, was securely kept and only the researcher had access to it. Furthermore, prior to beginning the interviews, all participants were informed of the recording process and their agreement was sought. Therefore, all respondents were provided with clear and comprehensive information about the research purpose, procedures, and potential risks or benefits associated with participation before the start of each interview.

Results

        The findings from the analysis of the interviews carried out on the influence of AI on creative content development in advertising have exposed four primary groups of classifications. In this segment, these classifications will be examined, diving into their consequences for the sector.

        The first cluster, Benefits of Using AI, discusses how advertising experts see the advantages of using AI for content creation in the advertising sphere. Each category focuses on going deeper into the most important benefits of applying AI-based technology to content creation for advertising agencies and brands, including time and cost efficiency, an enhanced level of creativity, and broader marketing capabilities for brands.

        The second cluster, Limitations and Risks of AI, focuses on the potential limitations and risks associated with using AI in advertising. It underscores the issues brought up by experts in discussions about the quality of content produced by AI and the inability of AI to duplicate human ingenuity and judgment.

        The third cluster, AI and Creativity, explores the relationship between AI and creativity in advertising. The interviewees discussed how AI can redefine creativity by bringing new approaches and techniques to the creative process. However, they also acknowledged the limitations of AI creativity and emphasized the inimitable aspects of human creativity in advertising.

        The fourth cluster focuses on how artificial intelligence is transforming the advertising industry, emphasizing the need for obtaining specific skills to keep up with the fast-paced changes brought about by AI.

        Overall, the study finds that AI has the potential to revolutionize content creation in the advertising industry. The interviewees emphasized the positive as well as negative sides of what kind of change may happen to modern industry. The study provides valuable insights about the implementation of AI in content creation, which will be discussed in further detail.

Benefits of Using AI

        The analysis of interviews conducted to explore the impact of artificial intelligence on the creative development of advertising projects reveals several significant benefits of using AI in creative advertising. These benefits include increased efficiency and cost-

effectiveness and a boost in creativity. Additionally, they could not avoid talking about benefits for clients. They talked about how marketing factors for brands would be enhanced for clients, which means better reach for the client.

Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness

Advertising agencies may significantly increase efficiency by implementing generative AI technology since these tools speed up procedures, reduce timelines, and enable quicker decision-making. One of the key advantages of AI in content creation lies in its ability to automate time-consuming tasks and streamline workflow. Darren says, "…basically the benefit is, you're economize the time. It's cheaper… rather than spending so much money, and time, and flights and finding the right scene to do a photo shoot, you just type it in." This thought is supported by a theoretical framework stating that workflow will be sufficiently improved with the use of AI (Chan-Olmsted, 2019). By automating aspects such as briefing with clients, idea selection, and research processes, AI accelerates the overall advertising process, enabling agencies to achieve greater advancements and outcomes in a shorter period of time. As James explains, "it's able to push us much further much quicker". This expeditiousness empowers advertisers to meet tight deadlines, seize emerging opportunities, and stay ahead in a fast-paced industry (Qin and Jiang, 2019). Two respondents, Jan and James, highlighted the potential of using AI in the briefing process with clients. This application of AI could simplify and enhance the process by allowing clients to precisely articulate their needs. James mentioned using AI image generators to help clients explain the type of image they are looking for, while another referred to clients using AI tools like Midjourney to assist in the effective briefing of creative agencies by saying, "…help them [clients] generate what it is they're trying to accomplish and use that to help brief the creative agencies." This possible application not only saves time but also leads to more accurate and tailored advertising campaigns, ultimately satisfying client expectations and increasing client satisfaction.

Furthermore, AI serves as a powerful research tool, comparable to a search engine like Google but with elevated capabilities. One of the respondents, Dirk, mentioned using GPT and Midjourney for all of the internal processes that inquire about research, stating, "It is basically Google on steroids." It empowers advertisers to gather information, analyze market trends, and make data-driven strategic decisions. By utilizing AI tools such as GPT

and Midjourney, advertising agencies can streamline the preparatory stages of client meetings, reducing the time required for brainstorming and idea selection. This enables agencies to approach clients with well-informed proposals, reinforcing their expertise and competence. Therefore, the concern raised by researchers that the search engines may encounter new competitors justifies itself (Desk, 2023; Grant & Metz, 2022).

Additionally, AI proves invaluable in automating routine tasks within advertising agencies, freeing up human creatives to focus on strategic and creative aspects of their work. A lot of creatives' time is occupied with very technical tasks; quoting one of the respondents, Jan, "90% of what we do is like making presentations." By automating tasks such as creating presentations, mock-ups, designs, and reformatting content for different platforms, AI significantly streamlines workflow and boosts overall productivity. As Pieter mentioned, "that's the base layer just in our daily work." Therefore, this level of work in advertising agencies can already be done with different types of generative AI. Researchers are making the same prognosis for the ability to self-learn on vast data sets; AI may be applied for repetitive tasks in the agency (Campbell et al., 2022; Shah et al., 2020). AI can serve as a fundamental layer upon which creatives build, generating initial drafts and conducting research, providing a starting point for human creativity. However, it is important to note that AI is a tool that enhances human creativity rather than replacing it, serving as a powerful ally for creative professionals.

Moreover, the use of AI in content creation can lead to cost savings and increased independence for advertising agencies. By leveraging AI technologies, agencies can reduce the need to outsource specialized creative work, thus eliminating the expenses associated with finding and hiring human talent. As Pieter pointed out:

> …we can go and find a really expensive Japanese anime artist. But we can also take real footage, throw it in some kind of video-to-video AI tool and it spits out the same film but then in anime style. I could really see us using that.

This cost-effectiveness allows agencies to allocate their resources more efficiently and focus on the creative aspects of their campaigns.

Boost in Creativity

Artificial intelligence has the potential to change content creation in the advertising sphere as professionals know it today, unlocking new potential for creativity and pushing

boundaries like never before. By harnessing the power of AI, advertising agencies can tap into a vast array of opportunities and explore uncharted territories in their creative potential.

Respondents consistently emphasized that AI serves as a wellspring of inspiration, offering ways to think outside the box and delve into unexplored creative territories. AI is seen as a source of inspiration and a catalyst for brainstorming new ideas. As Noah expressed, "We can do different and more complicated things with it. So it will expand our boundaries, our limits". As stated before, AI has the potential to be used as a research tool, like an advanced version of Google. As generative AI algorithms have the ability to analyze vast amounts of data, learn patterns, and generate novel outputs based on that knowledge, this capability allows AI to produce diverse and imaginative concepts that may not have been considered by humans instantly. By exploring the output generated by generative AI, creative professionals can gain fresh perspectives, discover unique angles, and uncover unexpected connections that can ignite their own creative thinking. According to the majority of respondents, AI-generated concepts can be a starting point for a campaign, which advertising professionals may see from different angles. As Dirk explained, "Basically, you can ask an AI to spit out a basic back planning for a certain project, and you have something to work from if you don't need to set it up from scratch."

Moreover, the accessibility and simplicity of AI tools have democratized content creation, making it easier for any brand to enter the market. This democratization lowers the barriers to entry, empowering agencies and brands of all sizes to create diverse and compelling advertising campaigns. By harnessing AI technology, even small brands with limited marketing budgets can now unleash their creativity and create advertising campaigns that can compete with those from industry giants (Campbell et al., 2022). As James noted, "It's going to be so easy just to make something generic quickly and cheaply." Therefore, the advertising industry risks becoming overtaken by generic campaigns due to the greater ease of producing basic material; therefore, advertising agencies will have a competitor in the face of generative AI. However, this challenge will only push agencies to reach new heights of creativity and innovation. This complication will make some creative traits and human skills grow as technology opens up new possibilities for creativity. Forced to compete with generative AI, agencies must rise above the mundane and deliver fresh,

compelling campaigns that capture the audience's attention. Also, James explained this instance in the following manner:

> It's going to push a lot of people to constantly be thinking: "Okay, how can we do it better? How can we do it more differently? How can we change the game?" ... it's going to be super interesting to see how much more attention companies … are getting because now they can afford to make work through AI.

Therefore, they must prove their worth by offering unique perspectives, emotional narratives, and immersive experiences that AI algorithms cannot replicate.

Enhanced Clients' Marketing Capabilities

Finally, the use of generative AI can positively influence clients' marketing capabilities. With the majority of companies now being digitally focused, digitalization has become the norm in advertising ("How technology is changing", 2022). AI is expected to simplify processes even further, changing the way of working in industry similar to how the internet transformed it in the past.

By incorporating AI into creative advertising, brands can gain several benefits in terms of their marketing capabilities. While not all clients may currently demand the use of AI, being innovative has become increasingly important for brands. The uncertainty of clients' willingness to use AI was also highlighted by Khokhar (2019). Those who embrace AI technology gain a competitive advantage in the market. As Pieter noted, "A lot of companies know they need to do something with it [AI]." By embracing AI, brands can explore new marketing and promotional strategies, foster innovation, and improve their performance in the market.

As it was discussed before, AI can enhance the efficiency of production within advertising agencies. This efficiency is also beneficial for clients, as it enables brands to release advertising campaigns faster and continuously engage their audience with compelling content. One of the respondents, Henry, stated that "I don't think they [clients] focus on what's the creative concept. I think they focus more on the results." Therefore, the speed and efficiency provided by AI empower marketers to get high-quality content from advertising agencies, therefore optimizing their resources and saving valuable time.

Additionally, according to the respondents, through the analysis of consumer data and preferences, generative AI algorithms can deliver personalized messaging tailored to

specific target segments, which was also discussed in the theoretical framework (De Bruyn et al., 2020). By understanding individual preferences and behaviors, AI can generate customized content that resonates with each consumer. This level of personalization enhances brand-consumer interactions, fostering deeper engagement and increasing the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Pieter stated, "…that really helps you as a brand become more innovative."

Limitations and Risks of AI

As it was discussed, the integration of artificial intelligence in content creation within the advertising sphere holds great potential, yet its limitations have been acknowledged during all interviews. The analysis of these interviews reveals key concerns surrounding the limitations of content produced by machine intelligence, ethical dilemmas, and potential risks associated with AI integration. By examining these limitations, we can develop a nuanced understanding of the challenges that AI presents to the creative advertising industry.

Limitations of Machine Intelligence: Exploring AI Constraints

According to all respondents, AI's current limitations make it challenging to consider it truly useful in the advertising business. In general, all respondents mentioned two main limitations that the use of AI can lead to: the doubtful quality of output and the need for human supervision.

The quality of AI output remains a major concern, with Levi stating, "I think the applications are still quite limited, in my view, in their usefulness." According to responses from all respondents, AI is not a consistent tool yet and is not precise enough; therefore, it cannot be widely used. AI is not yet as smart as people perceive it to be, as it struggles with specific styles of content and cannot effectively replicate realistic campaigns. The irregularity and imprecision observed in the creative output of AI pose significant challenges to its extensive utilization. As James emphasized, "… no matter how good the tool gets, it will still be a tool." This underscores the fact that AI's sophistication does not automatically guarantee superior results. The preference for human professionals arises from the belief that AI cannot match the multidimensional parameters and creative vision that humans possess. Rian underlined this fact by saying, "It's the same with AI, right? We don't look at AI as a thing where you say, "Create me a campaign." You say, "I want a campaign like this." I

have all the input. I'm the designer of this." Therefore, the human touch and expertise are seen as essential in guiding and shaping the direction of advertising campaigns (Huang and Rust, 2022). Technology, including AI, has a huge impact on the advertising industry. However, the sentiment expressed by James resonates strongly: "I think it's harder to give a direction when it's coming to technology." This highlights the current difficulty of effectively directing AI technology to meet specific creative goals. Which proves that the complexity of human creativity and the nuanced decision-making involved cannot be easily replicated by AI algorithms.

There was also a discussion about the possibility of AI taking over tasks that are currently outsourced, such as animation or 3D visualization, which require a high level of professionalism. While this prospect could streamline operations, it was acknowledged that AI would still need to be assisted by advertising expertise. Without a creative person behind AI, it cannot generate truly remarkable ideas, and its output can often be banal and generic. Henry highlighted that insight that AI produced output is "… not going to be as different as you want it to be for it to stand out and then get the awareness that you want … you're going to get an average idea, a generic idea more or less." Therefore, only a balance between the application of technology and the smart guidance of the expert can be achieved, as stated in the People Process Technology framework (Karlson, 2022). AI's training on vast amounts of data may allow it to produce content with specific characteristics, but it fails to capture the depth and diverse perspectives that humans have. The development of AI is not yet advanced enough to work independently of human creative input. As James remarked:

> … if you just use Midjourney as a basis, it can be quite generic. … for example, you type in the artist Mark Borthwick, … who's an analog photographer, and you use his details a little bit, the Midjourney will base the design it makes off that kind of creative. So I know it sounds weird, but I still quite firmly believe that without the creatives that are doing all of this stuff, the artificial intelligence wouldn't have anything to base it off of.

The limitations of AI extend to the inability to produce creative work that showcases subjective opinions as well as the inability to grasp every single detail that exists in a human

creative's mind. Human supervision of AI is consistently deemed necessary to ensure the generation of worthy creative outputs.

Lastly, it is crucial to approach the use of AI thoughtfully, aligning its applications with clients' objectives and ensuring that AI-generated content aligns with brand values and messaging. Technology should not be pursued for its own sake but rather as a means to enhance creativity. As one respondent emphasized, "It's a huge misunderstanding that we can solve everything with tech. … if we want to improve the world and we should focus on, for instance, things like behavioral change or polarization, or things that influence our behavior. And it's often not tech." Therefore, a multidimensional approach, which includes creativity, the selection of appropriate channels, and the use of the right technology, must be considered.

Ethical Dilemmas of AI Use in Advertising

The impact of AI on content creation in the advertising sphere extends beyond creative considerations and raises significant concerns regarding its ethical side. Two respondents emphasized that many experts in advertising underestimate how fast the development of generative AI is. The majority of respondents, six out of seven experts, believe that AI's quality will soon be much higher and its output will be able to be compared to human-produced content.

This rapid development of AI has left many advertising experts unprepared to utilize its capabilities effectively due to the insanely fast development of generative AI. The majority of respondents emphasized their lack of readiness, with Darren even stating, "No one knows what to do with it yet." This acknowledgment underscores the need for a better understanding of AI's implications for content creation in advertising and its capabilities. Consequently, the concept of an "intelligence explosion" was mentioned by Levi, referring to the theory that AI continuously improves itself and exponentially advances in intelligence. This concept, originally introduced by Bostrom (2014), suggests that once AI reaches a certain level of intelligence, it will surpass human capabilities at an accelerating rate. Quoting Levi, "… AI would be able to improve itself and then, become better exponentially. And then at some point, be out of control. … I personally don't see any reason why that is not a real possibility." This topic was constantly raised, as half of respondents expressed concerns about the potential threats AI poses to humanity as a whole. The exponential

growth, combined with the massive amounts of data inputted into AI systems, instills fear among professionals who lack the knowledge and control necessary to navigate its capabilities. James expressed distress by saying:

> …nobody really understands how it's going to shift things, truly. … if this is the beginning of it and I can already nearly replace someone's job, nearly. …in six months, how big is it gonna be? In a year, how big is it gonna be? And if we don't somehow figure out how to control this curve, it will get out of hand.

This extensive reliance of AI on large datasets, which are derived from diverse individual sources, presents a significant challenge in detecting the moral framework adopted by AI systems. As James pointed out, "they released them [generative AI] free as an open beta, which means millions of people around the world, which is using them, inputting, inputting, inputting." This widespread access to AI technologies raises questions about their legal regulation. Some participants even questioned whether it might be too late to regulate AI effectively because it has already adopted such a vast amount of information and people may not be able to control it (De Bruyn et al., 2020). The unrestricted access to potentially harmful information facilitated by AI has been compared to the dark web, causing concerns about the spread of content with extremely negative effects on vulnerable individuals. Therefore, there is a potential for AI to contribute to mental health issues and the prevalence of harmful information. Jan supports this assumption by saying, "…if you were a depressed teenager and you would ask a chatbot ways to commit suicide, I don't think at the moment there's nothing in place that prohibits the chatbot from telling you that." Consequently, advertisers should be mindful of the potential impact of their campaigns on vulnerable audiences and employ AI technologies responsibly to avoid any adverse effects. The absence of regulations and warning systems further exacerbates these ethical dilemmas. The development and implementation of regulatory frameworks specifically tailored to AI in advertising could help avoid these ethical challenges and ensure responsible and ethical campaign development. Jan emphasized the extensive efforts and time invested in regulating the internet to safeguard young and vulnerable individuals. In contrast, the vast amount of information accessible to AI poses significant challenges for current regulatory measures, making it difficult to effectively govern AI at present.

AI Risks in Advertising

The integration of AI in creative advertising poses various risks, as highlighted through the analysis of interviews conducted. One significant concern is the potential displacement of certain job positions, particularly those involving repetitive technical and creative tasks. While there may be a reduction in job opportunities on a smaller scale, it is crucial to emphasize that creative jobs will not be entirely eliminated. AI is more likely to replace individuals who fail to adapt to the changing landscape. Darren underscored, "… [technology is] replacing the ones who've never adapted to it, but the ones that, like, learn how to use these technologies and learned coding are now very rich and doing very well in these tech companies." However, it is important to acknowledge that truly creative individuals, even in technical roles, cannot be easily replaced. Also, as Darren expressed in presenting an example, a good photographer possesses not only technical skills but also the knowledge and talent to compose captivating photos. Consequently, the integration of AI creates a demand for professionals with different skill sets. Creative positions will be almost the same, but the skills actively employed will undergo significant transformation. Those who excel at utilizing AI tools are likely to shape the future of the creative advertising industry.

In general, the emergence of AI changed the behavior of clients at advertising agencies. More than half of the respondents, four out of seven, stated that clients' behavior has changed due to the emergence of AI in marketing. Clients are demanding increasingly complex solutions with briefs that can be either too broad or too narrow, making it difficult for agencies to deliver creative solutions that meet their needs. Brands are facing more complex and dynamic problems, which therefore require innovative decisions. Two respondents emphasized that the briefs from clients have already become, in some cases, too broad, when an ad campaign needs to solve an entire business problem with an advertising campaign, or sometimes too narrow, when the client is coming with a very specific request and there is no room for creativity left. As AI continues to evolve, it is likely to further complicate the relationship between brands and agencies. One of the respondents, Henry, noted that:

> I can only imagine when AI comes in place, like, "Oh, yeah, this one won't take a lot of time, create a thousand more [creative assets]." And clients won't know what

they want. So yeah, I think the relationship will be more strained, which is not something I'd like for it to happen.

Moreover, it is important to recognize that audiences are perceptive and will easily notice the use of AI, leading to potentially different attitudes toward AI-generated content. It was also underscored by Castillo et al. (2021), who stated that relationships between customers and AI systems can possibly lead to co-destruction in the case of unsuccessful interactions between the customer and the integrated AI system. As Henry emphasized, "I think as consumers, we're not as stupid as…as advertising agencies and clients think we are. I think they're definitely gonna notice the difference" (Kirwan, 2023).

Acknowledging these limitations is crucial to effectively navigate the incorporation of AI while maintaining the irreplaceable value of human creativity and addressing ethical concerns.

Transformative Influence of AI on the Notion of Creativity in Advertising

The integration of AI in creative advertising has changed the notion of creativity that we see today, as revealed through the analysis of interview data. This transformation raises important questions about the nature of creativity in the age of modern technological advancement. The discussion can be elaborated further by saying that the whole industry is changing to the point where creativity is the main driver (Dino, 2021). Participants noted that the increasing demand for combining technology with traditional creative elements reflects a changing perception of what constitutes creativity. This fact is also supported by the theory of technological determinism, which suggests that technology shapes and influences society (Hauer, 2017). This shift is perceived by some as a result of a phenomenon characterized by the appropriation and reimagining of existing ideas, leading to a broader sense of "stolen creativity." This leads to the conclusion that anything that is produced by any technology cannot be called creative. James continued on this thought by saying, "…you can still always tell that it's not coming from a place of genuine creativity. … all it does is it looks across the internet and sees what has been done before." Therefore, the emergence of AI-generated content raises a fundamental question formulated by Rian: "…in a world where everything can be generated, what is creativity then?"

The interviews emphasized the importance of considering creativity from different perspectives. While the creative use of technology is considered a crucial skill in the current

landscape, it is essential to use technology appropriately across new channels and mediums to maintain relevance to the audience. As one participant under the nickname Levi noted:

> I think there definitely is an additional skill required in the sense of seeing, being able to apply new technology and seeing the potential, being able to experiment with it, and seeing the application for it. That is, in a way, that's a creative process as well.

As MacRury (2018b) wrote, being creative is currently on the same level of importance as being digitally advanced. Innovation was identified as another dimension of creativity, where AI itself may not be innovative, but individuals who effectively utilize AI can exhibit innovative and creative approaches. Noah acknowledged that "…machine learning is often used to improve efficiency but not to develop innovation, and that's a big difference", highlighting the distinction between the roles of humans and AI in the creative process. Therefore, the meaning of creativity is now closely connected to the use of technology.

Respondents also shed light on the distinction between conceptual creativity and execution creativity, which are constantly confused. While execution involves technical skills that can be replicated by algorithms, conceptual idea generation remains a distinctly human skill. This process is highly individualistic, drawing upon personal experiences, individual emotions, and attitudes toward specific events. Pieter gave an example:

> Currently, AI does the mood board, but still, the final execution is man-made. But that distinction over time will get smaller and smaller, so the mood board will start to look more and more already like the end product, and it will need less and less human refinement as the models get better. But still, someone needs to tell the mood board or the machine what it should look like. And that is the idea [of conceptual creativity].

Optimization of AI's potential lies in leveraging the creative human skills required for conceptualization. Most respondents emphasized that genuine creativity is an exclusively human skill. Despite the evolving nature of creativity, the unchanging aspects of human cognition and perception were recognized as fundamental drivers of creative expression. According to the general opinion of experts, only a human is able to create a static idea that is able to stand the test of time, notwithstanding any technological advancements and changes in our lives.

Creativity, by its very nature, is based on human values that cannot be taught to AI (De Bruyn et al., 2020). The evaluation and judgment of creative content rely on subjective individual perspectives and values. As Noah highlighted that fact, "They [values] steer decisions." This subjective aspect of creativity contrasts with the objective nature of AI, highlighting the limitations of AI's ability to comprehend human values in its creative output. Moreover, the essence of advertising lies in experiences, new trends, and socialization. Human intuition and emotions, such as empathy and nostalgia, play a vital role in crafting impactful advertising campaigns. These deeply human elements are instrumental in creating truly compelling and resonant creative work. Jan elaborated on this thought:

> That's what good creative work. It, it grabs like one of those really human elements. And maybe you can teach an AI what it was like to grow up in a country during a certain period of time, watching certain pieces of TV, listening to certain types of music, show it the brands that you have consumed as a kid. And you can probably teach an AI out of that. But I think the human experience is so very specific to each and every person. ... I think it's very hard, because for humans, it's hard.

While AI can be trained on specific memories, it remains a challenging task. Consequently, AI is expected to play a prominent role in advertising but not as the primary driver of creativity. Its major function is perceived as assisting in the creative process rather than replacing human creativity altogether. The value placed on human-created content was underscored by Pieter, drawing a parallel with the preference for vinyl records among certain individuals, by saying, "I think what you might see, again, back to the whole old school thing… in the same way that someone uses records on their DJ equipment instead of digital, I think there's always gonna be an order to that." The distinctiveness of human behavior and understanding human nuances will continue to be crucial in preserving and distinguishing unique human creativity from AI-generated content. Underscoring that, almost half of respondents emphasized the higher value of humanly produced content due to the sudden development of AI. They believe that human content will be cherished as something completely unique, appreciated, and therefore expensive. Additionally, James underscored the importance of preserving those specifically human traits of social behavior by saying, "Really understanding humans, like an AI can't, will be the way to forward for creativity."

Therefore, the integration of AI in creative advertising has triggered a redefinition of creativity, prompting a deeper examination of its various dimensions. While AI can enhance and augment the creative process, it cannot fully replicate the intricate complexities and ingenuity of human creativity. As the boundaries between human and AI creativity continue to evolve, it is imperative to critically evaluate and appreciate the unique contributions that each brings to the creative advertising sphere.

Emergence of Novel Required Skills

Findings underscore the argument that AI is revolutionizing the creative advertising market and consequently altering the skill set required by professionals directly involved with AI. It was evident that the required skills in the creative sphere are constantly evolving and changing due to a constantly changing market (Cham et al., 2022). However, the respondents emphasized that AI is notably revolutionizing the creative advertising industry on a different level than before, thus necessitating a change in the skill set of professionals directly involved with AI. As Darren stated, "…it would be a new skill people need to have: how to use AI." In general, analysis of respondents' answers estimated the emergence of three main skills that are essential to every advertising expert.

Firstly, one of the essential skills identified by all respondents is adaptability and innovativeness. It is worth noting that, according to research, this skill has always been a factor in success in the advertising industry (Davenport et al., 2019). In the rapidly evolving technological landscape, advertising professionals must continually stay ahead of technological and digital advancements and adapt creatively to outperform their competitors (Drummey, 2021). This process of adaptation is ongoing and requires a mindset that embraces change. As stated by Henry, "it's very important to be agile in this world." Failure to cultivate this skill can lead to adverse outcomes for companies, with traditional agencies losing clients to more flexible and innovative smaller agencies.

Furthermore, some respondents highlighted the skill of readiness to use and learn about technology as an additional requirement. While the introduction of new technologies may present challenges, the willingness of creative professionals to adapt and explore novel techniques and approaches will determine their future success in the market. This skill involves the ability to explore and experiment with new technologies, identify their potential, and, most importantly, be brave enough to apply them effectively in advertising

campaigns. As James observed, "… creators are always going to try and find new ways to use technology and different techniques to sort of elevate the work and stay current." The evolving nature of technology expands the possibilities for creativity, ultimately pushing creative professionals to excel in the creativity of their work.

However, the majority of respondents underscored one skill as the most important for the future: the ability to communicate effectively with generative AI, which aligns with academic researchers' prognosis for the future (Shah et al., 2020). Some interviewees even referred to AI as a potential "assistant" in the creative process, emphasizing its ability to support and augment the work of advertising professionals. Jan saw the integration of AI into applications used by creatives in advertising agencies, like Photoshop or InDesign. Therefore, this fact understates the real applicability of AI and the insight that this will be an essential skill for the future advertising expert. According to interviewees' statements, advertising agencies that fail to acquire this skill will be left behind and become irrelevant. It is worth noting that this skill of verbalizing requirements and ideas already exists in the advertising profession. It is a vital skill in formulating campaign requirements for other creative professionals. However, advertisers now need to learn how to effectively communicate with AI instead of relying solely on human interaction. As one respondent emphasized, "…the big obstacle is like to put into words what you want to explain, how do you explain to computer what you want to see?"

Therefore, the analysis of the interviews highlighted the evolving nature of skills in the creative sphere, particularly in response to the AI revolution. Adaptability, innovativeness, readiness to learn about technology, and the skill of communicating with generative AI emerged as key competencies for advertising professionals in the modern landscape. Failing to acquire and develop these skills can have detrimental effects on the competitiveness and relevance of advertising agencies, therefore having a vital effect on the industry in general.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study investigated the practitioners' current attitudes toward the use of artificial intelligence in creative content production within the advertising industry, as well as to answer the research question, "What are the perceptions of professionals in advertising agencies regarding the influence of artificial intelligence on the creative development of advertising campaigns?"

Unlike to many academic literature that focus on the future potential of AI, this research intended to obtain insights into the real-world application of AI in advertising and the practitioners' perspectives on its future use. Overall, practitioners in the advertising industry recognize the enormous potential of artificial intelligence in advertising content creation. While AI has already demonstrated transformational effects in various areas, practitioners recognize that it is not fully capable of replacing human creativity and intuition. Professionals, on the other hand, agree that everyone should be ready to harness the power of AI as it constantly evolves. Due to the rapid breakthroughs in AI technology, advertising agencies and professionals must keep up to date and adapt to the changing landscape. By embracing AI as a tool and integrating it into their workflows, practitioners can enhance their efficiency, unlock new possibilities, and gain a competitive edge in the industry.

The investigation into the opinions of practitioners in the advertising industry has also uncovered a balanced perspective. It is evident that these professionals acknowledge both the benefits and drawbacks associated with utilizing AI in their creative processes. The balanced perspective of advertising experts reflects their recognition of the potential of AI while acknowledging its limitations. They understand that AI is a tool that can enhance their creative processes and campaign effectiveness but should not replace the creative instincts and intuition of human professionals.

First and foremost, the research findings offer empirical evidence of the beneficial effects of AI on the advertising industry. One of the significant advantages of AI in advertising is its ability to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The study found that AI tools can automate time-consuming tasks, streamline workflow, and enable quicker decision-making. The theoretical framework stated the same: the workflow will be enhanced due to AI integration in creative development (Chan-Olmsted, 2019). The use of AI in the briefing process with clients was particularly highlighted by respondents, as it

simplifies and enhances the process, leading to more accurate and tailored advertising campaigns that satisfy client expectations. Moreover, AI serves as a powerful research tool, enabling agencies to gather information, analyze market trends, and make data-driven strategic decisions, ultimately reinforcing their expertise and competence. This is supported by the worries of researchers that search engines have a new competitor in the face of AI (Desk, 2023; Grant & Metz, 2022). These findings are in line with the theoretical framework and support the argument that AI has a transformative effect on the advertising process (Qin & Jiang, 2019). Another key benefit of AI in advertising is the boost in creativity it provides. By harnessing AI's generative capabilities, advertising professionals can explore uncharted creative territories and think outside the box. AI-generated concepts can serve as a starting point for campaigns, providing different angles and expanding boundaries. The accessibility and simplicity of AI tools also democratize content creation, allowing brands of all sizes to compete and unleash their creativity. However, the study cautions that agencies must rise above generic campaigns and deliver unique perspectives, emotional narratives, and immersive experiences that AI algorithms cannot replicate. These practical insights extend beyond the theoretical framework and provide specific ways in which AI can boost creativity and unlock new opportunities in the industry. They therefore have a practical relevance for all people working in the industry. It is important to note that a significant part of the theoretical framework was dedicated to the beneficial impact of the use of AI for clients of advertising agencies; however, the respondent did not dedicate a lot of time to discussing this point and mainly discussed the creative side of campaign development inside the agency.

Secondly, the discussions with respondents shed light on the disadvantages and risks associated with the use of AI in advertising. The results provide new insights into the preparedness of advertising experts to utilize AI effectively. It is revealed that many professionals feel unprepared due to the rapid development of generative AI, which demands a better understanding of its implications and capabilities. Both the theoretical framework and the results converge in highlighting the potential impact of AI on job positions within the advertising industry. While the framework discusses the elimination of certain jobs in creative advertising agencies ("AI, Automation", 2018), the results indicate that creative jobs will not be entirely eliminated but rather undergo significant

transformation. The respondents expressed concerns about the quality of AI output, emphasizing its inconsistency, imprecision, and inability to match human creativity (Karlson, 2022; Kirwan, 2023). The results align with the theoretical framework's discussion on the doubtful quality of AI-generated content and the necessity of human supervision. Ethical concerns surrounding responsible AI practices were also raised. The theoretical framework emphasizes the limitations of AI in comprehending societal rules and its potential to promote harmful or controversial messages (De Bruyn et al., 2020). The results echo these concerns by highlighting the need for responsible and ethical campaign development, the potential impact on vulnerable audiences, and the challenges of regulating AI effectively.

Thirdly, a prominent topic explored in the research is the changing notion of creativity due to AI. The integration of AI in advertising has transformed the notion of creativity, shifting towards a combination of technology and traditional creative elements (Dino, 2021). Professionals need to adapt to this changing landscape by developing skills in leveraging technology effectively and creatively to maintain relevance with the audience. While AI may enhance efficiency, true innovation remains a human-driven aspect of creativity (MacRury, 2018b). Additionally, respondents acknowledged that AI primarily enhances efficiency rather than fosters innovation, highlighting the complementary roles of humans and AI in the creative process. Emphasizing innovation alongside the use of technology can lead to more impactful advertising campaigns. Although AI is expected to play a significant role in advertising, the value placed on human-created content remains high. Respondents emphasized the uniqueness and appreciation of human creativity. Creativity evaluation and judgment rely on subjective individual perspectives and values (De Bruyn et al., 2020). AI's objective nature limits its ability to comprehend and incorporate human values effectively. Professionals should recognize the importance of human intuition, emotions, and experiences in crafting compelling and resonant creative work. Preserving and distinguishing human traits and understanding human nuances were seen as essential for advancing creativity in the future. It is important to note that this topic was extensively covered in all interviews; however, it was not expected initially. Therefore, the advantage of using semi-structured interviews justified itself, as new concepts and areas of interest emerged from the research.

Lastly, the study explores the impact of AI on the required skill set for individuals aspiring to work in the advertising industry. Failure to develop adaptability, innovativeness, and AI-related skills can have detrimental effects on the competitiveness and relevance of advertising agencies. While the theoretical framework suggests that AI may reshape the industry and necessitate more technology-focused roles in creative and production departments (Campbell et al., 2022), the results do not specifically address the shifting roles within these departments but instead focus on the evolving skills required by professionals involved with AI. Both the theoretical framework and the study results agree on the impact of AI on the advertising industry and the need for professionals to adapt to the changing landscape. However, the results provide more specific insights into the emerging skills required in the creative advertising sphere, particularly in relation to AI, while the theoretical framework offers a broader perspective on the future implications of AI in the industry. This section carries practical implications for professionals, highlighting the importance of adapting and acquiring new skills to thrive in the evolving landscape of AI-driven advertising. With this knowledge, experts gain a competitive advantage by understanding which skills should be developed.

In summary, the study findings align with the theoretical framework, bridging the gap between theory and practice and contributing to the existing knowledge on the role of AI in content creation within the advertising sphere. This research reveals the potential for AI to revolutionize content creation in the advertising industry. However, cautionary notes were expressed by interviewees regarding the responsible and mindful use of AI as well as the importance of retaining human traits within the creative process. The findings offer valuable insights into the implementation of AI in content creation, providing a deeper understanding of its implications within the advertising sphere. As a result, this study holds both societal and practical relevance.

Limitations of the Research

This research has certain limitations. First of all, it is critical to understand that qualitative research not only reflects the experiences of the participants, but also the interaction between the researcher and the participants (Boeije, 2010). Prior job experience

in the advertising sector by the researcher may have affected data analysis since it gives a unique viewpoint from practitioners in the area.

Secondly, due to the limited sample size and specific features for appropriate participants, the findings of this study are context-specific and cannot be extrapolated to a larger population. However, the study compensated for this limitation by focusing on in-depth insights and rich descriptions, providing valuable understanding within the chosen context. To improve the generalizability of the findings, future study should involve a bigger and more varied sample of advertising practitioners. A more varied sample would contain a broader spectrum of opinions and viewpoints from advertising experts with various backgrounds, experiences, and cultural situations.

Additionally, the timeframe in which the research was conducted has an impact on the results of the study. As the research was time-limited, the depth of data collection and analysis may have been constrained. Given the fast growth of AI, longer-term study would give a fuller knowledge of AI's influence on content generation in the advertising sector.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge potential biases. The researcher had limited access to experts in the advertising business, despite her professional experience in the field. The selection of respondents was based on their availability, which may have introduced a bias towards individuals who already hold a positive attitude towards AI. This potential bias could have influenced the overall findings, as the participants willingly chose to engage in discussions about AI. However, efforts were made to ensure transparency and mitigate biases through regular peer debriefing sessions and documenting the research process and decisions made during data analysis.

It can be concluded that this study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. Nonetheless, reflexive methods and clear documentation were used to improve the study's trustworthiness and reliability.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research study provides a solid foundation for future researchers who want to investigate the link between artificial intelligence and the creative components of advertising. Future research might focus on clusters highlighted in the study's findings section to further our understanding of AI's influence on content production in advertising.

Firstly, researchers should delve deeper into the benefits of using AI in content creation for advertising agencies and brands. Specifically, investigating how AI enhances time efficiency, cost effectiveness, and marketing capabilities would provide valuable insights. Especially, exploring the specific mechanisms through which AI implementation influences brand performance, such as brand equity, brand loyalty, and consumer perception, can yield practical benefits for industry professionals.

Secondly, it is crucial to address the limitations and risks of AI in advertising. Researchers can investigate the concerns that were discussed in these clusters; however, addressing the ethical considerations of using AI in content creation within the advertising industry is crucial, as these aspects are often overlooked or ignored. Future research should emphasize the ethical side of AI implementation and its potential implications. It is imperative to examine issues such as potential harm to the audience and ways of regulating AI. By shedding light on these ethical dimensions, researchers can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of AI in advertising and help shape guidelines and best practices for responsible and ethical AI use. Given the rapid advancement of AI technology and its increasing integration into advertising processes, studying the ethical implications becomes even more imperative to ensure the industry operates with transparency.

Thirdly, the relationship between AI and creativity in advertising deserves focused attention. Researchers should explore how AI redefines creativity by introducing new approaches and techniques while also recognizing the distinct aspects of human creativity that AI cannot replicate. Future research exploring the changing notion of creativity due to AI in advertising is essential from different perspectives. The use of AI in the creative process has the potential to transform traditional concepts of creativity by challenging old ways and coming up with new methods. Investigating this phenomenon can provide valuable insights into the philosophical implications of human-AI collaboration in creative endeavors. Additionally, from a marketing standpoint, understanding how AI influences creativity can inform advertising strategies and campaign development.

Furthermore, complementing the qualitative findings with quantitative studies would enhance the generalizability of the research, addressing potential biases in

respondent selection. Longitudinal research and larger, more diverse samples can provide an in-depth analysis of the evolving influence of AI on content creation and its long-term implications for the advertising industry. Additionally, conducting longitudinal studies to track the evolving influence of AI on content creation over time would yield valuable insights into the long-term implications for the advertising industry.

By addressing these recommendations, future researchers can build upon the knowledge gained from this study and delve into various aspects of AI's impact on the creative side of content creation in the advertising sphere. This will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the implications of AI in the industry and drive further advancements in this dynamic field.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

CONSENT REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, CONTACT:

Daria Getmanskaia, 652760dg@student.eur.nl

DESCRIPTION

You are invited to participate in a research that investigate the influence of artificial intelligence (AI) on content creation within the advertising industry. The purpose of the study is to understand the various ways in which AI can affect the process of content creation in advertising.

Your acceptance to participate in this study means that you accept to be interviewed. In general terms, my questions will revolve around the impact of artificial intelligence on content creation within the advertising sphere. Specifically, the interview will explore your experiences, perspectives, and observations regarding the use of AI in advertising, its effects on content creation processes, potential benefits and drawbacks, changes in job roles and skill requirements, and the overall implications for the industry. The interview aims to delve into the real-world application of AI in advertising and practitioners' prognoses for its use. Your valuable input will contribute to the broader understanding of the role of AI in content creation and inform future industry practices.

Unless you prefer that no recordings are made, I will make an audio recording of the interview.

I will use the material from the interviews and my observation exclusively for academic work, such as further research, academic meetings and publications.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

As far as I can tell, there are no risks associated with participating in this research. I will not use your name or other identifying information in the study. To participants in the study will only be referred to with pseudonyms, and in terms of general characteristics such as age and gender, etc.

You are always free not to answer any particular question, and/or stop participating at any point.

TIME INVOLVEMENT

Your participation in this study will take from 45 to 60 minutes. You may interrupt your participation at any time.

PAYMENTS

There will be no monetary compensation for your participation.

PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS

If you have decided to accept to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. If you prefer, your identity will be made known in all written data resulting from the study. Otherwise, your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact –anonymously, if you wish— the Data Protection Officer (fg@eur.nl) or visit www.autoriteitpersoonsgegevens.nl. (T: 088 - 1805250).

SIGNING THE CONSENT FORM

If you sign this consent form, your signature will be the only documentation of your identity. Thus, you DO NOT NEED to sign this form. In order to minimize risks and protect your identity, you may prefer to consent orally. Your oral consent is sufficient.

I give consent to be recorded during this study:

Name: …

Signature: …

Date: …

Appendix B: Interview Guide

The next structure will be used for conducting expert interviews to answer the main research question mentioned above.

The opening block of questions

It is important to build rapport with participants for easy-going conversation; therefore, researchers ask for general information.

1) General information (name, country of origin, educational background)
2) Experience in the advertising business (how many years, in which department)

The main block of questions

Topic 1: Influence of technology on the advertising agency as an organization

1) Change in the advertising agency as an organization

   a. In terms of technology application, how have advertising departments changed since that time when you started your career? Talking in the case about how common technology applications are now.

2) Change in the creative process

   a. Did the creative process change due to the emergence of AI?
   b. What technologies based on machine intelligence are currently used for the creation/production/post-production processes?

Topic 2: Digitalization's Impact on Marketing

1) Interaction between an agency as a contractor and a brand as a client

   a. Have you noticed in what ways brand marketing strategies have shifted due to the integration of technology, including AI?

b. How has this shift in strategies impacted the role of advertising agencies? How has the independence of clients changed over time?

2) Effect of digitalization on marketing

    a. Have you noticed an increase in demand from clients for the use of AI technology in their campaigns?

    b. Are there any particular industries or sectors where the use of AI in advertising and marketing is particularly prevalent?

    c. What are some of the benefits that clients have seen from using AI in their advertising and marketing efforts?

    d. Have you encountered any concerns or hesitations from clients regarding the use of AI in their advertising and marketing strategies?

Topic 3: AI use in advertising

1) Current use of AI in specific agencies

    a. Where is AI used in your agency? What kind of AI is used?

    b. Do you already use it or plan to apply it to content creation?

- If they already use it, ask:
  - What are your experiences with AI?
  - Can you provide an example of a recent project and tell me a bit more about it.
  - What went very well and were there also obstacles that you encountered in the process etc.?
- If they plan to use it in the future, ask:
  - How do you see interactions between AI and advertising experts?
  - How do you feel about the potential for AI to replace certain creative roles in the future?

2) Speculation about the future use of AI

     a. As an advertising professional, what kind of benefits can advertising agencies gain from using AI in the development of advertising campaigns?

     b. Do you think the use of AI will create new obstacles? What kinds of problems can advertising agencies come across, such as job security or the elimination of certain job positions?

     c. How do you think AI will change the way consumers interact with brands, and what kind of opportunities and challenges will this create for advertisers?

3) The future of advertising

     a. What kind of new skills will be needed for professionals in this field?

     b. Have you seen in the past how people changed skills because of new technology?

     c. Do you think that future advertising campaigns will differ from those of the present? If so, in what ways do you think they will be different, and what will be the main distinguishing factors?

The closing block of questions

- Sum up what has been discussed and thank the respondent.
- Ask the respondent if they have any questions for the researcher, and inform them that they can contact the researcher if any questions arise after the interview.

Appendix C: Overview of the Respondents

#	Respondent's Pseudonym	Job Position	Department	Work Experience in Advertising Sphere
1	Darren	Art Director	Creative	7 years
2	Henry	Senior Account Manager	Client Service	8 years
3	Levi	Chief Executive Officer	Top Level Executive	17 years
4	Noah	Founder and Innovative Strategist	Creative/Strategy	31 years
5	James	Art Director	Creative	7 years
6	Dirk	Account Director	Client Service	7 years
7	Rian	Head of Technology	Creative	8 years
8	Pieter	Chief Executive Officer	Top Level Executive	17 years
9	Jan	Copywriter	Creative	7 years

Appendix D: Concept Mapping

Benefits of Using AI

1. Efficiency and Cost-effectiveness
   - Beneficial Time-Efficient Potential Ways of Using AI: AI as a tool and assistant, Internal Use, Use for Briefing Process, Use of AI for Routine Tasks, Laying a Fundamental Layer, Research Tool; Allocating Time for More Important Part of Work;

2. Boost in Creativity
   - Audience Can Spot the Use of AI; Help to Think Outside of the Box; Rise in Complexity of Ad Campaigns; Source of Inspiration; Creating Challenge for Creatives to Be More Creative than AI; Borders to Enter the Market Will Be Lower

3. Enhanced Clients' Marketing Capabilities
   - Brands who Use in AI Will Have a Competitive Advantage; Creating New Ways of Promoting for Brands; Campaigns Optimisation; Raise Innovativeness of Brands

Limitations and Risks of AI

1. Limitations of Machine Intelligence
   - Clients Change in Behavior; Industry changed a lot; Need for Human Assistance of AI; Less Need for Certain Technical Job Functions; Technology is a Mean, not an Aim; Quality of AI Output is Not High Enough;

2. Ethical Dilemmas of AI
   - Extremely Fast Pace of AI Development; Experts Are Not Ready to Use AI Sufficiently; Intelligence Explosion; Non-Existence of AI Regulation;

3. AI Risks in Advertising
   - Elimination of Certain Roles in Agencies; Change in the Organization; Change in the Skills;

Changing Notion of Creativity in Advertising

- Creative Use of Technology; Importance of Conceptual Creativity; Collaboration Between Human and AI; Irreplaceability of Human Ideas; Ideas Based on Human Values; Humanity in Advertising;

Emergence of Novel Required Skills

- Change in needed skills in creative sphere; Skill of Adaptability and Innovativeness; Skill of Readiness to Use New technologies; Skill of Talking to AI

Revolutionary Impact of AI on Content Creation in Advertising