

Artificially Creative Intelligent

How advertising professionals perceive generative artificial intelligence (GAI) as a tool for concept development and its effect on their creative identity

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Abstract

Technology has always played a role in the development of advertising campaigns, but creativity has always been considered a human domain. With the increasing use of GAI in the advertising industry there is discussion whether this is still the case as GAI continuously seems to get closer to human 'creative' capabilities. While existing research mainly focusses on the application of GAI in advertising design, research linking the application of GAI to the earlier phase of concept development is limited as is research on GAI's impact on the advertising professionals perceived creative identity. This research aims to fill that gap and answer the following research question: *How do advertising professionals perceive generative artificial intelligence (GAI) as a tool for concept development and its effect on creative identity within their professional role?* To answer this question, first existing research on concept development, GAI and creative identity is reviewed. Subsequently, 13 semi-structured in-depth interviews with experts were conducted to delve deeper into advertising professionals' perceptions of GAI in concept development and its effect on creative identity. Through thematic analysis, it was found that GAI as a tool for concept development was met with a nuanced attitude mentioning threats and benefits where they are applicable and not necessarily in contrast with the other. Advertising professionals recognized GAI as an inevitable part of the industry and acknowledged that it may cause tensions where their creative identity is concerned. It was found that if GAI serves the advertising professional practically, and if it does not mentally interfere with their creative identity, they are more willing and inclined to use GAI. However, if the creative identity of an advertising professional is perceived to be badly impacted by GAI, the creative professional may look for another outlet for their creativity. Although, the results do not rule out the possibility that, given the rapid development of GAI, finding added value for advertising professionals will become increasingly difficult in the future, at the time of this study the advertising professionals still perceived their creative identity as adding value to the advertising industry. Ultimately, GAI is seen as an almost human companion in concept development that, through its differences with human creativity, shows how valuable the individual creative identities of advertising professionals are.

Keywords: *Creative process in advertising, Concept development, Creative Identity, Generative artificial intelligence, Technological Acceptance*

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Preface

Ever since I started paying conscious attention to commercials on TV, creativity in advertising has fascinated me and an interest to learn more about the creative industry behind advertising gradually developed. This thesis marks the end of my academic journey to learn as much as I could before finally entering the advertising industry myself.

This research before you would not have been possible without the support and contribution of several people I would like to express my sincere gratitude to. First and foremost, I would like to my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to my thesis supervisor Dr Izabela Derda. Her continuous support and guidance gave me the confidence to complete this thesis on the very topic of advertising.

Furthermore, I would like to thank all the interviewed advertising professionals sharing their time and useful insights with me. Their input was vital to the completion of this thesis. Moreover, to all my family and friends who were always there for me: thank you, it has not gone unnoticed.

Finally, to all the (annoying) commercials on TV that I secretly enjoyed more than the series I was watching: thank you for marking the beginning of this journey to learn as much as possible about the advertising industry.

1. Introduction

It has long been assumed that creativity is uniquely human (Koivisto & Grassini, 2023, p. 1). With the emergence of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) there is a growing discussion where the distinction between human and machine creativity lies (Koivisto & Grassini, 2023, p. 1). While technology has always been part of creating an advertising campaign, creativity was a human domain (Koivisto & Grassini, 2023, p. 1). With GAI, computational technologies creating works of art, the discussion is whether this is still the case. (Gujar & Panyam, 2024, p. 5; Koivisto & Grassini, 2023, p. 1).

One of the stages of campaign development where GAI may see growing applications is in concept development (Stuhlfaut & Windels, 2019, p. 20). GAI computational techniques now offer way more possibilities than the sheer production of campaign materials and can actually influence the development of ideas, keeping in mind that GAI can be used to generate ‘creative’ ideas instead of just evaluating them (Stuhlfaut & Windels, 2019, p. 20). By creating seemingly creative ideas, GAI enters into the human domain and might even get to the point where human and GAI creativity become indistinguishable in concept development (Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 17-19; Kietzmann et al., 2018, p. 267). If this happens, it would be a potential challenge to the general perception of human creativity, which has long been seen as the main currency of the advertising industry (Kadry, 2015, p. 1085). Subsequently, GAI may also influence the advertising professional's individual perception of their creative identity (Nielsen et al., 2018, p. 359). Considering that any creative advertising professional is in turn guided by their respective creative identity (Nielsen et al., 2018, p. 359), a more in-depth knowledge of GAI's impact on creative identity becomes increasingly important to all professionals involved the advertising industry.

Therefore, the aim of this research is not only to learn how advertising professionals currently view extending the use of GAI from producing materials to the human domain of creativity in concept development, but also how it has an effect on their creative identity. Accordingly, this study aims to answer the following research question: *How do advertising professionals perceive generative artificial intelligence (GAI) as a tool for concept development and its effect on creative identity within their professional role?* Through qualitative in-depth interviews with experts, this research focuses on personal experiences and opinions on GAI of advertising professionals working at creative agencies.

1.1. Academic and societal relevance

In terms of academic relevance, in the context of GAI in advertising, existing research is found to mainly focus on specific solutions and applications within advertising design (Bashynska, 2023, p. 112; Gołąb-Andrzejak, 2023, p. 1; Gujar & Panyam, 2024, p. 1; Hoffman et al., 2021, p. 1). For example, GAI can be used as a tool for consumer data collection (Kietzmann et al., 2018, p. 263). Little research has been done to gain insights from advertising professionals on how they perceive the use of GAI in relation to the creative endeavours in the agency (Gujar & Panyam, 2024, p. 5; Lynch,

2019, p. 845). Gujar and Panyam (2024, p. 5) emphasize the need for more research on the balance between GAI and human creativity as the role of GAI expands in the advertising industry. This research attempts to fill this research gap by providing insights into how advertising professionals perceive GAI not only as a tool for concept development but also how they perceive its impact on their creative identity.

Regarding societal relevance, first the advertising professionals themselves could benefit from the findings of this research when looking for insights on how creative agencies can implement GAI in their field. Hoffman et al. (2021, pp. 1-6) found that advertising professionals need a highly specialized understanding of current trends, such as GAI, in the industry if they want to perform better and more effectively. The findings of this study could provide advertising professionals seeking the latest trends in (G)AI with an overview of the perspectives of others in the industry and help them strategize accordingly. Because new technological applications are constantly evolving, this research can be used as an overview of different ideas and approaches when looking for new implementations for GAI in concept development (Hoffman et al., 2021, p. 1). The findings of this study can provide insights into how current GAI implementations may or may not already operate in concept development according to advertising professionals. Managers in the advertising industry could use these findings to decide where and how GAI can be best implemented.

This research focuses on advertising professionals active in the Dutch creative industries. The creative industries are named one of the leading industries contributing to the economy and society of the Netherlands (van Kranenburg, 2017b, p. 143). Van Kranenburg (2017a, p. 1) emphasizes that jobs within the creative industries will inevitably change in the future due to technological innovations. The Dutch advertising landscape also presents a challenge, similar to other technological advanced parts of the world, as the digital advertising market is dominated by a few giants such as Google, Meta and Amazon for which government regulation regarding for example data protection is still limited and therefore prone to sudden changes (Kranenburg, 2017b, pp. 146-147; MarketLine, 2023, pp. 15-16). Thus, while the creative agencies operate in an unstable environment, this research can help advertising professionals to find some guidance in how others perceive the use of GAI so far, practical and ethical, and what they expect in terms of human creativity.

1.2. Chapter outline

In the first chapter the research problem and research question are presented and clarified. The academic and societal relevance of this research is also discussed here. Chapter two reviews previous research on concept development, GAI and creative identity and provides an overview of previous research on GAI and the human domain. The following third chapter discusses the methodological approach and includes details on the sampling method and provides an overview of the sample. Additionally, the data collection, operationalization of the relevant concepts, and the data analysis method are explained. The third chapter concludes by justifying how this research covered ethics and

credibility. Chapter four discusses the results of the data analysis and connects the findings to the theory presented in the theoretical framework outlined in chapter two. The final chapter presents the conclusion of this research. The research question is addressed and the theoretical and societal implications are discussed. This chapter concludes by providing limitations of the current study and suggestions for future research.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework lists the core theories and concepts in relation to the research question. First, a brief overview is presented as an introduction to the industry in which this research is conducted. The next section further clarifies the process of concept development, followed by a section on how to define what is in more general terms considered to be a creative process. The concept of creative identity is then introduced along with an overview of relevant literature. The following sections explore the concept of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) and the role of humans in relation to GAI. Finally, the technology acceptance model will provide more framework on how technology (such as GAI) can be accepted in creative agencies.

2.1. Introduction to advertising

Advertising can be characterised as strategically and creatively putting together words and images for promotional and informational purposes (Landa, 2020, p. 12). In short, “advertising informs, persuades, provokes, and promotes; it aims at a target audience - a large number of people forming an aggregate - through visual communication, copy, stories, and music” (Landa, 2020, p. 11). Whether or not an advertisement will be successful in promoting a brand or raising awareness for something (Landa, 2016, p. 3) depends on criteria like being relevant, interesting, credible, and coherent (Kadry, 2015, pp. 1085-1090). The success of an advertisement will benefit both the customer and the agency itself by gaining both brand recognition and revenue (Landa, 2016, p. 3).

An advertising agency is a company that provides marketing, creative and other commercial services related to the planning, execution, and distribution of media ads on behalf of clients (Landa, 2016, p. 36). Their services are constantly evolving so that the agency’s brand image keeps pace with the new media landscape (Lynch, 2019, pp. 845-848). Although creativity has always been the backbone of advertising agencies, it is now being brought to the forefront and the term creative agency is often used to describe an advertising agency that seeks to excel in creativity (Lynch, 2019, pp. 845-848).

Lynch (2019, p. 859) notes that the changing media landscape has also required the original creative duo teams (copy writer and art director) to evolve their roles within the agencies, as creative teams now also include strategically oriented professionals (such as UX design and customer experience specialists). Another way the role of creatives in advertising has evolved is that they can now make a very specific contribution to one client as part of the larger creative team and then move on to the next client with perhaps a different team and consequently learning from new perspectives (Lynch, 2019, p. 859).

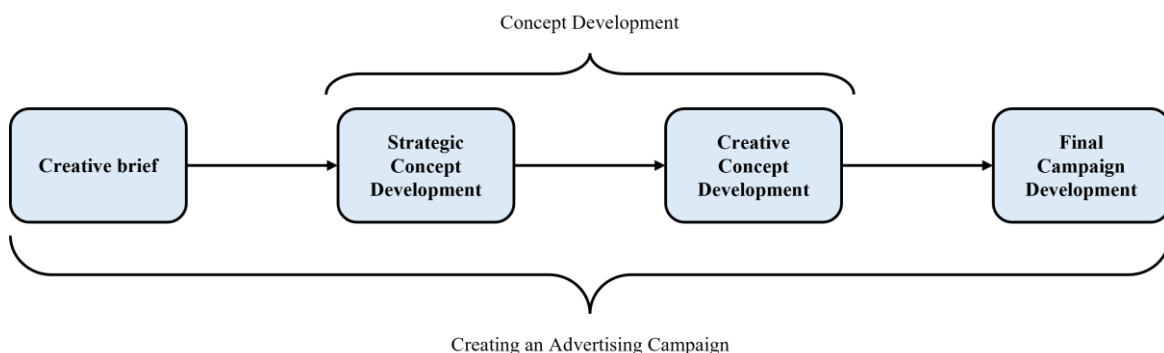
2.2. Concept development in advertising

The creative team is responsible for envisioning and designing the concept for the advertising campaign (Lynch, 2019, pp. 845-848; Nagai et al., 2009, pp. 649-650). This process, whereby an idea is formed and refined and developed into a sustainable proposal, is referred to as concept development (Kadry, 2015, p. 1086). A strong creative concept serves as the backbone of an entire advertising campaign, as a concept has the power to connect every element of advertising messages within a campaign to convey one main message (Kadry, 2015, p. 1088). However, researchers such as Crilly (2015, pp. 54–91), Nagai et al. (2009, pp. 649-650) and Koslow et al. (2003, p. 96) point out that it is difficult knowing when to label something as creative. So, to make the term of creative concept more tangible, a concept was considered creative in the advertising industry if the idea was both original and strategically well thought out (Crilly, 2015, p. 55; Nagai et al., 2009, p. 660; Koslow et al., 2003, p. 96). Additionally, creatives highly value the artistic qualities of the concept as well (Koslow et al., 2003, p. 96).

Landa (2016, pp. 41-43) introduces three phases in creating an advertising campaign: 1) creative brief, 2) concept development, 3) final campaign development. In the first phase, the creative agency receives a creative briefing from the client with the initial request to start the project (Landa, 2016, pp. 41-44). After the creative brief is presented, the second phase begins in which a concept for the advertising campaign has to be created (Landa, 2016, pp. 41-43). However, this does not just refer to coming up with creative (artistic) ideas, but it also encompasses the development of strategic ideas (Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 17-19; Lee & Lau, 2018, p. 152). Therefore, as Figure 1 visualises, concept development can be divided into first a strategic and then a creative concept development phase (Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 17-19). After both concept development phases are complete, the final stage of creating an advertising campaign follows (Landa, 2016, p. 43). This stage includes producing the concept, implementing it, and monitoring it over time (Landa, 2016, p. 43).

Figure 1

Concept development in creating an advertising campaign



Note. This figure visualizes the position of the strategic and creative phases of concept development (Crosby et al., 2019) in the overall creation of an advertising campaign (Landa, 2016).

2.3. The creative process in concept development

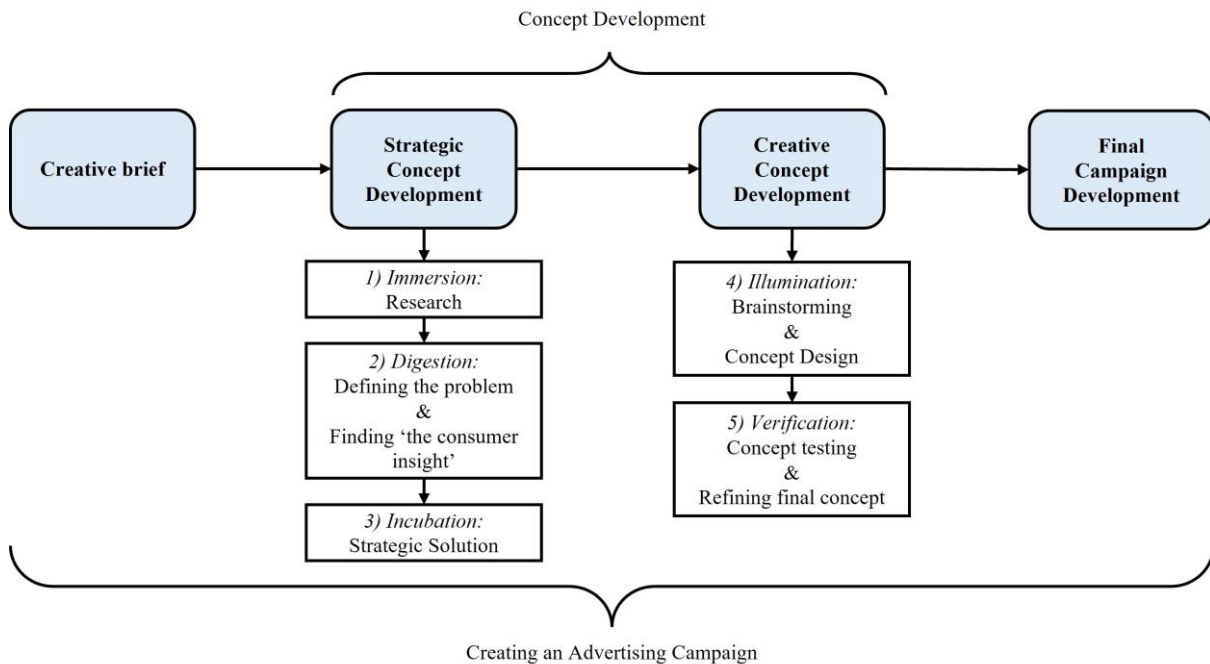
To arrive at an original, valuable, and therefore creative concept, advertising professionals must first follow a creative process (Lubart, 2018, p. 3). This creative process can be seen as a series of thoughts and actions that lead to a new idea (Lubart, 2018, p. 3). Glăveanu (2018, p. 298) emphasizes that “the creative process is primarily a form of action and not (only) thinking.” In theory, the creative process has a beginning, no time constraints and, if it occurs, an end (Lubart, 2018, p. 3).

Barker (2019, p. 246) highlights that *the creative process* could be divided in the following stages: 1) *immersion*; researching sources and collecting available data, 2) *digestion*; finding connections in the collected data, 3) *incubation*; rethinking the problem, 4) *illumination*; the idea emerges, 5) *verification*; testing and refining the idea (Young, 2003 as cited by Barker, 2019, p. 246). Although the five stages in this framework were originally intended as a fixed order to follow when working with idea creation, today these stages serve a better purpose as an underlying guideline that can be reworked to fit new applications of technology (Barker, 2019, pp. 246-247).

The difference between the abovementioned framework and that of Crosby et al. (2019, pp. 17-19), which divides concept development into a separate strategic and creative phase, is that the five phases of the creative process by Young (2003 as cited by Barker 2019, p. 246) combine both creative and strategic elements as part of one process to arrive at a single idea. Integrating the two frameworks places the five stages of the creative process (Young, 2003 as cited by Barker 2019, p. 246) within concept development, and as a result, the two phases of Crosby et al. (2019, pp. 17-19) gain more depth. The way to integrate them is to first combine the strategic concept development phase (Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 17-19) with the first three stages of the creative process: immersion, digestion, and incubation (Young, 2003 as cited by Barker 2019, p. 246). Then, connect the creative concept development phase (Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 17-19) with the last two stages of the creative process: enlightenment and verification (Young, 2003 as cited by Barker 2019, p. 246). A visualization of the combined framework is presented in Figure 2. It should be noted that the combined framework, like Young's (2003 as cited by Barker 2019, p. 246) original stages of the creative process, is not intended as a fixed structure, but rather serves as a guideline for how concept development can take place in a creative agency. It is important to understand what elements can play a role in concept development, because this research explores how, according to advertising professionals, GAI may be used as a tool in this process.

Figure 2

Visualisation of the stages of the creative process in concept development



Note. This figure combines the five stages of the creative process in concept development (Young, 2003 as explained by Barker, 2019), the two phases of concept development (Crosby et al., 2019), and the four phases of creating an advertising campaign (Landa, 2016).

Strategic concept development as described by Crosby et al. (2019, pp. 17-18) starts with research, as a creative brief usually does not contain enough information to start developing a (strategic) concept (Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 17-18; Kadry, 2015, p. 1086). The client often does not know exactly what it is that they want and, perhaps more importantly, need (Kadry, 2015, p. 1086). This first step in strategic concept development correlates to the immersion phase in the creative process which aims to fill this knowledge gap by collecting as much data as possible (Barker, 2019, p. 246). In the following digestion stage of the creative process, the problem should be defined and preferably accompanied by a consumer insight found in the earlier research by looking for connections in the collected data in the previous stage (Barker, 2019, p. 246; Kadry, 2015, p. 1086; Landa, 2016, p. 41). Lastly, the incubation stage aims to “[turn] the problem over to a relaxed mind” (Barker, 2019, p. 246). This point in the creative process can be combined with the final outcome of the strategic concept development phase, since the outcome of the incubation phase is a developed idea for the strategic solution to the customer's problem (Barker, 2019, p. 246; Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 17-18). Based on new findings from additional research or concept testing, this strategic concept can be continuously modified over time (Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 17-18).

Creative concept development builds on the strategic solution formed in the previous incubation phase and focuses on how the campaign's message will be conveyed to consumers both verbally and visually (Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 18-19). The natural follow-up to the strategic concept would be a brainstorming session with new perspectives (Kadry, 2015, p. 1087). In the brainstorming session creative teams come up with a, so called, 'big idea' that ensures the needs of the client are met (Kadry, 2015, p. 1085). This process is closely followed by both verbal and visual concept design (Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 18-19). Visual concept design focuses on the look and feel of the campaign, while verbal concept design focuses on conveying the main message through words (Kadry, 2015, p. 1086; Landa, 2016, p. 207). Both the brainstorming and concept design can be linked to the illumination stage where the big idea is formed and takes shape (Barker, 2019, p. 246). In the final verification phase, the concept is tested and refined until the concept is accepted by the client (Kadry, 2015, p. 1086) and moves on to the final phase of creating the full advertising campaign (Landa, 2016, p. 43).

2.4. Creative identity

In the advertising industry, advertising professionals are constantly reflecting on what creativity means to them and their client (Holm, 2023, p. 184). Based on their own thoughts on creativity and through social interactions, individuals form and continually reshape their own *creative identity* (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014, p. 14). Identity refers to an individual's subjective perception of themselves, which influences and guides their interpretation of the world, the choices they make and the actions they take (Nielsen et al., 2018, p. 359). Creative individuals, such as professionals working in creative agencies, typically form their identity around their beliefs or personal approach to creativity (Nielsen et al., 2018, p. 359-360).

It is up to the advertising professional themselves to determine what their creative identity means to them, how they wish to adapt their identity to their surroundings and how they choose to act upon their identity (Hackley & Kover, 2007, p. 66). However, whether within the advertising industry as a whole or the advertising professionals' social and cultural environment (Mao & Shen, 2015, pp. 1550-1551), creative identities are constantly challenged by their environment (Hackley & Kover, 2007, p. 66). To further clarify, creative identities are assigned labels by the outside world, and it is up to the individual to choose to either embrace, renegotiate, or push back against these labels (Hackley & Kover, 2007, p. 66). Hackley and Kover (2007, p. 66) find that this is an ongoing process in advertising agencies, and that very few advertisers ever reach the stage in their careers where their colleagues take their creative credentials completely for granted. Wang et al. (2021, p. 576) introduce a concept of *creative identity asymmetry* to explain how a person may perceive a difference between their assumed creative identity and the appreciation they may or may not receive from others for their creative identity. Most creatives go through this negotiation process throughout their entire careers, trying to prove to others that their assumed creative identity is representative of themselves (Hackley

& Kover, 2007, p. 66).

Glăveanu and Tanggaard (2014, p. 18) point out that personal creative identities influence the creative professional's engagement with their work. After all, identity influences the choices an individual makes, such as whether or not to embark on (creative) work (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014, p. 18). Additionally, identity and behaviour reinforce each other, and this relationship is located in a complex web of meanings and social relationships that change over time (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014, p. 18). In this complex web, Uddin et al. (2019, p. 877) found that acting on one's creative identity positively influences their innovative behaviour within a company. Especially if the environment is highly creative, people with a creative identity are more likely to participate in the creative process, resulting in innovative behaviour (Uddin et al., 2019, p. 888). Furthermore, people with creative identities often feel obligated to contribute to innovative outcomes because they want to meet the standard for creativity set by society (Uddin et al., 2019, p. 889).

It is important to understand how advertising professionals engaged in concept development think about the effect they believe GAI will have as a tool for concept development and on their creative identity within their role. In the following chapters, the concept of creative identity is used to operationalize part of the research question and to structure the findings.

2.5. Generative artificial intelligence

In recent decades, research and practice in a variety of fields have placed a noticeable emphasis on *artificial intelligence* (AI) (Banh & Strobel, 2023, p. 1). “[AI] is considered an umbrella term, spanning over different computational algorithms capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as understanding natural language, recognizing patterns, making decisions, and learning from experience” (Banh & Strobel, 2023, p. 2). The ability of AI to keep learning how to replicate human skills seems to be growing so rapidly that Kietzmann et al. (2018, p. 267) considers it entirely possible that AI will become so ingrained in advertising that it can never be separated from its fabric. Hoffman et al. (2021, pp. 1-6) argues that it is important to understand how the integration of new technologies, such as AI, affects advertising because investing in the right technologies gives organizations an advantage over their competitors.

One of the newest developments in AI, *generative artificial intelligence* (GAI), “refers to computational techniques that are capable of generating seemingly new, meaningful content such as text, images, or audio from training data” (Feuerriegel et al., 2023, p. 111). Banh and Strobel (2023, p. 1) define GAI as capable of producing seemingly creative and unique content that can be mistaken for man-made. In addition to producing new content that mimics (human) creatives, GAI systems act as intelligent question-answering systems (Feuerriegel et al., 2023, p. 111). One of the strengths of GAI is the ability to let the technology uncover patterns that humans find difficult to detect (Huang & Rust, 2020, p. 38). Since GAI is constantly evolving, there are many possibilities for its use in advertising, whether, for example, for automation or for providing immediate feedback (Gupta et al., 2024, p. 8). In

addition, Gujar and Panyam (2024, p. 5) list GAI's ability to efficiently produce a lot of content at once and its ability to enhance creativity as possible opportunities within advertising. It is the responsibility of the advertising professionals to choose the right GAI tools for creating an advertising campaign (Huang & Rust, 2020, p. 33). Thus, as Huang and Rust (2020, p. 33) argue, it is up to the professional to decide what is the best use of it in each specific situation.

However, the use of GAI also presents challenges since the output of GAI is not always usable (Gujar & Panyam, 2024, p. 5). With the growing presence of GAI in the advertising industry, Gujar and Panyam (2024, pp. 3-5) emphasize that a collaboration between human creativity and artificial intelligence is crucial to achieve the full potential of GAI, keep up with innovation and still create content based on human values to maintain integrity. While producing a lot of content at once with GAI can be seen as positive, Gujar and Panyam (2024, p. 3) also find that in this mass production, maintaining a unique brand identity is difficult, so this is up to the advertising professional to ensure the presence of these subtle nuances in tone of voice, for example. “[GAI] serves as a powerful tool, but it cannot fully replace the human touch needed to maintain the authenticity that audiences crave and connect with” (Gujar & Panyam, 2024, p. 3).

Another challenge that needs to be addressed are the ethical concerns of the use of GAI (Gujar & Panyam, 2024, p. 5). First, GAI collects, uses, and stores a lot of data that in turn may be susceptible to privacy violations, either through a data breach or by creating outputs that may feel intrusive and trigger a debate about acceptable targeting (Gujar & Panyam, 2024, p. 3). Additionally, since anyone can use GAI without supervision, the possibility of unethical use with malicious intent is also present (Gupta et al., 2024, p. 8). There are also ethical concerns about possible biases in the data GAI uses because the engineer who built the algorithm may have (unknowingly) transferred his own biases into the tool (Miller, 2019, p. 5). Additionally, the sources GAI uses are either referenced wrongfully or not disclosed at all (Benjamins et al., 2019, p. 1). As a result, GAI may unintentionally fuel stereotypes and prejudice, affecting vulnerable groups (Gupta et al., 2024, p. 5). Both Gupta (et al., 2024, p. 5) and Gujar and Panyam (2024, p. 3) propose awareness and transparency policies on these ethical concerns within the advertising industry to stimulate the responsible use of GAI. In response to these ethical concerns, programmers are now programming GAI to be responsible and take ethical considerations into account (Benjamins et al., 2019, pp. 1-3; Lu et al., 2023, p. 70). This so-called *responsible AI* was introduced to try to avoid the unintended negative consequences, such as programmer bias or the elimination of human autonomy (Benjamins et al., 2019, p. 1; Mikalef et al., 2022, p. 259).

2.6. Humans and GAI

AI is already being introduced in many companies (Shah & Murthi, 2021, p. 125), but the application of GAI has sped up this process even more (Banh & Strobel, 2023, p. 6). As a result, Banh and Strobel (2023, pp. 6-7) suggest that organizations need to embrace and understand the potential of GAI so that they will be able to decide how to respond to GAI taking over jobs that were previously

strictly human, while also deciding what new jobs need to be created to keep up with this rapid innovation. But since perhaps the most important currency in the advertising industry is innovative creative (human) ideas (Kadry, 2015, p. 1085), it remains to be seen how GAI has its place alongside creativity in advertising today (Banh & Strobel, 2023, p. 11). Understanding the role of GAI in advertising in relation to creativity is crucial for the framework, as it contributes to the aim of this research to find out how advertising professionals perceive this relationship in concept development.

When human creativity is enhanced using computational machines such as GAI, it is called *computational creativity* (Vakratsas & Wang, 2020, p. 39). Vakratsas and Wang (2020, p. 39) argue that creativity is glorified in advertising and considered important by many and is often seen as a privilege or a gift. However, approaching creativity as "a systematic process which can be aided by data and computation" challenges long established beliefs about human creativity (Vakratsas & Wang, 2020, p. 39). In this definition of computational creativity, GAI does not (yet) take over human creativity, but enhances it (Vakratsas & Wang, 2020, p. 39).

Human creativity flourishes on inspiration, but falls short of GAI's capacity for large-scale analysis of datasets (Gujar & Panyam, 2024, p. 3) Specifically to the advertising industry, Huh et al. (2023, pp. 480-481) point out that any replacement of human jobs due to GAI has already inspired creatives in the advertising industry to take a different approach in their work as they are concerned about the future of creativity. Interactions between humans and GAI are constantly being reshaped as more GAI is integrated into the advertising industry, and it is up to professionals to learn how to navigate this and find the most beneficial implementation within their role (Lim et al., 2024, pp. 266-267). By embracing the use of GAI as a different approach in their creative work, new forms of collaboration between humans and machines are created (Banh & Strobel, 2023, p. 6). Miller (2019) articulates this relationship between humans and machines as "humans need to learn from AI and AI needs to learn from humans" (p. 4). Building on this idea, Mikalef and Gupta (2021, p. 3) question whether by learning from humans the GAI is literally copying their behaviour or whether there are simply implementing features that complement those of the humans from whom it learns.

According to Lukowicz (2019, p. 9), for AI to be empowering for humans, it must gain the ability to read and understand human emotions and human reasoning. *Human-centred AI* is an approach to AI development in which the well-being of people is the primary objective (Nowak et al., 2018, p. 27). In other words, AI should provide a service to society while humans remain in control, driven by human values (Benjamins et al., 2019, p. 2; Erkkilä & Kostas, 2023, p. 1). This means that ideally, when using human-centred AI, human rights should never be negatively affected and humans should remain in control (Benjamins et al., 2019, p. 2)

The research of Romani et al. (2022, p. 1) is opposed to this idea that humans are and must stay superior to machines. They believe that although this hierarchical thinking fits the dominant viewpoint of humans, people should actually recognize the agency of non-human entities (such as

GAI) and implement a non-hierarchical perspective (Romani et al., 2022, p. 1). In this way, co-creation, which is often seen as a practice that occurs only between humans, can also include GAI, as such a non-human entity is no longer seen as inferior to humans and therefore the interaction between GAI and humans can be seen as a collaborative process to create something (Romani et al., 2022, p. 2). If humans do not recognize the opportunities that this type of interaction with GAI offers them, they will undoubtedly become second-class citizens in their own environment (Miller, 2019, p. 6). In all likelihood humans will need GAI much more than GAI needs humans (Miller, 2019, p. 7). Therefore, Miller (2019, p. 6) continues that people should embrace what the future holds and take advantage of GAI and the possibilities it offers to accomplish things where human capabilities alone would be inadequate.

To embrace the future and technologies such as GAI, agencies are adapting their internal structures and focusing on the demands of the ever-changing advertising industry (Lynch, 2019, p. 847). To successfully implement new technology like GAI in an agency, the internal focus must be on their “most important asset, their people” to create a culture in the company that stimulates learning the new tools (Ewing & West, 2000, p. 240). Especially if creative jobs will change due to the introduction of technologies, new skills must be acquired to keep up (Sima et al., 2020, p. 20). Which is in line with both Lynch (2019, p. 859) and Lee and Lau (2018, p. 152) who argue that “digital literacy” is rapidly becoming a required skill for creatives in today's advertising landscape.

Burrell (2018, para. 2) notes that humans tend to fixate on the risks when presented with technological innovations, and while being cautious is justified, being overly cautious is self-destructive as it stops them from gaining any of the benefits associated with technological advancement. As mentioned earlier, it is also crucial to be careful not to surrender completely, as both human and artificial intellectual capital are valuable to companies and one should not overshadow the other, as this will not prolong the value of GAI (Popkova & Sergi, 2020, p. 578). Although GAI may be useful for automation when considering productivity performance, Burger et al. (2021, p. 12) find that *human capital* – which refers the economic value of peoples’ knowledge and skills – and knowledge creation do have a significant positive impact on productivity. However, human capital must continue to evolve and adapt to the shifts in industry (Sima et al., 2020, p. 10). Human capital is currently developing in three directions: “(1) Reducing the number of jobs allocated to human labor; (2) Allocating a labor force to other fields that produce higher value added; (3) Increasing the demand for a labor force with the skills required by new technologies” (Sima et al., 2020, p. 20). Noticeably, all three directions would require some form of (re)training to gain new skills, usually digital skills (Sima et al., 2020, p. 20). It is helpful to understand that human capital development is primarily about moving people to places where they can add the most economic value so that the company can continue to innovate (Sima et al., 2020, p. 10). In turn, Barone and Jewell (2013, pp. 318-319) find that a good reputation of advertising professionals can lead to clients giving more leeway, allowing for

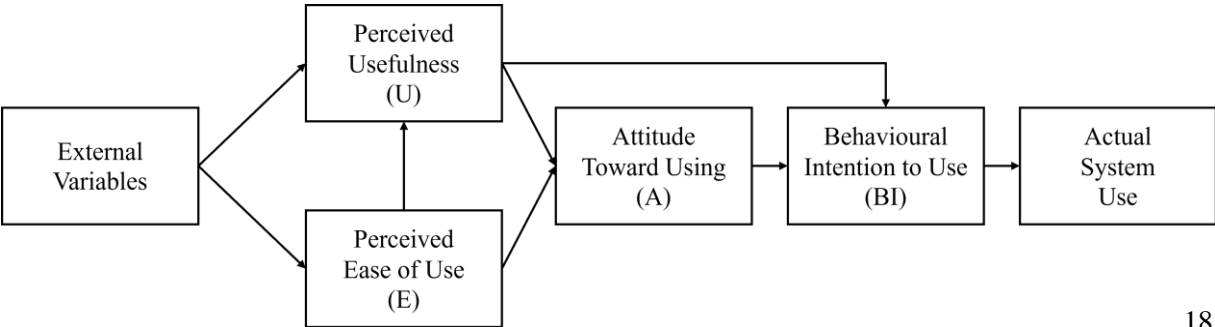
more flexibility and therewith innovation when developing advertising campaigns. This flexibility and ability to innovate is especially useful for responding to shifts and trends in the advertising industry, which Kumar and Gupta (2016, p. 316) argue is necessary for the effectiveness of advertising campaigns in the future. This is because advertisers who are able to track shifts and trends that empower and engage consumers and deploy timely, reliable and relevant messaging will get the best campaign results (Kumar & Gupta, 2016, p. 316).

2.7. Technological Acceptance Model

The *Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)* was introduced by Fred D. Davis (1989) to better predict and explain how people's intention to adopt technology is influenced. TAM presents four constructs as determinants of actual system use: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude toward using, and behavioural intention to use (see Figure 3). According to Davis (1989), *perceived usefulness* is "the extent to which an individual believes that utilizing a specific system would improve his or her job performance" (p. 320). A system with high perceived usability is one where the user believes the performance outweighs the investment (Bernaert et al., 2013, p. 82; Wang et al., 2023, p. 6). Davis (1989, p. 320) defined *perceived ease of use* as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort." A user is more likely to use an application of technology that he thinks is easier to use than another (Wang et al., 2023, p. 6). According to both Vorm and Combs (2022, pp. 1830-1831) and Banh and Strobel (2023, pp. 8-11) transparency is the best means of building trust and user acceptance with GAI.

Both perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are predictive of people’s attitudes toward use of technology (Cheng, 2018, p. 22). *Attitude toward using* refers to the individual’s assessment of the desirability of implementing a specific behaviour (Cheng, 2018, p. 22). Attitude is found to be a significant predictor of behavioural intentions (Cheng, 2018, p. 25). *Behavioural intention to use* measures the likelihood that an individual will adopt the application (Cheng, 2018, p. 24). Since this research focuses on how GAI is perceived as a tool for concept development, TAM is essential to use when attempting to understand advertising professionals’ personal behaviours and intentions toward GAI. Thus, TAM is adapted as framework for operationalization in the methods chapter and for interpreting the results in the results chapter.

Figure 3
The Technology Acceptance Model by Davis (1989)



3. Method

This chapter provides an overview of the research design of the study. First, the methodological approach is introduced, then the sampling method and the sample are discussed. This is followed by a clarification of data collection, operationalization, and data analysis. Finally, ethics, credibility and reflexivity are addressed.

3.1. Methodological approach

This research aims to uncover how advertising professionals currently perceive GAI a tool for concept development and its effect on their roles by answering the following research question: *How do advertising professionals perceive generative artificial intelligence (GAI) as a tool for concept development and its effect on their roles?* A qualitative research design will be the most useful method in this study as the research question aims to uncover the individuals' experiences (Brennen, 2017, p. 5). To identify underlying patterns and meanings, in these personal experiences, opinions and perspectives (Brennen, 2017, pp. 14-15; Babbie, 2017, pp. 318-319) of advertising professionals, qualitative research is used to make sense of their perceptions of GAI.

The specific method chosen was semi-structured expert-interviews as the experiences needed to answer the research question are only happening in creative agencies. As concept development takes place behind closed doors, expert-interviews were the best way to collect perceptions of GAI within a creative agency directly at the source. Additionally, since this qualitative research design relies on knowledge and experience from experts within the advertising industry, this method of data collection is especially efficient and concentrated (Bogner et al., 2009, p. 2). Furthermore, by conducting expert interviews, this research prioritized quality of data over quantity of data, as this data collection method allows for the researcher to really focus in-depth on the reasoning behind the opinion of an individual instead of aiming to provide enough data to generalize (Babbie, 2017, pp. 318-319).

This research made use of semi-structured in-depth interviews, where the researcher has an interview guide with a topic list and questions but is also flexible enough to address concepts that arise on the spot (Babbie, 2017, pp. 318-319). The latter is useful when interviewees come up with insights that come from practice and experience in the industry and therefore are not presented in the theoretical framework (Babbie, 2017, pp. 318-319). As the goal of this research is to understand the personal perception of advertising professionals in relation to the role of GAI in their work environment, it is important to use a data collection method that enables the researcher to create an environment in which the individual feels free to truly express themselves (Oltmann, 2016, pp. 3-4).

Thematic analysis (TA) was used to analyse the data. This method of data analysis focuses on reviewing and transforming a lot of research material, like interview transcripts, to find and name the important patterns 'themes and report on them (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 77–101). TA provides the researcher with the structure needed to go through a substantial amount of data, but also with the ability to disaggregate, analyse and then reorder the data to answer the research question (Boeije,

2010, pp. 83–121).

3.2. Sampling and sample

In order to ensure a relevant sample, purposive sampling was applied as this research is targeting a small group with specific characteristics (Babbie, 2017, p. 200). The criteria set for the purposive sampling were that: the interviewee a) works in a creative agency, b) has a role within the creative agency related to copy, art and/or strategy, c) participates in or oversees the concept development of advertising campaigns in the agency, d) is based in the Netherlands and speaks Dutch or English, and e) is 18 years and older (to be able to give consent). Since the research question is open to all experiences with GAI in concept development, the length of work experience does not matter much if the interviewee has experience with concept development and has an opinion on the use of GAI in their role.

Using the network of the researcher that was build during an internship at a creative agency, first contact was made through Linked-in. The researcher followed up by employing the networks of the professionals that responded to the initial call to further contact new interviewees. This is also known as snowball sampling, a sampling strategy that relies on current participants to bring in new participants (Babbie, 2017, pp. 200-201). Snowball sampling helped reach more respondents as experts were otherwise difficult to locate (Babbie, 2017, pp. 200-201). As stated in Bogner et al. (2009, p. 2), most of the interviewees became linking pins between the researcher and their extended network full of advertising professionals and thus after the first four interviews all remaining nine interviews had been planned.

By using the professionals' networks, the researcher contacted advertising professionals spread across different agencies to obtain a more diverse sample as different agencies may be working with GAI in different ways. Ultimately, the sample consisted of 14 selected participants who met the sampling criteria (see Table 1 for the overview of participants).

Table 1*Participant overview*

Inter- viewee	Formal Job Title	Role Within Agency	Years of Experience in the Advertising Industry	Duration Interview	Place Interview
1	Copy Director	Copy & Strategy	7	58 min.	Agency
2	UX Designer	Art & Strategy	6	61 min.	Zoom
3	Junior Content Specialist	Copy	1,5	49 min.	Zoom
4	Founder Creative Agency	Art, Copy & Strategy	1,5	50 min.	Zoom
5	Art Director	Art & Strategy	11	62 min.	Zoom
6	Designer	Art & Strategy	4,5	56 min.	Agency
7	Senior SEO Specialist	Strategy & Copy	5	52 min.	Zoom
8	Creative Copywriter	Copy	10	50 min.	Agency
9	Creative	Art & Copy	18	46 min.	Agency
10	Director of Photography	Art	8	60 min.	Zoom
11	Creative Director	Art, Copy & Strategy	27	54 min.	Agency
12a	Founder Agency/ Strategist	Art, Copy & Strategy	20	59 min.	Agency
12b	Founder Agency/ Video Producer	Art, Copy & Strategy	19	59 min.	Agency
13	UX Designer	Art & Strategy	20	54 min.	Zoom

3.3. Data collection

This research conducted 13 semi-structured expert interviews with advertising professionals. It must be noted that the 12th interview had two participants. Both participants have similar backgrounds, current roles within their own agencies and there was no power imbalance (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 24).

The semi-structured interviews started with a few general questions to break the ice, followed by operationalized questions connected to the theoretical framework. When necessary, a question would have a follow-up question or probe added to help get more information from the interviewees, if needed. A trial interview took place to test the structure, flow, and duration of the interview guide (McGrath et al., 2018, p. 1003).

By structuring all questions and probes in an interview guide (see Appendix A), the researcher could stay focused on guiding the interviewees through all the questions while also managing the time as the experts have busy schedules with appointments directly after the interview (Ruslin et al., 2022, p. 4). By ensuring that the interviews were not too long, there were no rushed or cut-off responses that would have corrupted the dataset (Bogner et al., 2009, pp. 86-88). The additional benefit of using an interview guide in expert interviews is that it allows for the researcher to receive a broader understanding of the experiences of the interviewee while also being able to guide the interviewee back to concepts connected to the theoretical framework when they might have gotten caught up in their own stories (Bogner et al., 2009, p. 2).

The interviews took place at the end of April and the beginning of May 2024. The researcher's preference was to conduct the interviews offline and in the respondent's office to ensure for the most comfortable and familiar environment for them (Bogner et al., 2009, p. 244). Furthermore, in offline interviews there was no technological barrier (such as bad Wi-Fi) to hinder rapport – trust – between the researcher and the interviewee (Knott et al., 2022, p. 13). Additionally, it was easier to engage with non-verbal cues in offline face-to-face interviews (Knott et al., 2022, p. 13). However, when the advertising professional worked from home or, for example, from the location of a shoot, the interviews were conducted online through Zoom to accommodate the schedules of the participant. Zoom was chosen as the experts were already familiar with the platform, and it allows for the audio to be recorded directly on the laptop, so the quality of the recording was ensured.

Each interview took around 45 to 60 minutes and was recorded, transcribed, and anonymized (Babbie, 2017, pp. 318-319). In total 371 pages of transcript were generated.

3.4. Operationalization

Because understanding and recognizing concept development is central to this study, this concept is operationalized into two components: strategic concept development and creative concept development (Crosby et al., 2019, pp. 17-19). The first, strategic concept development, coincides with the digestion and incubation stages of the creative process (Barker, 2019, p. 246). While the second,

creative concept development, can be found in the illumination and verification stages of the creative process (Barker, 2019, p. 246). These stages of the creative process will be used to recognize and categorize the current use of GAI in the appropriate category of concept development.

Additionally, the concept of creative identity is operationalised by personal perception and external challenges (Hackley & Kover, 2007, p. 66). Personal perception refers to the personal approach and beliefs regarding creativity that help individuals form and maintain their creative identity (Hackley & Kover, 2007, p. 66). External challenges refer to the influence of the social and cultural environment and the influences of others on the individual's creative identity (Hackley & Kover, 2007, p. 66; Mao & Shen, 2015, pp. 1550-1551). Both personal and external influences on creative identity were used to form questions about the effect of GAI on how advertising professionals form and maintain their creative identity.

In order to examine the motivation behind the use or disuse of GAI in concept development, TAM will be used (Davis, 1989, pp. 320-323). Acceptance of technology will be measured by perceived usefulness, which will examine how using GAI improves concept development performance, and perceived ease of use, which will be used to examine how GAI can make concept development easier compared to not using GAI. Table 2 provides an overview of how the interview questions were constructed based on this operationalisation.

Table 2
Operationalization Interview Guide

Topic	Associated concepts	Key Points	Question Examples
GAI as a Tool in Concept Development in TAM	Perceived Usefulness	Daily Tasks, Benefits, Risks, Importance, Possibilities	<p>What do you think about using generative AI in your daily tasks within a creative agency? Why?</p> <p>In your opinion, do the benefits or threats of using generative AI outweigh each other? Can you elaborate?</p> <p>Looking at your experiences, would you consider the use of generative AI important in your role within a creative agency? Why?</p> <p>In what areas of campaign development can generative AI be the most useful and why?</p>

Perceived Ease of Use	Difficulty, Learning, Skills, Obstacles	<p>What makes generative AI hard/easy to use in your role? Can you elaborate?</p> <p>How would you describe the skills you need to use generative AI?</p> <p>What would hold you back from using generative AI in your role within a creative agency? Why does this hold you back from using generative AI?</p>
Creative Identity in Relation to GAI	Personal perception	<p>Feeling Personal Impact of GAI, Approach to Creativity, Co-creation</p> <p>Do you feel that generative AI affects your creativity and why??</p> <p>What is the role of creativity in your job?</p> <p>Would you consider the use of generative AI as cocreation between humans and computers? Why (not)?</p>
External challenges	Change in Role, Future Orientations, Creative Identity Asymmetry	<p>Do you think your role in a creative agency will have to change because of generative AI? How/ why not?</p> <p>If any, what aspects of your role in a creative agency do you think generative AI will have the most impact on? Why those aspects?</p> <p>Do you feel that generative AI affects your creativity and why?</p> <p>Do you have any fears or hopes about the impact of generative AI on your role in the future?</p>

3.5. Data analysis method

Once the in-depth interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim, thematic analysis (TA) was used to analyse the data by using both inductive and deductive coding to find recurring patterns in the large dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2021, pp. 37–47; Brennen, 2017, p. 29). In this study, the researcher

used the inductive nature to allow the themes to emerge from the data itself by searching for both latent (underlying) and manifest (literal) meanings, while then the deductive approach helps to relate the themes back to the theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2021, pp. 37–47). The deductive approach provides an iterative step as the researcher returns to the data and compares the data to the theory (Babbie, 2017, pp. 318-319).

This research followed the six phases of thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87): “1) familiarizing yourself with your data, 2) generating initial codes, 3) searching for themes, 4) reviewing themes, 5) defining and naming themes, 6) producing the report.” First the researcher took notes right after the interviews and again when transcribing the interviews to become familiar with the data. In the second step codes were generated to highlight emerging patterns in the data. The researcher used Atlas.ti to be able to rename, switch or remove codes quickly if needed. Next, the researcher went over all the codes to search for themes. In the fourth step these themes were reviewed and compared to the theoretical framework. Then the themes were defined and named, and a coding tree was formed (see Appendix B) (Boeije, 2010, pp. 83–121). In the end, there were 30 axial codes, 11 selective codes and three themes. The final step of the thematic analyses incorporated the findings of this study into the results chapter.

3.6. Ethics and credibility

To ensure that the study was conducted in an ethical manner, the interviewees were informed about the nature of the research and how their data would be handled at the start of the interview and were asked to sign an informed consent form (see Appendix C for the consent form). Moreover, interviewees were informed when the audio recording started and were again verbally asked for their consent. All participants were informed that they could refuse to answer questions and withdraw their consent at any point during and after the interview.

This study ensured validity by constructing the interview guide based on theory used theoretical framework. Additionally, by testing the interview guide before the first official interviews, the clarity, consistency and structure were improved to ensure that the questions will be as valid as possible (Silverman, 2011, pp. 360–385). Furthermore, the validity of the data analysis was assured by taking iterative steps based on the findings from each newly uncovered pattern in the dataset. The researcher circled back until all codes were completed and best fitted the data (Babbie, 2017, p. 431).

In terms of reliability, reflexivity by the researcher was imperative during this study to limit possible researchers bias (O’connor, 2011, pp. 421-423). Especially since a disadvantage of TA is that important data can be overlooked by the researcher (O’connor, 2011, pp. 421-423). Apart from the previous justifications on the chosen methodology, this research disclosed the main codes in a coding tree to provide further reliability. Overall, coding was done twice to ensure it remained consistent within the dataset. Additionally, interpretations of the dataset were connected to the theory from the theoretical framework. Within the interview guide, reliability was ensured by using the ‘test-retest’

method in which the same question is asked twice but phrased differently (Babbie, 2017, pp. 153-154). More specifically, since the operationalisation showed that there are many different elements in concept development, rephrasing the same question helped to get a more complete answer from the interviewee, as they might choose to focus on another element the second time the question is asked.

4. Results

This chapter presents the findings from the data analysis of the 13 interviews in this study. This study focused on the research question: *How do advertising professionals perceive generative artificial intelligence (GAI) as a tool for concept development and its effect on creative identity within their professional role?* The results are divided into three parts inspired by TAM (Davis, 1989) as this framework was used to form the interview guide and thus influenced the patterns found in the data set. The first part examines the dimensions of *perceived usefulness* and *perceived ease of use* of GAI in concept development. To better fit the research, TAM was adapted to include creative identity as an additional dimension to the previous two dimensions. As a result, the second part of this chapter discusses how advertising professionals perceive the *effect of GAI on their creative identity*. The final part focuses on *attitude and behavioural intention* towards the use of GAI and includes a visual representation of the modified TAM. The results of all three sections help answer the research question of this study.

4.1 Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use

To answer the research question, it is important to first understand how advertising professionals view GAI as a tool for concept development. Following TAM, the first two sections of this part present the identified themes of *perceived usefulness* and *perceived ease of use* to provide a foundation for attitude toward GAI and behavioural intention to use GAI in concept development.

4.1.1. Perceived Usefulness

Perceived usefulness of GAI in concept development is reflected in that GAI *supports creativity, increases efficiency, and takes over repetitive tasks*. However, when discussing exactly how useful GAI is in these previous categories, opinions were divided because GAI was seen as *arguably intelligent* by some.

Supporting Creativity. Among the interviewed advertising professionals GAI is seen as useful for supporting creativity, specifically in *ideation* and *visualizing concepts*. While the interviews mentioned these benefits, they also raised concerns that creativity is threatened when *quantity is emphasized over quality*.

For ideation, all respondents describe GAI as useful for such things as finding new perspectives, breaking through stagnation or additional brainpower. Interviewee 11 explained this by saying that "your field of association widens." Interviewee 3 added that "[GAI] inspires me to start thinking in a certain way." Thus, GAI comes in handy when you run out of creativity and "you kind of just need a fresh perspective" (Interviewee 6). In all these examples, it remains up to the advertising professional to determine whether something is creative. While GAI may have helped form an idea, it is not trusted to create a concept that professionals would copy directly. Overall, 13 respondents agree that GAI "complements human intuition and our own creative ideas" (Interviewee 2). As Interviewee 7

added: "I can incorporate my own creativity and my own adroitness."

Eight respondents said they use GAI to visualize their ideas to make their concepts clearer and stronger. For example, it was found useful to use these GAI visuals to customize presentations "so that a client also sees what you ... see in your head" (Interviewee 1). Concerning GAI's use in coming up with ideas and visualizing concepts, a significant number of respondents began to question the value of getting a lot of output quickly if that would result in a loss in the quality of the generated output. Interviewee 8 echoed this: "Doesn't it all become very monotonous?" Some respondents even indicated they would even stop using GAI completely because "that's where it loses creative value for me at some point because it's no longer unique" (Interviewee 10).

Most interviewees confirm that GAI can support creativity, opening up to the idea that creativity can be computational (Vakratsas & Wang, 2020, p. 39). The interviewees that indicated that they recognize GAI's ability to support creativity seek to employ it in concept development whenever useful. Additionally, the concern found about uniqueness aligns with Gujar and Panyam's (2024, p. 3) idea that mass production of GAI makes it difficult to maintain a unique brand identity.

Increasing efficiency. In addition to feeling creatively supported, interviewees indicated that GAI increases efficiency in concept development by *saving time, structuring data, and testing concepts*, thus creating new opportunities to develop *concepts with less budget and time*. Many respondents pointed out that using GAI saves time as "sometimes [GAI] lets you quickly see the possibilities that you might have otherwise come up with on your own" (Interviewee 8). In addition, respondents feel that the stages of concept development can be completed more quickly because GAI can be implemented "while you're still developing it [a concept]" (Interviewee 4).

Respondents who associated creativity with being less structured felt that "[GAI] can help you organize certain information very quickly. ... I can do it myself, but that takes energy" (Interviewee 11). All respondents recognize that "AI is unprecedentedly good at recognizing patterns" (Interviewee 10). This is in line with Huang & Rust's (2020, p. 38) theory that GAI is able to identify patterns that are difficult for humans to notice. Building on this idea, nine respondents mentioned GAI as useful, for example, for summarizing results, briefings, or meetings and as a result "the more data you have in a complete way, the easier you can also accelerate in your creative process" (Interviewee 12a).

Six respondents agreed that "you can test concepts using AI" (Interviewee 1) by, for example, running an A/B test or asking GAI for feedback as if it were the target audience. These respondents expressed that they feel more self-reliant with GAI because they can test their concepts "without taking somebody else off work" (Interviewee 6). As a result of increased efficiency, five respondents endorse that GAI enables the development of concepts with less budget and time: "Clients with a smaller budget can also just make really cool beautiful campaigns because really only the idea is leading" (Interviewee 11). Interviewee 7 added that "by, yes, having things made in bulk, suddenly you can" (Interviewee 7).

GAI's capability of analysing huge amounts of data is indeed recognised by the interviewees (Gujar & Panyam, 2024, p. 3), the findings show that advertising professionals see this as an opportunity to develop more concepts more quickly and cheaply. Furthermore, this application of GAI illustrates a new form of collaboration between humans and machines (Banh & Strobel, 2023, p. 6).

Taking over repetitive tasks. Another way in which GAI was perceived as useful by interviewees was by taking over repetitive tasks through *automation*. When it came to taking over *unfulfilling* tasks, this was seen as a positive development. Many respondents saw automation as a given outcome of implementing GAI: "that's just the price of progress. Is that some things are automated" (Interviewee 11). Interviewee 7 added that "when a task comes back several times and you ... don't get energy from it, then you should try to automate it." For example, an advantage of streamlining concept development stages through automation is that "you don't have to think about some things every time" (Interviewee 12b). While this is seen as a good thing by most interviewees, it simultaneously raises the concern that automation should not get in the way of developing one's own qualities: "as a side note, I have to add that I can imagine, that if you are used to things being able to be generated automatically, you don't develop the ability of yourself to come up with other solutions" (Interviewee 11). Although this sentiment is recognized by many, these interviewees state that so far they feel unaffected and that the automation so far is positive because it is the unfulfilling tasks that are being taken over by GAI, as Interviewee 5 said: "[GAI] performs tasks that you don't feel like doing."

Whilst Huang and Rust (2020, p. 33) state that it is up to the professional to decide on the best use of GAI in their tasks, the interviewees did not indicate that they feel they have control over which tasks are taken over in the long run, but at the moment they choose to accept that GAI is most useful for tasks that are deemed unfulfilling. The concern about restricting the development of one's own qualities aligns with Popkova and Sergi (2020, p. 578) who argue that artificial intellectual capital should not overshadow human capital. The displacement of human capital to more fulfilling tasks is consistent with Sima et al.'s (2020, p. 20) assertion that human capital shifts to other tasks where higher value can be added.

Arguably intelligent. As interviewees talked about the use of GAI in creative processes, most began to *question the intelligence of GAI* in contrast with human intelligence. Remarkably, all interviewees still continued to unconsciously *refer to GAI with personal characteristics*.

Confusion started with the term 'intelligence': "Because I don't think it is intelligence the way we typically think about intelligence" (Interviewee 11). Interviewee 10 elaborated that "[GAI is] purely trained to give output based on certain parameters. But it is not like the intelligence of another human being." Interestingly, six interviewees who also questioned GAI's intelligence did acknowledge that "on the other hand, people also use what's there, what they already know and what they've seen, and they make something out of that too" (Interviewee 1). However, many interviewees

did believe that GAI's intelligence could eventually only get so far, as Interviewee 11 explained: "the spark is mostly in my head anyway and not in the head of ChatGPT." Interviewee 12b added: "everything I've ever done creatively is the result of a feeling or a hunch or an epiphany and never from a calculation." It is important to emphasize that while the interviewees did praise GAI to be useful for supporting creativity, increasing efficiency, and taking over repetitive tasks, most of them were cautious when talking about GAI's intelligence relative to human intelligence, as Interviewee 13 articulated: "I don't think we should praise [GAI] too much." Many interviewees expressed concern that GAI is tied to its (Western) programming. Interviewees felt that this may even distort the outcome because "someone else sets the frameworks of AI and what the norm is with regards to what is allowed and what isn't" (Interviewee 5). Additionally, five respondents expressed concern about the sources GAI uses: "you can't really verify what [GAI's] sources are and where it gets it from. And also, whether it's up-to-date" (Interviewee 1). The reservation toward GAI is not surprising, as Burrell (2018, para. 2) noted that people tend to fixate on risk when presented with technological innovations. The specific concerns about algorithm bias and questionable sources align with the ethical concerns presented by Miller (2019, p. 5).

A divide regarding the perception of GAI's intelligence was found when interviewees explained whether working with GAI is co-creation between human and computer. Slightly more than half of the participants placed human intelligence hand-in-hand with GAI. As Interviewee 5 explained, "yes, it is co-creation ... you have a discussion with the computer." The other six participants put human intelligence above GAI: "Co-creation, there is something equal in it. It's not. And it's not going to be, as far as I'm concerned" (Interviewee 12b). This divide confirms the findings of Romani et al. (2022, p. 1), as indeed only those interviewees who have moved away from the belief that humans are above GAI saw AI-human interaction as co-creation.

Although many interviewees questioned GAI's intelligence and some believed that GAI would never become more than a computational tool, all but one interviewee used terms such as "sparring partner," "buddy," "intern," "colleague," and "friend" when referring to GAI during the interview. Some interviewees indicated that they see the line between computer and human blurring. For example, Interviewee 9 said, "I'm just talking to a robot here. But it feels like I'm talking to a real person. ... because it adopts all sorts of patterns from humans. So yeah, how original are we humans actually?" Interviewee 13 also saw this happening: "I've heard people here [in the agency] almost address it as a human being. And who also occasionally say sorry." Miller's (2019, p. 4) argument that GAI specifically implements features that complement human behaviour on an intellectual level could explain why these interviewees could see GAI almost as an equal.

4.1.2. Perceived Ease of Use

Perceived ease of use of GAI in concept development is associated with the *intuitive handling* of the GAI tools, with the *short learning-curve* and with the *use of common sense*. These first three

categories are mostly perceived as easy, but the ability to *personalize GAI* is perceived as more difficult, but also more rewarding.

Intuitive handling. Initial exposure to GAI felt comfortable for many respondents because GAI tools are often used through *engaging in dialogue* and *playing around with them*, in ways the interviewed advertising professionals considered to be intuitive. Upon further familiarization with GAI, interviewees discovered that this intuitive handling does offer *limited control*. When working with GAI, the findings show that all respondents use the GAI tools by engaging in a dialogue, as Interviewee 3 said, "I do find it similar to a conversation sometimes." Several respondents indicated that this way of interacting works well within concept development, for example Interviewee 2 explained: "we mainly use [GAI] to be able to have a kind of dialogue from which new ideas can emerge." Furthermore, interviewees said they liked being able to play around with GAI tools, which they felt made it easier to use GAI "because you can figure out [what you want] through play" (Interviewee 8). Interviewee 2 added that "it is so intuitive in that way that yes, that feels very human, funny enough."

While figuring out how GAI tools might work within concept development, four interviewees indicated that from a certain point, control is limited. For example, while going back and forth with the GAI tool, Interviewee 13 experienced that "[GAI] gets lost at some point." Interviewee 12b further explained that "if you ask him [GAI] something very easy, it works very well. If you really challenge him, then I'm having a very hard time." In the interviewees' examples, the GAI is always constrained by its pre-programmed limits.

Short learning-curve. Most interviewees experienced a short learning curve when learning the basics of GAI tools. They felt that the tools were *approachable* and *produced a lot of output quickly*. However, interviewees felt that subsequently that *the desired output is not achieved as quickly*. Many respondents agreed that a lot of free GAI tools are very approachable because anyone can access them, and learning what works is easy, as Interviewee 8 explained: "You ask a question, and you get an answer. And if you don't agree with your answer.... you can change your question." Many respondents felt that learning to use GAI is a process where you keep building on your previous experiences. Interviewee 9 explained that "it's very simple. But for every step there is a learning process." The findings show that most respondents do not know all the features of their GAI tools but are comfortable with the features they actually use. This also applied to Interviewee 7 who stated that "the possibilities that I do know, I find easy to use." Because GAI can be simple to use, Interviewee 5 added that "literally anyone can make something. Whether it's good is another question"; a sentiment shared by all the other interviewees.

All respondents indicated that they find it easy to use a GAI tool of their preference to quickly produce a lot of output as, for example, in concept development GAI allows Interviewee 11 to "quickly go down a lot of options." In addition, several respondents stated that they turn to GAI when

they want a quick answer that turns many sources into something manageable, as Interviewee 7 explained, "where you used to use google and end up at a blog, now you just get your answer right away."

With delivering a lot of output quickly, a new problem emerged from the findings: Interviewee 12a explained that "it is too much information" presented by the GAI to actually achieve the desired result. Additionally, many interviewees expressed that learning how to get the desired outcome is difficult as "no matter how well I can direct him [GAI], he will always ... [have] his own interpretation" (Interviewee 9). Interviewee 1 explained that you have to learn and accept "that it [GAI's output] is not quite what you want, but it's also good." Interviewee 4 added that at some point "you have to make a choice of is it enough or do I continue? ... Because you can go on endlessly." In practice, some respondents indicated that they do not accept less than perfect and get frustrated when GAI's output does not meet their standards, as indicated by Interviewee 12b, for example: "The output kept coming back worthless. Every time. It drove me crazy. I tried until the middle of the night. Then I took to LinkedIn: Guys, I need a human being."

Using common sense. The findings show that for the interviewees, whether it is while *prompting* or *examining the output*, ease of use is generally associated with using common sense. Analysis revealed that the common sense referred to, already relates to the *characteristics of a practicing advertising professional*. All respondents expressed that being able to create good prompts is crucial when using GAI tools. Interviewee 6 mentioned that "anybody can use it as long as you have some common sense. ... You just have to know what's ethical and how to use it. Because, yes, you shouldn't use it for negative purposes." The importance of being aware of ethical considerations when using GAI was shared by several respondents and is in line with the research of both Gupta (et al., 2024, p. 5) and Gujar and Panyam (2024, p. 3) as they advocated for this awareness to encourage responsible use of GAI. Regarding how to practically use GAI, Interviewee 9 explained: "I often put something creative in there already, and when I do, something creative comes out." Interviewee 12a added that to influence the outcome "you have to think more carefully about what kind of information you need."

When it comes to examining output, common sense was associated by 12 respondents with a critical mindset: "Don't get lazy when using AI but see it as a colleague and be critical of it and be critical of yourself. And try to add something to it" (Interviewee 8). Similarly, Interviewee 13 explained, "that you don't take everything at face value, that from your own professional level you take another look at it like: hey, am I not going blind or something?" This is in line with Lim et al.'s (2024, pp. 266-267) research that professionals are required to learn use GAI in a way that is most beneficial to their role.

Furthermore, most respondents linked many skills needed to use GAI to pre-existing characteristics in their profession, for example, "you might recognize it if you studied

communications, then you have a certain feel for text" (Interviewee 3). Interviewee 11 added the following:

I think you actually still need all the skills creatives use to give a place or direction to what you are creating. So, a copywriter still needs to be able to write good text ... a designer still needs to, say, come up with a composition or be able to name the emotion ... all those skills remain necessary to apply generative AI. (Interviewee 11)

Likewise, when it comes to learning new skills to use GAI, Interviewee 12a added that advertising professionals already have a leg up: "I think our adoption level is a little higher compared to people who are not digitally trained or experienced." Abovementioned findings support the research of Sima et al. (2020, p. 20) that new skills must be learned in creative jobs to keep up. It can be added, however, that some respondents do not see this as a major problem because they feel they can build on pre-existing skills.

Personalizing GAI. Many interviewees expressed that personalizing one's use of GAI tools would make implementing them in concept development easier. The findings show that being in *control of* how and why GAI is used is important and if it is understood how GAI works it opens up possibilities to fully *customize tools*. Many respondents indicated that they like to keep control over the use of GAI: "[AI] should not be something that ... does it all by itself. ... No, I want to be in control" (Interviewee 7). This desire for control aligns with the human-centric approach to GAI that puts humans in control of GAI (Benjamins et al., 2019, p. 2). Additionally, if humans are given control, Interviewee 4 added that self-reflection is important since "people are very quick to blame the AI for something, even if they themselves don't use it in the right way." To maintain as much control as possible, Interviewee 12a suggested structuring your GAI tool clearly so you don't lose yourself in the overflow of data the tool produces.

Several respondents mentioned that, although more difficult and time-consuming, fully customizing or programming GAI tools can help make GAI easier to use in concept development. This puts the respondents in line with Gujar and Panyam (2024, p. 5) who emphasized that such collaboration between artificial intelligence and human creativity is crucial to achieve the full potential of GAI. However, only two respondents indicated that they possessed the ability to actually create a fully customized GAI tool. Their customized tools were positively received and smoothly fit into the concept development processes of the respective creative agencies, as Interviewee 9 explained that programming a tool yourself has no limitations, "[self-programmed GAI] doesn't have those frameworks. And with that you can create and invent whatever you want."

4.2. Effect of GAI on creative identity

This part of the chapter discusses the theme *effect of GAI on creative identity* in the context of the role of an advertising professional in concept development. Three elements were found that explain how the interviewed advertising professionals navigate the impact of GAI on their creative identity.

First, the *importance of individual choices* was frequently mentioned in the interviews. Second, the use of GAI carries the *risk of losing personal drivers*, which threatens advertising professionals' motivation to continue working at creative agencies. Finally, as a result of the implementation of GAI within creative agencies, *changing role requirements* adapting to the presence of GAI in concept development have been identified. At the end of this chapter, the constant balancing act between the three elements is illustrated.

4.2.1. Importance of individual choices

Now that anyone can use GAI, the findings show that it is up to the advertising professionals to demonstrate through their individual choices why clients should do business with them. The findings show that interviewees differentiate with their own *individual style versus GAI's style* and by using their own *practical expertise*. First, the results show that respondents can appreciate GAI content if it looks authentic but are disappointed if the content is poorly executed. Interviewee 6 added that it's not just advertising professionals who show distaste for GAI content: "you already notice ... that a lot of people just react super negatively [to a GAI image]." Hence, Interviewee 1 explained that if "you can do that [writing] even a little bit, I think there's value in the way you articulate things. ... to give a kind of character, an individuality to what you do." Accordingly, many interviewees said they prefer to see human-created content because they do not like the fact that they can easily identify work created by GAI by its style. Some respondents added that good GAI content therefore depends on how the final output is always still edited by a human being: "I think what makes the difference is that you throw your own sauce on top of it" (Interviewee 4). Interviewee 8 explained that creatives are constantly developing this individual style and see it as an employable tool: "I think creatives end up forming a palette by just looking at art, reading books, seeing paintings, watching movies, all things you can use to express yourself."

In addition to individual style, the findings show that the quality of the advertising professional is associated with one's level of expertise. Interviewee 1 explained how expertise can help preserve quality when working with GAI: "with experience you understand what works and what doesn't work, and how things are supposed to look." Several respondents connect a part of that expertise to knowing your impact as an advertising professional. Interviewee 3 elaborated, "that ethical outlook, that critical thinking. ... [That] should always be in the back of your mind." Interviewee 2 added that "you [as a designer] should be able to use it [GAI] with some responsibility." Nielsen et al.'s (2018, p. 359) research on how individuals follow their creative identity when making choices explains why both individual style and expertise have an impact on how interviewees make individual choices. Additionally, several interviewees agreed that hands-on expertise could be the differentiating factor why a client would come to an agency rather than use GAI themselves. Interviewee 10 believed that "there is no AI tool that can similarly replicate that real-world knowledge and experience [of a professional]."

4.2.2. Risk of losing personal drivers

The next finding highlights how with the rise of GAI, interviewees risk losing the personal drivers that motivate them to work at a creative agency. The personal drivers mentioned by interviewees can be divided into either *wanting recognition* or *passion for the profession*. Many respondents indicated that they seek recognition for their creative work and that they fear that GAI will deprive them of that recognition. Interviewee 1 explained as follows:

And I think what poses a risk for creative people who actually make something is that their craft is undervalued. Because people think, yeah, we can just do it ourselves with AI. Whereas someone who clearly, say, puts their own work into it is probably still making something more unique and distinct and something that is more deliberate than if you were doing it with AI.
(Interviewee 1)

Similarly, when explaining what would keep them away from using GAI, Interviewee 8 confessed, "honestly a little bit of my ego. The moment it would really be that I fill something in and I get out exactly what I wanted to get out and it's already good.... I would find that difficult." With this, the interviewee illustrates how the ability to creatively add value is linked to their creative identity through ego and how GAI challenges this by potentially taking away the satisfaction of having to improve GAI's output (Nielsen et al., 2018, p. 359).

Hackley and Kover's (2007, p. 66) theory says that creative identities are challenged by their environment, and the use of GAI in concept development challenges the humanly added value of being creative. Notably, many interviewees felt that, at least for now, they still provide value that the GAI cannot provide. For example, Interviewee 11 pointed out, "We shouldn't get anxious about what AI does and most of all, I think, we should look at ourselves in the mirror again and think shit we actually do that very well." The findings show that several interviewees considered themselves creative, but feared being underappreciated because GAI produces seemingly creative content. This perception aligns with Wang et al.'s (2021, p. 576) research on creative identity asymmetry. Because of this fear of being undervalued, the interviewed advertising professionals began to list what they are good at and therefore adds value. Essentially the interviewees kept referring to their creative identity which can be used to position themselves in the advertising industry opposed to GAI (Nielsen et al., 2018, p. 359). Essentially, interviewees continued to refer to their creative identity as the added value that can be used to position themselves in the advertising industry (Nielsen et al., 2018, p. 359).

The majority of respondents related to having a passion for their role within a creative agency. Interviewee 5 echoed: "It is a profession you do from an intrinsic value." The findings show that GAI can prove to be disheartening when interviewees feel like they cannot compete. Interviewee 13 added, for example, "[an artist] takes two days to draw a very beautiful, very beautiful drawing and with AI it's ten seconds ... [but an artist] really puts his whole heart and soul into it and then he has one unique thing." Many respondents indicated that it was important for them to be able to express their own

creativity in concept development. For example, Interviewee 12b recalled a situation when someone from another agency suggested using GAI to find a name for an advertising campaign they were working on together: "The best part of a whole campaign is coming up with the name. ... I want to come up with that myself. I don't want a robot to do that."

4.2.3. Changing role requirements

This element focuses on how interviewees see GAI's impact on their roles within the agency, resulting in changing role requirements. The findings show that GAI allows for *more time for creativity*, GAI's shortcomings indicate *the need for human presence*, GAI's rapid growth and presence make the *use of GAI inevitable*, and GAI influences how the creative agencies *follow demand*.

As a result of GAI's ability to automate repetitive tasks and streamline processes, interviewees indicated that the time saved benefited creativity. For example, "[by providing] the structure and the frameworks, [GAI gives] you a lot more time for the creative process in your head, so to speak. Whereby you don't have to be very busy with peripheral things" (Interviewee 12a). Several respondents indicated that this was positive because having more time for creative things was associated with more rewarding and enjoyable tasks, as Interviewee 6 said, for example, "if that [GAI] saves you hours, then you can spend your time doing fun things, for example." In addition, some respondents indicated that the time saved could also be used to further improve concepts to a level not possible with less time. Interviewee 1 added that this is also where the creative is at its best:

Well, I think if it all [GAI] gets much better and faster that a lot of the kind of chores that you have to do will take less time. ... so that you can actually spend more time on what is actually the most valuable thing and that's your unique perspective. (Interviewee 1)

These findings are in line with the research of Lubart (2018, p. 3) that the creative process is a series of thoughts and actions with a beginning and an end. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the interviewees were getting a little tired of the shortcomings of GAI and that their clients too have needs that GAI cannot complete. Many respondents indicated a desire for a human presence to compensate for that missing factor of the GAI. Interviewee 12b, for example, explained: "I started to focus a lot on the human side. ... Because that's where the opportunities are. So, in all this digitization, robotization, you bring out the human sound. You can't fake that with a robot." Interviewee 2 added that "Clients come to our agency for the people, for the creativity, for the contact, for the way we try to understand your problem. ... That is something human that customers come to us for - for us Interviewee 7 presented an example of why this human presence cannot be replicated by GAI:

One client [you have met in real life] is very sociable, very warm. ... you can take that with you and this gives you a certain feeling about the brand. And that feeling, ... ChatGPT can never get from content on the website. (Interviewee 7)

Interviewee 8 explained that this shift toward human presence has been going on for a few years in the creative sector, where creatives are being moved from the background to the foreground with actual client contact: “that's already much more normal now [for creatives]. That you sit with a client and you have communication.” Although on a smaller scale, by changing the role of creatives to have more client contact in response to the need for more human presence, these findings reinforce that human capital is being moved to where it seems most valuable (Sima et al., 2020, p. 20).

Many respondents acknowledged that the use of GAI has grown so much in the last few years that its presence in their roles within concept development feels inevitable. Interviewee 9 pointed out that “[GAI] is really something from a year, year and a half ago - that it took off like that. And it's moving really fast.” Several respondents believed that GAI is seen as a trend or a new gimmick for now but will one day become the new normal. Interviewee 1 referred to a quote that corresponds to a widely shared opinion among the interviewees: “I heard some quote on Instagram: you shouldn't ... be afraid of AI taking over your job but you should be afraid of people using AI taking over your job.” This reinforces Miller's (2019, p. 6) research that people become second-class citizens in their own communities if they do not keep up with GAI.

Another finding shows that many interviewees perceived that GAI influences how clients form their demands thus having an effect on the demands the creative agencies face. Interviewee 5 explained how due to clients choosing GAI, crafted concepts become more expensive:

Actually, the customers who don't care that much about what they bring out as long as they bring something out. Those will be doing a lot with AI. And the customers who see value in call it, I'll call it craft, so with handmade products. ... Something that has a human signature in it. Those [customers] will be harder to find because it [craft] is just more expensive.

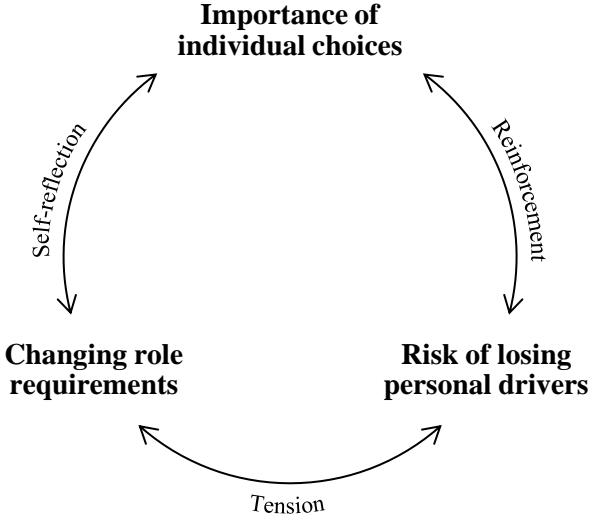
(Interviewee 5)

At the same time as bespoke concepts become more expensive, the findings show that customer expectations also become higher: “because the quality of everything and the production value is getting higher and higher, customers also expect more” (Interviewee 1). Additionally, several respondents indicated that when selling bespoke concepts, it is up to agencies to convince potential clients why they should work with a creative agency and not rely solely on GAI. Interviewee 6 added that as a creative agency they should say something like: “we have a whole idea behind it [a campaign]. We can provide this [something] that AI can't.” This is in line with Gujar and Panyam (2024, p. 3) as they claim that GAI is powerful but cannot fully replace needed human touch. This finding also suggests that it is not just up to the advertising professional to use GAI. If clients start comparing the creative agency to GAI's ability to produce different concepts quickly, they may start expecting more from the agency than is humanly feasible. This may force the agency to use GAI to keep meeting demand, allowing them to spend less time per client, which in turn can lead to compromises on the quality of each concept. Interviewee 10 emphasized that while it is up to clients to

choose GAI over an agency, it may not be best in the long run because the public craves authenticity to build a long-term bond with a brand (Gujar & Panyam, 2024, p. 3):

I think companies that are going to choose to have AI concepts developed to avoid the big agencies will benefit very much financially in the short term and in the long term actually put all of their relationships with the creative sector at risk. ... I think the campaigns that are developed based on AI do not have long-term sting power. (Interviewee 10)

Figure 4
Navigating the impact of GAI on the creative identity of the advertising professional



Note. This figure makes no distinction between the role types (art, copy and strategy) as it is based on the experiences of all interviewees.

4.2.4. Navigating the impact of GAI on identity within a creative agency

Figure 4 visualises how the importance of individual choices, the risk of losing personal drivers and changing role requirements relate to each other. With the impact of GAI on these three elements relating to the creative identity of advertising professionals, the need for a constant balancing act arises. If any one of the three elements were to become out of balance with the others, the whole cycle would be disrupted and the result would likely be that the advertising professional would have to find a completely different role, and for those professionals who value creativity highly, this could well mean the end of their career in advertising, as some expressed that they would likely look for a new industry if that happens.

Between the changing role requirements and the risk of losing personal drivers, the findings show a need to balance the resulting tension. The tension in this case refers to whether the advertising professional is satisfied with their creative identity (Mao & Shen, 2015, pp. 1550-1551) and is able to follow changing role requirements without losing their personal drivers. As Interviewee 8, for example, said, "if it [my role within the agency] develops in such a way that I will soon be redundant,

then I will try to do something else creative." The interviewee did not necessarily feel threatened but rather expressed his flexibility by indicating that either way he would find a way to stay active in a creative role.

Constant self-reflection is needed because of the changing role requirements and the importance of individual choices to ensure that the advertising professional does not sacrifice their individual style to meet new demands. If the two are not balanced, the changing role requirements will put pressure on the advertising professional to adjust their creative identity which endangers their productivity and motivation (Mao & Shen, 2015, pp. 1550-1551). The findings showed that the majority of respondents value their creativity and do not appreciate having their control over creativity taken away (Huang & Rust, 2020, p. 33): "I mean, that's your face. That's when it comes to real creativity, which can't be replaced by a robot" (Interviewee 12b).

The final balancing act is between the importance of individual choices and the risk of losing personal drivers. If either element, rather than reinforcing the other, works against the other, a sense of creative identity asymmetry may arise meaning that the advertising professional experiences a discrepancy between their supposed creative identity and the actual recognition they receive from others (Wang et al., 2021, p. 576). As a result, several interviewees indicated that they would start to question if they wanted to continue their role. Interviewee 4 explained that " you have to make people feel, yes, like they are important too." This reinforces both individual choices and motivations as part of a grander creative identity. A strong creative identity will actually improve innovative behaviour in the creative agency (Uddin et al., 2019, p. 877). In turn, such a change in behaviour within the creative agency can create new tensions in the circle, which is why it remains important to continuously navigate the circle and maintain a balance.

4.3. Attitude and Behavioural Intention

The third and final part of this chapter discusses attitude and behavioural intention, building on the abovementioned themes. First, *attitude towards using GAI* is discussed, followed by the *behavioural intention to use GAI*.

4.3.1. Attitude towards using GAI

In terms of attitudes toward the use of GAI, the findings show many differences among the advertising professionals interviewed. Remarkably, all interviewees spoke with lots of nuances and presented many opinions that showed both the perceived benefits and threats of GAI in concept development and its effect on creative identity. All but one respondent had a generally positive attitude toward the use of GAI in concept development. However, while the attitude was mostly positive, interviewees also expressed concerns they had to ensure that the positive attitude was not confused with lack of caution. Overall, advertising professionals remained aware of the risks but chose to focus on the opportunities thus the general attitude towards using GAI can be labelled as *positively aware of*

both the benefits and threats.

First, several interviewees mentioned that implementing GAI within concept development is more desirable if you know how to use it well. As Interviewee 6 explained:

Anybody can actually use it [a camera] but a real photographer actually knows how to set the settings, how to take the right shots, how composition works. So, the same thing then actually applies to AI: anyone can use it but once you know how to deploy it and how to apply it, then it actually becomes good. (Interviewee 6)

As Huang and Rust (2020, p. 33) said, it is up to the advertising professionals to decide how and when it is desirable to use GAI. In line with this, several respondents stated that it is not (yet) desirable to fully implement GAI in the creative process as standard procedure. Interviewee 2 explained that there is no need:

We don't get stuck on different things than we got stuck on two years ago. Customers are still as difficult as they once were. In that respect, I don't feel it changes that much. It's that occasionally that things get a little bit easier. (Interviewee 2)

Furthermore, a few interviewees expressed they felt like GAI, even though it has grown, still has many aspects that are in development. In relation to this, it is worth noting that Miller's (2019, p. 4) research shows that communication with GAI can go both ways. GAI needs to learn from humans and, in turn, humans need to learn from GAI (Miller's, 2019, p. 4). Popkova and Sergi (2020, p. 578) in turn highlighted that it is crucial not to surrender completely. Interviewee 11 did focus on putting creative identity on the foreground when describing whether GAI is desirable to use:

When you work with AI, you actually become aware of what we as humans are very good at, and that is giving meaning to things ... I just get more and more amazed at the human brain when I see AI doing things (Interviewee 11).

Additionally, several respondents formed their attitude based on experiences with new technologies from the past, for example, Interviewee 11 also mentioned: "I think we should all not be so afraid of AI because I don't think it is going to take over the world. The car didn't take over the world either." For most respondents, the need of using GAI is also based on whether they feel like they have to keep up with technology. Interviewee 7 added that "if you don't use it, you're going to fall behind. ... I just don't see it as a threat, I see it more as an opportunity." So, although people tend to fixate on risk according to Burrell (2018, para. 2), the findings in this study show that the advertising professionals interviewed had a very nuanced perspective.

4.3.2. Behavioural intention to use GAI

Regarding behavioural intention to use GAI, the findings show a practical approach and an emotional approach. When it comes to the practical intentions, the findings indicate that once the tools fits to the needs of the advertising professional, the likelihood of employment by said professional is high. This practical behavioural intention to use GAI can be labelled *servicing professional needs*. The

behavioural intention driven by emotions can be labelled as *protecting creative identity* because in this approach, the intention to use AI depends on its influence on the existing balance of GAI's impact on creative identity as portrayed in figure 4. Taking both the practical and emotional behavioural intention, the majority of the respondents indicated that they intend to use more GAI in the future. For example, Interviewee 1 explained:

I do think it [GAI] will get better. And that eventually you can do more with it. And that it also becomes easier. I think especially the barrier now is that.... you have no guarantee that it always works out. That you get out what you wanted to get out. ... once you get more confidence in that, then I would do it more often. (Interviewee 1)

Interviewee 2 added, "as AI improves, we'll keep involved. It's helping tremendously right now. So yeah, if it improves further, I think we'll use it even more in the future, although not in a [fundamentally] different way than it is used today." For this respondent, there is no change expected with regards to the behavioural intention to use GAI tools, but there is an intention to use GAI more often if certain conditions are met. Simultaneously, some respondents expressed that no new conditions are needed as they do not expect to use GAI more often in the future. As Interviewee 12a explained, "I already use it a lot." On the other hand, there was one respondent, Interviewee 10, who had no intention of employing a GAI tool any time soon:

No. I don't think so. Unless we sort of go back to the AI, the way it was, when [the less perfected, sometimes weird and horrific output was not yet filtered and] it still provided unique things, which I wouldn't be able to think of myself. Then it still has added value. But right now, at least where the trend seems to be going with the development of generative AI, I don't see myself being inclined to make more use of that. (Interviewee 10)

Kietzmann et al.'s (2018, p. 263) research predicts that it is entirely possible that advertising professionals will have to embrace GAI anyway if it becomes an embedded part of advertising. In that case the intention behind the behaviour will see a shift from individual choice to following demands. Behavioural intention also seems to be influenced by creative identity. As follows from figure 4, upheaval, as expressed by interviewees, can cause creatives to take their creativity elsewhere. When balancing creative identity with GAI, three conditions can be evaluated when considering the behavioural intention to use GAI. The first condition is that the GAI you intent on using allows for individual choices. The second condition is that the use of GAI should not put personal drivers at risk. The final condition is that GAI should support advertising professionals rather than direct them. When these conditions are met, the creative identity is best protected. In line with what Hackley and Kover (2007, p. 66) found, creative identity gives creatives direction, and the findings show that these interviewees are also guided by their creative identity when deciding on the likelihood of them using GAI for concept development.

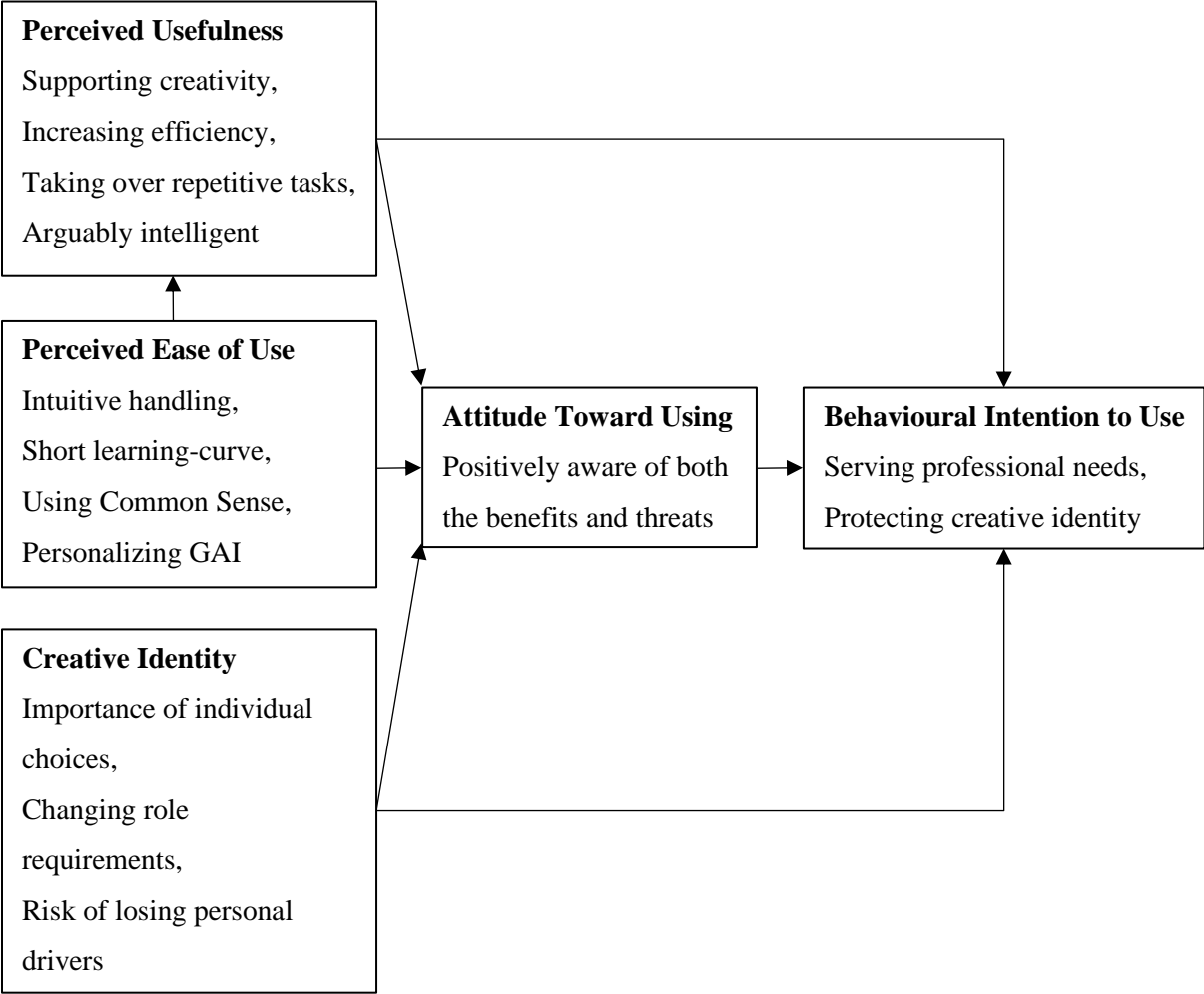
Noteworthy, the findings show that predicting the future of their individual roles in creative

agencies, most of the interviewees describe roles where creative identity is leading and GAI is not directly mentioned. For example: “it [my role] is going to become a bit more like people manager” (Interviewee 4). Or as Interviewee 3 added, “maybe my role will be different, more like a consultant.” This change in roles aligns with the research by Banh and Strobel (2023, pp. 6-7) showing that within the very organization of creative agencies new tasks will need to be assigned to keep with the rapid innovation of GAI.

To conclude, the three main themes: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and effect of GAI on creative identity all played a role in attitude and behavioural intention. Figure 5 shows part of Davis's (1989) Technology Acceptance Model applied to the data presented in the last part of this chapter. The next chapter provides the conclusion of this study, thus answering the research question and providing a critical analysis of the study.

Figure 5

Overview of the results



Note. This visual adds the creative identity dimension to the structure of Davis’s (1989) Technology Acceptance Model.

5. Conclusion

In advertising, creativity has long been a human domain. With the introduction of GAI, the question arises whether this is still true. By reflecting on GAI with advertising professionals, this research aimed to gain a better understanding of how they view GAI both as a practical tool and as a technology that potentially alters their view on creative identity. Specifically, the focus was on extending GAI to the creative process in concept development in a creative agency. This led to the following research question: *How do advertising professionals perceive generative artificial intelligence (GAI) as a tool for concept development and its effect on creative identity within their professional role?* This chapter answers the research question and presents the theoretical and societal implications. Finally, the limitations of this study and recommendations for future research are discussed.

5.1. Addressing the Research Question

First the findings show that GAI is considered useful in concept development when it is used in support of human creativity or help the professional to perform tasks better or faster. Overall, for tasks like brainstorming, visualising ideas, or automating repetitive tasks the advertising professionals found that GAI could be of service to them as a tool in their toolkit. However, GAI's intelligence was not seen on the same level as human intelligence thus advertising professionals believed that humans are still needed to uphold creative quality and guard over its application with common sense. On the practical side, GAI was perceived to be relatively easy to use by most interviewees as the required skills were considered to already be present among advertising professionals.

Advertising professionals recognize GAI as an inevitable part of the industry. However, the findings show the presence of GAI in the industry does provide tensions when the advertising professionals form their creative identity. When GAI intrudes into the human domain or tasks that advertising professionals take pride in, their creative identity is challenged. If the impact of GAI on their creative identity leads the advertising professionals to feel creatively unfulfilled, it may even cause them to seek other outlets for their creativity, like moving to different industries.

Overall, the attitude of advertising professionals towards using GAI as a tool in concept development is quite nuanced mentioning threats and benefits, each where they are applicable and not necessarily in contrast with the other. Their attitude appears to be grounded more in a general perception of GAI and its impact on the entire advertising industry. Whereas for their behavioural intention to use, the advertising professionals are looking more closely at their own interests. If it practically serves them as an advertising professional, and if it mentally does not get in the way of their creative identity, they are more willing and likely to use GAI.

With the expectation that even clients themselves can and will use GAI for concept development, the findings show that advertising professionals expect low-cost, high-volume advertising output to become a considerable part of the market. In return, as the findings show, it is to

be expected that creative agencies with added human value will move further to the top end of the market. As this will not be within the budget of many clients, the number of creative agencies at the bespoke end of the market might decrease even though, as a whole, the advertising market may grow.

Thus, while it is easy to imagine that the human touch will be appreciated mainly in the premium market, the possibility of many advertising campaigns made with GAI might affect the way the creative identity of the advertising professionals is perceived. As a result, the findings show that the advertising professionals are very much looking for how they can add value. With GAI's rapid innovations, the findings certainly do not rule out the possibility that it will become increasingly difficult to continue to find that added value for advertising professionals. However, at the time of this research, they still see an added value for themselves although they all have thoughts about the impact of GAI. In the end, GAI is perceived as an almost human companion in concept development that, through its differences with human creativity, shows how valuable the individual creative identities of advertising professionals are.

5.2. Theoretical implications

The results of this study make several contributions to the existing literature discussed earlier in the theoretical framework. As previously mentioned, there is not yet a conclusive answer to the question of how GAI has a place alongside creativity (Banh & Strobel, 2023, p.11). This study places GAI in concept development, an inherently creative process. As a result, the insights from this study contribute to the understanding of how GAI stands alongside creativity. Furthermore, the interviewees indicated that they recognize GAI's ability to support creativity or automate repetitive tasks and therefore seek to employ it in concept development whenever useful. This finding reinforces Gujar and Panyam's (2024, p. 5) theory that enhancing creativity through GAI seems a real possibility and thus offers opportunities in advertising.

Overall, the findings show that advertising professionals acknowledged both the opportunities and threats but most deliberately chose to focus on how the use of GAI can benefit them and not on what it might take away from them. This challenges the theory that humans tend to fixate on risks when presented with new technologies (Burrell, 2018, para. 2). Moreover, the findings show how GAI can be seen as an opportunity to enhance human creativity, contributing to the understanding of computational creativity (Vakratsas & Wang, 2020, p. 39).

Furthermore, the findings offer another perspective to the theory that it is entirely up to the advertising professional to choose the right GAI tool (Huang & Rust, 2020, p. 33; Lim et al., 2024, pp. 266-267). Although, at first glance, advertising professionals do indeed choose to use GAI themselves based on different tasks they want to perform, the decision is not entirely up to them as they also indicate that they may be influenced by client demands.

This research can also add substantiated value to the existing research on creative identity. As stated by Hackley and Kover (2007, p. 66), the creative identity is not only influenced by the

individual but also by their social surroundings. This research and the advertising professionals interviewed recognize GAI as part of the environment that plays a role in shaping creative identity. Moreover, the findings showed that when creative individuals are compared to GAI, they fear work may become undervalued. This complements Wang et al.'s (2021, p. 576) theory of creative identity asymmetry as the advertising professionals perceive that their creativity identity is not fully appreciated by the client who compares them to GAI.

Finally, by building on the finding that advertising professionals also form their attitudes towards GAI based on its impact on their creative identity, this study proposes an extension of Davis's (1989) TAM to include creative identity as a determinant of attitude towards technology when examining creative individuals.

5.3. Societal implications

Regarding the societal implications of this research, creative agencies could benefit from the findings by understanding the worth of protecting the creative identity of their employees. The more the human touch is demanded by clients, the more important it becomes to realise that dissatisfied creative individuals will keep seeking creative fulfilment, even if it means looking for another job and thus losing value to the agency. Additionally, this research could be of help to advertising managers who may have lost overview of all the possibilities of GAI due to its fast emergence. The findings in this study could then be used to guide the implementation of GAI in the concept development process.

Furthermore, this research offers the perspective that positioning creative identity as a distinctive feature of the advertising professional is crucial to show clients why they should choose them over GAI. Advertising professionals could benefit from this insight and focus on clearly defining their creative identity and use this to position themselves in the advertising market that now includes GAI.

5.4. Limitations

The main limitation of this study is the generalisability of the findings. The sample of 14 Dutch advertising professionals was somewhat limited opposed to the entirety of all advertising professionals in the Netherlands. However, the inclusion of professionals from different creative agencies improved the representation of the broader population. Additionally, because only Dutch agencies were interviewed, the findings may be difficult to apply to other countries, especially those without a Western orientation.

Furthermore, as the interviews were conducted in Dutch, but the data reported in English, subtle translation differences may occur. Although efforts were made to accurately interpret interviewees' responses in the English translations, the researcher acknowledges that some cultural nuances and subtleties may have been lost through translation.

It is also important to note that prior to the study, the researcher has worked in and with

creative agencies. While this experience helped to gain access to advertising professionals, the previous experience combined with the researcher's personal beliefs may have indirectly influenced the interpretation of the data.

5.5. Suggestions for future research

For future research, it would be interesting to expand beyond just the advertising professional's perspective. In this study, all findings on how others react to advertising professionals using GAI are based on their own perceptions. A recommendation would be to conduct qualitative interviews with clients of creative agencies to gain more insight into how they actually see GAI as a tool to develop their own advertising concept, or whether they still prefer to employ the agency to create the concept. Additionally, throughout the findings it was found that advertising professionals valued their creative identity and GAI should not compromise this identity. It would be useful to explore how creative advertising professionals can keep a job that fits their creative identity without having to compromise because of GAI. This would help create a better understanding of how advertising professionals could protect their creative identity if GAI gets even closer to human creativity. Lastly, this research did not take into account the personal characters of the advertising professionals themselves. Follow up research could focus on how the personal character of the advertising professional has an effect on how they perceive GAI. This study would benefit from qualitative in-depth interviews to gain a better understanding of the character of the individuals as well as how this effected their opinions and experiences.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

Introduction

First of all, I would like to thank you for participating in this research. My name is Anna van Amstel and for my thesis research at the Media & Creative Industries master's program at Erasmus University, I am conducting research on the expansion of generative artificial intelligence (AI) within concept development and the effect of AI on roles within creative agencies. To do this, I will ask you questions related to your own personal experiences and opinions. There are no wrong answers. Again, your participation is purely voluntary and you have the right to choose not to answer certain questions or withdraw your consent or discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. Do I have permission to record the interview? (If yes, this question will be repeated at the beginning of the recording).

Icebreaker

- How did you get into advertising?
- How long have you been active in the field of advertising?

1. Creative Identity & Generative AI

Defining

- How would you describe your role in the creative agency?
- What is the role of creativity in your job?
- Can you explain to me what the creative process in your agency looks like and what your role in it is?
 - o Probe: concept development

Introducing generative AI

- How would you define generative AI?
 - o If the participants' definition of generative AI is not in line with the definition used in this study, the following simplified definition is read aloud:

The term generative AI describes computer techniques that, given prompts, can produce seemingly original, meaningful content, such as text, images, or audio. Apart from mimicking human creativity in this seemingly new content, generative AI systems are also used as intelligent question-answering systems.
- If any, what generative AI tools do you use in your role as copywriter/art director/...?
 - o Probe: ChatGPT & GPT-4 (open-AI), Cohere Generate & Copy.ai (copy content),

Midjourney & DALL-E 2 & StyleGAN-t (image and art), Bardeen (workflow automation), Synthesia & Sora (videos), Fireflies.ai (Notetaking)

- Follow-up: what do you use these specific tools for?

2. Perceived Usefulness

- What do you think about using generative AI in your daily tasks within a creative agency?
 - Follow-up: Why?
 - Follow-up: Can you give an example of a recent situation when you used generative ai in your role?
 - Emphasize: can be both a positive and negative experience
 - Follow-up: At what stage?
 - Follow-up: How specifically did you use it?
- In your opinion, what are the benefits of using generative AI in concept development to you?
 - Follow-up: Why do you think these are benefits? / Why do you think there are no benefits?
- In your opinion, what do you think are the threats of using generative AI in concept development?
 - Follow-up: Why do you think these are threats? / Why do you think there are no threats?
- In your opinion, do the benefits or threats of using generative AI outweigh each other?
 - Follow-up: Can you elaborate?
- Looking at your experiences, would you consider the use of generative AI important in your role within a creative agency?
 - Follow-up: Why?

3. Perceived Ease of Use

- Do you consider generative AI hard or easy to use, and why?
- What makes generative AI hard/easy to use in your role?
 - Follow-up: Can you elaborate?
- In your opinion, how easy or difficult is it to learn how to use generative AI?
 - Follow-up if applicable: How did you experience learning to use generative AI yourself?
- How would you describe the skills you need to use generative AI?
- What would hold you back from using generative AI in your role within a creative agency?
 - Probe: ethical considerations, policy, competence
 - Follow-up: Why does this hold you back from using generative AI?

4. Concept Development

- In what areas of campaign development can generative AI be the most useful and why?
- How can generative AI be useful when developing a concept?
- If not mentioned before: How do you currently use generative AI when developing a concept?
 - Follow-up: Why do you not use generative AI? / Why do you use generative AI at that

stage?

- Have you noticed a change in in the creative process within your creative agency since the use of generative AI?
 - o Follow-up if yes: How did the creative process change? And how did the use of generative AI cause this change?
 - o Follow-up if no: Why not?
- Would you consider the use of generative AI as cocreation between humans and computers?
 - o Follow-up: Why (not)?

5. Creative Identity within the role

- Do you think your role in a creative agency will have to change because of generative AI?
 - o Follow-up: How? / Why not?
 - o Follow-up: Do you think this is positive, negative or both?
 - o Follow-up: Do feel like you need to learn new things?
 - o Follow-up: Can you give me an example?
- If any, what aspects of your role in a creative agency do you think generative AI will have the most impact on?
 - o Probe: doing research, preparing presentations, time management
 - o Follow-up: Why those aspects?
 - o Follow-up: How would generative AI have an effect on those aspects?
 - o Follow-up: Do you think this is positive, negative or both?
- What do you imagine your role within the creative agency will look like in 5 years?
 - o Follow-up: Why do you think generative AI will or will not have an impact your role within the creative agency?
- Do you have any fears or hopes about the impact of generative AI on your role in the future?
- Do you feel like generative AI takes something away from you?
 - o Follow-up: Why?
- Do you feel that generative AI affects your creativity and why?
 - o Follow-up: Can you give me an example of how it would affect your creativity?
 - o Follow-up: Do you think this is positive, negative or both?
- Do you think you will use (more) generative AI in the future and why?

End

- Is there anything you would like to add about your experience with generative AI within a creative agency and/or concept development?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix B

Coding Tree

Table C1

Theme 1: Perceived Usefulness

Themes	Selective Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Perceived Usefulness	Supporting creativity	Ideation	Brainstorming
			Breaking through stagnation
			Additional brainpower
		Visualising concepts	New perspectives
			Visualising ideas
			Text to picture
	Quantity over quality	Saving time	Losing quality
			Uniformity
			Information overload
		Concept testing	Efficiency
			A lot of information quickly
			Always available
	Structuring of data	Concept testing	A/B testing
			Mirroring ideas
			Different perspectives
		Developing concepts with less budget and time	Research overviews
			Summarizing data
			Data searching
Taking over repetitive tasks	Automation	Getting less time per project	
		Clients with smaller budgets	
		Using AI in final concepts	
	Unfulfilling tasks	Repetitive tasks	
		Streamlining processes	
		Creating workflow	
Arguably intelligent	Referring to GAI with personal characteristics	Boring tasks	
		Annoying tasks	
		Sparring partner	
	Questioning (A)Intelligence	Extra colleague	
		Intern	
		Questionable sources	
			Algorithm
			(Western) bias
			Co-creation between human and computers

Table C2

Theme 2: Perceived Ease of Use

Themes	Selective Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Perceived Ease of Use	Intuitive handling	Engaging in dialogue	Natural process
			Iterative process
		Playing around	Easy
			Trying new things
	Exploring		
	Limited control	Good input = good output	Fixed boundaries
			Low threshold
	Short learning-curve	Approachable	Easily accessible
			Fast responses
		Producing a lot of output quickly	Long lists
			Many possibilities
	Desired output is not achieved quickly	Never perfect	Wasting time
			Settle for less
			Simplicity
	Using Common Sense	Prompting	Applying structure
			Learning from past experiences
			Language proficient
			(Human) judgement
		Examining the output	Engagement
			Reading comprehension
Do not be lazy			
Characteristics of a practising advertising professional		Technically savvy	
		Analytical thinking	
		Creativity	
	Critical thinking		
Personalizing GAI	Controlling GAI	Understanding AI	
		Contemplating use of AI	
	Customizing tools	Responsibility by the user	
		Programming AI yourself	
		Selective use	

Table C3

Theme 3: Effect of AI on roles

Themes	Selective Coding	Axial Coding	Open Coding
Effect of AI on roles	Importance of individual choices	Personal style over AI's style	Personalization
			Authenticity
			Distinctive style of AI
		Practical expertise	Prior practical knowledge
			Ethics
			Empathy
	Risk of losing personal drivers	Wanting recognition	Ego
			Positive feedback
			Proud
			Undervalued work
			Failed artists
			Passion for the profession
	Changing role requirements	More time for creativity, fewer repetitive tasks	Fun tasks
			Focus on talents
			Supplementing (otherwise missing) skills
The need for human presence		Client is human	
		Human contact	
		Reading body language	
Inevitable use of AI		Trend	
		Indispensable	
		Missing the train	
Following demand		Niche market	
		Bespoke concepts	

Appendix C

Informed Consent

CONSENT REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH

For questions about the study, contact: Anna van Amstel, 668025aa@eur.nl

DESCRIPTION

You are invited to participate in a research about generative artificial intelligence (AI) in concept development within creative agencies. The purpose of the study is to understand how advertising professionals perceive AI as a tool for concept development and its effect on their roles.

Your acceptance to participate in this study means that you accept to be interviewed. In general terms:

- The interview questions will be related to your experience with generative AI as a tool for concept development within a creative agency and your perspectives on its effect on your role within a creative agency.

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 [such as the name of the creative agency you work for] in the study. The participants in the study will only be referred to with pseudonyms. Your age and job title will be used in an overview of the participants, unless you prefer that these are not disclosed.

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

If the participants would like to see the outcomes of this study, the participants need to communicate this to the interviewer. Once the research is out, these participants will receive an email.

TIME INVOLVEMENT

Your participation in this study will take approximately 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— mamedia@eshcc.eur.nl

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
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I prefer my identity to be revealed in all written data resulting from this study:

Name	Signature	Date
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This copy of the consent form is for you to keep.